



# Greenhouses not Warehouses:

Commissioning education to plant seeds of hope and opportunity

Workbook



Sir Richard Branson:

*Do we want warehouses for the incorrigible, or greenhouses for the reformed? At the moment, we are looking at the former. But the latter is possible and within reach.*

Helga Swindenbank  
(former Director of HMP Bronzefield):

*All prison sector leaders need to take advantage of opportunities to plant seeds of hope and opportunity.*



## The Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA)

The PLA brings together organisations and individuals with expertise in prison education.

**Our vision is:** That all prisoners can engage in high-quality and diverse learning opportunities to help them transform their lives.

**Our mission is:** To provide expertise and strategic vision to inform prison education priorities, policies and practices.

## Current membership:

**Chair:** Alexandra Marks CBE; **Secretariat:** Prisoners' Education Trust

<b>John Attard</b>	National Officer, Prison Governors' Association
<b>Mark Blake</b>	Project Development Officer, Black Training & Enterprise Group
<b>Angela Cairns</b>	Chief Executive, Shannon Trust
<b>Teresa Carroll</b>	Programme Coordinator – Offender Learning, Education and Training Foundation
<b>Rod Clark</b>	Chief Executive, Prisoners' Education Trust
<b>David Corke</b>	Director of Education and Skills Policy, Association of Colleges
<b>Susan Easton</b>	Head of Digital Skills and Learning, Learning & Work Institute
<b>Tracey Hammond</b>	Communication and Engagement Director, KeyRing
<b>Juliet Hope</b>	Founder and CEO, StartUp
<b>Dr. Jane Hurry</b>	Co-Director of Centre for Education in the CJS, UCL Institute of Education
<b>Melanie Jameson</b>	Founder, Dyslexia Consultancy Malvern
<b>Maria McNicholl</b>	Development Manager, St. Giles Trust
<b>Rebecca Page</b>	Operations Manager, User Voice
<b>Kate Paradine</b>	Director, Women in Prison
<b>Jessica Plant</b>	Manager of National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance, Clinks
<b>Gee Punia</b>	Head of Employability, The Forward Trust (Formerly RAPt & Blue Sky)
<b>Michala Robertson</b>	Assistant Director, Widening Access Service, Open University
<b>Diana Sutton</b>	Director, The Bell Foundation
<b>Cheryl Swales</b>	Project Manager, Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)
<b>Sarah Turvey</b>	Co-Founder and Co-Director, Prison Reading Groups
<b>Charlotte Weinberg</b>	Executive Director, Safe Ground
<b>Andrew Wilkie</b>	Director of Radio, Prison Radio Association

## Previous PLA publications:

<b>2013</b>	Smart Rehabilitation
<b>2015</b>	The Future of Prison Education Contracts: Delivering Better Outcomes
<b>2016</b>	What is Prison Education For? A Theory of Change Exploring the Value of Learning in Prison (In partnership with New Philanthropy Capital)

# Foreword



Education transforms lives. It is the passport to a fulfilling future, the gateway to a good job, and one of the best ways to bridge the gap between outcomes for the most and least fortunate in society.

When I was a minister in the Department for Education, I was committed to giving every child every chance to make the most of their life, regardless of their background or upbringing. Now as Prisons Minister, overseeing our wide-ranging reform agenda, I am no less committed to giving everyone that same chance. Through education, I want to create the best possible conditions for some of the most disadvantaged people in society to unlock their potential.

Because we believe that prison governors are ideally placed to know what form that education should take, we are giving them the freedom to set their strategic visions. It's a prospect that is hugely exciting and may also be a little daunting. Governors will have many questions – which is why I hope they will welcome this excellent practical guide from the Prisoner Learning Alliance.

What does effective prison education look like? How do I tailor it to inspire the least accomplished prisoners, while stimulating those with qualifications? How ambitious should I be? This timely workbook will help governors make these key decisions. It is one more tool to help them make regimes more rehabilitative; one more tool for them to use as they challenge prisoners to turn their lives around.

At present, nearly a third of prisoners arriving in jail admit to a learning difficulty or disability – a figure that is almost certainly an under-estimate, and compares to an estimated 2 per cent in the general population. In reading tests, over half of new prisoners do not reach the level expected of an 11-year-old. In prison, they can make valuable progress.

We know that prisoners who access education are more likely to stay out of trouble on their release and less likely to commit further crimes. Importantly, we also know that making progress in education leads to an improved sense of purpose, productivity and pride – useful traits both in and out of prison.

I am confident that this workbook will encourage, enable and empower governors as they go about improving the quality of education in our prisons, and transforming troubled lives.

**Sam Gyimah MP**, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Self-assessment tool</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Definitions</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 1.</b> Vision and Strategy	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter 2.</b> Identifying needs and priorities	<b>14</b>
<b>Chapter 3.</b> Listening to your prisoners	<b>17</b>
<b>Chapter 4.</b> Using research and evidence	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 5.</b> Partnering with the right people, the right way	<b>24</b>
<b>Chapter 6.</b> Ensuring fairness in the commissioning process	<b>27</b>
<b>Chapter 7.</b> Innovation v. consistency	<b>29</b>
<b>Chapter 8.</b> Looking beyond the gate	<b>33</b>
<b>Chapter 9.</b> Developing a 'Whole-prison' Learning Culture	<b>36</b>
<b>Chapter 10.</b> Who else can help make this happen?	<b>39</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>41</b>

# Introduction

***‘Strong leadership is essential to any organisation and a powerful force for driving change and improvement [...] Empowered prison governors will have the freedom to set the strategic vision for their establishment’s education programme, and ensure this is delivered in the best way for their prisoners.’***

**(Ministry of Justice, Kickstarter event, August 2017)**

Prisons are being given increasing flexibility and control over education budgets and the ability to commission a wide range of provision. Governor-led commissioning is an exciting opportunity to increase engagement of prisoners in education to achieve a whole-prison learning culture.

The PLA has produced this workbook aimed at helping governors and managers plan and commission education. It includes a self-assessment tool and provides advice, case studies and additional resources around ten key aspects of commissioning. This timely resource sets out the crucial questions to be thinking about and suggestions for how to bring together the right people to answer them for your prison and population.

## How was this workbook developed?

The PLA has consulted a range of charities and other learning providers to think about how governors might rise to the challenge of commissioning prison education in order to create a whole-prison learning culture and improve outcomes for prisoners.

A series of four roundtable events were organised by the PLA with support from Education Training Foundation (ETF), Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), Employment Related Services Association (ERSA), Clinks and Association of Colleges (AoC). The expertise gathered in those roundtables has informed this workbook (see Conclusion for more information about these organisations).

## Why is education commissioning important?

### Getting commissioning ‘right’

Prisoners who are purposefully engaged, well supported by staff and peers and hopeful about their futures will be a positive influence on others, the prison culture and themselves. Thoughtful, appropriate education provision is a vital part of the solution. Knowing who and what is best for your particular prison population requires forward planning, good stakeholder engagement and a clear understanding of the needs and evidence-base.

### Getting commissioning ‘wrong’

Getting prison education commissioning wrong could exacerbate current challenges facing prisons, specifically increasing prisoner disengagement and disillusionment.

*‘I was angry. I was not happy. I had nothing to focus on. When I was a child my teacher would say to me – drummed it into me – you’re worthless, useless and not going to do anything. But now with my certificate in my hand I feel complete, my anger has gone.’*

*‘I was almost at despairing in my life and had often contemplated suicide as I was so depressed and have no family. However I now feel optimistic about my future and job prospects and I feel proud of myself and what I’ve achieved.’*

(Former prisoner learners, as quoted in PLA Theory of Change, 2016)

# Self-assessment tool

## How confident are you with ten key aspects of commissioning education?

### 1. Vision and strategy [See pages 11-13]

You will need to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve with education in your prison. What will your prison look and feel like when it is supporting this vision? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 2. Identifying needs and priorities [See pages 14-16]

You will need to understand the strengths, needs and interests of your population. What learning opportunities could help meet these needs? What are the priorities for your population? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 3. Listening to your prisoners [See pages 17-19]

You will need to understand your prisoners. What do your current learners say is working and not working within existing activities? What do prisoners not currently engaged in education feel would help them to engage? What would help current learners to progress? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 4. Using research and evidence [See pages 20-23]

Evidenced decisions are more successful. How will you use research and evidence to plan and commission your learning offer? How can you measure and increase the impact and quality of learning in your prison? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 5. Partnering with the right people, the right way [See pages 24-26]

There are many partners who could help you design and deliver education. Which specialists and partners could help you achieve your vision? How can you ensure they work together effectively? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 6. Ensuring fairness in the commissioning process [See pages 27-28]

It is important to have a fair commissioning process. How will you communicate with potential providers about what you need? How will you ensure that your commissioning process is fair, transparent and open? Do you understand the procurement rules? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 7. Innovation v. consistency [See pages 29-32]

Don't fix what isn't broken. What is currently working that you could build on? What isn't working and needs a new solution? What innovations are out there? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

### 8. Looking beyond the gate [See pages 33-35]

You will need to think about opportunities in the community. How will you build bridges for prisoners into wider society? How will you ensure prisoners are involved in education, training or employment after release? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

## 9. Developing a 'Whole-prison' Learning Culture [See pages 36-38]

You will need the 'buy in' of all staff to develop a learning culture. What are the roles for those outside of key education posts to promote learning? How could training and development opportunities help others contribute to making the vision a reality? What value could prisoners add? **How confident are you in this?**

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

## 10. Who else can help make this happen? [See pages 39-40]

There's a lot to consider when taking this new approach to commissioning education including commercial and financial implications. What other specific expertise do you need to help you and how might you get it? **How confident are you in this?**

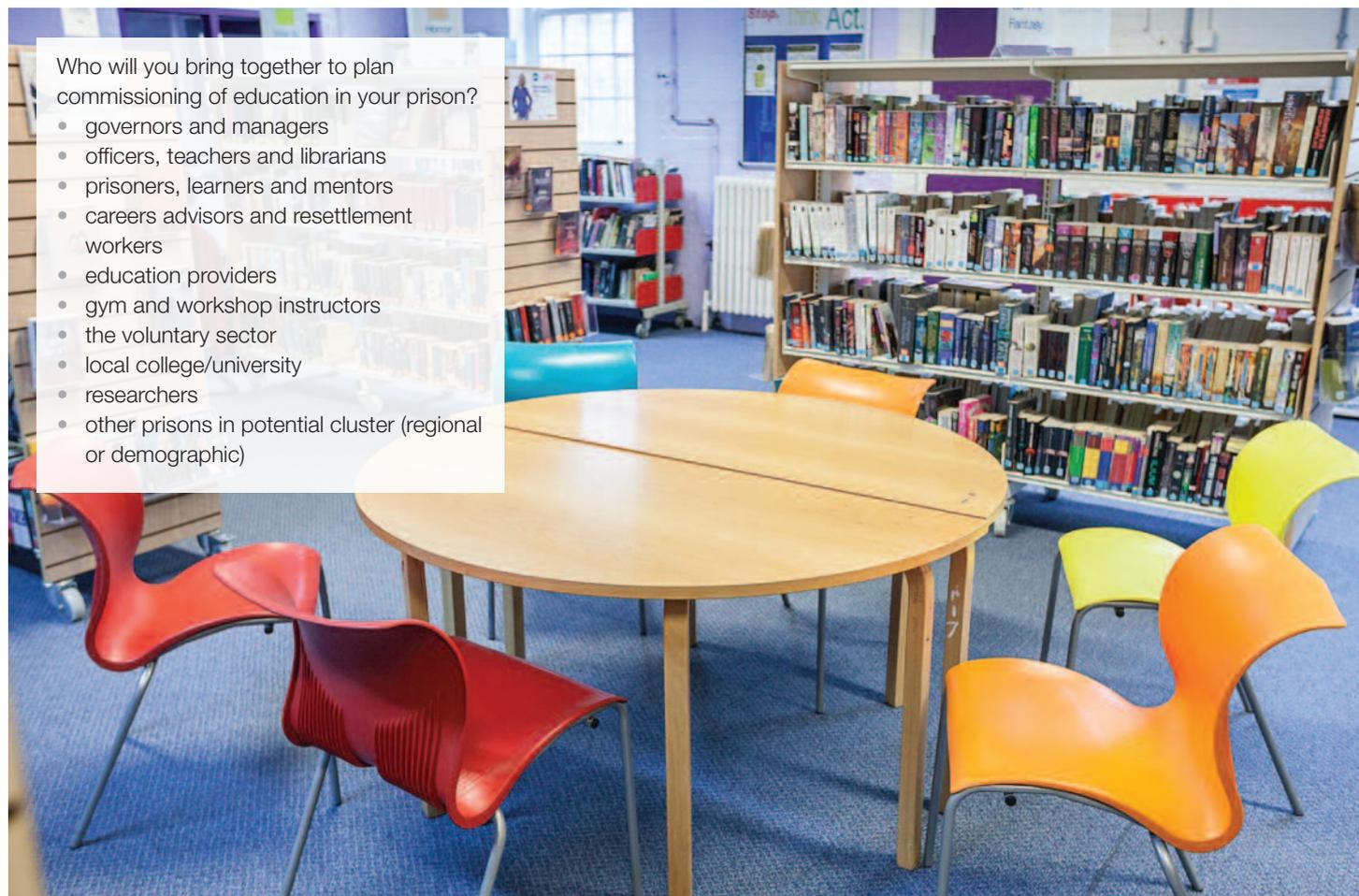
Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	--------------------------	----------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

## What next?

This resource is intended to be used as a co-production tool. There is not one way to 'do' co-production, but the key principle is to have a creative, inclusive and reflective space with a range of people sharing ideas and experiences to develop a shared direction of travel.

*'Service users, communities and voluntary and community organisations often have knowledge, ideas and skills that can be vital to the design and implementation of the best services possible.'*

(navca.org.uk, Beginners Guide to Commissioning, 2011)



# DEFINITIONS

## What is prison education?

The PLA has long called for an outcome-focused definition of prison education and is delighted with the definition now being used by the Ministry of Justice, which encompasses the key themes identified in the PLA Theory of Change (2016). The PLA Theory of Change was designed in partnership with New Philanthropy Capital following consultation with prison teachers and former prisoner learners:



*'Activities that give individuals the skills they need to unlock their potential, gain employment and become assets to their communities. It should also build social capital and improve the wellbeing of prisoners during their sentences.'*

(Ministry of Justice, 2017)

## Wellbeing

*'Wellbeing is about people and creating the conditions for us all to thrive. It's quality of life and prosperity, positive physical and mental health, sustainable thriving communities.'*

(What Works Centre for Wellbeing)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) sites education and skills as one of the ten dimensions for good wellbeing. The PLA has identified a variety of 'change processes' through which learning could contribute to increased wellbeing of prisoners.

These include:

- More time out of cell and engaged in activities.
- Education as enjoyable, stimulating, fun and motivating.
- Education as a 'third space' distinct from prison life.
- Education providing a psychological goal and potential coping strategy for recovery.

*'If people are not engaged then they are more likely to get involved in negative behaviours, fights, getting high or self harming.'*

*'Being on the wing and doing nothing, you feel kind of depressed.'*

(Former prisoner learners, as quoted in PLA Theory of Change 2016)



## Social Capital

*'Social capital is the links, shared values and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and so work together. There are three main categories of social capital:*

*Bonds: Links to people based on a sense of common identity "people like us" – such as family, close friends and people who share our culture or ethnicity.*

*Bridges: Links that stretch beyond a shared sense of identity, for example to distant friends, colleagues and associates.*

*Linkages: Links to people or groups further up or lower down the social ladder.'*

(OECD Insights)

The PLA has identified a variety of 'change processes' through which learning could contribute to the social capital of prisoners including:

### Belonging and community

- Teachers showing interest in prisoners and treating them with respect and kindness.
- Prisoners learning to trust teachers and changing attitudes towards education/authority.
- Shared education experience as a point of commonality and collaboration.
- Exposure to different people, cultures and ideas.
- Practising new behaviours such as collaboration and working together.
- Experience of helping and working with others, and seeing the benefits.



### Active engagement

- Development of functional and life skills.
- Knowledge and confidence to access services and support in prison and after release.
- Building resilience and confidence to challenge appropriately and persuasively.
- Developing a thirst for learning and interests.
- Increased understanding of family, relationships and parenting roles.
- Increased understanding of impact of behaviours and attitudes on family.
- Experience of participation in prison civic life developing knowledge, skills and confidence.

*'I didn't know how to make appointments, manage money or anything. It was a nightmare, but I'm capable now and help others.'*

*'The biggest effects were on my children [...] she saw me graduate and she is excelling in school. I'm a role model now. I can help her with her homework.'*

*'Education gave me empathy. Before I didn't care about anyone or myself [...] other's kindness helped me gain empathy.'*

(Former prisoner learners, as quoted in PLA Theory of Change 2016)

## Human capital ('being an asset'/'unlocking potential')

*'Human capital can be defined as people's skills, learning, talents and attributes.'*

(OECD)

*'Prisoners are asked to undergo the most difficult of all human processes, the process of change [...] Who am I? Where am I going? [...] This is not to devalue literacy or numeracy, but to elevate self-discovery as the overarching goal in education.'*

(Former prison teacher, Inside Time, October 2012)

*'Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.'*

(Y.B. Yeats, Poet)

The PLA has identified ways in which education can build human capital:

Motivation to change:

- Opportunity for reflection. Psychological sense of a new beginning, having a goal, hope.
- Feelings of progression and moving forward.
- Gradual introduction to learning tailored to needs, strengths and interests.
- Exposure to new possibilities, ideas and role models.
- Encouraging imagination and a different world view.
- Taking ownership of and responsibility for learning: making choices, self direction, feeling of control.

Moving forward:

- Learning to appreciate own strengths and resources. Greater self awareness.
- Experience of meeting challenges, achievement, making progress and pride.
- Engagement in and practice new activities, roles and experiences.
- Opportunity to express oneself, be creative in a positive way.
- Learning and reflecting on personal history and gaining new perspectives on oneself.
- Experience of concentration, patience, applying oneself, self discipline, focus.

*'Education made me a better person [...] I could still take a different path but my head's in the right place now.'*

*'You need people to push you out of your comfort zone, to have new experiences. You can do it!'*

*'You're not just learning maths and English, you are learning about yourself, how you react in different situations, what you like, don't like, what you are good at, what you need to work on.'*

(Former prisoner learners, as quoted in PLA Theory of Change 2016)

The PLA asked over 100 prison teachers and practitioners to name the benefits of prison education at our PLA conference 2015. Elements of human capital featured strongly in their responses: confidence, self-realisation, self-awareness, pride, progression, understanding and self-belief (see word cloud below):



## Employability

There is a clear link between education and employment, and there is a statistically significant link between employment and likelihood of reoffending (Ministry of Justice report, March 2013, showed rates of reoffending within a year of release were up to 9.4 percentage points less for those in employment).

48% of prisoners reported they needed help finding a job on release, 41% needed help with their education and 40% needed help to improve their work related skills (Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Survey 2013).

A You Gov report on behalf of CfBT Education Trust (2011) called 'Employers' Perceptions of Best Practice in Prison Education' found that personal skills such as a positive attitude (44 per cent), communication skills (37 per cent), and reliability (34 per cent) are highlighted as the type of skills or attributes applicants most need to demonstrate to prospective employers. (<https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~media/EDT/Reports/Research/2011/r-employers-best-practice-prison-education-2011.pdf>)

*'By 2020, 16 million more jobs will require high level qualifications, while the demand for low skills will drop by 12 million jobs.'*

(Europe 2020 website, cited in Hawley et al. 2013)

*'Evidence suggests that steady employment – particularly if it offers a sense of achievement, satisfaction or mastery, can support offenders in stopping offending.'*

(Uggen & Staff, 2001, quoted in MoJ Evidence of Reducing Reoffending, 2013)

*'Academic studies show that prisoners tend to be highly entrepreneurial [...] we need to provide ex-offenders with a recognised pathway towards entrepreneurship [...] beginning in prison.'*

(Andrew Dixon, Woodhaven Trust, From Inmates to Entrepreneurs, Centre for Entrepreneurs (CFE), 2016)

The PLA has identified a number of ways in which prison education can improve employability:

- Education increases relevant knowledge and skills to access employment.
- Brokerage with employers and accessing real work opportunities.
- Increased understanding of the labour market, the nature of work and what they need to do to access employment.
- Experience of taking responsibility, punctuality, completing tasks, ability to multi-task, meeting deadlines, managing direction and developing employment 'mindsets'.
- A network of support in custody and through-the-gate to help with the development of education and skills, as well as support with personal barriers which may affect employment prospects.



*'Education made me think – I can do this. I enjoy it, but it also pays the bills.'*

*'I'd like to start a business with my partner [...] I have ideas [...] I've got goals of having a house and providing for my kids.'*

(Former prisoner learners, as quoted in PLA Theory of Change 2016)

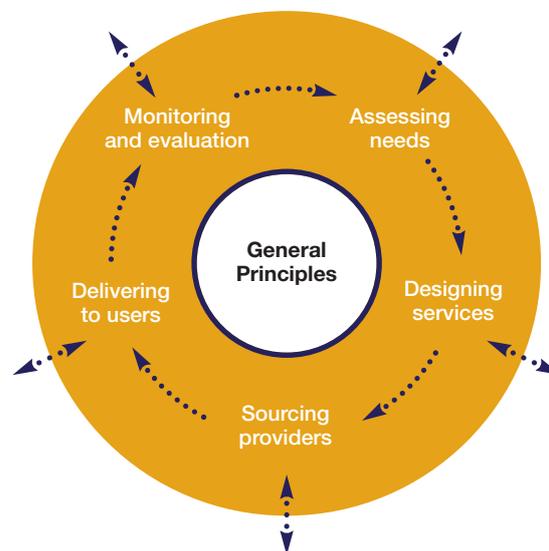
## Commissioning

*'Commissioning is the cycle of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and then achieving appropriate outcomes.'*

(Modernising Commissioning: Increasing the role of charities, social enterprises, mutuals and cooperatives in public service delivery, Cabinet Office, 2011)

The National Audit Office (NAO) has set out eight principles of good commissioning:

- 1 Understanding the needs of users and other communities by ensuring that, alongside other consultees, you engage with third sector organisations, as advocates, to access their specialist knowledge.
- 2 Consulting potential provider organisations, including those from the third sector and local experts, well in advance of commissioning new services, working with them to set priority outcomes for that service.
- 3 Putting outcomes for users at the heart of the strategic planning process.
- 4 Mapping the fullest practical range of providers with a view to understanding the contribution they could make to delivering those outcomes.
- 5 Considering investing in the capacity of the provider base, particularly those working with hard-to-reach groups.
- 6 Ensuring contracting processes are transparent and fair, facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including considering sub-contracting and consortia building, where appropriate.
- 7 Ensuring long-term contracts and risk sharing, wherever appropriate, as ways of achieving efficiency and effectiveness.
- 8 Seeking feedback from service users, communities and providers in order to review the effectiveness of the commissioning process in meeting local needs.



<https://www.nao.org.uk/successful-commissioning/>

# Chapter 1. Vision and Strategy



**Governors need to know, and communicate, what good looks like.**

Focus group participant

<p><b>What does success look like and feel like? What would you like to see change?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What are the key values that will underpin your commissioning decisions?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What is your prison's vision and mission? If you don't have these, how could you develop them?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What are your thoughts on the new outcome-focused definition of prison education? What ideas does it give you?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What is your three-five year strategy for the prison? What are the priorities to focus on improving?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How will you communicate your strategy to internal and external stakeholders?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

## Useful resources

What is Prison Education For? A Theory of Change for the Value of Learning in Prison (2016) PLA

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/news/pla-sets-out-theory-of-change-for-prison-education->

Strategic Guide to Strategic Planning (2011)

<https://thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Planning-Guide-Final-whole.pdf>

More than a provider. Clinks Guide to Commissioning (2014):

<http://www.clinks.org/resources-reports/more-provider-role-voluntary-sector-commissioning-offender-services>

Connect to Commissioning Support, A Guide to Commissioning Practice:

<http://commissioning.connecttosupport.org>

## Strategy

*'Empowered prison governors will have the freedom to set the strategic vision for their establishment's education programme, and ensure this is delivered in the best way for their prisoners.'*

(MoJ, August 2017)

### Strategic planning

'Strategic planning is the process of defining and presenting a clear, coherent and realistic view of what the organisation wants to achieve and a 3-5 year (or whatever period you need to be thinking about) overview of how it will achieve its aims and objectives.

A strategic plan is a dynamic and useful tool to monitor how the organisation as a whole is meeting its objectives. It is about the big picture and the long term direction of the organisation.

A strategic plan usually includes a vision/mission statement, a statement of key priorities and strategies for achieving these priorities, timescales and a procedure for reviewing progress and modifying the plan.' (The Women's Resource Centre)

### Hints for developing a strategy:

- Be clear about the process you want to use: who will be consulted and when, who will 'lead' the process, how long will it take (set a target end date) and ensure everyone involved is happy with the process and timeframe.
- Who to involve will depend on the size and type of establishment. A working party with representatives from different departments might be the way to go.
- The strategic planning process can highlight change(s) that are necessary in order for an organisation to move forward.
- It is useful for the people who are leading the process to think about how to prepare the organisation for change and deal with any resistance to change that might come up.

*'Strategic commissioning can be thought of as having four key elements - analyse, plan, do and review - which are sequential and of equal importance, i.e. commissioners should spend equal time, energy and attention on all four elements. A strategic approach to commissioning and a clear process will help to provide transparency and a level playing field for all those involved'.*

(Connect to Commissioning Support, A Guide to Commissioning Practice)

## Vision and Mission

### What is a vision?

- The world as you would like it to be.
- A vision is a statement of why your establishment exists and describes the change you want to see in the world.
- A vision creates an ideal picture. It is inspiring and motivating.

### What is a mission?

- The role of your establishment in making the vision happen.
- A mission statement outlines how your establishment will achieve its goals and guides its work.

(Women's Resource Centre, 2011)



## Case study - HMP Bronzefield 'Stronger Together' strategy



Bold changes at the women's prison include a refurbished education block, ambitious plans for technology in classrooms and cells and the adoption of industry-standard vocational qualifications and higher education. Speaking at an event to launch the new strategy, the prison's director Ian Whiteside said he wanted to keep "pushing the boundaries" to ensure education was placed at the centre of the prison and at the forefront of staff members' minds.

Ian said a prison "operating in solitude" could not hope to meet the increasingly complex needs of its residents, at the same time as adapting to changes ushered in by the Coates review, the prison reform agenda and new inspection criteria. "The solution is simple," he said. "The solution is partnership working." Bronzefield's new strategy document is aptly titled Stronger Together. It identifies a number of key partners among the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and voluntary/community sector organisations.

Having a public document which reflects a prison's strategy is a rare thing, as is a prison with its own Twitter handle (@HMP\_Bronzefield was launched on the same day). In institutions that are used to operating away from public view, this outward-facing approach may feel uncomfortable. However, in a new age of governor autonomy this openness will prove essential in attracting and retaining partners from the outside world, and ultimately in enacting the 'bold changes' that are needed.

Extract from Nina Champion's write up of the HMP Bronzefield strategy launch event (<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/case-studies/bronzefields-bold-changes->)



# Chapter 2. Identifying needs and priorities

**Governors' priorities need to be transparent.**  
Focus group participant

**Think broadly about what you want, rather than be led by what's on offer.**  
Focus group participant

<p><b>Do you have an up-to-date education needs analysis? Does it tell you everything you need? How could you gather more information?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What other information do you have? How does the education needs analysis tie in with other needs analysis documents e.g. health?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What are your population's demographics? What are your population's specific needs, interests and strengths?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What is currently working well in your prison, and what isn't? What are the challenges in your prison which education could help solve?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>Which groups are not engaging in learning and why? Do groups with protected characteristics under The Equality Act have equal access? How could any barriers be addressed?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What recommendations were made in the latest inspection/ Ofsted/IMB reports and/or self-assessments?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

## Useful resources

Handbook for the inspection of education, skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions (From September 2017)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/631070/Handbook\\_for\\_the\\_inspection\\_of\\_education\\_skills\\_and\\_work\\_activities\\_in\\_prisons\\_and\\_young\\_offender\\_institutions\\_from\\_1\\_September\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/631070/Handbook_for_the_inspection_of_education_skills_and_work_activities_in_prisons_and_young_offender_institutions_from_1_September_2017.pdf)

### Prisoners with English as a second language:

The Language Barrier to Rehabilitation (2015)

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/research-report/language-barrier-rehabilitation/>

A Prison within a Prison (2015)

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/research-report/prison-within-prison/>

### Prisoners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities:

Realising the Potential of Offenders with Dyslexia (2014)

<http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/docs/justice/Releasing%20Potential.pdf>

No-One Knows (Prison Reform Trust, 2007)

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/ProjectsResearch/Learningdisabilitiesanddifficulties/NoOneKnowspublications>

### Young black and/or Muslim men in prison:

Improving Outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System (2014)

([http://www.youngreview.org.uk/sites/default/files/clinks\\_young-review\\_report\\_dec2014.pdf](http://www.youngreview.org.uk/sites/default/files/clinks_young-review_report_dec2014.pdf))

The Lammy Review: An independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System (2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lammy-review-final-report>

### Women prisoners:

Learning for Women in prison (NIACE, 2013)

[https://fbclientprisoners.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Reports/learning\\_for\\_wip\\_v3\\_final.pdf](https://fbclientprisoners.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Reports/learning_for_wip_v3_final.pdf)

### Young adult prisoners:

The Aspirations and Realities of Education for Under 25's in the London area (2014)

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/ieop/clre/2014/00000012/00000002/art00004?crawler=true>

Great Expectations: Towards better learning outcomes for young people and young adults in custody, Prisoners' Education Trust (2016)

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/resources/great-expectations>

### Older prisoners:

Doing Time – Older People in Prison (Prison Reform Trust, 2008)

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/ProjectsResearch/Olderpeopleinprison>

### Supporting older people in prison:

Ideas for practice (Age UK, 2011)

[http://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/en-gb/for-professionals/government-and-society/older%20prisoners%20guide\\_pro.pdf?dtrk=tr](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/en-gb/for-professionals/government-and-society/older%20prisoners%20guide_pro.pdf?dtrk=tr)



## Case study - Needs Analysis at HMP Bronzefield

### COMMISSIONING SERVICES

We will undertake a needs analysis on a yearly basis which will inform the needs of the women at HMP/YOI Bronzefield. We will seek to secure services by using relationships with third sector organisations to deliver the right outcomes and provide quality services for the women. The process we will establish will:

- Establish the needs for the women at HMP/YOI Bronzefield
- Cultivate and maintain partnerships with those delivering services in an accessible and practical way
- Improve the practices we have in place to commission services

## Case study - Needs Analysis at HMP Highpoint

The analysis has been run annually for the last three years and the questions featured in the survey are generated by the education team and by the prison governor – the prison have sign-off on the questionnaire and the final report. The survey process is carried out by a team of men who are briefed and directed by a prisoner with a background in data analysis, and they conduct the survey throughout the prison. The survey starts in August and the whole process takes approximately 6 months from assembling the questionnaire to completing the final report; the current survey includes responses from 370 men; approximately one third of the population.

The questionnaire is deliberately limited to no more than two sides of A4 and the questions are kept simple enough to be asked and answered verbally but still draw out useful information. A prominent example of a change to provision based on the Learner Needs Analysis is the Motor Vehicle Maintenance workshop. Feedback from prisoners indicated a demand for this kind of workshop and the education department and prison have worked to bring it about. The prison made connections with local businesses to donate vehicles for the learners to work on.



## Case study - Needs Analysis at HMP Swaleside

The Needs Analysis being conducted in HMP Swaleside is to inform a new Reducing Reoffending Strategy, based on the seven pathways cross-referenced with the four standards. The needs analysis is being developed and delivered by prisoners for prisoners, creating a working group for future developments. The needs analysis is necessary to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- A 'tailored' approach to delivery based on the needs and wants of the prison population, with the flexibility to change.
- Sequenced delivery, promoting progress and self-development.
- A three-five year delivery plan, to enable prisoners to reduce their risk, change their behaviour and prepare for life outside prison.
- Multi-agency approach that allows appropriate planning and timely interventions.
- Provide evidence for the three year service level agreement based on the four standards.
- Future planning for the changes happening in education funding and governor autonomy.
- Implementation of the recommendations of the Coates Review.

In particular it will:

- Promote working with prisoners' families and children.
- Involve sentence planning.
- Develop employment qualifications, skills and opportunities.
- Create and promote an environment where change and growth is possible.
- Inculcate the Rehabilitative Culture.

## Chapter 3. Listening to your prisoners



**Your decisions must be learner-led**

Focus group participant



**Consult and engage learners/  
prisoners in developing the provision.**

Focus group participant

**How do you currently involve learners in shaping, designing and delivering the education provision? What more could you do?**

.....

.....

.....

**How do prisoners currently help to effectively engage other prisoners in learning and help them progress? How could this be developed?**

.....

.....

.....

**How can you develop meaningful co-production opportunities to involve prisoners in shaping the learning offer?**

.....

.....

.....

**What training and support do staff and prisoners require to make this happen?**

.....

.....

.....

**How will the ideas and suggestions of prisoners be recorded and actioned? How will changes made as a result of their involvement be recognised and celebrated?**

.....

.....

.....

**How will you continually evaluate and get feedback from learners? How will you provide feedback to prisoners?**

.....

.....

.....

### Useful links

Involve, Improve, Inspire: A Prisoner Learner Voice Toolkit, Prisoners' Education Trust (2015)

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/involve-improve-inspire-a-prison-toolkit>

Clinks Guide to Service User Involvement and Co-Production (2016)

[www.clinks.org/resources-guides-toolkits/guide-service-user-involvement-and-co-production](http://www.clinks.org/resources-guides-toolkits/guide-service-user-involvement-and-co-production)

Improving teaching standards by listening to learners, HMP Wymott, Ofsted (2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/416957/HMP\\_Wymott\\_-\\_good\\_practice\\_example.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416957/HMP_Wymott_-_good_practice_example.pdf)

## Learner Voice

Following the Strangeways prison riots in the early 1990s, The Woolf Report highlighted the importance of listening to prisoners' concerns and how this could lead to a more stable environment (Solomon & Edgar, 2004):

*'[Prisoners] should be able to contribute to and be informed of the way things are run. This is a matter of common sense as well as of justice. If prisoners have a greater understanding of what is happening to them in prison and why, they are less likely to be aggrieved and become disaffected. This should, in turn, improve relations between staff and prisoners.'*

(Woolf, 1991)

HMIP Expectations V.5 2017:

- Prisoners are able to take an active role in influencing decisions about services, routines and facilities in the prison and in managing their own day-to-day life.
- There is a clear strategy for listening to and taking account of prisoner perceptions.
- The peer worker group is engaged in consultation activities.
- Prisoners are made aware of the outcome of consultation.

Ofsted Handbook: Effectiveness of Leadership and Management (2017) assesses:

'How successfully ambitions for the prison's or YOI's performance, including its aims to reduce reoffending, are set, reviewed and communicated with staff, prisoners, employers and other partners and the impact this has on the quality of provision and outcomes for all prisoners.'

Service User Involvement in the education sector is often referred to a 'Learner Voice':

*'Developing a culture and processes whereby learners are consulted and proactively engaged with shaping their own educational experience.'*

(Rudd et al., 2006)

*'Learner Voice is about considering the perspectives and ideas of learners, respecting what everyone has to say, taking risks, sharing, listening, engaging and working together in partnership.'*

(Rudd et al., Future Lab: Learner Voice Handbook, 2006)

In researching its Learner Voice Toolkit 'Involve, Improve, inspire' (Champion & Aguiar, 2013), PET found anecdotal evidence of benefits to prisoner learners including:

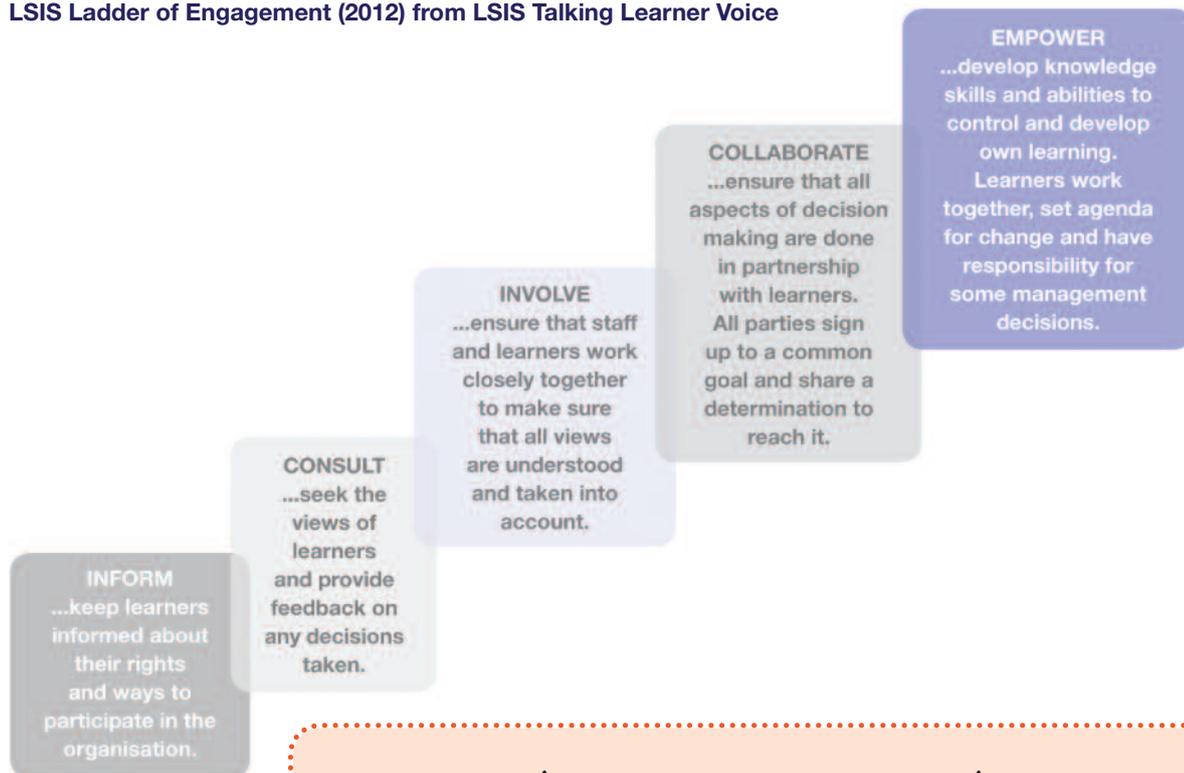
- Feeling like their views are taken more seriously.
- Feeling more respected.
- Being more inclined to reflect and discuss their learning.
- Having raised self-esteem, personal development and developing confidence.
- Developing transferable skills such as diplomacy, communication, facilitation, advocacy, leadership, listening and customer service.
- More engagement and participation.
- Increased wellbeing.

*'We welcome the view, now much more widely accepted, that service users are experts through their life experiences. We have seen that providers and commissioners now seem to understand in principle the value of involving service users.'*

(Clinks, 2016)



## LSIS Ladder of Engagement (2012) from LSIS Talking Learner Voice



### Case Study - HMP Wymott Student Council

*'Through the student council, learners are able to make a valued contribution to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the prison. Leaders and managers view the work of the student council as integral to the prison securing high performance' Managers and teachers have carried out a number of improvements in provision in response to feedback from the student council. Consequently, inspectors judged both the achievement of learners and the standards of learners' work to be good at inspection.'* (Ofsted, 2015)

The Wymott student council created and distributed a 'Learner Voice' survey to assess the educational experiences of learners. A total of 202 learners from across the prison responded. Particular emphasis was placed on finding out whether learners felt that their courses suited their needs and abilities and would enable them to find work on release. Questions also focused on what barriers prevented learners from making good progress and whether teachers were enabling learners to achieve their set targets. Findings have informed the prison's education improvement plan and their progress is monitored at student council meetings.

### Case study - Prisoners' Education Trust Rehabilitative Cultures Project

In 2016, PET used co-production in eight prisons, facilitating workshops which brought staff from different grades, departments and organisations together with prisoners, to create a space to solve a single problem: how to engage 'hard to reach' prisoners in education. The development of a 'creative and inclusive' space to share ideas, reflect on experiences and make action plans was highlighted as a key benefit by participants who were used to working in silos:



*'It gave us a chance to evaluate our ideas and develop a direction of travel.'*

*'The session brought together different groups of people who share an aim but never meet to discuss.'*

*'Input from prisoners was essential.'*

# Chapter 4. using research and evidence

**f** *It's about maximising impact.*  
Focus group participant

**f** *You need to understand what is going on in your prison, what works and what doesn't.*  
Focus group participant

<p><b>How will you use research and evidence to plan and commission your learning offer?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How can you measure the impact and quality of learning in your prison?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How will you measure outcomes as set out in the definition of prison education e.g. social capital, well being, employability, becoming assets?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How will you/your education providers gather evidence of individual progression and 'distance travelled'? How will you track 'through the gate' outcomes?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What does quality delivery look like? What are the quality benchmarks you will use to manage performance?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How does the service reinforce the desistance process?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

## Useful resources

Clinks Introduction to desistance (2013)

<http://www.clinks.org/resources-dij-desistance>

Clinks evidencing your impact

<http://www.clinks.org/support-evaluation-and-effectiveness/demonstrating-outcomes>

Arts Alliance Evidence Library

[www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/evidence-library](http://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/evidence-library)

Prisoners' Education Trust Research & Evidence Library

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/research-and-evidence>

National Alliance of Sport for the Desistance of Crime Resource Library

<http://www.nasdc.org/power-of-sport/resource-library/>

Justice Data Lab

<http://www.russellwebster.com/what-works-in-reducing-reoffending>

Exploring the outcomes of prisoner learners, MoJ/DfE (2017)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/633198/pnc-ilr.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633198/pnc-ilr.pdf)

Summary of evidence on reducing reoffending, MoJ (2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-rehabilitation-a-summary-of-evidence-on-reducing-reoffending>

Reducing Reoffending and Desistance: Key Practice Skills (2005)

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2005/04/21132007/20089>

Rapid Evidence assessment on intermediate outcomes and reoffending inc. arts, family, mentoring, peers, MoJ (2013)

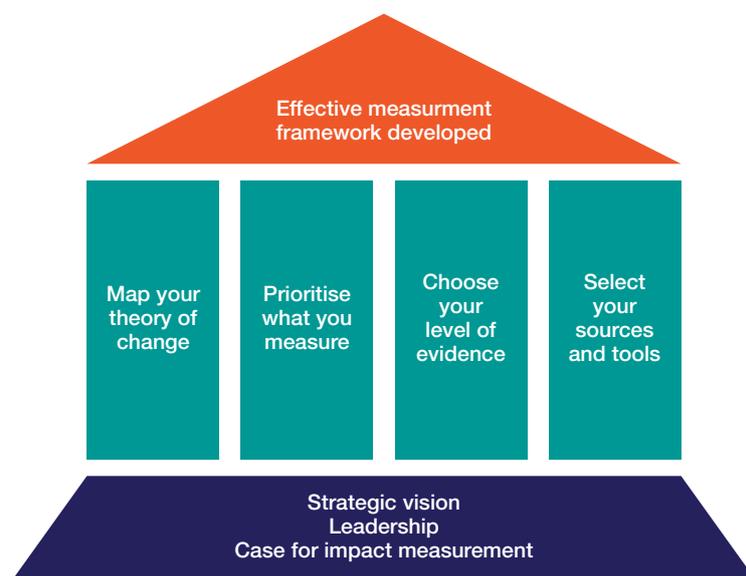
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rapid-evidence-assessments-on-intermediate-outcomes-and-reoffending>

A Review of the social impacts of culture and sport (2015):

<http://www.nasdc.org/resource-library/800/>

Lessons from abroad for Criminal Justice Reform (2017), Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and Prison Reform Trust, Institute for Criminal Policy Research and Birkbeck University

<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/fellows/news/lessons-abroad-justice-reform>



*'Building an effective measurement framework depends on a strong foundation. It requires buy-in from senior staff [...], the investment of time and money, and a culture that is committed to learning and improving—only then can our four pillar approach be applied. And of course the development and implementation of a measurement framework is not an end in itself: to see the benefits you need to use the findings to review and improve your practices.'*

Building your measurement framework: Four Pillar Approach, New Philanthropy Capital (2014)

<http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/npcs-four-pillar-approach/>

**Glossary of research terms:**

Term	Description	Example
Inputs	The resources a project or organisation needs to carry out its activities.	Funding, volunteer time, IT systems, training for volunteers, case work supervision
Activities	A description of a service's key components. How you are planning to deliver.	Type of training delivered, or support provided, staff and volunteer, culture approach and outlook
Outputs	The quantity of activity you deliver.	For example, the number of users, how many sessions they receive and the amount of contact you have with them.
Engagement	This reflects the reality of how the project is delivered and what users make of it.	Drop out rates, service users' perceptions etc,
Intermediate outcomes (also referred to as "short-term outcomes")	The assets or strengths you aim to give the prisoners that will help them improve their lives. What service users take away from it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased self-worth and aspirations for the future</li> <li>• Budgeting skills</li> <li>• Association with pro-social networks</li> <li>• Stronger family relationships</li> <li>• Reduced drug use</li> </ul>
Final outcomes ("impact" or "long-term goals")	This is social phenomena or problem that you are looking to address in the community as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced offending</li> <li>• Entry into employment</li> <li>• Improved wellbeing</li> </ul>
Soft outcomes	Outcomes that involve some form of change within people, such as a change in attitude or a change in the way they see themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in attitudes, outlook</li> <li>• Change in knowledge or skills</li> </ul>
Hard outcomes	Outcomes that are clear and obvious, or which involve a change in behaviour or circumstances which tend to be easier to record and measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registering with a GP</li> <li>• Achieving a qualification</li> </ul>
Attribution	The process of ascribing a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention or project.	The strongest way to attribute outcomes to a project is to compare the outcomes achieved with a comparison group of people who have not received the services (i.e. through a randomised control trial or the Justice Datalab)
Baseline	Information about the situation that a project or organisation is trying to change, showing what it is like before any intervention.	
Benchmark	A standard of achievement that other organisations or projects have already achieved and that you can compare your own achievements against.	

Evaluation	Using information from monitoring and elsewhere to judge and understand the performance of an organisation or project, and how it could be improved.	
Indicator	Well-defined information which shows whether something is happening.	For example, attending appointments or listening and engaging in conversations can be indicators of a positive mindset towards change.
Monitoring	Collecting and recording information in a routine and systematic way to check progress against plans, assist with service management and enable evaluation.	
Process evaluation	An evaluation that focuses on how a service has been delivered, as opposed to the impact.	It's essential because it demonstrates the link between what you do and any outcomes achieved and will highlight learning points.
Sampling	The process of selecting a group of people to participate in research from a wider population. This can be helpful if you don't have the resources to speak to everyone, however it brings a risk of bias if your sample is not representative.	E.g. random sampling.
Theory of change	A process of review and analysis which can lead to the development of a diagram which represents how the intervention is expected to bring about the outcomes it is aiming for.	
Tool	A method for recording information from service users. There are many commonly available tools (such as the Outcomes Star and NPC's Wellbeing measure), but you can also design your own or work with universities to do so.	Other words for tools include 'questionnaires' or 'scales'.



Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) has established the Prisoner Learning Academic Network (PLAN) which works to bring together researchers who work on issues relating to prisoner learning. PLAN's overall aim is to raise the profile, quality and impact of all levels of prison education by promoting and supporting rigorous and collaborative research, consultation and dissemination. Currently over 200 academics and students are signed up to the network.

Alternatively you might want to form a partnership with a local university. PET is proud to be working with the growing number of prison/university partnerships across the country and internationally. These innovative partnerships often bring university students into the prison environment to learn alongside prisoners who are interested in the same subject. PET believes these partnerships have the potential to transform the learning experience of students both inside and outside prison, and to improve the educational opportunities we offer to those in custody and in the community.



If you would like to find out more about the PLAN or PUPiL networks:

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/prisoner-learning-academic-network-plan->  
<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/PUPiL>

# Chapter 5. Partnering with the right people, the right way



**Be proactive in connecting with the local community and who is out there**

Focus group participant

<p><b>What partnerships and collaborative working already exists within your establishment? What exists in other similar or nearby establishments?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What partnerships are working well in your prison? Which partnerships are not working well and what are the barriers to effective collaboration in your prison?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What links to other services and schemes in the local community do staff, prisoners and existing/potential providers have? Can these be built on and developed further?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>Who would current providers, staff and prisoners like the prison to be collaborating with? Which specialists could help meet the specific needs of your population?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How will you encourage collaboration with local authorities, local colleges and universities, the CRC and the Voluntary/Community Sector?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How will you ensure education providers work together effectively?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

### Useful links

Developing Collaboration, Clinks

[www.clinks.org/support/developing-collaboration](http://www.clinks.org/support/developing-collaboration)

Making Partnerships work for you, Clinks

[http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/making\\_partnerships\\_work\\_for\\_you\\_08012015.pdf](http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/making_partnerships_work_for_you_08012015.pdf)

The Rehabilitative Prison: Good engagement with the voluntary sector (2016)

[http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/clinks\\_dij\\_rehabilitative-prison\\_final-web.pdf](http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/clinks_dij_rehabilitative-prison_final-web.pdf)

Commissioning for Recovery, NHS (2010)

[http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/commissioning\\_for\\_recovery\\_january\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/commissioning_for_recovery_january_2010.pdf)

Arts, culture and innovation in criminal justice settings: A Guide for Commissioners (2016)

[www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CommissioningGuide\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CommissioningGuide_FINAL.pdf)

## Case study - Partner and potential partner mapping by HMP Bronzefield:

Interventions and Services	Accommodation	Education, Training and Employment	Mental and Physical Health	Drugs and Alcohol	Finance, Benefit and Debt	Children and Families of Offenders	Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour	Domestic Abuse and Sex work
Accommodation - Advice	■							
Advance Minerva	■			■	■		■	
Age UK							■	
Alcohol 1-1 Psycho Social Interventions				■				
Alcohol and Drug Services - Adult and YOI				■				
Alcohol awareness 3 day course				■				
Alcohol relapse prevention Group - 2 week course				■				
Ashford Football Club		■						
Aurora								■
Battersea Dogs							■	
Beth Centre							■	
Blood Borne Virus Awareness				■				
Bronzefield Bees Women's Institute							■	
Catering & Hospitality - Food Hygiene		■						
Centaur Inside				■				
Chance to Change - Beyond Youth							■	
Changing Tunes							■	
Chaplaincy Pastoral Care Team (CPCT)							■	
Chaplaincy Syllabus							■	

## Case Study - HMP Littlehey

HMP Littlehey took part in a 'health check' carried out externally by Education and Training Foundation (ETF). As part of the health check, the prison were asked to gather together a range of documents. The documents included:

- Establishment self-assessment report
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Summary of OLASS and non-OLASS teaching and learning observation grades
- Previous year and in-year recruitment, retention and achievement data (OLASS/non-OLASS)
- Annual needs analysis of the population including English, maths and ESOL needs
- Details of the regime and the prisons' employment strategy
- English and Maths initial assessment data (year to date)
- Partnership map of agencies that contribute to the learners' journeys (see below)



## Overcoming challenges of partnership working

---

### Tips on collaborative working – Clinks

- Ideally, from the beginning of your partnership, there should have been absolute openness and clarity about expectations and the roles that every partner is to play.
- Trust and a clear understanding require open and honest communication and commitments.
- All parties need to be clear about their intentions, goals and strategy in order to enable a strategic fit.
- Regular and open communication will help to promote effective working and mutual trust.
- Rather than making demands, ensure that your partner is involved in a conversation about how they can support you so that everyone can gain maximum benefit from the partnership.
- There should be transparency about the roles, responsibilities, payment processes, risks, governance and monitoring arrangements.
- While you have the same short-term goals, remember that different sectors have different organisational characteristics. It is important to be mindful of these differences and be aware that they can drive certain behaviours. If you are aware, you can proactively address any potential misunderstandings and find constructive ways around any differences.

### Extract from 'Learning Together: Productive disruption of ego, expertise and ethics' (Armstrong & Ludlow, British Academy Blog, August 2017)

'Our criminal justice colleagues have also sometimes pushed back against us, standing on their own expertise of navigating complex operational environments. In this push-pull struggle we've found it essential to build relationships with criminal justice professionals, as colleagues, by getting alongside them: participating in full staff briefings, senior management meetings, staff recognition events and training courses, and standing shoulder to shoulder with them in tough moments. From this, a mutual understanding and common language have grown – a platform for honest dialogue, including about the discomforts and disruptions of partnership working.

Transformative learning communities cannot flourish without being open to, and embedded within, broader structures and communities of support, but building and sustaining these structures and relationships requires courage, intellectual and emotional energy, and a significant investment of time. Paolo Freire believed that transformational learning happens through collaborative, co-produced, inclusive learning communities where knowledge is shaped by the many, not owned by the few. But Freire also acknowledged that collaboration and co-production involve conflict – the kinds of conflict that are, he said 'the midwives of consciousness'. We think this work is necessarily uncomfortable, for us as academics, for all of our students and for the institutions involved. But it is by leaning into these discomforts, by being willing to be both disruptive and disrupted, that we can be transformed and transformative in ways that are life-giving for us all.'

## Chapter 6. Ensuring Fairness in the commissioning process



*Have transparent criteria based on your vision and values*

Focus group participant



*Have fair and equitable communications and engagement with potential providers.*

Focus group participant

<p><b>What are your criteria for commissioning education services and how will you communicate these to potential providers?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What are your expectations of providers and how will you communicate these clearly?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How will you ensure the process is fair, transparent and open?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What opportunities can you offer to meet potential providers face to face?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How will you ensure both big and smaller prospective providers have opportunities to be part of the process?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>Do you understand the procurement rules? Who can deliver the best services for the most cost-effective price?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

### Useful links

Successful Commissioning Toolkit, National Audit Office (2011)

<https://www.nao.org.uk/successful-commissioning/>

Joint Review of partnerships with VCS in the health and care sector, NHS (2016)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524243/VCSE\\_Investment\\_Review\\_A.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524243/VCSE_Investment_Review_A.pdf)

Guidelines for Commissioners, The Crown Commercial Service (2014)

[www.gov.uk/guidance/transposing-eu-procurement-directives](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/transposing-eu-procurement-directives)

The DWP's Merlin Standard sets out good practice in supply chain management. It is one of the most comprehensive sets of guidelines available: <http://www.merlinstandard.co.uk/>

## **Better Commissioning for Local Skills and Employment: Employment Related Services Association (ERSA) Guide for Commissioners in Local Authorities (2016)**

---

Commissioning is a challenging and complicated process and this is particularly the case when procuring employment and skills support, particularly for those further from the labour market. As such, services need to be designed carefully to ensure that they are able to meet the specific needs of jobseekers, whilst also suiting the needs of employers and complementing any existing services on the ground. Many problems can be avoided with proper planning and effective communication at an early stage:

### **Legal challenges**

Don't leave yourself open to a legal challenge. The UK and EU have stringent rules ensuring that a level playing field is present for all organisations putting in a bid, whether they are private organisations, charities or local authorities hoping to deliver services in-house. In addition, commissioners have a responsibility to accept bids that offer the best services in terms of value for money – this does not necessarily mean the cheapest, but rather the delivery of the best services at the most cost-effective price. Focussing too heavily on cost rather than value is one of the most common issues on which commissioners leave themselves vulnerable to a challenge. The best way to protect against these kinds of challenges is to ensure that the processes through which decisions are reached are transparent, and that you are providing all the information required by providers to write effective bids.

### **An appropriate timeframe**

A short contract can be appealing when commissioning as it incurs a lower cost, but it comes with substantial drawbacks. As a commissioner, you need to account for setup time at the start and close down towards the end of the contract period. In these opening and closing stages, outcomes are likely to be less impressive while the provider makes necessary adjustments to begin work or reduces intake in preparation for close. Short contracts are dominated by these less productive periods, and in turn outputs are significantly reduced. Essentially, the longer a contract is allowed to run, the more likely it is to be able to meet or exceed expected outcomes as your providers will have more time to hone their approach. Ensuring that your contract runs for an appropriate period is a key factor in ensuring that you get good value for money.

### **Communication**

Good communication is vital for effective commissioning. You need to clearly communicate to potential providers relevant information at the earliest stages, and make clear what is expected in terms of outcomes, engagement and investment. Without clear communication of available data, core aims and contract stipulations, commissioners leave themselves open to damaging complications from inappropriately modelled bids.

### **Monitoring**

Once a decision is made, ensure you have in place a robust system of monitoring agreed with your provider, so that you are able to identify and address any issues in the running of the contract as early as possible.

### **Evaluation**

Carry out a rigorous evaluation and make sure the findings are shared to ensure that the experience can be used to enhance future commissioning.

For more information:

<http://ersa.org.uk/documents/better-commissioning-local-skills-and-employment-ersa-guide-commissioners-local>

## Chapter 7. Innovation v. Consistency

**“ Embrace change!  
Innovate! Be creative!**

Focus group participant

**“ If it isn't  
broken, don't  
fix it!**

Focus group participant

**“ There is no need to reinvent  
the wheel.**

Focus group participant

<p><b>What is currently working that you could build on?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What isn't working and needs a new solution?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What are the problems that might benefit from new solutions? How prepared are you to 'push the boundaries'?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What can be learned from elsewhere (other prisons, providers, colleges and universities)? What innovations are out there?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How can you ensure provision is responsive and flexible as needs and priorities change?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What's the right balance in your prison between innovation and consistency?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

### Useful resources

Innovation, Voluntary Sector Network (2011)

<https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2012/sep/11/innovation-good-charities-management>

Rethinking Risk. Beyond the tick box. Inspiring Financial Leadership (2016)

<http://www.sayervincent.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Rethinking-Risk.pdf>

Governance of Risk: The Three Lines of Defence, Institute of Internal Auditors (2015)

<https://www.iaa.org.uk/resources/audit-committees/governance-of-risk-three-lines-of-defence/>

EAST. Four simple ways to apply behavioural insights, Cabinet Office & Nesta (2014)

[http://38r8om2xjhh125mw24492dir.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/BIT-Publication-EAST\\_FA\\_WEB.pdf](http://38r8om2xjhh125mw24492dir.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/BIT-Publication-EAST_FA_WEB.pdf)

Diffusion of Innovations, Everett Rogers (1983)

<https://teddykw2.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/everett-m-rogers-diffusion-of-innovations.pdf>

## Innovation

---

The five stages of the innovation process are:

### 1 How to come up with an idea

- Train staff to facilitate creative and co-productive forums and focus group sessions with staff, prisoners and other stakeholders.
- Train staff and prisoners how to research and pitch ideas to develop a compelling business case.
- Have spaces and places to post ideas: on notice boards, suggestion boxes, on the intranet.
- Horizon scan – research what else is out there. What are other people doing? Arrange for people to come and speak about interesting examples of innovation in other prisons or sectors.
- Admit failure – failures are opportunities for innovation. Define your problems and share them widely to seek solutions.

### 2 How to select the best idea

- Can staff, prisoners and other stakeholders rate ideas in some way?
- How compatible is the idea with the your prison's values and strategy?

### 3 How to develop an idea

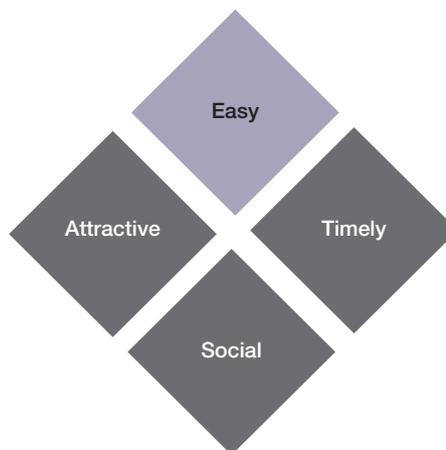
- Doing something new means taking a measured risk. Can you draw up a risk assessment and work out how to mitigate the risks identified?
- What needs to happen, and when, to turn the idea into reality?
- Is there something already out there which can be adapted to fit your needs?

### 4 How to launch an idea

- How will you communicate and publicise the idea?
- How can you make the innovation visible?
- How can you make it easy to understand and use?
- How can you make it attractive and personalised?
- At what time are people going to be most receptive to the idea?

### 5 How to diffuse the idea

- Interpersonal channels are the most effective in spreading innovation e.g. peer to peer.
- How can people demonstrate the new innovation? 'At the heart of the diffusion process is modelling and imitation' (Rogers, 1983).
- How can you make it social and harness the power of networks?



If you want to encourage an innovation, make it Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely (EAST):

**Easy:** Harness the power of defaults, reduce the hassle factor and simplify messages

**Attractive:** Attract attention and design rewards and sanctions for maximum effect

**Social:** Use the power of networks, encourage people to make a commitment to others

**Timely:** Prompt people when most receptive, consider immediate costs and benefits

(EAST, Cabinet Office & Nesta, 2014)

## Case study - Identifying problem areas that need solutions

Before the 'health check' at HMP Littlehey, carried out by Education & Training Foundation (ETF), staff were asked to complete a brief description of the following areas of a learner's journey, to help understand what was working and what could be improved along this journey:

### Preparing for a health check

Please provide a brief description of each aspect of a learner's journey in your prison.

Area	Description
1. Induction	
2. Allocation process	
3. Meeting functional skills needs	
4. Identifying and supporting Personal Development Targets	
5. Identifying learning support needs	
6. Recording progress	
7. Meeting needs across the Reducing Reoffending Pathways	
8. Employer engagement activities	
9. Pre-release/through the gate activities	
10. Give at least one example of good practice at your establishment	

One of the ideas generated by this process at HMP Littlehey was to set up a 'Coates Task Force':

The 'Task Force' was established by the Governor and the Learning and Skills Manager at the prison. It includes representatives from the prison's education department, careers service, NOMs and an academic from Cambridge University, as well as a serving prisoner. It is chaired by the Governor, who shares Coates' vision of an education that is inclusive and ambitious. "I want to get education in everything we do – on the wings, in the workshops. There is so much potential in our prison which we've got to untap," he says. There is an Excel spreadsheet of the Coates' Reviews recommendations and the Task Force work their way through each, assessing how far they meet it and what more they can do. For example:

- The education team is beginning to take steps to enable the prison to become dyslexia-friendly.
- It is also in looking into how it might become a dementia-friendly institution in light of its ageing population.
- They are recruiting two prisoners to act as senior classroom assistants, to help to design curricula, plan lessons and engage fellow prisoners outside of the classroom.
- The prison has also recently introduced Prison Information Desk (PIDs), where trained prisoners provide information relating to education timetables. It is hoped that those who man the desks will be trained towards Advice and Guidance certificates.

At the end of every meeting, Task Force members are given a chance to share any 'blue sky thinking', creative ideas they want to explore relating to education in prison.

For more information:

<https://api.excellencegateway.org.uk/resource/etf:2466>

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/case-studies/coates-the-taskforce->

## Case study - PET Rehabilitative Cultures project:

In 2014/15 Prisoners' Education Trust used co-production workshops in eight prisons with staff from different departments and prisoners to create a space to explore and put into practice ideas which would help engage 'hard to reach' prisoners into education. There were two full-day facilitated workshops. The innovations included:

- The introduction of **Prisoner Information Desks** on every wing managed by a trained peer mentor.
- A **newsletter**, written by prisoners for prisoners, and a re-branding of the education department as a 'college', with posters using photographs and quote from female learners about the benefits of each course of offer. Previous posters in this women's prison featured male prisoners.
- **Skills champions** for each department e.g. gym, workshops.
- Development of '**7 pathways reps**', an idea taken from the PET 'Involve, Improve, Inspire' Learner Voice Toolkit.
- **Learning and Skills Champions**, attached to activities and to wings. Two of the champions sat on the Quality Improvement Group (QIG) to give direct learner feedback.
- The introduction of a **Student Council**, with elected class representatives, was set up.

PET tracked the diffusion of the innovation and its impact on the learning culture of the prison. Characteristics of prisons where innovations diffused more quickly and had a greater impact on culture were:

- 1 Good staff involvement and engagement.
- 2 Good prisoner involvement and engagement.
- 3 Effective horizontal (peer-to-peer) and vertical (hierarchical) communication systems.

### Managing risks

A word associated with innovation is risk. When thinking about innovation in education activities or curriculum planning, it can be useful to appraise risks using headings such as these:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Action to mitigate/ Assurance activities	Responsibility

The 'three lines of defence' (Governance of Risk, Institute of Internal Auditors, 2015) can provide a helpful framework for assurance activities to help mitigate risks:

	Organisational culture	Policies and procedures	Roles & responsibilities	Managing people	Training	Planning
<b>First line of defence:</b> Operational risk management						
<b>Second line of defence:</b> Management oversight and central functions						
<b>Third line of defence:</b> Internal audit and external reviews						

## Chapter 8. Looking beyond the gate



*Help build bridges for prisoners into wider society.*

Focus group participant

<p><b>Which education providers can offer support to prisoners through the gate? How will you build bridges for prisoners into wider society and develop positive social networks?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How can prisoners' families be involved in, support and benefit from learning opportunities?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What are the opportunities for learning, volunteering and gaining work experience on ROTL and how could these be increased?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How can you work with the CRC and NPT to ensure learning, volunteering, employment and self-employment opportunities continue through the gate?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How are employers currently engaged and involved in your prison? How could these relationships be developed to maximise positive outcomes in custody and after release?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How can you help communicate 'success stories' of prisoners who have turned their lives around to those still in prison? What role can ex-prisoners play in your education offer?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

### Useful links

An Inspection of Through the Gate Resettlement Services for Short-Term Prisoners (2016)

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/09/Through-the-Gate.pdf>

Learning from projects working with ex-offenders, Big Lottery (2013)

<https://biglotteryfund.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/reducing-reoffending-summary.pdf>

Prison University Partnerships in Learning

[www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/PUPiL](http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/PUPiL)

Local Enterprise Partnerships

<https://www.lepnetwork.net/the-network-of-leps/>

The Exceptionals (helping business employ ex-offenders)

<http://www.theexceptionals.org/>

Employers Forum for Reducing reoffending

<http://apm-uk.co.uk/justice/employers-forum-for-reducing-re-offending-effrr/>

Family Learning in prisons: A Resource for prisons and Learning Providers, Learning & Work Institute (2017)

<https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/LW-Family-Learning-In-Prison-Report-V3.pdf>

## Case study - Engagement and Resettlement workers in YOIS

'Under the new education contracts an Engagement and Resettlement (E & R) team has been developed in the four YOIs. E & R workers can provide support around educational opportunities within the establishment and liaise with community providers to contribute to a continuous and consistent learning journey from custody into the community. PET sees these roles as crucial in addressing some of the issues that have been identified in the last 15 years and in enabling young people who have gained qualifications in custody to continue. These roles are particularly important for young people who are serving short sentences and do not have the time to complete courses whilst in custody. PET would like to see these roles expanded to the adult estate, particularly for young adults.'

Taken from Great Expectations: Towards better learning outcomes for young people and young adults in custody, Prisoners' Education Trust (2016) <http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/resources/great-expectations>

## Case study - HMP Prescoed

Open prison HMP Prescoed in Wales has been piloting a multi-partner project to improve drug recovery and learning outcomes. The project is called 'Collectively Heighten Awareness of Substance Misuse through Education' (CHASE). Participants achieve a range of qualifications including:

- Level 2 courses in Health & Wellbeing, Behavioural Change and Substance Misuse.
- City and Guilds level 3 in Substance Misuse, delivered by Torfaen Adult Education.
- Mental Health First Aid, level 4, delivered by MIND Cymru.
- PTTLs level 4 provided by Cardiff Metropolitan University.
- Level 2 Counselling qualification, delivered by local FE college (Coleg Gwent).
- Volunteer work placement in community and/or peer mentor role in the prison.

Within the first 18 months 26 men enrolled and 22 completed L3 C&G Substance Misuse and five completed L2 Counselling in local FE college. Eleven have been released and six are already in full-time paid employment within the substance misuse field. Several participants have helped plan and deliver community classes. Positive drug tests in prison lowered and the prison is planning an evaluation to understand why.

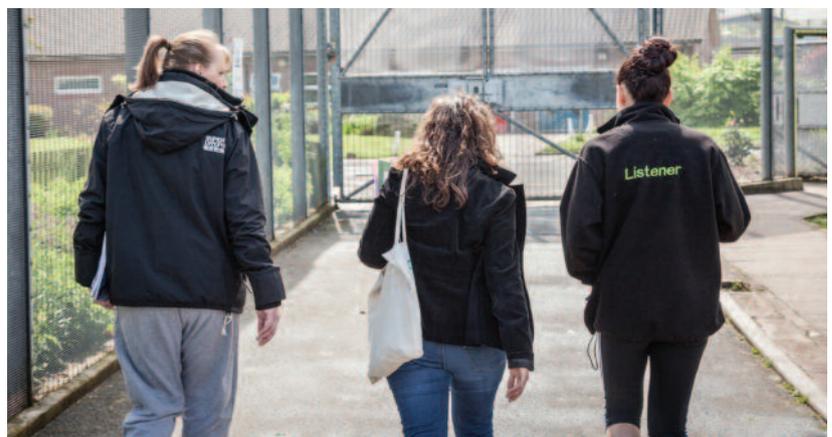


***After doing my L3 courses, I have been asked to facilitate the Level 2 Substance Misuse course here at HMP Prescoed's education department. I'm also doing a community work placement with Kaleidoscope and have a caseload of ten clients. I came to prison without so much as a GCSE, now I am well on my way to getting specific employment-related qualifications that will not just reduce my risk of reoffending but give me the chance to begin an illustrious career.***

Participant on the CHASE course

Hints and tips from Neville Brooks, Project Co-ordinator:

- The subject needs to spark interest in the prison community to be a 'hook' to learning.
- Allow the programme to develop. Have a multi-agency approach.
- Allow the participants a sense of ownership and to lead development.
- Coaching and mentoring from prison to community education is essential. Developing confidence is critical.
- Beware of stigma. Have a single point of contact providing a bridge and 'buffer' between the college and the prison. This is key to breaking down barriers and stigma.
- Enjoy it! Successes will bring great satisfaction.



## Engaging with families

---

'Family learning is an important strand of family interventions. Family learning encourages adults to support children's learning within the family. It involves learners in practical activities which engage adults in learning, provides opportunities for them to support their children and helps them understand their role in their children's learning [...] Family learning helps parents to support their child's learning, developing learning families which can help break cycles of intergenerational deprivation.'

For an overview of family learning programmes in prison, including family relationship programmes, family days, activity-based visits, family reading and storytelling programmes and homework clubs, see:

Family Learning in Prisons: A Resource for Prisons and Learning Providers (Learning & Work Institute, 2017)

<https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/LW-Family-Learning-In-Prison-Report-V3.pdf>

## Engaging with colleges and universities

---

Employment fairs are well established in many prisons, but education fairs are less common. PET's Welsh Prison Project has piloted education fairs in all Welsh prisons to help broker collaboration between prisons and local colleges, universities and other community learning providers to help prisoner learners continue their learning journey after release:

- Education fairs are similar to an employment fair, but with opportunities to have quite lengthy conversations.
- The prisons invited the prisoners and this was managed differently in each establishment as to which prisoners attended the fair.
- On average three to four Universities attended and around four colleges and other third sector and support services also attended.



***Taking a pile of university and college prospectus to a group of prison learners just didn't work. So the best thing seemed to be to take the colleges and the universities to the learners. We had already made contact and met with most local colleges and universities in South Wales. Most were keen to support prison learners, some had already knowingly accepted ex-prisoners, some guessed that ex-prisoners were part of their population but they had not disclosed. Overall they wanted to help but were unsure how. In the same way prison staff wanted to help learners continue their studies, but many were unsure what to do, who were the right contacts at local colleges and universities, what were the processes. It took some time at each prison to work with the staff to arrange the practicalities of holding such an event, which prisoners to invite, where to hold the event, security, movement – the usual considerations when inviting the community into a prison. As with any get together, tea, biscuits and cakes were the icebreaker, from there relationships formed, not just between colleges/universities and learners, but between staff and organisations. What these events demonstrated was that colleges and universities do value prison learners, they are open to accepting them as students and in supporting them to become successful learners. It was a very clear demonstration of commitment.***

Clare Lloyd, Head of Welsh Prisons Project, PET

## Engaging with employers

---

The Employers Forum for Reducing Reoffending includes employers such as Carillion, Timpson, Greggs, Halfords, Amey and Wilmott Dixon. Many of these work in prison and offer opportunities through the gate. For example Carillion PLC:

- Has 'banned the box' from job application forms;
- Offers basic and enhanced work placements in prison with L1 and/or L2 qualifications;
- Offers job matching on ROTL and release;
- Runs some pre-apprenticeship programmes;
- Initiated an employer fair in one prison in partnership with Business in the Community called 'Seeing is Believing'. Employers included Mersey Rail, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and Integral.

# Chapter 9. Developing a 'Whole-Prison' Learning Culture

**ff** *Prioritise education and learner access.*  
Focus group participant

**ff** *The learning culture of your prison needs to follow through at every level.*  
Focus group participant

<p><b>What are the roles for those outside of key education posts to promote learning? How will you win hearts and minds to take your staff with you?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How could staff learning and development opportunities help them contribute to making the vision a reality?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>What needs to happen to prioritise access to education within the prison regime?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How can you develop a 'whole-prison' approach to embed and contextualise education in other activities/departments?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How can learning and skills support the regime and wider vision for the prison?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What value could prisoners and peer mentors add?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

**Useful links**

Developing a Learning Culture Project, Prisoners' Education Trust (2015)  
<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/noms-rehabilitative-cultures-project>  
 Wings of Learning: The role of the Prison Officer in supporting prisoners education, Braggins & Talbot (2005)  
<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/wings-learning-role-prison-officer-supporting-prisoner-education>  
 The Learning Prison, RSA, O'Brian (2010)  
<https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/the-learning-prison-report.pdf>

## Learning Culture

*'In a Rehabilitative Culture there is a sense of purpose in relation to rehabilitation, desistance, and progression through a sentence which is shared and understood by all who work with offenders. All who work with offenders consistently demonstrate behaviours and attitudes that support rehabilitation and desistance.'*  
(NOMS, 2014)

Given that learning is an important part of rehabilitation, it therefore follows that a learning culture is an important part of a rehabilitative culture.

*'As the critical mass of inmate students grows, the institution also slowly begins to change. The power of education is the most vital tool we have to encourage change within the individuals in prisons and to begin to transform the larger culture of the institution.'*

(Inderbitzen, 2012)

'[Learning cultures] are different from learning contexts or learning environments in that they are to be understood as the social practices through which people learn.' (Biesta, 2011). Organisations often attempt to define their culture using a set of values. Values describe how you aim to treat people and the way you do your work.

*"They may be beliefs, attitudes or principles, they act as the glue that binds the members of the organisation together."*

(Barnard and Walker, 1994)

The Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) carried out extensive consultation and roundtable discussions, culminating in their report 'Smart Rehabilitation' (Champion, 2013). They found that to be effective, education in prison needed to be underpinned and driven by five key values:

### **Inclusive**

Learning opportunities in prison should be accessible to all prisoners and reflect their diverse needs and motivation.

### **Engaging**

Embedded learning and a learning culture can effectively 'hook' prisoners to become learners.

### **Aspirational**

Once engaged, many prisoners develop a thirst for learning. Mechanisms to enable progression to happen should be supported.

### **Safe**

Safety can be both physical and emotional. A 'safe space' to learn is respectful, comfortable, builds on strengths and is motivational.

### **Empowering**

Enabling learners to take responsibility through e.g. peer-mentoring, self-directed learning, learner voice and developing learning plans together.

In 2016, Prisoners' Education Trust published a report based on research carried out with University of Cambridge, funded by the Ministry of Justice, looking at learning cultures in eight prisons. The learning culture tool, based on the same principles as the Measuring Quality of Prison Life tool (<https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/impact/measuring-the-quality-of-prison-life>), attempts to measure dimensions of a learning culture using those values described above.

## A 'Whole-Prison' Approach

*'The idea that education is a place to take prisoners to, where they will spend time in classrooms, is firmly rooted in the organisational structure and culture.'*

(Braggins and Talbot, 2005)

In prison it is particularly important to break down this silo approach, as many prisoners had negative experiences of school and fear entering a traditional classroom space.

- 42% of prisoners reported having been permanently excluded from school (Hopkins, 2012).
- Ofsted found that 'few prisons had effective procedures for ensuring that those with the greatest need took up the provision' (Ofsted, 2014).

New commissioning structures and the outcome-focused definition of prison education provide an exciting opportunity to embed learning throughout the prison and to move away from purely 'classroom-based' learning.

*'Prisoners' learning should be an integral part of the common purpose of the institution, communicated to all involved and that promotion of learning should be covered in initial training, professional development and appraisal for officers'.*

(Braggins and Talbot, 2005)



### Case study - open Academy at HMP Swaleside

The Open Academy is a wing-based initiative which expands education around the prison. It combines higher level education resources, including books donated by the Open University and computers with access to the virtual campus. It is supported by the education department but runs alongside other education provision. The Academy works through support from residential officers and governors and brings in relationships with external providers and organisations. Significantly, the day to day running of the Academy is managed by prisoner-held roles. They run the distance learning study sessions and offer crucial support to learners.

The Academy promotes individual responsibility and empowerment in study choices and processes. It encourages aspiration. The attractive space and positive learning communities are highly visible to all who live on the wing and those who visit. Through this, it feeds into the culture of the rest of the wing, and prison.

### Case study - A whole-Prison Approach to the Shannon Trust Reading Plan



**Shannon Trust supports prisoners who can read to teach prisoners who can't. During 2017, the charity worked with six prisons to embed their learning opportunities throughout each establishment. The Whole Prison Approach project aimed to provide anyone struggling with reading the chance to participate in the Reading Plan wherever they were during the core day, evenings and weekends. The project focused on Learners/potential Learners and the places they spend their time including workshops and workplaces, wings, gym, libraries, and healthcare. Workshops and workplaces offered an opportunity to develop good practice models and embed learning in non-traditional settings. Early planning meetings in the pilot establishments included walk rounds to different areas of the prison to assess whether they might have Learners/potential Learners. Conversations with workshop managers resulted in removing to barriers to regular mentoring sessions. For example, in one prison, learning pods were built to create private space for mentoring. With locations identified, mentors were recruited and trained in these areas.**

Angela Cairns, Chief Executive, Shannon Trust

# Chapter 10.

## Who else can help make this happen?

**ff** *Think about commissioning strategic support, not just delivery.*

**ff** *Look very carefully at who you recruit into Education and Reducing Reoffending senior roles.*

**ff** *Use infrastructure organisations to provide an overview of what is available.*

<p><b>What other specific expertise do you need to help you, and how might you get it?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>Who can provide expertise to understand how education works in other environments?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>Who can provide commercial/procurement/ financial advice and support?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>How will you ensure education provision is inclusive and meets the diversity, cultural and learning support needs of your population? What specific expertise do you need to do this?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>How can you use infrastructure organisations to help you understand what good practice and potential providers are out there?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What support do you need from Ofsted on meeting their expectations?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

## Infrastructure organisations, alliances and networks

Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA)

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/prisoner-learning-alliance>

Employment and Related Services Commission (ERSA)

<http://ersa.org.uk/>

Association of Employment & Learning providers (AELP)

<https://www.aelp.org.uk/>

Clinks

<http://www.clinks.org/>

Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

<http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/>

National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance (NCJAA)

<https://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/>

National Alliance of Sport for the Desistence of Crime (NASDC)

<http://www.nasdc.org/>

European Prison Education Association (EPEA)

<http://www.epea.org/>

Lessons from abroad for Criminal Justice Reform (2017), Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and Prison Reform Trust, Institute for Criminal Policy Research and Birkbeck University

<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/fellows/news/lessons-abroad-justice-reform>

Standing Committee for Youth Justice (SCYJ)

<http://scyj.org.uk/>

Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA)

<http://criminaljusticealliance.org/>

The Exceptionals (helping business employ ex-offenders)

<http://www.theexceptionals.org/>

Employers Forum for Reducing Reoffending

<http://apm-uk.co.uk/justice/employers-forum-for-reducing-re-offending-efrr/>

Learning & Work Institute (LWI)

<https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/our-work/life-and-society/offender-rehabilitation/>

Russell Webster blog

<http://www.russellwebster.com/blog/>



To receive emails about prison education policy and practice, please sign up to Prisoners' Education Trust Learning Matters e-news:

<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/learning-matters-e-news>

## CONCLUSION

*'The PLA resource for commissioning education offers thought-provoking themes to support governors and managers in exploring how best to work with providers. It rightly emphasises consideration of the crucial elements required to manage and deliver a comprehensive, high-quality, needs-based education which ensures successful outcomes for learners. The Association of Colleges has been delighted to help in its development.'*



*'The Education and Training Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that all learners have access to high-quality teaching and learning across the further education sector as we know the life-changing impact of education. Nowhere is this more the case than prison. The new and imminent flexibilities within education provision, which will enable governors to commission learning that meets the needs of their prisoners, provides both formidable opportunities and challenges. However, this sector is known for its passionate, creative and tenacious workforce and by working together, we can ensure that learning is at the centre of the rehabilitative journey. This workbook provides a good tool for governors and managers to support their learners in growing into the people they want to be.'*

*'Together, AELP and ERSA run the Offender Related Services Forum, meeting quarterly and drawing together the frontline experience of our members working within the prison estate and supporting prison leavers and others with an offending record. We recognise the upcoming challenges facing governors and as such have helped contribute to this workbook on commissioning education services. We hope it will provide an effective starting point for governors and managers as part of their initial scoping and self-evaluation process.'*



*'As Prison governors gain increased control over prison education it is important that they proactively reach out to local communities, voluntary organisations and other structures that can help support them to make the best decisions for the people in their institutions. Prison governors have a real opportunity to be innovative, creative and develop a whole-prison approach to learning but, at this time of change, they will also need to put robust and transparent processes in place to help them fairly commission the right services for their prisons and service users. Clinks and the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance are really pleased to be involved in the development of this workbook and hope that Prison governors find it a useful resource.'*

### With special thanks to:

Various current and former prison governors and senior leaders in prisons for reviewing the content and offering valuable feedback.

PLA members, particularly AELP (Cheryl Swales), AoC (Catherine Sezen and the OLASS providers), Clinks (Jess Mullen, Nicola Drinkwater, Abi Lun and Jess Plant), Education & Training Foundation (Teresa Carroll and Linda Simpson), PGA (John Attard), BTEG (Mark Blake) and St. Giles Trust (Maria McNicholl).

ERSA (Sam Windett and Rick Wright).

Jose Aguiar and prisoner learners at HMP Pentonville.

PET volunteer Connie Hodgkinson Lahiff. PET Senior Policy Officer Morwenna Bennallick.

Ministry of Justice.

For online copies of the full workbook:

<http://prisonerseducation.org.uk/prisoner-learning-alliance>

For hard copies of the workbook and/or for a PLA member to come to your prison to lead a discussion or a workshop please email: [nina@prisonerseducation.org.uk](mailto:nina@prisonerseducation.org.uk)



All photos ©Rebecca Radmore/Prisoners' Education Trust 2017, except page 16 ©Ian Cuthert



Prisoners'  
Education  
Trust

Prisoners' Education Trust  
The Foundry · 17 Oval Way  
Vauxhall · London · SE11 5RR

---

020 3752 5680  
[lm@prisonerseducation.org.uk](mailto:lm@prisonerseducation.org.uk)  
[www.prisonerseducation.org.uk](http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk)  
 @PrisonersEd  
 [facebook.com/prisonersed](https://facebook.com/prisonersed)

---

If you would like to make a donation in support of the work of Prisoners' Education Trust, please visit [justgiving.com/petrust](http://justgiving.com/petrust)

---

Registered charity No. 1084718  
Company limited by guarantee No. 4132595