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ABSTRACT

A study examined the current policies, practices, and perceived unmet needs of selected organizations involved in employment, training, and education (ETE) for offenders and exoffenders in the Yorkshire and Humberside region of the United Kingdom. Representatives of 63 of the more than 100 probation services, further education (FE) colleges, careers services, training and enterprise councils (TECs), local education authorities (LEAs), and prisons and prison education departments contacted completed written questionnaires and/or participated in oral interviews. More than 20 ETE projects/programs targeting offenders and exoffenders were identified. The TECs, LEAs, FE colleges, and career services all had different internal arrangements regarding responsibility for working with offenders. Levels of interagency contact ranged from none to active working relationships, and those organizations that were in partnerships with and/or cooperating with probation services reported very different experiences. Quality and quantity of staff development varied widely. Policymakers and practitioners had widely differing opinions regarding needs, appropriate strategies, and monitoring and evaluation procedures. Education and training was generally much more accessible to incarcerated offenders than to offenders receiving community sentences. (Appended are views on volunteerism/compulsion for ETE, information on the nature/scope of educational guidance, and a glossary. Contains 56 references.)

(MN)

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SURVEYING

the

STRUCTURES

for

**Interagency work in
Education, Training & Guidance
for offenders and ex-offenders
in the Yorkshire & Humberside Region**

A study sponsored by

**YHAFHE
Yorkshire & Humberside Association for
Further & Higher Education**

**BRIDGEBUILDERS
National Development Unit**

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Pauline Sweet, the project officer, was a practitioner and manager in this interagency work for ten years, was an early member of Bridgebuilders and is Chair of Bridgebuilders National Development Unit. Readers' comments and queries are welcome and should be addressed to Pauline Sweet at 5 Park Terrace, Otley LS21 1HH Tel: 0943 851214.

SURVEYING THE STRUCTURES

A survey of the contribution made by

Probation Services

FE Colleges

Careers Services

TECs

LEAs

Prison Education Departments

Voluntary organisations

**to the Education, Training and Guidance
of offenders and ex-offenders**

by Pauline Sweet BA; PGCE; Cert. Crim.

(Autumn 1993)

Grateful thanks to the members of the Steering Committee who gave support and guidance.

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CONTENTS

1. **Introduction**
2. **Abstract of whole**
3. **Objective 1 "current policy and practice"**
Summary of findings and Issues arising
4. **Objective 2 "staff support strategies met and unmet needs"**
Findings and Issues arising
5. **Ways forward**
6. **Full findings for Objective 1**
7. **Appendix 1 : Some views on voluntaryism/compulsion**
Appendix 2 : "What is educational guidance?"
Appendix 3 : Glossary
Appendix 4 : Bibliography

INTRODUCTION

1. PROJECT SPONSORS

1.1 This pilot regional development project has been jointly sponsored by a regional and a national body.

Yorkshire & Humberside Association for Further & Higher Education

1.2 Regionally the work has been commissioned and supported by the Yorkshire and Humberside Association for Further and Higher Education (YHAFHE). This is an organisation with a focus upon staff and curriculum development, assessment and accreditation, research and consultancy in the field of Further and Higher Education. It offers a regional forum providing a wide range of services, which include support for practitioners in terms of information, professional development and networking, and opportunities for organisations to move practice forward by identifying leading edge information on change and development regionally, nationally and internationally. Issues of equal opportunity have always been high on YHAFHE's agenda and in the late 1980's it sponsored two conferences about education and training opportunities for offenders in the community and an ongoing working group.

Bridgebuilders National Development Unit

1.3 Bridgebuilders National Development Unit is a recently established project funded by the Home Office in partnership with Bridgebuilders. (Bridgebuilders is the national association for those concerned with the promotion and provision of education, training and guidance in the community to offenders and ex-offenders). The remit of this Unit includes the promotion of education, training and guidance for offenders in the community underpinned by relevant research and liaison with policy makers and significant organisations, and also the support and professional development of existing practitioners. The Unit's staff include a Development Officer, and a Research and Administrative Officer, and the officer responsible for this project has worked closely with both in the design and delivery of this work.

2. TARGET/SUPPORT/CLIENT GROUP

Target Group

2.1 However, the provision of education, training and guidance for offenders in the community - wherever it happens in the country, may involve several of a range of organisations. Since Probation Services have the responsibility for offenders receiving sentences in the community, they clearly have a central position in relation to the "client", but Local Education Authorities (LEAs), Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), Careers and Guidance Services, Further Education (FE) Colleges, voluntary organisations and private companies may well be involved too in the delivery of education, training and guidance services within a supervision programme. Since prisons establishments return offenders/ex-offenders to the community, (and increasingly to a further period of Probation supervision) they too have a significant role to play. The project addressed its enquiries to seven of these organisations. The role of private business and industry in providing work training under AT/YT schemes was fully recognised. However it was decided that for the following reasons they would not be included: some concern that such contact might not be helpful to clients; concern that a lot of work might result in very small returns because trainers might not know (or record) numbers of Probation Service referrals; recognition that the project was already overloaded.

Support Group

2.2 The seven organisations below have then provided the project with its support group, and managers and practitioners representing these various agencies (and, to some extent, the regional spread) have been brought together to form a Steering Committee, as follows

a Probation Service (West Yorkshire)	Rosemary Heal
a Local Education Authority (Humberside)	Penny Robson
a Further Education College (West Yorkshire)	Wendy Pawson
a Careers Service (Doncaster)	Karen Morgan
a Voluntary Organisation (SOVA)	Gary Smelt
a Training and Enterprise Council (Sheffield)	Michelle Gill
Penal Establishments in the North of England	David Poole.

Client Group

2.3 Moreover these agencies might also be deemed to be the clientele for the work of this project and its findings will be made known to them, via a report or/and dissemination to all these interested parties.

3. AIMS OF THE PROJECT

3.1 The aims of this project included

- To promote education, training and guidance for offenders and ex-offenders in the community who are over 16.
- To support practitioners in this work.

These directly reflect Bridgebuilders' own statement of principle

"that education, training and guidance (for offenders and ex-offenders) contributes to

- **positive change in the individual**
- **reducing offending/re-offending**
- **widening opportunities.**

Supporting workers who provide education, training and guidance enhances their effectiveness".

3.2 The third intention was to examine the usefulness of the project as a pilot, with potentially transferable elements to other regions recognising that the Association and the Unit have national responsibilities.

4. RATIONALE

A. The importance of education and training for offenders

4.1 Since the major aim of this project is to "promote education, training and guidance for offenders/ex-offenders in the community" some rationale for this approach is required. Why is education/training (or guidance towards those services), of any special importance for "adult" offenders?

4.2 First of all because there is an association between poor educational achievement and the risk of offending. A number of recent surveys and studies of ex-offenders have pointed to the fact that "they tended, by and large to display a more uniform pattern of social and educational disadvantage than a similar sized group of students taken from a mainstream College course". (Specific Educational Needs of Offenders : Tim Evans, Further Education Unit (FEU)/ Bridgebuilders 1991).

"72% of the offenders questioned had not gained state qualifications upon leaving school ... 49% felt they needed to improve their reading and writing skills". (Identifying the Education Needs of Offenders : Liverpool Educational Opportunities Initiative 1993).

"Comparison of the above offender-related data with national school leaving data is stark. Nationally only 10% of boys and 7% of girls left school with no graded qualifications whatever in 1989-90. In the same year 55.7% of 16 year olds stayed on for some form of post-compulsory education". (Social Circumstances of Young Offenders under Supervision : ACOP 1993).

4.3 Parallel to this is the recognition that lack of employment is also a risk factor associated with offending, and clearly those with no educational or vocational achievements stand less chance in today's (and especially tomorrow's) job market, even before they disclose a criminal record.

4.4 Unemployment amongst offenders under Probation supervision in March 1993 was estimated at 65% - 75%, and 90% for offenders leaving prison. Research has confirmed Probation officer's experience that unemployment was **"sure to lead to more crime"** ("Offenders out of Work", discussion paper for Association of Chief Officers of Probation (ACOP) Employment Committee 1992), and **"changes in the Criminal Justice system are bringing into Probation supervision increasing numbers of serious offenders who are chronically unemployed, untrained, unskilled and 'unsuitable' people"** (Peter Towler, Chief Probation Officer (CPO), addressing "Offenders out of Work Conference" March 1993). The ACOP Employment Committee of the Probation Service has itself called for **"work with clients on employment, training and educational issues ... of central importance in addressing their offending behaviour"** (Prepare and Provide - guidelines ACOP Employment Committee 1992). Nevertheless there have been no Home Office policy statements or guidelines on ETE since 1990. New guidelines are currently expected and Bridgebuilders has contributed to the consultative processes.

4.5 Finally one must turn from this deficit account to the positives offered by education and training. Some of these have long been recognised as of value to a whole range of students who share many of the characteristics of this offender group:- characteristics such as long term unemployment, low basic or/and vocational skills, poor first experiences of education/training, consequential loss of self esteem, confidence and motivation. Many innovative and successful schemes were pioneered via the REPLAN funding which provided a new focus on the needs of unemployed people in the recession of the 1980's and made appropriate provision.

4.6 In addition, in the last decade, a slow growth of projects has developed addressed specifically to the educational and training needs of offenders, every one of which could illustrate by case-study, monitoring or anecdote the value of this **"plank in the bridge to resettlement"** (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) "Education and Training" 1989). In the introduction to the Replan Reachout newsletter in the summer of 1990, which focussed on education and training work with offenders and ex-offenders in this region, Michael Hensman, (HMI Probation), wrote **"Education is a powerful means of giving experiences of success and improving self image, confidence and motivation, all important factors in the rehabilitation of offenders. Education may give access to new worlds - of employment, interest and achievement"**.

4.7 Hensman's emphasis on education is even more significant now than when he wrote. The current emphasis on employment and employability, necessary though they are, may neglect the equal necessity to provide offenders with the tools for growth and change which the content and processes of learning can provide - for other life-roles as well as work.

B. The importance of Offenders as a potential market for education and training organisations

4.8 However, this is not a one-sided issue. Offenders - whether sentenced to a community penalty or returning to the community after a custodial sentence may also be "useful" to providers, who are looking to increase their participant numbers.

4.9 Two of the four Probation Services in the region provided relevant statistics which illustrate this. (The first figures from Service R, the second from Service P).

5649/1736 people were sentenced to a community penalty supervised by these Probation Services in the year ending March 1993. As many as 75% of these clients are likely to be unemployed as inciated above (4.4). All will have a supervision 'programme' (either voluntary or compulsory) which may include work by specialist agencies to tackle clients' needs such as homelessness, social skills, drug addition, unemployment etc. and so reduce the risk of re-offending. This clearly provides a window of opportunity for providers - (as well as clients).

4.10 These Probation Services also know of 1796/798 further people who went into prison in the year in question, and of these 1132/468 inmates who came out to statutory supervision. All young offenders receive post-custody supervision and they made up 732/336 of the release figures given above. A Probation Officer suggested that "*Prison is the biggest training organisation in the country*". A prison education manager pointed to the potentiality of an inmate leaving prison with the greater part of a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) already achieved, which could then be completed at little cost but with full financial advantage to the training organisation (or employer). NACRO (1989) noted that "**A far greater proportion of the prison population undertakes some education and training than does the general population**". As many as 90% of those recently released from prison will be unemployed. Here again there is potential as well as need.

4.11 If education and training providers are to effect the expansion required often it will be essential to draw in significant numbers of non-traditional participants. Offenders are clearly an important segment in that non-traditional market.

5. CONTEXT

5.1 The context for this project is complex and unstable. There had been, over the last decade a slow growth of provision of education, training and educational guidance for offenders and ex-offenders in the community, and this has accelerated recently as a result of some Probation Services focus on employment for offenders.

5.2 These developments had led to some exploration of the issues so raised, for agencies and their workers including two detailed studies of the specific educational needs of offenders*, and a parallel recognition that such interagency work might require special training, staff development, and support for the staff involved as Colin Thomas noted in his foreword to the Hensman report 1988. That report also noted the dearth of hard information about this provision and the "**lack of conceptual framework that would enable such work to be taken forward systematically**". Indeed it may be that from just such a view of the lay-of-the-land the Home Office agreed, in 1991, to fund the Bridgebuilder National Development Unit.

It was therefore decided that this enquiry should examine the provision in this one region to provide some such (non-qualitative) data and perhaps contribute to the understanding of issues.

5.3 However, in enquiring of the many agencies which may contribute to this work as to what is currently on offer, and/or what plans they have for further developments there can be no presumption of organic or/and rational building on what has gone before. The radical (and sometimes seemingly chaotic) changes in public sector services have been affecting policy and practice to some extent in all the relevant organisations.

The resulting "fault-lines" have had varying effects, some negative, some potentially positive, with intended and unintended consequences of central policies sometimes in conflict. This project may be able to identify some of the impact of these changes in the region as well as "putting down a marker" as to "where we're at" now.

6. CURRENT ISSUES FOR THE ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

The following paragraphs attempt to highlight major recent developments within or impinging upon each of the organisations identified and the resulting critical issues so that readers may understand more of where other agencies are "coming from" in terms of current concerns for policy and practice, some of which will have implications for the education, training and guidance of offenders.

*See Bibliography

6.1 For Probation Services the major concern is the resource planning needed to manage the impact of cash-limited budgets on core tasks for the Service, and especially on those aspects of Service delivery required or emphasised by the 1991 Criminal Justice Act. Elements of major importance in that Act which have implications for education, training and guidance developments are

- (a) the pre-sentence reports identifying client need and offering to the courts a relevant supervision programme, (addressing community safety, offending behaviour and reducing future offending)
- (b) the provision of a range of options (including programmes developed through inter-agency partnerships) for increased community penalties and a reduction of custodial sentences
- (c) supportive through-care programmes for those now completing their custodial sentence under statutory supervision in the community.

Probation Services have, of necessity, devoted substantial resources to the implementation of this Criminal Justice Act and the government-set National Standards for its operation. The near certainty of further substantial amendments to the Act is viewed with considerable dismay. For Probation Service Officers there may be additional concerns for the nature of their professional role in view of the increasing responsibility put upon them by the Act for community punishment and surveillance and the resulting erosion of the original welfare-related support for offenders.

6.2 Further Education Colleges are also faced with a range of issues arising largely from their incorporation under the Further and Higher Education Act, others are the result of central government policies, of new directions agreed with industry lead bodies, or of the ever thickening maze to funding sources. Providing a relevant, accessible, supportive and accreditable education and training system for post-16 learners is the core business of Further Education. In these concerns curriculum development, human resource management and new funding arrangements are inextricably linked.

But such a focus will be equally necessary for the 25% increase in student participation required by the government's new National Education and Training Target Standards (NETTS); for identifying outreach and student support needs and for maximising positive outcomes and improved retention-rates to secure Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) funding; and for identifying funding or income-generating opportunities now needed if colleges are to survive. A further facet of concerns centres around developing the human resources to provide the raw (business) management teams; to support quality assurance and customer and staff care, and to give the thrust to marketing and financial planning essential to take the colleges forward. Many of these issues are clearly important to the interagency work on which this report focuses.

6.3 In recent years many Careers Services have diversified their work in their local community by utilising funds from other sources (i.e. European Social Fund (ESF), Employment Services, TECs). Resulting in provision for adults, targetting groups i.e. 16-25 unemployed, initiatives for school non-attenders and so on.

The Careers Service has yet to incur the major organisational and structural changes which have affected many other services. However many are anticipating major changes as a result of the new legislation contained in the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act.

In order to meet these anticipated changes Careers Services are currently:-

- (a) closely reviewing their statutory and non-statutory obligations
- (b) consolidating partnerships with the local LEAs and TECs.

The experiences of the 13 Pathways pilots will be watched closely over the next two years and will act as pointers to where the Careers Service will move post 1994.

6.4 For TECs, rising from the ashes of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) only two years ago critical issues may still be related to core concerns - e.g. developing partnerships with employers, establishing NVQs and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), helping businesses to survive the recession, and attracting and using European funding.

In terms of work with offenders the concerns may be seen

(a) from an Equal Opportunities perspective - e.g. increasing employer commitment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders; addressing the low take-up of TEC training by ethnic minorities (who are over represented in the criminal justice system),

or

(b) as a business prospect: e.g. recognising the need for links to and between training for those, (especially young people) moving through the criminal justice system, or the potential difficulties in achieving appropriate outputs (and related funding) with this particular group.

6.5 If the issues for Colleges are in part to do with expansion and development, for many Local Education Authorities they arise more from a contraction of staff and services.

LEAs have had to decide and design their arrangements for non-Schedule 2 provision for those over 16, and for any Schedule 2 work (i.e. accredited courses) in which they wished to be involved. (If the LEA was previously directly responsible for Adult Education this will have meant assigning the greater part of that service to the college or colleges - (or to private contractors) or seeking co-operative arrangements with colleges to forward LEA bids to the FEFC to deliver Schedule 2 work).

The 1991 Education Act which initiated local management of schools and the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) which brought about the incorporation of the FE colleges, have also both impacted financially on local authorities and on their central administration, and may jeopardise their ability to sustain their concessionary fee and discretionary awards policies.

Authorities are also well aware, that, given the Central government's attitude to local government, the local government re-organisation is likely to curb their powers and activities even further.

6.6 For Prison Educators the last year has been dominated by the process of competitive tendering and its continuing consequences. With the confusion over "acquired rights", the request for judicial review, and an unrealistic time scheme anyway, the awarding of contracts has been a long-protracted process, resulting in months of stress and demoralisation for workers involved.

Under the new arrangements the Head of Inmate Activity (HIA) (not the College, as before) manages the contract on behalf of the Prison Governor - a specification previously negotiated and constantly changing in relation to regime needs.

In the context prison Education Officers - now Co-ordinators - are exploring their new relationship to the regime, and the often-reduced team of full-time workers have even less time for the essential individual support to inmates and inevitable paperwork. The new contractual arrangements and the introduction of TEC or employment services funding may have implications for the future of some cross-regime and multi-disciplinary activities. There are concerns too that present government plans to require contractors to re-tender may cause further disruption to the work.

More positive issues in this sector may be seen as

(a) the growing development of modular and accredited NVQ training schemes using cross-regime facilities and expertise

(b) the introduction of a standardised curriculum linked to National Records of Achievement and sentence plans for inmates, together with plans to monitor the exit services provided by the new contractors.

6.7 Voluntary Organisations too are facing difficult issues. Whilst funding from central government may increase an organisation's opportunities to work with its 'focus group' there are fears that such acceptance may impinge on the ethos of the organisation. There are concerns, too, about taking on what might be considered state responsibilities and the level and short term nature of the funding so offered; about partnership or contractualisation as the appropriate 'business' relationship, and about the lack of core funding to maintain the organisation.

These concerns 'knock-on' to those associated with the voluntary organisation's local dimension: its capacity to network and be consulted, its access to information and its credibility with statutory agencies (and potential partners). Internally these issues in turn lead to concerns for staff confidence and motivation.

7. THE OBJECTIVES

7.1 The framework of the project has been provided by its two basic objectives:

7.1.1 To provide intelligence of current policy and practice within this region.

7.1.2 To identify what support strategies, including networks, are available or may be required by workers.

7.2 Whilst its approach has been informed by those remaining:

7.2.1 To promote and develop good practice in accordance with BBNDU guidelines.

7.2.2 To raise awareness of the role of Bridgebuilders Association, the National Development Unit, YHAFHE and other potential resources.

7.2.3 To encourage membership of Bridgebuilders and participation in national activities if appropriate.

7.3 Objective 3 is "to analyse project results for transferable elements in terms of content and methodologies, recognising that Bridgebuilders Association, and the Unit has national responsibilities".

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1 For objective 1 the project has been attempting to survey current policy and practice in the provision, or/and facilitation of guidance, education and training (for offenders/ex-offenders who are in the community) from the organisations in this region. This has included questions about measurable levels of activity in the last year as well as plans for, or perceived changes in, activity in the future. The result is of course an illustration rather than a comprehensive map. Issues of quality and effectiveness have not come within the scope of this work.

Such information has been gained largely from questionnaire responses supplemented by some structured individual and group interviews.

See Section 6 of the Report for these findings.

8.2 For objective 2 the project has attempted to illustrate

(a) the met and unmet training and staff development needs of practitioners in relation to this area of their work, from interviews with sample groups or individuals from agencies,

and

(b) agency or organisational practice in making such provision, from questionnaires or/ and interviews.

(See Section 4 of the report).

8.3.1 The third objective "to analyse project results for transferable elements" is, in part, beyond the remit of this report. While it is possible to comment on the methodology of the project in terms of its ability to deliver the two information-seeking objectives (7.1.1 and 7.1.2 above), its results in terms of the remaining three objectives are, at this stage, essentially problematic. There is however, as might be expected, some interesting evidence of the positive effects of simply asking questions. These are referred to in the text.

9. THE REPORT

9.1 It is the intention of the Report

(a) to record the findings:- in a way which allows, you, the reader to hear the contributors' voices and the full range of the material.

(b) to point to just some of the significant issues. I acknowledge gratefully the contributions of the regional Steering Committee and the National Unit to my understandings. However these comments are essentially my own, subjective and impressionistic, perhaps sometimes simplistic but offered in a spirit of enquiry, commitment, and, I believe, empathy to further your discussion.

(c) to suggest some "directions for further work" given the promotional viewpoint of the project as a whole, but resisting "recommendations" as too suggestive of solutions.

10. ARE YOU RECEIVING ME?

10.1 In his report on Education and The Probation Service in 1988 Michael Hensman wrote that "a major finding was the difficulty experienced by both professions in understanding each other's concepts and assumptions". He might have added "and language". But this problem is not unique to Probation and Education Services. Experience as a practitioner, and now in conducting this project suggests to the writer that there are at least two quite distinct difficulties when different agencies try to communicate.

10.2 What Hensman calls "assumptions" is the first - most damaging because least accessible. This is where as workers in different agencies we use the same words (a "common language") and believe we have common understandings. "Support" "assessment" "guidance" "progress" and particularly "education" are words in this category, because to each we bring a range of personal and professional experience and values -. Unfortunately our different understandings sometimes come to light only when they have caused problems. The word "education" itself is particularly bedevilled in that it is used to denote a public system as well as a professional approach, as a gather-all title (which may equally include work related training (e.g. FE College) and as a synonym for "learning".

10.3 The second language problem, is of course our use of jargon. "Organisation-speak" is probably a feature of every profession, embodying something of what is distinctive in its culture, systems, skills and knowledge - but also conferring internal street-cred and external mystique on the worker. It is often not a good tool for communication!

10.4 With the help of Steering Committee members the Project Officer has unashamedly "dropped into the jargon" (and so "dressed" the questions into the appropriate language for each specific organisation) - if that has made acceptance, and therefore answers, more likely! NOW, communicating with all organisations at once may reveal the Emperor's clothes! However, this problem can be addressed and the Report will try

- to avoid specialist terms and in-house jargon
- to spell out each abbreviation and acronym fully at its first appearance
- and provide a glossary at Appendix 3.

A selective bibliography is also included at Appendix 4.

ABSTRACT

1.1 This project was intended to take a set of "snapshots" of the views and activities of some of the organisations involved in education, training and guidance for offenders and ex-offenders in the community in mid 1993. The organisations included in the frame were Probation Services and Penal Education departments; Further Education Colleges, Local Education Authorities and Careers Services; voluntary organisations and TECs. Youth Training and Adult Training Schemes, though recognised as relevant were not approached for the reasons explained in the Introduction.

1.2 It was not within the scope of this project to look at quality issues, and this precluded examination of the Equal Opportunities dimension to this work in terms of its recognition of the needs of women offenders, offenders from ethnic minority groups, disabled offenders etc. Where "Equal Opportunities" issues are identified this relates to the debate as to whether offenders as a whole should be specifically recognised.

2. Over a hundred organisations were approached, and sixty three provided a "reflection" of their work in this area. The resulting pictures are characterised first and foremost by their immense diversity, not only between different organisations (which was to be expected) but between those of a kind (and even within organisations).

3.1 These organisations present an immense variety:- of views, policies and strategies (including conflicting interpretations of "Equal Opportunities" in respect of offenders). There are more than twenty projects or programmes in the community in the region, with several more planned, especially linking to prisons.

3.2 There is wide variation in the composition of interagency groups, and so in the range of expertise and opportunities available. (LEAs and FE Colleges are least likely and TECs and Careers Services more likely to be involved).

3.3 Almost every TEC, LEA, FE College and Careers Service which responded had a different internal arrangement (and nomenclature) for responsibility for work with offenders; the levels of interagency contact ranged from zero to active working relationships, associated of course, with a parallel variation in provision positively facilitated for offenders. (Though it is recognised that offenders may well use such provision independently and that such use would not be monitored).

3.4 Organisations contracted to, in partnerships or/and co-operating with Probation Services seem to have differing experiences of that relationship.

3.5 Staff development provision relating to this area of work varies widely - in terms of quantity and content and this provision does not match the expressed needs of the (admittedly very small) sample of practitioners questioned here. Even with one group of organisations (e.g. Probation Services) opportunities range from nothing to a highly structured programme.

3.6 There is also some evidence that the views of policy-makers and practitioners are divergent in terms of perceived needs, appropriate stratagems, and monitoring and evaluation procedures.

3.7 Finally - as far as figures have been provided, there appears to be a great diversity - and inequity - in terms of numbers of offenders having access to or making use of ETE provision of any kind. It must also be noted that whilst someone given a custodial sentence, is likely to be offered access to education and training, there is no parity of provision for offenders given a community sentence.

4. However, diversity also has its own great advantages in that within the region there are many creative initiatives, bringing together various interests and areas of expertise, and these could provide a fund of information, experience and understanding to inform other developments.

5.1 There is then, this great organisational diversity. But there are also several elements in common. Most of the projects initiated by a criminal justice organisation offer access skills and guidance towards employment, training and education provided by another agency. This is true in prisons and in the community. In some of the community-based projects there is also basic skills teaching (only one provided occupational skills for offenders).

5.2 Present partnership projects have been funded extensively either through Home Office Supervision Grants - which may be incorporated into new partnership arrangements, or, increasingly via TEC or Employment Services funding. Both the latter create boundaries to opportunities - one in terms of the geographical eligibility of clients, the other in terms of required outcomes and reduced Basic Skills support.

5.3 There appears also to be a very broad understanding of offenders' needs and the difficulties which they may experience in entering training and education - although the potential contribution of learning processes to empowerment confidence building and skills for living (whether written structures designated as education, or training, or in other scenarios) seems to be somewhat misunderstood and undervalued.

5.4 None of the pre-service courses (for Probation Officers or for trainers or teachers in this sector) systematically addressed these matters.

5.5 It is also quite clear that education, guidance and training for offenders in the community are not a priority concern nor a core activity for any organisation but there is a welcome growth of recognition, focus and activity from Probation Services in particular, and within existing penal establishment departments.

OBJECTIVE 1

CURRENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

A summary of the findings and some issues arising

The full findings for each organisation are included as Section 6 of this report. Paragraph references in each summary relate to the individual organisational findings, unless otherwise indicated.

CURRENT POLICY AND PRACTICE - A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND SOME ISSUES ARISING

PROBATION SERVICES

1. Readers are asked to remember that the project focus is on education and training. But the Probation Services in this region with a policy for this work designate it as "Employment, Training and Education". The Introduction has attempted to peel back some of the complex relationships wrapped up in this ETE package (and to underline the role and value of the final E in particular) but the information received is about the total parcel.

2. The material produced by the four services is not of course directly comparable. Because Services Q and R are at a different stage of development from Service P they have more to record and in more detail. Because Service S offered a practitioner perspective and a less structured framework their contribution reflects the day by day reality for client and "bridgebuilders".

With these reservations acknowledged.....

3. Two services already have ETE policies (and are already redrafting them in the light of experience). One is at first draft stage. One has none. Having an ETE policy does seem to be important.

4. It would seem that Policy predicates implementation. Implementation strategies may bring resources and require action, these in themselves are likely to increase demand. (Conversely why identify, perhaps encourage demand if there is no means to meet it?)

5. For the two services in the region the implementation of policy has clearly had strategic implications resulting in the designation of base-line budget to the work, the allocation of senior management time, the appointment of specialist staff and the acquisition of additional funding for this purpose. This has enabled both services, in very different ways, to provide an ETE facility for a large number of clients.

6. Only Service R provided the range of statistics which allows for some kind of quantification. It indicated that in one of its four divisions 520 people that year made use of the ETE provision. Presuming that this division also dealt with a quarter of Service R's total of 5649 supervisees (i.e. 1412 clients) this would mean that 37% of those clients were involved. Service S on the other hand (without a policy) also provided ETE opportunities, but for about 5%-10% of the client group, one officer suggested.

7. This is not of course a simplistic equation that more = better : QED. But it does raise a number of issues. For one thing the figures have been arrived at in very different ways and may count different things. Hensman quotes Probation Officers as suggesting "that 15% to 30% of their caseload had some sort of educational need". Given the particular nature of the ETE provision is Service R recording just this:- that 37% of clients thought they might have "some need" and at least got as far as an initial discussion. (Though some certainly also took part in Basic Skills work or Job Search Seminars). Given the client characteristics so clearly described by Service S many more clients of Service R then see this provision as at least worth trying than Service S has experienced. But can Service S be "counting" the "same thing" as Service R? Presumably not, since it does not have the same facilities - Service S is perhaps looking at and "counting" what would be "outcomes" for Service R, that is clients engaged in training/education progression. Service R indicates that this is the next stage of its monitoring. Lack of comparable figures bedevils any survey.

8. But to return to the policy issue. Further evidence is provided by Service P that in conjunction with or as a result of its new policy it is developing two ETE projects - so presumably it did not offer such provision before. Would there be a higher demand/encouragement for ETE provision in Service S if there were a policy to be implemented which brought additional resources and a requirement to monitor that use? (Or might the cynic say that demand in Service R has been artificially raised to justify resources?) Whatever the answers the current situation raises concerns about equity of provision for clients of Probation Services across this region. They do not seem to have equivalent chances.

9. If the possession of ETE policy appears to have generally positive implications, the content shapes ensuing strategies. Thus, whilst Service Q relates its ETE work to the core of Probation function "to reduce re-offending". Service R has associated ETE with less central concerns (see Probation § 3.5 and 3.6).

The strategies subsequently designed reflect this difference. If ETE is a "central feature of supervision" for Service Q then its consistent development across the service seems a logical consequence and the ACPO was required to ensure implementation of a common strategy. This has largely resulted in creating a common pattern for practice. In Service R, on the other hand, ETE work seems to have been accorded a role supportive to core concerns, with "policy developing from activity rather than imposing on it". Service R strategies have then developed ETE provision in a variety of ways across their area.

10. Each of these situations raises interesting issues. For example does the affirmation of ETE centrality and the associated (apparently top-down) ETE developments in Service Q give a different message to POs in that service from the one given to Service R Probation Officers? Consistency of approach may be seen to have certain benefits - it offers equity of opportunity for clients within this Probation area, it offers a coherent structure and value set to brokerage or contractual partners, it provides easy comparability for monitoring effectiveness and flexibility for utilising staff expertise. On the other hand one might ask why this model was chosen and then replicated before it had been evaluated in terms of the policy intention (§ 15.2).

11. The diversity of approach of Service R raises some of these issues in reverse:- can such diversity produce equity for the client? Does it make difficulties for the coherent implementation of policy. Where methods and approaches are so diverse does it make evaluation more problematic?

12. Diversity may also be seen as having particular advantages - encouraging initiative within the divisions and a response to local need; fostering divisional and individual expertise which can feed into the whole, piloting new approaches, not tying ETE into offence-reduction criteria.

Some of these issues will reappear as more of the information provided is examined.

13. Before leaving the area of policy and policy implementation however, two other issues must be noted:

(1) The Home Office has issued no policy guidelines since 1990.

(2) All three services providing written evidence indicated that ETE programmes would not be "recommended as a Schedule 1A condition of a Probation Order" - in common parlance clients would not be attending "compulsorily".

It was therefore a matter of puzzlement to note contradictions to this stated policy in that one current and one planned divisional project for which Service R provided information indicated that attendance was by Court Order! and other services working with this Probation Service also perceived this to be the case in other projects in which they were involved. If this is the case [and not a consequence of misunderstandings] it would clearly be of great interest to compare outcomes from these two approaches.

14. To turn then from policy to practice - and what Probation Services offer in response to the ETE needs of their clients. Only one project (identified by Service R) actually provided occupational training, but Services Q, R (and S informally) all offer some form of Literacy/Communication Skills/Basic Education. This "sheltered" initial contact development corresponds with what is recognised as good practice elsewhere (Aubrey 1993) and Hensman's observation that "Probation Services should develop some sort of in-house provision, particularly for basic education" "coupled with a planned - and often physically accompanied 'move on' to mainstream courses".

15. However the activity which all ETE provision of all Probation Services has in common is that it offers "guidance" and the accessing of clients into opportunities provided by another agency.

16. This focus and the structure which supports it together with other aspects of ETE work combine together to highlight certain issues:-

- i. the place - or absence, of ETE concerns as a systematic element in PSRs
- ii. the key role of the Probation Officer as "first cause" in what is essentially a two-tier referral system

- iii. the influence of funding on expected outcomes and the potential impact on the impartial stance of the "guider"
- iv. the importance of communication with those "other agencies" to whom the client is referred and the whole business of interagency liaison
- v. the role of the Probation Officer (and the other workers) in the potential quadrilateral relationship (including the ongoing support of clients)
- vi. the monitoring, and evaluating, of this work - within the Probation Service, with other providers - with clients.

Some of these issues will be looked at in more detail in conjunction with the evidence from which they spring.

17. Guidance essentially involves "assessing" i.e. **"defining clients' current levels of skills, knowledge and experience, by formal or informal methods in order to help them set appropriate goals"** but the information given indicates that ETE issues are not generally addressed at PSR stage by the Probation Officer, nor is there evidence here of ETE assessment by the Service 'specialists' at this stage (as sometimes happens elsewhere, nationally). Probation Services explain that National Standards may require officers to focus only on issues and measures related to changing offending behaviour, but as Evans characterises it **(offenders) may want to opt out of offending, but what do they opt into"**.

18. It is at the next stage then where the Probation Officer may be determining a useful 'supervision programme' with the client, that ETE options may be discussed, so that the PO can encourage and 'refer on' the client to the Service specialist, or (less often) directly to the training or educational provider.

19. The model presented by all four Services in some form or other seems to be a "two-stage-two-person" referral process, in which the PO refers the client to the "specialist" liaison worker, and the "specialist" (after further work with the client, and at an appropriate time) enables the client contact with the employer, the training or educational agency. The Probation Officer therefore has a key-role as "prime mover" in this process.

20. In such a structure however Probation Officers may be at a disadvantage in doing this. They are not likely to be at the immediate receiving end of information about the content or processes of the education or/and training opportunities available to their clients. This goes to their appointed "specialists". Because there may be 'specialists' they (the POs) are unlikely to have received training in educational assessment and may well feel **"diffident in what appears to be focussing again on failure"** or **"In setting up the client for another failure"** as an ACPO from the West Midland said recently to a Bridgebuilder conference.

Their own experiences of education and training may not have been all that good and there is little evidence that pre-service or in-service training addresses these issues although Harris writes that **"Education is a Leitmotif of contemporary probation practice"**. Faced then with a client wanting a 'real job' or not having the motivation for anything at all it may well be that, **"the Probation Officer cannot give positive feedback to offenders about the skills he already has, or can improve on, or can gain"** and cannot inspire confidence in what may be on offer. How can this immensely difficult task be facilitated?

21. Clients then are referred to, and perhaps attend an ETE "Centre", Job Club etc. This provision is not always funded by the Home Office (either directly, or through the Supervision Grants Scheme and the partnerships it makes possible). Some funding, particularly recently, seems to be coming from Employment Services or/and TECs and thus raises questions about the "stance" of the guiders. This is not, in itself, a question about their professional expertise in terms of employment, training and education, but about their brief. Where funding comes from may influence outcomes, and external constraints associated with Employment Services or TEC money have to be recognised. In this context the "supported" Job Club model of Service R, or its twinned Education/Employment Officers may be useful structures, as the ACPO underlined, to ensure that the service is client-centred and impartial. Home Office funding on the other hand presumably does not have such restraints, so it is difficult to understand why Service P, apparently using SUGS money, anticipates outcomes only in ET and employment terms (§ 14.1).

ETE provision in all these 4 services then is very much about enabling clients to make good use of what other agencies provide.

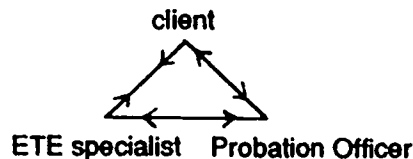
22. Probation Services have recorded three models of interagency liaison structures - one a "standing fora", with identified organisations meeting regularly and purposefully (Service Q). The second model is rather of "task force" groups where organisations have been brought together for a short period for a special purpose (Service R and P). The third has no formal structures (See Service S, § 27) "*no-one represents the College*" and depends largely on individuals. It is as unlikely that there is a "single solution" here as in any other aspect of this work. However this interagency work is obviously crucial and at both manager and practitioner level. Such contacts may promote ideas for new work, ensure information flow, develop funding proposals, provide support for client/student/trainee and share expertise (See for example § 10.1 in this section and § 8 in FE Section).

How important is it to ensure that this collaboration extends beyond the planning and establishment stages?

It is a matter of fact that few of the other agencies asked about interagency liaison could record much in the way of such contact with Probation Services. Perhaps there is opportunity for further exploration here to gain access to and make use of the relevant expertise of all agencies.

23. The 'brokerage' role of Probation Officers was touched on in a number of responses. The Shorter Oxford dictionary defines the broker as "**the go-between, the middleman and the matchmaker**" for example. This seems more likely to be the ETE specialist worker in many of the arrangements describe and yet the Probation Officer has the lead responsibility. Service Q wrote of concern that "*POs might still not see ETE work as routine ... were quite happy for this to be 'hived off' to others*". It reported that POs were "*encouraged (my italics) to maintain client support by receiving feedback on clients' progress*". Service R was considering the possibility of bringing ETE work *fully (my italics)* into Probation monitoring.

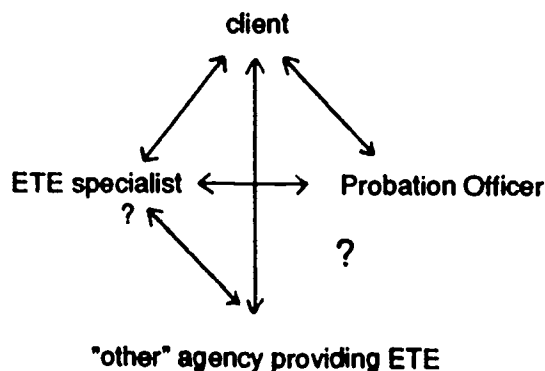
24. However when the PO in these two services "hands over" the ETE work with a client to the Service's own project this might be said to keep it "*within the Probation family*" where functions, goals and value bases could be expected to be known and shared. A comfortable/familiar triangle?



25. But what of the fourth dimension? It was notable that in a series of questions to Services P, Q and R which all referred to interagency mechanisms (for client support, monitoring and evaluation) none of these services mentioned other than its own workers' work.

26. Is the "other agency" simply a resource for the client? Would a truly quadrilateral relationship be more helpful in supporting the client, and in contributing to evaluation (to name but two) even though this might be less comfortable and more demanding?

the present position?



27. The three Services responding to the questionnaire were all concerned for ongoing support for clients when they took up opportunities : work, training, education. All four Services recognised the problems that arose - lack of money, personal difficulties, obstacles to progress etc. All four Services identified actual or potential strategies within their own field for dealing with them. The "matching schemes" for example (§ 13.2 and 31). No Service seemed to expect or record reciprocal support for the client who was someone else's student, trainee, employee. Yet, for example FE Colleges would seem to offer this (See FE § 2.2, 10.2).

28. Probation Services have very different views and practices in relation to ETE monitoring and evaluation (See Probation Service § 14 and § 15).

Service P appears to set its limits at the point of entry to the Service of the "other organisation". Service S points to the ethical difficulties it sees in seeking feedback when this contact may, in effect, deny the client the opportunity to move away from the negative label - but also admits that it doesn't want the additional paperwork.

29. Services Q and R are both planning ways to increase ETE monitoring and bring ETE issues more centrally into the mainframe of Probation Service purposes - e.g. *"the changes resulting from ETE work"* *"ETE projects were being asked about the re-offending rate"*. Can this be achieved without the involvement of those organisations providing training and education?

30. Hensman wrote (1988) of **"Impressionistic evidence that an educational element in the work of the Probation Service with a further number of offenders was making a significant contribution to the containment of those offending and the modification of their behaviour"** through **"the confidence it brought and the doors it opened"**. But Williams (2) quotes MacLean as asking **"how ethical is it to evaluate the work of teaching history, anthropology or Canadian literature by their capacity to change a person's perspective towards criminal activity"**. Does this equally apply to **"the work of training someone in the competencies of computer programming or catering (on the job or in the college?) etc."**. These are difficult issues.

Will those monitoring and evaluation initiatives proceed quite separately in each Service or might they look together at common issues?

31. To some extent the influence of recent criminal justice developments can be seen in these current activities:- the impact of National Standards, the focus on offender-related issues, the need to affirm that the Probation Service could still offer the *"support, warmth and counselling needed by so many clients"*.

32. Perhaps too these changes affect attitudes to interagency work (and not only for Probation Services). Robert Harris commented that **"Multi-professional work is easier when both sides are secure in their roles and identities"**. (The Probation/Education Interface : address to Bramley Grange Conference 1990).

33. New requirements for Probation Services to provide more post-custody supervision had some reflection in planned developments - several of which focussed on "bridging" activities for prison inmates (§ 7.6 and § 8.6) and the HELP project outlined by Service 6 (§ 32). However the range of funding available may be drawing developments in a rather narrower direction.

FE COLLEGES

34. Thirteen of the region's 33 Further Education Colleges responded to the project's questionnaire, perhaps a remarkably positive response, given the range of crucial issues colleges were facing in June 1993. And although less than half of them recorded any measurable activity in this area of work responses stressed the facilitative policies and strategies in place, and indicated recognition of need. Three "uninvolved" colleges expressed interest in making moves in this direction, and another hoped for *"more"*. Several however wrote - or implied - that this was *"not a priority"*.

35. The recognition of offender-issues should be set in a broader context. In the last decade Further Education institutions (including Adult and Continuing Education and training organisations) have been reviewing and modifying all aspects of their policies and practice to improve opportunities for access and progress for many identifiable groups within their communities and particularly for the "non-traditional"

learner or trainee. In this there has been the intention to integrate Equal Opportunities concerns into all aspects of the College. In this context then, the needs of many oppressed or/and disadvantaged groups have begun to be recognised:- women, black people, wheelchair users, people with learning difficulties - people who have not "traditionally" felt able to make use of these resources.

36. Many offenders share many characteristics with "non-traditional learners" since offenders are indeed also women, black people, people with learning difficulties etc. However offenders may also have needs and experience difficulties which are specific to them. But because offenders are not "visible" (as some other groups are), because they are (for obvious reasons), not a vocal group, because (and the circular effects of this are very plain), they are not a large group, these specific needs are often not acknowledged and not addressed by educationalists.

37. Most of the Colleges answering this questionnaire would probably recognise this. By and large "offenders", by name, do not appear in their policies, mission statements, equal opportunities provision, and staff liaison or outreach work appointments, and there is some denial that there are any specific issues (3.2). But if specific needs are not actually articulated, no-one would deny the relevance to offenders, (as part of that non-traditional group) of the general aims and general supportive structures offered by the Colleges as described in § 2.1-2.6 and § 10.2 and the description given of needs and barriers (§ 3.4).

Much of what is offered, or perceived as required would match exactly the concerns expressed by the Probation practitioners

e.g. the financial difficulties experienced (§ 4.1)
the need for supported learning (§ 2.2 and § 10.2)
the avoidance of stigma (§ 2.1 and § 2.4)
the need for flexible, accessible entry (§ 10.2)
the problems of peer group culture and lack of confidence (§ 4.2)

etc.

38. Of course offenders are not a homogenous group and there is some danger that in recognising the needs of the majority all are stereotyped. (For further exploration of Equal Opportunities implications see the summary to Careers Service responses).

39. Fees policies would also seem to set out to be 'helpful'. However the lack of common structures for concessions added to the different rates which colleges charged anyway, makes this an intimidating area for the adviser, let alone for his/her student.

40. Some of the same (and some new) issues arise in examining the responses about staff responsibilities in that, again, there is cause for bewilderment (for those seeking information for example) in the diverse range of job titles and levels of opportunity for this work across the organisations. (It is also of course the case that, in over half the responding colleges, staff with criminal justice liaison responsibilities had not, apparently, taken any action - though one acknowledges that it takes two to tango).

41. In this there is also another less obvious issue to tease out. Whilst the allocation of, for example, criminal justice liaison responsibilities to an Assistant Principal or Senior Manager (as recorded here) might appear to underline its importance, (and can indeed be useful), in practice, one suspects that it is only too easy for such work to be marginal, "not a priority" amongst all the other core concerns which the postholder has to deal with.

42. On the other hand there may be problems too, where work on the College/Probation Service margins falls to isolated workers with "low" status. Some College practitioners (interviewed primarily about staff development issues) illustrated these situations:-

- a worker whose "fingers were rapped" for taking the initiative, and then whose "back was slapped" congratulatory - for the same activity
- a P/T and very experienced worker given no opportunity to give feedback to the organisations between whom she worked
- a P/T tutor isolated amongst equally "marginal" Probation employees who did not understand his role.

These are all examples of people trying to manage the compatibility of work on the margins of their own organisation with work on the margins of other organisations.

At least within the College this marginal worker is still tutor or lecturer. Only one of the Probation Services' designated ETE workers was also a maingrade Probation Officer. What messages do these situations give to both marginal and mainstream workers about the value of this work?

43. Five only of the eleven Colleges responding fully indicate substantial involvement with offenders and with Probation Services or/and penal establishments. These Colleges are engaged in a cluster of interagency activities. They all make provision for offenders either exclusively or with special targeting. They all affirm interagency liaison, and are likely to be involved in less formal links too, such as the sharing of information and visits from individual POs and clients. Two both monitor and evaluate the work.

44. An obvious point here perhaps is the positive correlation between liaison and provision. Both the Colleges making provision exclusively for offenders had formal and active links with criminal justice agencies, so did two of the three encouraging use by offenders. It is surely significant that the one College without such links records of its special provision: *"only one student so far but we would welcome an increase in involvement"*. (However it is also this College which recorded the contribution it made about records of achievement to some Probation workers training. This presumably required just such liaison, which has not been recorded).

45. An analysis of these meetings show that whilst information exchange and 'networking' were common outcomes, meetings were also seen as having organisational implications. These responses also demonstrate what was noticed in relation to Probation Services' own returns, that interagency co-operation seems to focus on the initiation and immediate contexts for working together, but there is less evidence that this remains a shared concern. This is underlined by some apparent discrepancies, where services do not seem clear (or quite to agree) on what they are providing for or with each other.

For example whilst College 31 describes what is clearly an innovative development in three Probation Centres (9.1), the Probation Service concerned, with whom this is "jointly offered", does not mention it - only the general guidance service provided by the Educational Support worker with ex-offenders. Neither the College (6) nor the relevant Probation Service refer to the shared working which the local LEA respondent believes they were involved in.

46. Whilst some of the liaison described referred only two meetings in the year those in which College 31 seems to have been involved reflect an ongoing relationship in the case of the Probation/College Practitioner team meetings, and a continuing focus on the work within the College itself. This seems to be a noticeably integrated and purposeful relationship.

47. How is it that interesting and innovative developments pioneered by whatever organisation - are not disseminated and examined? How can we make progress effectively when there is insufficient opportunity to evaluate and build on shared experience?

48. The wide range of responses recorded in § 12 may be seen as further evidence that services (and not just Colleges) develop and perhaps reserve all kinds of expertise which, with more openness and structural opportunities, could be shared. This may be particularly true of, for example, some staff development issues, including the recognition and accreditation of competencies (NVQs) now common to all organisations.

49. It would be difficult to interpret closely how far these responses reverberate to the crucial issues for Colleges identified in the Introduction. But there are some echoes. One of these is the colleges' recognition of the non-traditional learner as an important "market segment" and part of the student body. The immense diversity of responses from different colleges to the same question perhaps illustrates something of the autonomy consequential upon Incorporation - Colleges will be going very much their own individual way. That these 'ways' are by no means set is indicated by the possibilities opened up in the response to the final question. Perhaps colleges, too, are wondering whether they will be eligible for partnership arrangements with Probation Services. Colleges represent a vast range of resources and expertise and it would seem goodwill - there is both useful experience and opportunity here, to explore opening them up further for Probation clients.

CAREERS SERVICE

50. The response rate from Careers Services was the highest of all the agencies questioned: 82%. This may well be because the project shared the rosy glow of credibility from its Careers Service representative. Information has therefore come from every type of area - large rural mixed 'town and country', large cities.

51. Careers services vary widely in their provision for offenders and in a way which illustrates well the two, opposing Equal Opportunities, perspectives on this work. Aspects of this potential debate have already appeared in the responses of FE colleges (See § 18/20) and appear again in (§ 12) about the TECs but it is here in relation to Careers Services that the two views and their very different consequences are most clearly presented.

52. Where offenders/ex-offenders are viewed as part of the overall community for which the agency provides a service, the consequence is that there are no "designated" posts and no offender-specific services. Clearly such agencies do provide a service for some offenders, but it is probably impossible to demonstrate this, as some TECs have come to realise in trying to monitor offender useage of "general" schemes. Issues of confidentiality and disclosure may prevent tracking in a way that might be done with other groups.

53. On the other hand where offenders/ex offenders are seen as in need of 'special services', posts are designated or/and 'specific service delivery' identified and work can be delivered, monitored and demonstrated. [Such a view might be supported by the argument that, since offenders (though by no means a homogeneous group) include many with a range of social educational and economic disadvantages such as positive provision is a necessary compensatory mechanism.]

54. Careers Service experience as reported to this Project correlates exactly with these two views. The three Services expressing the former view have no record of work with offenders; (though the YES/NO answers indicate their willingness and belief that this is done). Perhaps self-evidently where services designate individuals or post(s) with such responsibilities in line with the second view identifiable work with offenders is carried out.

55. As with the responses from FE Colleges those services who did any work of this kind had a substantial involvement, in particular Service 4 (and to some extent 9) working in Young Offender Institutions, and Services 3, 4 6 and 9 which all offered Careers Guidance to Offenders in the community.

56. The wealth of numerical monitoring information provided by careers Services is a feature of these returns. Unfortunately - as previously noted in relation to Probation Services, - it is not clear whether all are "counting the same thing" - for e.g. whether "clients" means clients of the Probation Service or the Careers Service (§ 5.6).

57. However, this is not an issue in examining responses about work in prisons. Clients counted in prisons are prisoners. Careers Services have a statutory responsibility for those under the age of 21 so there is good reason for them to focus on inmates of Young Offenders Institutions. In terms of age eligibility. However it is understood that, unless Careers Services are bought in with a special remit, Careers Services, like TECs, are limited to working with clients from the "home" locality. Services to two are reported here and to two others in the chapter on TECs - but there are seven Young Offenders Institutions in he region. So again the question of equity arises -

for young prisoners in the YOIs not provided with Careers Guidance
for young prisoners in these institutions from areas not served by the Careers guidance
for adult prisoners compared with young prisoners
for offenders with community sentences as distinct from those with custodial ones.

58. The constraints of the existing questionnaire left several matters unexplored, but it is evident that some Careers Services are already well versed in partnership initiatives with criminal justice agencies:- for example the multi-agency Youth Justice project (also referred to by Probation Service Q and by th4e relevant TEC) involving Service 9; the TEC funded "Project Challenge (also described by other agencies) of Service 3, and; the work in YOIs of Service 4 - with prison education funding. Their experience might be usefully shared.

59. For similar reasons it was not possible to investigate the interagency links in which Careers Services are engaged, beyond the simple enquiry about their participation in Local Offender Employment Forums. Three Services affirmed this, Service 1 indicating recent involvement. Services 4 and 9, the other Services involved with such fora, are the most active of all in this area of work. All three of these Careers Services work with the same Probation Service however, other Probation areas have not developed this particular interagency focus, and there is no information about alternative interagency mechanisms in which the other Careers Services active in this work (that is 3 and 6), might have been involved, so it is difficult to assess the importance of this.

60. Key issues in future Careers Service guidance facilities for offenders/ex-offenders are identified as the continuing absence of a remit to provide adult guidance and, the possibilities of charging for services. Two other issues (which have arisen elsewhere) are the difficulties of outcome-related funding in relation to offenders, and the potential challenge to the traditional impartiality and disinterested professional advice of guidance work implicit in certain government schemes and models.

61. Given the relevance and the dominance of the "guidance" model for "front-line" ETE provision Careers Services obviously have a lot to offer, both in direct services for Probation clients and in terms of staff development. However Careers Service contracts have still to be "bid for" (and present workers clearly feel threatened). The market experiences of the Prison Education Service would suggest that there may be painful upheaval ahead here too. It is to be hoped that the good initiatives will not be lost, or useful experience be sunk without trace, as seems to have happened to other work in such situations.

PROVISION BY TECs

62. All TECs responding to this questionnaire had mechanisms for addressing offender/ex-offender issues somewhere in their organisation; but TECs are by no means equally active beyond that point. There was great diversity among the TECs as to which Group should be concerned. The Equal Opportunity Group was named by three TECs but in fact all five TECs found it appropriate that other groups should have this responsibility as well, (or in one case, instead). It is difficult to know whether this represents a lot of opportunities for "a bite of the cherry" - a benefit; or a dilution and confusion of focus:- a disadvantage.

63. In conjunction with subsequent findings it underlines yet again the ambivalence of/and varying attitudes taken by organisations in considering offenders from an Equal Opportunities perspective. For example while, as we have seen, offenders' needs do come to Equal Opportunities Groups in TECs, it also appears that Equal Opportunities policies prevent TEC from involvement in provision exclusively for community-based offenders (§ 4.1), but this does not appear to be a problem in making provision in prisons. Would-be bidders for TEC funding and potential partners would seem to have to tread the maze carefully to arrive at the doorstep with a "welcome" on the mat.

64. However, two TECs had some involvement in community-based work with offenders - one working directly with clients - another with the referring, training and employing organisations. Future developments agreed or under discussion intended two guidance initiatives, and research evaluation of previous work - these involved two TECs - one newly considering work in this area.

65. However, all TECs indicated some links to prisons. Three were providing direct services (Job search skills, guidance, "action planning" etc) two appeared to be involved rather in outreach and course preparation.) Work with prisons also dominated the plans for future developments and involved four of the TECs who responded. Two had, or were looking for TEED funding. The two schemes described in detail seem to illustrate TEC's growing recognition of the problems faced by inmates in *"getting and keeping suitable employment and training"*.

66. The schemes themselves raise a number of questions - many identified before in this report. The one issue specific to TECs, (which would seem to make such work highly problematic for them) is their "boundary" restriction. Both of the two TECs working substantially with YOI inmates indicated that these services were exclusively for prisoners who would be returning to that TEC's own area. One understands the reasons for this - but the Young Offenders will come from many areas. This apparent inequity of opportunity is perhaps handled in ways not described or available to the project.

(TEED funded work - from national development sources is not bounded in this way.)

67. Another issue, also touched on elsewhere (Summary § 21 and Appendix 2) relates to the independence and impartiality seen as the hallmark of guidance by, for example, the Institute of Careers Guidance. The author may have misunderstood some of the details provided about the feasibility project, but it would appear that the same organisation is involved both in the guidance and the provision of the YT training which the "guidee" might take up as a result of that process. Whilst this is not a unique situation there are very real difficulties here where there is well-recognised pressure for certain outcomes to ensure funding continuity.

68. Again, the information given may be incomplete, but it would seem that the Education Departments in these YOIs were not involved in these developments - which otherwise bring together a wide multi-agency interest, both inside and outside the prison. If that is so it is difficult to understand why that expertise and those resources are excluded and raises particular concern for the "client". Since the strength of this initiative might seem to be in its intention to provide a continuous 'bridge' between prison and community, and to promote immediate and supported access into training (or/and education) it would seem wasteful if opportunities for continuity of work begun during imprisonment were missed. The YT work-experience in the community is clearly of enormous value (and attraction) to these young men, is it totally divorced from the NVQ learning, IT practice and basic skills development (for example) gained inside?

69. Both this and many other schemes reported here are distinguished by their multi-agency approach - in community as well as prison work. The "research and evaluation" focus (§ 7.2) on one such project suggests that TECs may have useful experience of all stages of "working together". How might this be shared?

70. Altogether TECs reported 16 current, planned or "under discussion" projects with, or relating to offenders. Of these, nine, (all in prisons) had "guiding and accessing" into training or/and employment as their focal activity. Guidance, referral, and advice is (has been or will be) offered somewhere by every kind of organisation responding to this survey. A similar perception led Paul Davies at Lancaster University, to write, in a recent article on "Careers Guidance Today" "the guidance scene suddenly looks very cluttered and it is little wonder that TECs have recently been issued with guidelines on how to map guidance provision in their areas". Cluttered? Complementary? or in Competition?. How do services manage these boundaries and share expertise and experience?

LEAS RESPONSES

71. The response rate from Local Authorities was the lowest of all the agencies questioned, three out of the eleven possible, replied, or 27.3%. This must surely reflect the negative changes of role, depletion of staff, and limitation of responsibility for post 16 learners indicated by these three respondents as well as the new priorities involved in restructuring, and continuing concerns for pre-16 education, as a result of the incorporation of the FE colleges?

72. The immediate impression from reading these replies was that here was a response quite different in kind from the others. In interviews people often show their feelings. Respondents to questionnaires less so. The sub-texts of many of the practitioner interviews about staff development - with teachers, voluntary organisation works, prison education co-ordinators, was their passionate commitment to and belief in education and training for offenders.

73. Probation practitioners spoke in scorn and despair of their personal experiences of some responses from some educationalists. Here the accusation and the pessimism are directed towards the Probation Service. Again this is strongly personal experience. It is perhaps a relevant reminder of what most of us will have observed at some time or other: that innovative, marginal work of any kind is often pushed forward and dependent on an individual in one place, at one time. Hensman also wrote "Much that is or is not done appears to be the result of personal interest of staff in education and/or probation fields". So, when things seem to be going wrong the individual feels that keenly too.

74. A strange aspect of this is that the College referred to and involved by the LEA in the work, also responded to the FE questionnaire, and presents a very positive image of active work and relationship.

75. Officers from all three authorities have previously been involved in regional activity, but perhaps the willingness to respond to this questionnaire reflects the fact that each authority has been involved in exclusively committing resources to provision for offenders. Not that they were the only LEAs to have done so. The LEA in the region with a past reputation for such work did not reply to the questionnaire and information from the relevant division of Probation Service R refers only to present activities. However that authority's Bridging the Gap project is referred to both in the FE College and Prison Education responses. Similarly the contribution of the local LEA to an ETE project is recorded by Probation Service Q. What characterises all these responses and perhaps lies behind the silences, is Authority's anxieties about, or declining ability to make, a substantial contribution to this work - whatever their goodwill.

76. The responses have several other features in common. In all three authorities the provision made for offenders consisted of

adult basic education, and/or job search skills and some guidance. (No details are given for the Residential Centre in which Authority As is involved).

77. All three authorities also demonstrate recognition of the specific/additional learning needs of offenders - not only in their response to the direct question, but also by describing facilitative aspects of other services they provide (including concessionary fees). Again these perceptions match closely with those of Probation Officers interviewed for the project.

78. Two of the three authorities will continue to deliver Schedule 2 work - at community-based centres and community colleges - but it is also likely that where this responsibility is now with an FE College, that College may also make use of other, accessible, premises, if it feels that this will be more effective.

79. Beyond these there are perhaps significant differences. Only Authority A reports on joint systematic monitoring (C records monitoring as "casual", B does not respond). Only A therefore was able to indicate numbers of users, for example.

80. Whilst all three authorities indicate some practical links with criminal justice agencies (for example provision of information about "post 16 provision" to Services and to individual Officers, "open days", informal links) only Authority A recorded past or potential involvement in a multi-agency forum ("*TEC and other voluntary agencies, Probation Service*") with a future view to "*identify further funding*".

81. Only A recorded either making a staff development contribution to Probation Services, or providing any kind of staff development related to criminal justice issues to its own staff. Only Authority A responded as a multi-agency team.

82. It may be that these factors are associated with Authority A's relatively upbeat assessment of its future activity in this area, where, in spite of having to record "*reduced input*" from the Senior Officer concerned; loss of Urban Programme funding, it has staff of "*its own*" in the post-16 sector, it can still write of positive developments at the residential centre and the "*potential*" for inter agency links and partnership funding.

83. Clearly the officer completing the report for Authority B is pressed for time; and depressed by the experiences he is recording. It would be unwise to assume therefore that all the blank answers mean "No" or "None". Whatever may, or may not have been provided, offered or promoted "*the response from the Probation Service has been poor*". Whilst this may be interpreted as a poor use of the provision, i.e. lack of referrals by Probation Officers; other answers (see § 2.2 and § 7.1) might suggest a lack of Probation co-operation in the making of the provision or of poor interest in what is provided. The result is that there is no will to engage in "what next". This too contrasts strongly with the college perception and plans. Authority C records similar consequences "*limited in ability ... to contribute*" but links this firmly to the new organisational and funding position for the authority "*our present financial position means we have scant resources for anything other than a minimal level of involvement in Post 16 education and my time is fully spoken for in delivering that*". (See also § 13.6).

84. The responses in this section indicate that the implementation of the Further and higher Education Act is likely to have negative consequences in terms of an LEA's ability to make provision specifically for offenders, or to give such concerns much focus. However good past shared experiences clearly encourage the pursuit of further involvement.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

85. Voluntary organisations are very closely involved with Probation Services in delivering ETE Services to clients. In particular they seem - (in prisons and in the community) to be responsible for the guidance and access element of work which then enables clients to make use of what other organisations provide - employers, training agents, colleges etc. They therefore have an essential role in the ETE delivery - and, (particularly in prisons) share this role with many other agencies - Prison Education Departments, Careers Services, Bridging Guidance Workers etc.

86. Workers have very varied experiences of and views on partnership. Many positive aspects of such partnerships are indicated for client and worker. However, there is clearly great concern, that, whilst partnerships may have great potential often in practice insufficient time and consideration is given to their planning and especially to their ongoing support, and the equality implicit in the term "partnership" is not always a structural part.

87. Some see new or revised funding arrangements as a particular threat. These concerns are very understandable at a time when even the charitable status of voluntary organisations is being called into question. The perceived difficulties (and advantages) of partnerships are not of course exclusive to voluntary organisations, but have been recognised throughout this report.

PRISON EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

Introduction

88. The provision of education in penal establishments began in 1823 so that prisoners could be taught to read their Bibles. Since then there has been a wide array of arguments offered to justify its place in penal systems. These range from prisoners' own views. "Prisons take away your dignity and your pride. It's the courses which give you back your confidence" (Judith Ward quoted in Guardian Education). "I only really started taking art seriously in prison. ... I hope going to College will keep me out of trouble" (Shane Wakelin quoted in TES). A recent Radio 4 programme "Selling Snow to Eskimos" reinforced the way in which education and training in prison can improve offenders already slim chances of employment. Responses to this project, from prisons and elsewhere, reflect the view that education may at least be a better option than idleness.

89. Prison Education, funded by the Home Office - has been the responsibility of Local Education Authorities since 1944. In practice it has been largely provided through Further Education Colleges providing (or supporting) a very wide range of opportunities. In the 1991 National Prisoner Survey of 4000 inmates, 95% were aware that the prison offered education and training facilities (not a narrow definition). Of these 47% attended such classes (with higher proportions of women and young offenders). Nearly half of those not attending said they would like to. A current small study by Goldsmiths College into Ex-Offenders Perceptions of Prison Education is likely to replicate this latter finding and record a recognition by 90% of that sample that education across the whole range of provision was important (82%) or very important (58%) for them as offenders.

90. Education in prison has very positive attractions which may have little to do with its overt purposes - providing an opportunity to get out of the cell, to be with other prisoners or have contact with outsiders; providing mental or practical material to take back to the cell, providing the opportunity to be with women. Whatever the original motivation many prisoners clearly come to enjoy and value their actual educational experience and achievements. Continuing education or training "on the out" however is highly problematic without support, when the ex-prisoner is already often faced with a cluster of practical, social and personal problems for example and when the sources of information about courses, training agents, grants etc. may be a hundred miles away.

91. All this is essential background to the assumption that lies behind this aspect of Bridgebuilding work (and therefore this part of the project). That where offenders have already been motivated, have had positive experiences and gained recognisable achievements in education and training in prisons, there should be transitional and supportive strategies to bridge from prisons into the community and enable continuity and progression where this can be useful. Hensman writes "The evidence appears to be that educational progress in prison is rarely carried on outside unless such process" (i.e. bridging) "is

embarked on. Where it is ... perhaps one third of prisoners benefiting from education inside can be 'hooked' and enabled to continue on release".

92.1 What then are the views about, and the activities to provide this bridge, in the region.

The initial recognition is of the extent to which the category of the prison/prisoner determines these arrangements, and this would seem an inevitable restraint. Thus an 'open' prison can allow its inmates to use the computer guidance facilities at a local careers centre (A), a high security unit clearly cannot (C). A high security, long term prison is unlikely to discharge prisoners to their homes, but to a lower security prison to prepare for release, so it will not provide "pre-release" courses (C and F).

92.2 But in some cases two similar establishments seem to have very different patterns. For example Establishments B and L are both YOIs, but while the HIA of Establishment B indicated "little call" for guidance on education and training provision post-custody, the Education Department of Establishment L had recently appointed a Careers Officer for this task for one day per week. The HIA of Prison B felt that accreditation might "spark interest" but reported that there were no NVQ courses and that such courses were not suitable for a short-stay population. Establishment L already has one course (in Industrial Cleaning) and two others are being prepared (Motor Mechanics and Welding). Is this a true difference of provision, or does it reflect the source of information? In one case the HIA and in the other the providing college and Prison Education Department? [But HIAs are taking over responsibility for the delivery of the education contract].

92.3 An attempt was made to check from the information provided whether other establishments within the same category were giving similar, or different, replies when they come from different sources. The result is inconclusive since there is only one other category of prison for which information comes from these two diverse sources. In the case of the long-term prisons (C and F) the responses appear to be congruent.

93. The overall impact of these responses is however, yet again, of enormous diversity. Where the above restraints allow almost all establishments are involved in the full range of transitional activities, but this commonality is almost buried under the differences in terms of

- availability to inmates
- the degree of education department involvement or/and responsibility
- the funding sources and community organisations involved.

94. Sentence planning, is the first example of this. Some departments were involved in week-long induction programmes associated with which sentence plan, for another a Sentence Planning Board, for another "brief interviewing". One prison does not seem to address education at all in the sentence plan, one prison is said "not yet to be into" sentence planning. Criteria making sentence-planning part of an inmate's prison experience seem to vary arbitrarily.

The resulting plans, where education is concerned may be very specific "a contracted timetable" for example, with built in reviews. However, (apart from such negotiated changes) although the inmate is expected to conform to this plan (or be penalised) for the prison establishment it is a "compact" which can be changed "if circumstances demand".

Probation Officers (Probation: § 22) and Co-ordinators spoke of the directly and indirectly destructive effects of such changes where prisoners are moved off to another prison without any regard for this compact and the positive ongoing work.

95. Pre-release and inmate development courses are clearly an area of conflict as well as co-operation - with departments speaking of "running" them, or "multi-disciplinary team delivery" and of specialised input to them, but also of anxieties about the role of Prison Officers (§ 7.2) or in one case of their possessiveness (§ 17.1). However by whatever involvement education and training issues do figure in most courses of these kinds.

Whilst figures given for the number of such courses in a year may seem to indicate the inequity of opportunity so often noticed throughout this project, they may in this case be more the result of differing release figures for these establishments.

There are interesting references here to joint Probation/Education working on offending behaviour - a useful reminder that learning processes may be useful beyond easily recognisable "ETE" provision.

96. Opportunities for inmates day-parole to attend courses are understandably linked to risk categories, but, beyond that the availability of this particular facility as a "normal" thing seems to depend on custom and practice of individual Co-ordinators, and now, the departments' abilities to pay the fees. Both these situations also relate to Governor's past or present support to such activities. The authors of "Unlocking Potential"* suggest regular meetings between students/inmates and governors as a way of creating involvement and understanding.

*See bibliography

Some departments seem to have found external funding support for inmate students (A and G), most paid, but could only "afford" this for limited numbers, although more prisoners might be eligible and able (D,M,E). A matter for concern is the withdrawal of fee waivers for prisoners, when these same people would qualify for fee waivers and concessions on release. An alternative view is that the "Home Office should undertake to pay all college fees at the full rate once an inmate is accepted at an outside College. Without this it will be impossible to enrol inmates because of the recent changes in funding to the Colleges" ("Unlocking Potential").

97. Establishment practice again varied widely in the provision of guidance facilities for education and training post custody.

Some education departments had well-structured internal arrangements e.g. The Careers Officer now attached to all three establishments J and K and L funded by the education department. Others had long-standing links to external services - for example the Bridging the Gap service. In two establishments this was the major provider of such services, other departments made occasional use. Two departments made use of non-statutory organisations (H and G) in one case funded by the department - the other source of funding unclear. One department was able to make use of community resources (A). Other evidence to this project shows the contribution of TECs and Employment Services funded partnerships. There was also considerable evidence that Education Co-ordinators and staff played a very important role in facilitating and supporting these guidance activities - often with extensive referral networks of their own.

98. Job clubs and directly employment related courses and schemes were seen as relevant where prisons released prisoners to the community. In Establishment H there would be education department funding and partnership with Employment Services, K and J indicate co-operation with Prison Officers. Several services had such facilities planned. It was not clear how closely such employment-related and education and training guidance schemes worked together.

99. In the introduction to this section, and in issues raised by other agencies (notably Probation (§ 12 and § 13), FE Colleges (§ 10.2), TEC (§ 8.2 and § 8.3)) there has been recognition of the importance of support for offenders or ex-prisoners who are engaged in education and or training activities, and especially in the immediate post-custody period. Education, training and especially guidance workers can offer specialist support but Probation Officers also have a very significant role and information provided by education or training departments in prisons might seem to offer positive material for further work to the Probation Officer in drawing up formal supervision plans or even in informal discussion.

100. This role for Probation Officers has been underlined by the 1991 Criminal Justice Act. Until that Act the majority of prisoners would be released to voluntary Probation Supervision, since that Act Probation Officers have responsibility for a period of statutory post-custodial supervision for anyone whose original sentence is for twelve months imprisonment, or more. (Young offenders, those sentenced to life imprisonment, and certain others have always been - and still are - released under such arrangements).

101. It was a matter of some surprise then that Hensman's observations about the Probation Service/ Prison Education interface (outside the prison) are still true today (See Hensman § 12.4-12.6) and encouraging that some Probation Officers (see Section III Staff Development) asked for opportunities to learn more about what Prison educators are doing.

102. Whilst education, training and regime officers in penal establishments may all be concerned to develop instruction and work-place practice for the achievement of NVQ competences it would appear that some inmates and some Probation Officers have no faith in their currency or credibility. Is this partly that both may "**deny the good of any part of the custodial experience**"? (Hensman 12.5) or are there other causes for concern about the quality of training, the validity of competences or employer attitudes to what seems a most positive development?

103. The working lives and practices of prison educators have been affected in the last year, perhaps more than those of any other agency in this survey.

Some of those changes are seen as potentially beneficial - the closer involvement of 'home' Probation Officers with "their" students under the Criminal Justice Act arrangements for more post custodial supervision; the opportunities Employment Services money might open up; and improvements related to developments of "positive" regimes.

104. There were concerns however - In particular there was anger as well as dismay at the way in which the needs of the regime could so arbitrarily override the needs of the prisoner. "*What's the point of all this?*" (the work of the department and the transitional arrangements) "*when Allocations Unit can snuff it all out?*". The issue of continuity - from inside to outside - but equally from prison to prison, does seem to be critical.

105. Whilst there is ample evidence of good working relationships in the multi-agency organism which is a prison - there were also anxieties about the role conflict (§ 7.2) about integration (§ 30) and about openness (§ 27.4).

106. However, perhaps understandably, the impact of change in their own organisation was the one most keenly felt. There is considerable concern

- about "**The balance between economy and standards**" (Williams 2 op cit.) and the effect of immediate cuts to F/T staff;
- about the consequences for individual inmates and for curriculum development as a whole of their new perceptions of insularity and necessary defensiveness;
- about their changing relationship to the regime and how these relationships may best be managed. In this context the very supportive views of HIAs are particularly important.

107. Interagency arrangements for this work would seem more complex than those identified for work in the community. Prison Education departments though important do not have such a clear "prime" role as the community Probation Officers in that model. Prisoners (who have already had positive experiences of education and training) are more likely themselves to take on initiative than their less experienced community counterparts. They may choose to involve Prison Educators, bridging Guidance or Careers Workers, Probation Officers, Prison Officers, Job Club workers, or Chaplains, for example, in their search for progression or continuity on release.

It is well recognised that this work and these links might best be made before release to minimise time spent unconstructively in the first weeks/months when offenders are at high risk of re-offending.

108. This survey shows that there are various agencies and strategies already providing an assessment, information and guidance service - for some prisoners. However it is not clear how the interagency model develops from this point. For example how it links into the Probation Service model previously outlined and how it can also be involved in support and evaluation as well as initial services. The difficulties for such interagency work are of course exacerbated by the geographical distances, the uncertain "ownership" (outcomes might be thought to be as important to regimes or prison education departments as to Probation Services) and (again) by the diversity of organisations involved in such transitional arrangements. Prison education changes which appear to reduce their contribution do not look helpful, unless the new organisational arrangements and Through-Care requirements actually increase regime responsibility and investment for these "exit services".

OBJECTIVE 2

**STAFF TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND
SUPPORT STRATEGIES
MET AND UNMET NEEDS**

Findings and issues arising

OBJECTIVE 2

Staff training, staff development and support - met and unmet needs in relation to education, training and guidance for offenders.

STARTING POINT : PROBATION SERVICES AND INITIAL TRAINING

1. First enquiries sprung from a recognition that Probation Officers have a major role to play - certainly with offenders in the development of these opportunities. The finding in HMI Report 1992 "that pre-professional qualifying courses were remembered as containing little reference to unemployment" was noted together with the subsequent recommendation that "The Home Office should enquire into the quality of education about issues related to the employment and training of offenders provided on sponsored pre-professional and in-service training courses for probation officers and seek improvements" HMI Probation "Offenders into Work", January 1992.

2. Three regional providers of initial Probation Training in the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) were therefore contacted. Bearing in mind the Statement of Requirements for that training, discussion was initially focussed on three elements in these requirements which might include reference to employment or/and education or/and training issues. These were to do with

- i assessment of clients
- ii making use of community resources in the development of supervision programmes
- iii relationships with those resource agencies.

3. All three sources indicated that unemployment among offenders and employment/training education issues are not programmed to appear specifically or systematically in the Dip SW course, but

- (a) might come up from practice placements
- (b) are, they believed, reflected in the broader elements of the training.

4.1 The tutor from Course 1 explained that their current course was now less social policy and theory and more practice-led. Two examples of this were

- (a) the fora in which students shared their placement experiences - (a mechanism also adopted by Course 3).

and

- (b) sessions from a range of external "witnesses" included in the course either directly, or via student interview and report back. (The author contributed in this way this autumn).

4.2 Course 2 had no such mechanisms but in common with Courses 1 and 3 required each student to cover the same issues wherever their placement took place. In all three courses it was felt that students on placement would have some practical experience of employment, training and education strategies within a criminal justice agency.

5.1 All three agencies felt that elements relevant to ETE for offenders were tackled to some extent; in theory, but in a "broad brush way". From course 3 came the description of a Module on assessment skills called "Exploring Problems" this set out the skills needed in "enabling people to tell their stories" but the focus was on problems.

5.2 The tutor from Course 2 explained that whilst students work extensively on these identification and interaction skills it was to help their clients think about suitable programmes to tackle the problem of their offending behaviour, a focus required by National Standards. Employment, education, training might be raised as just one among many issues.

5.3 The Course 1 tutor underlined the "empowerment" implicit in the social work approach and the need to avoid raising yet another apparent failure for the client when 'education' was assessed, and pointed out that the Criminal Justice Act did not require POs to address these issues.

6.1 Use of community resources was a topic for all three courses. - One module on Course 3 required students to "investigate available resources and employ them in the user's interests", and "to seek out appropriate guidance when uncertain" (though the uncertainty was related to equal opportunities issues) - The student was also required to "develop a wide repertoire of roles in the service of the client" including "Supporter Adviser and Educator".

6.2 Another module required the students to "define the social work task in relation to other professionals and volunteers and explain this task clearly" and to "understand the value to the service-user of a multi-disciplinary approach". The course tutor spoke of the intention that new Probation Officers should recognise that they are part of a network of agencies which may offer different expertise and a different relationship to the client.

6.3 The tutor for Course 2 spoke of the "huge debate for a PO in deciding what is appropriate to work on himself and what to pass on to other agencies". He surmised that there were situations, for example with people released from custody where reluctant clients would be best linked in to a "non-criminal justice agency".

6.4 The Course 1 tutor wanted students to understand that they "didn't have to do everything themselves", and to do so wasn't best for the clients. They should be able to find the "best person to deliver" - though this did not mean farming everything out to another "expert" - but getting the balance right.

7. The complexities of interagency relationship (ownership, contract, partnership) and the processes (referral, brokerage "handing over") were well understood but "did not much come up". All three tutors spoke of the course pressure to arrive at basic competences. In-service training might be the appropriate place for ETE focussed work in "relation to local resources and practices". Another tutor spoke of the new Probation Officers' "resignation to the fact of offender unemployment".

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

8. Without fuller information from course providers and tutors it would be impossible to comment comprehensively on these courses. However it would seem that unemployment and strategies to address it are not, as yet, programmed into these courses, instead there is reliance upon placements to give experience of unemployment issues and employment, training and education strategies. Where existing practice is strong and positive this would seem to provide good models and a useful focus. Where practice is less well developed there seems a danger that placement experience can perpetuate the status quo unless there is a built-in opportunity, in the course, for students to share and evaluate their placement experiences, especially where specialist 'invitees' can contribute as well.

9. In looking at the way the courses deal with elements in probation practice which may be important to this work, it is well understood that the focus will have to be on the competencies required for e.g. for work to National Standards. This is the priority. However, from the perspective of this project, there is concern if Probation Officers interpret "assessment" only as problem-focussed, if employment training and education issues remain marginalised because 'not required by the Criminal Justice Act', if discussion about interagency work is limited to the 'why' and does not explore the practicalities of 'how' or the even more problematic interface between "own" and "other agency" values.

10. It is easy to make such queries - when one does not have the responsibility of deciding "what is to be left out". Perhaps the "substantial HO review" of the course mentioned by one respondent will examine these, among other, issues.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

Accredited Training

11. But those providing training for practitioners in the fields of education and training also have responsibilities in this work, as noted in various reports: "Training for all education and Probation staff is essential if clients' educational needs are to be correctly assessed and appropriate referrals made. Training should also include legislation on particular offences and the resulting restrictions on occupational choices". Recommendations of the Final Report "Identifying the Educational Needs of Ex-offenders and Probationers" EOI Liverpool 1993.

"Training bodies in the education and probation services should address ... training needs both - in the techniques of interagency work and to overcome some of the professional barriers". Report of the joint Education/Probation Bramley Grange Conference 1990

12. Two organisations in the region which provided (A) In-service and (B) pre-service training for teachers or trainers etc. in the 16+ sector gave information about their practice. Both organisations worked with mature students, (as well as recent graduates), whose expectations of work and work experiences were related to Training Agencies, private training organisations, work-based training, as well as FE colleges, Adult Education and in one case prison education.

13. In neither course were offenders or offender-issues specifically written in to the curriculum. In both courses however a lot of attention was given to the barriers students/trainees (and would-be students and trainees) might experience: in organisational, cultural, social, personal etc. terms. *"The issue is to change the organisation to meet the needs of the student and not vice versa"*.

14. Both courses made extensive use of their students own experiences and practice: which might or might not contribute an offender focus. In Course B this fortuitous range of student interest/experience was supplemented by a Conference Week - when students elected to attend (and write up for their portfolios) workshops and lectures etc. representing a wide range of agencies providing, using or working alongside educational or training services:- e.g. a counselling service; a project working with unemployed adults; a drug-addiction agency.

15. Students on Course B might also have the opportunity, via a "Working with People" approach to develop their role, not so much as teachers of "a subject", but as workers using educational resources and processes (whatever the subject) as a means of empowerment for individuals or groups.

16. Questioned about the inclusion of issues related to interagency work in the course curriculum, both course directors replied affirmatively - though again doubted whether the interface between education training and criminal justice organisations was specifically addressed. However Course A students had examined the nature of linkages with other organisations in general and some of the effects of the marginality which characterise much interagency work. Course B modularised part of its programme based on roles that the student will take, e.g.: "the teacher or trainer as member of an organisation" - interagency issues would arise in this context.

17. Both directors underlined that Equal Opportunities considerations were a part of every aspect of their courses: marketing, access, quality, evaluation etc.

18. As a result of the discussions with the project the Director of Course A wanted to raise the issue with her team, and Course B had invited a contribution to its Conference Week.

SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

19. The general context within Further Education and training organisations has been described in the FE Section § 18/19. It would appear that on the whole practitioner training reflects this. Neither course specifically programmes or assures an address to any offender issues. But both embed equal opportunity issues throughout the course. In both there is the possibility that offenders will be specified - but this approach has the same difficulties as identified in the Probation Training Dip SW course: it is dependent on relevant student experience or placement. This leaves Rehabilitation of offenders and disclosure issues for example untouched apart from whatever input may go into Course B's multiagency Conference Week.

20. There are other additional concerns here, that because of stereo-typing, the issues related to integrating offenders into "mainstream" education may be non-visible amongst the broader concerns for all non-traditional groups; equally, the development of the "Working with People" approach for the non-traditional learner, with its focus on process and empowerment* ("whatever-the-subject") which may well be appropriate with some offenders may not be as well understood by other professionals. It is not clear how widely the courses tackled interagency working-practices and problems though some are mentioned.

21. There is obviously a very relevant basic curriculum here and it was heartening that the courses can perhaps be flexible enough to take on this additional element.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Some organisational responses

22. Information about current in-service training and staff development was also provided in written responses by Probation Services, FE Colleges, Careers Services and LEAs.

Probation Services

Several questions to Probation Services touched on the need for and provision of training and staff development for staff, relative to ETE work.

23. Since it might be considered that the development and implementation of policy in areas not traditionally covered by Social Work Training would have implications for staff development and training. Services were asked what they offered, or made available to any staff given new ETE responsibilities.

Service P made no response.

Service Q had developed a comprehensive training strategy on ETE issues (see below § 24) for all relevant personnel and Seniors with ETE responsibilities "would attend relevant ETE training".

Service R explained that since, until October 1992, there had been only two officers (the Employment officer and the Education Liaison officer) with such responsibilities "the training facilities did not provide any courses specifically relating to ETE". Since then, with the extension of ETE budget, and an increase of staff so involved, the Employment officer had co-ordinated a training-needs analysis and relevant provision was being negotiated in terms of content and budget.

24. Information was provided by each of the three Services about how it identified and met ETE related training and staff development needs for

- (a) its own non-ETE workers or/and
- (b) those involved with but not employed by the Probation Service in delivering ETE services.

24.1 Service P responded that the draft of their "Employment policy (sic) includes provision for this". The Service would need to provide training on employment issues for POs - such training could be one of the needs annually identified. So far the Service had been involved in a one-day in-house event "with the help of NACRO, Employment Services, TEC and the Careers Service". These were the organisations the ACOP Employment Committee had advised them to contact.

24.2 Service Q made available a recent 3 page paper on a Draft Training Strategy, "Work with Unemployed Offenders", and also alluded to specific issues for training in responses to other questions (e.g. evaluation strategies).

The paper identified two strands in the Service training strategy:-

*See also Tim Evans "The Specific Educational Needs of Ex-Offenders" p.43

1. training for potential, existing and newly qualified POs and those working for the Probation Service with specialist ETE functions
2. training for staff in key employment/training organisations outside the service.

Such training was necessary because *"numerous enquiries/requests made regarding these issues suggest that Probation staff are ill equipped to raise and address issues with clients, sentencers and relevant employment/training organisations. It is also evident that key employment/training organisations commonly do not have policies and systems which effectively take account of the particular employment/training needs of those with an offending background or criminal record"*.

24.3 The paper then went on to identify in some detail the aims and objectives of proposed training and to record what training has already taken place since 1991 for a range of workers:-

- (a) outside organisations
- (b) mainstream Probation staff
- (c) new Probation staff
- (d) potential Probation staff - input to Sheffield University DipSW course
- (e) hostel staff
- (f) Employment specialists (Probation staff and partnerships).

The content of these courses was not described.

Workers from this Service also attended courses provided by such national organisations in this field as Bridgebuilders.

24.4 Service R reported that there was a divisional training needs analysis but that these needs were probably not being addressed systematically yet. The ETE practitioners group had been asked to look at this and try to establish common needs in the area of ETE work, so that these could be provided for on an area wide basis. The Training Officer would make use of other organisations - such as Bridgebuilders - for such work, where appropriate. Only workers directly employed by the Probation Service would be eligible for these training courses, although non-Probation Service employees working with the Service might be offered "Probation-service familiarisation" courses.

Probation Officers in Service S could not remember ever having had any staff development in any way touching these issues.

FE Colleges

25. FE colleges were similarly asked how they identified and met staff needs for training and staff development in relation to offender/Criminal Justice issues. In response to this there was, from some colleges, something of a denial that staff had any such needs.

"These needs would be fed ... would be incorporated" (College 23) my emphasis
"If such issues arose (they would go) through the normal INSET procedures" (College 6) my emphasis

26. Another College response reflected the stance that 'offenders/ex-offenders' raised no special issues: *"No such specific provision. Awareness-raising sessions on Equal Opportunities generally"* College 20. And another suggested that no specific measures were needed because there were so few offender students.

27. For two of the three colleges responsible for Prison Education neither the need, nor the response to it were problematic, though in college 31 the respondent seemed largely to be thinking of those staff with direct responsibilities in this area

"We have utilised the skills of staff based in penal establishments" (College 12)
"Attendance at Bridgebuilders Seminars/workshops. Regular attendance at Probation Centres" (College 31).

Neither of these Colleges indicated what was done.

28. From two colleges there was perhaps acknowledgement that this might be yet another area for change

"Currently not an issue or priority" (College 8) (my emphasis)

and whilst college 11 had affirmed that there was

"not significant potential clientele to warrant any specific measure"

it had added "as yet" to the end of the statement (my emphasis).

College 1 asked for change

"we would be open to suggestions for staff development/awareness raising".

Three colleges did not answer at all.

Careers Service

29. Five of the 9 services providing information about Careers Service work with offenders indicated positive action in the area of training and staff development.

30.1 As work in the YOIs to which she is attached developed, the Careers Adviser in Service 4 began to identify training needs of the "home" service, specially *"in relation to clarifying rights and responsibilities of advisers and individual clients"*. Liaison with the local Probation Employment specialist, and a voluntary organisation associated locally with ETE work led to their putting together a two day Training Session. Currently the worker is producing guidelines on work with offenders, and an associated training package for all staff in her Careers Service.

30.2 Service 6 made use of various sources of expertise:

"We use resources from NACRO and other sources with individual clients. We have occasional information sessions for all staff from agencies such as Probation. A smaller group of officers have developed expertise as a result of their specific links/caseloads - this is shared with colleagues both formally and informally".

30.3 Service 9 recorded

"We are working on a new policy document about working with offenders which deals with our advice to young people on whether they should disclose and whether we should disclose to training providers/employers - this is passing through the management approval stage".

30.4 The other Services (10 and 7) indicated that there were guidelines for staff on confidentiality, disclosure of offences and the rehabilitation of offenders act, and that these were provided for all staff.

Service 10 added that

"no specific training ... has been requested or offered".

TECs

31. Because TECs were not seen as having a direct responsibility for practitioners, they were not asked this question.

LEAs

32. Only one of the LEA respondents was involved in training or staff development relative to this area of work.

32.1 Authority A had been able to

1. contribute to training/staff development for Probation Service personnel.
2. provide courses on control and restraint for teaching staff at the residential centre.

Staff at that centre *"identified their own development needs and were currently undertaking a year long course on change"*.

Since the implementation of the FHE Act this LEA said that it no longer had control or responsibility for any staff of "its own" in the 16+ sector.

32.2 Authority C said it had not been involved in any relevant training *"at all"*, and certainly would not be in the future as *"other than awards staff we have virtually no direct employees in this sector"*.

Authority B did not reply.

Prison Education Departments

33. Because questions about "transitional activities" in prisons were not directed to those departments but to the colleges involved there is no separate institutional response about staff development in relation to this aspect of work with offenders.

Voluntary Organisations

34. Voluntary organisations play an important part in providing training - usually in partnership with a Probation Service, but also with Careers and TECs - for workers in their own and these organisations. Equal opportunities, Rehabilitation of Offenders, Basic Defence, monitoring strategies, and the recruitment and training of volunteers were all given as specific examples of this area of work by two voluntary organisations. Some had opportunities for training provided by the statutory partner, all had opportunities within their own organisation, though this did not necessarily meet their needs.

Summary

35. These returns demonstrate immense variety in organisations' perceptions of the training and staff development needs of their staff in this area of work.

Whilst some organisations (for example some FE Colleges, some Careers Services) do not perceive any need for any "offender-specific" staff development, other services have highly structured programmes. Organisations within individual sectors vary from one another. Thus Probation Service P would focus on employment issues, Probation Service R is developing provision based on a training-needs analysis, Probation S workers had nothing on this and Service Q had a structured programme. However, whilst it was clear that in the interests of interagency working Service Q invited other relevant organisations (such as colleges) to participate in its training provision it was not clear whether those organisations were also asked to contribute to its training.

Careers Services had most consistently recognised the staff development implications of work with offenders - but then made very different provision.

PRACTITIONER VIEWS

Some practitioner views on met and unmet training, staff development and support needs in relation to education training and guidance for offenders.

36. The following account records views offered to the author in semi-structured interviews with practitioners or groups of practitioners employed by colleges, Probation Services, Careers Service, voluntary organisations and Prison Education Departments in the region. In all 20 people contributed something in this way. There is no claim whatever that they represent their organisations. But they do illustrate something of what workers may see as important as distinct from the organisations which train or employ them.

37. The views expressed, when analysed, appear to spring from three perceptions:-

- A. Workers' experience of useful training or staff development, or professional support already provided, or their own perceived needs.
- B. Workers' views on training or staff development that others needed.
- C. Workers' views on needs for shared opportunities.

38. A. Needs described (or staff development already usefully received) by workers in non-criminal justice organisations included:

i general awareness raising about offender needs and offender issues - with more specificity than general Equal Opportunities training.

This was particularly stressed from a "mainstream" college/training perspective where specific tutor difficulties had been experienced.

- when a student, embarrassed into silence in an "ice breaker" exercise, later explained that his 'interest in the subject' had begun in prison.
- when a tutor knew that a student had a Probation Officer, who had referred her and encouraged her. But the student did not mention it to the tutor.
- when a student did not want to claim examination certificates in case they evidenced his prison experience.

However it was also noted that "offenders may be invisible - and why not" - "we don't have enough (offenders) to be able to give time to it".

ii specific training about aspects of the criminal justice system, so that workers could understand the language, situations and (perhaps concept) of offenders/students (and professionals) within that system

- e.g. sentencing
young offender practice and issues
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act/disclosure
special groups - e.g. Rule 43.

iii specific skills training

- e.g. counselling skills
handling violence
setting boundaries etc.

There was close overlap here between the perceptions of workers in non criminal justice organisations about their own needs and what criminal justice organisations workers wanted them to have, although group (c) above was identified entirely by non criminal justice workers as "own" needs, (met and unmet).

39. B. There was rather less common ground between the very few needs identified for themselves by criminal justice organisations in this area of work and those ascribed to them by others. However there were two education and training issues mentioned by both.

(a) Training/staff development about prison education : recent curriculum developments and current procedures/activity etc. Probation Officers felt that they had no need of similar knowledge and overview about the work of colleges, training agencies in the community as they could make use of a "liaison person" "links worker" for specifics in relation to specific clients.

- (b) Awareness raising around issues of offenders' barriers to education and training:- motivation, assessment, support of all kinds etc. The "liaison workers" in some of these settings also gave some value in belonging to a network.

Other workers who were involved in delivering training, job search skills, guidance or education provision, sometimes to offenders, were themselves concerned that workers in criminal justice organisations should have greater understanding of educational processes and values.

i Workers from two different agencies focussed on the processes involved in adult basic education (communication and life skills, numeracy and survival skills). It was suggested that there was potential for uncertainty, suspicion or even conflict where, for example Probation Offices, were unaware of the "self-determining nature" of this curriculum which developed according to client/ students' perceived needs (which might be different from what others perceived for them) and "empowered" students in unexpected ways. One of these agencies had provided such training.

ii Two other workers, independently, argued a need for criminal justice workers to have training to enable them to see that *"doing something (which doesn't give a qualification, or appear to have direct relevance to work) but which gives the person a range of personal skills, raises all kinds of issues, provides a group-work opportunity and improves that person's confidence can, at some stages, be more useful than going down a narrow job-directed education or training course"*.

40. C. Expressed needs for opportunities to share in training, staff development and professional support across the agencies fell very clearly into two categories.

- (a) Three quarters of the contributors mentioned the usefulness of some sort of "network" or "fora". This was seen sometimes

i as basically an intelligence-sharing strategy (including telephone contact)

- providing information about course availability, training agency provision, grants and fees etc. etc. for immediate practical purposes

but most workers recognised also the usefulness of a network for

ii sharing experience, reviewing work in a locality, bringing in new expertise, examining successful projects, looking at common issues, giving support (see below)

- e.g. a) for prisons in close proximity to have contact with local providers
b) for guidance workers (whether from Careers Services, Job Clubs, or educational providers) working with offenders across the region or across a county, to share issues.

- (b) Those workers (seven in number) who came from three partnership projects, all focussed on the need for training related to partnership issues. At least three different aspects were mentioned by one or more people as needing training before action:

i related to the planning stages - the importance of giving plenty of time for mutual understanding about aims and expectations and the particular values and skills of the agencies involved

ii related to the potential for tension or/and conflict in ongoing partnerships and how shared training or staff development might help to avoid the problems. Some areas of such difficulty were identified

- issues of confidentiality and openness
- issues of "brokerage" principles and practices
- issues of worker status
- issues of empowerment/control.

(See above)

iii related to the need for training and staff development on monitoring and especially evaluation if this was to reflect the work of both agencies.

41. In addition workers in partnerships pointed to the relative isolation or/and marginality of such work professionally and often geographically. *"The tutor is in the middle, alone if you're not careful, between both organisations"*. In such situations a network or support group provided a kind of ongoing staff development offering professional feedback, shared problem solving and the valuing of the workers' efforts which recreate motivation and energy. *"It can't be stressed enough - the difficulties of isolation - of doing a two-hour stint which leaves you with all kinds of negative experiences to go home alone with. It helps so much when they" (other workers 'normally' there) "ask me in to talk about how it's going"*.

Networking helps morale and methods too.

"You must have optimism to believe that someone can change and that education can help. It's easy to get disheartened and feel that nothing works. The best way to be able to keep this optimism alive is to share with other people doing similar work. There will always be some success somewhere -". "It's necessary to facilitate the cross-fertilisation of ideas and avoid reinventing the wheel, at manager and practitioner level".

Summary and Comment : Practitioner Views

42. Whilst the views and ideas presented here are purely illustrative, it is interesting to note to what extent they reflect or underline themes already identified via agency report, and where there is a new focus.

In the responses registered here workers from criminal justice organisations did not seem as forthcoming as others about their training needs - although or perhaps because they had generally received very little or no relevant training in this area of work before. Their previous lack, and lack of present, interest may both reflect the low priority the work has, and the prevalence and demands of other training for high priority areas. There is also the "hand-over" factor - the links person/liaison person available to all those interviewed who had front-line responsibility for contact with education and training organisations and who were mainly responsible for the staff development interest that was shown. This may simply reflect the small numbers contacted here.

43. Those involved in education/training/guidance on the other hand showed a greater awareness of and expressed more needs for staff development in these areas than their employer organisations acknowledge.

These practitioners' needs reflect many issues previously identified - their requests for specific understandings of criminal justice systems and processes further confirms the perception that there are specific issues in accessing education and training for many offenders.

These practitioners were also clearly aware of the value of networking: in facilitating work with clients, but also in providing greater coherence, in avoiding or dealing with problems, and in maximising expertise and experience.

44. They also see it as a potential contribution to the support they need. It is, however, in terms of partnership issues that practitioners have contributed most to a sharpened focus. In this context workers were asking for opportunities, through shared staff development, to examine the building blocks of partnerships: the principles on which it was based, its purposes, processes, structures and outcomes. Two respondents saw this as something the two agencies should work on together before beginning, others saw it as an ongoing exercise, perhaps complementing experience.

Such a skein of common concerns amongst people working in partnerships laces many previous threads together in the recognition that partnerships are no simple, single solution - no easy or to-be-taken-for-granted strategies - as official documents seem sometimes to suggest.

WAYS FORWARD

These findings suggest that there may be a number of issues on which future work might be fruitful.

1. Partnerships

Probation Services now have to use 5% of their budgets in partnerships. The report indicates that managing such relationships required a pro-active approach whether in terms of aims, practical working arrangements, mutual understanding or supporting workers who may find themselves on their organisations' boundaries. Home Office as well as Probation Services have an interest in ensuring success here as well as the 'partner' organisations, and agencies within the region seem to have concerns as well as good experiences to share and learn from.

2. ETE development and the place of education within this spectrum

ETE work in Probation Services is currently not a priority. Will the new HO guidelines give it a more central position amongst Probation concerns? Current developments give most weight to improving offenders' employment and training opportunities identified as prime needs by politicians, Probation Services and clients alike. There is a danger that education may "drop off the agenda", particularly where new Employment-funded project may reduce or remove complementary Basic Skills provision and narrow the range of positive outcomes. In practical terms are there new opportunities here for Probation partnerships with FE colleges or/and co-operative working? Is there also a need for Home Office guidelines to ensure that opportunities for educational processes and choices are seen as complementary and not as poor alternatives.

3. Equal Opportunities

The project has noted the implications of the conflicting interpretations of "Equal opportunities" in relation to designated work with offenders. These interpretations seem to have substantial consequences for the work done, and for the monitoring of such work, (which may in any case raise ethical issues). Such different approaches may contribute to the inequity of provision for offenders seen in the region, dependent on their location, not their offences. It is not to be expected perhaps that organisations will agree on their interpretations, but clarification would surely be helpful in mutual working. There is then the need to monitor existing work and/or design and modify projects to ensure that the needs of women, black people etc. are met.

4. Co-ordinated work

From respondents working in prisons and from projects contributing to this work there was general recognition that inmates should have opportunities to develop skills and receive guidance and structured support to take up employment training (or education) as soon as possible on their release from prison. Many organisations seem interested in being involved in this apparently growing area of work. It would seem important that as schemes and projects develop all the relevant agencies involved in Penal Establishments are brought on board so that all can contribute. This will be needed to ensure that, where appropriate, a prisoner's work, training or educational achievements, during sentence, can be recognised and continued.

5. Some issues in Prisons?

Respondents have also pointed to a number of problems which can perhaps only be addressed by national bodies. One is the long-standing difficulty associated with the prison regimes need to move prisoners about as establishments fill or empty. The credibility of any course of study, or NVQ training is likely to be in doubt unless inmates can have some assurance of opportunities for continuity - by stability or by a common curriculum. A newer concern appears to be that opportunities to make positive bridging arrangements for prisoners in terms of day-parole study or vocational training in colleges are determined not by risk or suitability but on financial grounds. Is this an issue for FEFC?

6. Supporting the workers

Probation Officers have described some of the difficulties they face in motivating clients towards ETE provision, and may not, themselves, receive the information, support, or training they need to enable them to do this knowledgeably or with confidence. Pre-service and in-service training for Probation Officers - and for other workers in the field or 16+ training and education needs to be reviewed. Opportunities to form regional or sub-regional networks should also be developed so that marginal workers across various organisations can share information and experience.

7. Guidance

A major focus of the ETE projects set up by criminal justice agencies is the provision of access skills, guidance and information for offenders to seek work, or enter training or perhaps education. Many organisations are involved in the different and yet related facets of this work - TEC is understood to be already offering an NVQ module on Adult Guidance to workers in such situations. Should there also be less formal opportunities for workers to share experience and expertise - and to consider the guidelines for such work (from the National Association for the Educational Guidance of Adults and the Institute of Careers Guidance) already under consideration by CEOB?

8. Disseminating experience and good practice

The diversity, of interagency arrangements has been noted, so too have the various and innovative approaches to ETE work with offenders, both in the community and on the prison margin. Perhaps organisations or Probation Service areas could work on presenting and communicating information about these initiatives in a systematic and accessible way so that those planning new work have the benefit of previous experience, and those involved in current projects can be in touch with others in similar situations.

9. Research and evaluation

Probation Services, and some other organisations have themselves identified the evaluation of ETE work as an issue which has not yet been fully tackled. Further research is needed here to identify what criminal justice agencies, training organisations and educators regard as "achievement", "progress" and "success" and to find a way of bringing these together to ensure that positive work can be demonstrated. Different situations may require different emphases and ranges of criteria, but until there are some frameworks for recognising effectiveness it is difficult to pursue the equally necessary exploration of comparative interagency models, motivation, assessment and referral strategies, quality in the 'traditional' equal opportunities issues, and other client-centred good practice issues.

Findings from organisations

Probation Services

FE Colleges

Careers Services

TECs

LEAs

Voluntary Organisations

Prisons & Prison Education departments

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PROBATION SERVICES

Responses

- 1.1 Information about three of the four Probation Services in the region has come from two sources
- i written completion of a questionnaire
 - ii oral replies to further questions sent with the questionnaire.

2.1 The fourth Probation Service responded by letter to the questionnaire saying that *"developmental thinking on this issue is at such an early stage that we are unable to assist with the completion of the questionnaire"*. However this Service has facilitated two structured discussions with Probation Officers/ Probation team intended to explore present views and practice in this Service and what practitioners might find useful. (This is recorded later § 18-33).

Policy Strategy

3.1 Probation Services were first asked about their policy in this area of work. Service P indicated that its policy, which would cover employment, training and education was in draft form only at present and therefore not available, there would be a strategic plan to implement this in due time.

3.2 Service Q issued a policy statement on *"Work with Unemployed Offenders"* in January 1990 with an associated development strategy. The policy document recognised *"that assisting offenders to obtain employment or training is a central feature of a supervision process which aims to reduce reoffending"* and that the Service should therefore *"develop and maintain existing working relationships with prospective employers, those agencies providing employment and training opportunities and education establishments regarding the educational needs of unemployed offenders"*.

3.3 The resulting strategies included a service-wide co-ordinating structure, including a County Employment Forum, Local Offender Employment forums and specific responsibilities for staff (see Staffing § 4 below); and a requirement to ensure staff access to information about, and links with, agencies providing employment, training and educational (ETE) opportunities so that these issues are addressed *"in a consistent way across the service"*.

3.4 This policy and associated strategy has recently been redrafted to take account of subsequent developments including the projects now working in each division. This redraft is not yet in the public domain but is understood to be more specific in terms of objectives for each division, to include requirements for monitoring, (both referrals and outcomes) and for the provision of in-service training to include *"outside" providers working with the Service.*

3.5 Service R, which published its paper *"Employment, Training and Education for Offenders"* in October 1991 saw its ETE policy as furthering area objectives of

- i. *the promotion of the social integration of offenders*
- ii. *the promotion of equity of access to service provision."*

Acknowledging that the relationship between unemployment and crime was not simple it went on to affirm that *"legitimate economic opportunities for unemployed offenders"* are less likely than for *"those who can obtain a place on an education or training course or who can get a full-time job"*.

3.6 Resultant strategies included the staffing arrangement outlined at § 4 below; a requirement for the Chief Probation Officer (CPO) to make contact with Senior Managers in relevant organisations, for the Service's Research department to include clients' employment status and education and training achievement in measuring performance of Probation work and for the Training Department of the Service to provide opportunities for ETE partnership training. Central to the strategy was the development of *"partnership arrangements with other providers"* since the Service could not of itself be a *"major provider of ETE facilities"*, so a responsibility was put upon each division *"to identify at least one initiative to improve access to ETE provision"*, together with other related tasks.

In summary the implementation of the policy would mean *"assisting some offenders to seek immediate employment, assisting some offenders to seek access to training and education opportunities which can lead to employment, and assisting a third group to seek educational opportunities which will enhance and enrich their lives but do not lead immediately to job opportunities"*.

This Service (R) also called attention to the fact that there had been no Home Office instruction on these issues since 1990, and that although the ACOP Employment Forum had issued guidelines these could, in practice, be followed or ignored.

Staffing

4.1 The next question sought information about staffing appointments or responsibilities specifically related to delivering the ETE strategy. Services were developing and had developed these in very different ways. In Service P the Senior Probation Officer (SPO) who has responsibility for ETE policy and implementation is responsible for all partnership work (not just ETE partnerships) and this is one of *"numerous areas of responsibility"*. In this Service and both the others this most senior post does not have a line management responsibility for this work. This point was made explicitly by the Assistant Chief Probation Officer (ACPO) with these responsibilities from Service R, *"my role is purely advisory to the SPO divisional line managers for ETE work. I have to be better informed than anyone else in order to be persuasive"*. In this Service *"policy must make sense and develop from activity, rather than impose on it"*. Whereas the role for the ACPO in a similar situation in Service Q had been to ensure that the SPOs who had divisional line and functional responsibilities implemented the agreed Service policy and strategy for ETE.

4.2 In all three Services these Senior Probation Officers had (or in the case of Service P were planned to have) divisional responsibility for liaison between Probation Services and external ETE agencies.

4.3 The delivery of specialist ETE services by the Probation Service was organised very differently within each Service. Service P would have no one directly employed for this work but planned to subcontract it to (see § 6).

4.4 Service Q had appointed a Probation Officer (PO) with this area of responsibility within its Social Policies Development Unit, though this post did not involve direct client contact. In one city there were also three Probation Service Assistants attached to a College/Probation Link project and a Probation Hostel Assistant with the responsibility of ensuring hostel residents' access to this project and other ETE opportunities.

4.5 The pattern of appointments and responsibilities in Service R was different again: a Principal Employment Officer had a job description which combined four days of *"practical"*, face-to-face ETE work in one city with one day as *"technical/professional adviser"* to the ACPO across divisional boundaries. There were also 3 full-time employment officers (one temporary) in other divisions, and a Full Time Education Liaison Probation Officer (with temporary worker support).

Budgets

5.1 Questioned about budgets Service P indicated that no base-line budget was dedicated to ETE provision but that it was planning to use short term funding and re-contract annually.

5.2 Services Q and R had both invested base-line budget in ETE work (see 4.4 and 4.5 above). Both had also made use of Home Office Supervision Grants (SUGS) funding which had been on a three year basis.

5.3 In addition to this both these Services made use of yet other funding and entered into formal partnership or co-operative working with other organisations to provide ETE Services to clients (see § 6, 7 and 8).

Current provision of ETE services for clients and further plans

6. Service P had no current projects but had two projects planned to begin work in the near future in two Probation Offices in larger centres of population. These would each provide one specialist employment worker offering 37 hours per week contact throughout the year for job search and job skills work with clients, including referrals to Employment Training (ET). The clients for this service, who would all be on Probation, Supervision or Community Service Orders (CSO) would be referred to the project worker by their Probation Officers. Both projects had been set up (using Home Office supervision grants funding) in partnership with voluntary organisations - one national, and one set up by this Probation Service for work in its area. It was expected that each project would work with about 20 clients per month.

7.1 Service Q recorded six such projects - one in each of the four divisions, one associated with prisons, and one for Young Offenders. The four divisional projects, in accordance with this Service's policy for a consistent ETE Service throughout its area, have an almost identical profile in terms of

(a) Provision (Basic Skills, Guidance and Job search skills) available for all the working hours of the week. [In addition two of the projects offered additional broader educational opportunities].

(b) Target group - all were open to past or present clients of the Probation Service or/and those released from prison.

(c) Mode of attendance - clients made use of this provision after referral by a Probation Officer or other agency, or quite independently - none attended as the result of a court order.

7.2 There were variations however in funding and management - and of course in the numbers attending. In three of the projects in large towns Home Office Supervision Grant funding had been used to establish partnership with a local voluntary organisation involved in the criminal justice field. The fourth project was a co-operative relationship bringing together funding from the local education authority, the FE college, Employment Services (ES) and a voluntary organisation. 730 people attended this Unit in a large city last year - in the other conurbations numbers of 200, and 150 attenders per annum were recorded.

7.3 The guidance service to the three prisons in this area, described as offering similar facilities to the divisional projects, was funded entirely by the TEC, in co-operation with NACRO and the Probation Service and resulted in 500 Action Plans in the year.

7.4 The Youth Justice project, with specialised guidance and appraisal input to young people, involved Careers, Social Services and Employment Service funding in a co-operative arrangement with the Probation Service, providing a facility for 150 clients.

7.5 This Service's plans for next year included the continuation of the three projects in partnership with the Probation Service. For one of these an additional worker was planned with possible Employment Services Project Development Fund funding and local TEC support. Additional resources were also planned to facilitate the evaluation of the fourth and largest of these divisional projects.

7.6 It was hoped that the Training, Enterprise and Education Directorate (TEED) funding currently dedicated to Action planning in the prisons could be "reworked", together with new Probation Service funding so that the voluntary organisation involved could link its present workers to the Careers Officer currently employed by one of the area's prison education departments. Any plans for Youth Training (YT) or Adult Training (AT), further or adult education, so developed, could then be shared with home Probation Officers through the sentence-planning process, as well as being sent to potential providers. This would increase the support to inmates on release and increase the likelihood of their following through the plans made. This project would then provide a consistent guidance facility to all three prisons in this Services' area. A parallel development would extend the present provision of Job Search courses currently in one prison to all three.

8.1 Service B provided information about its work in one of its 6 prisons, and in its 4 divisions. Currently there was one prison-based project offering employment-related skills and guidance to 120 prisoners per year at the pre-release stage, to inform and motivate them to take up education or training opportunities in the community. This project made use of 70% Employment Services funding with the remainder from Home Office and from the Probation Service and involved both NACRO and APEX in the partnership scheme.

8.2 Provision in the four divisions was very varied. In the first there were two ETE opportunities for offenders sentenced in the community. One provided by a voluntary organisation contracted to the Probation Service offered basic and occupational skills, guidance and job search and broader educational activities to offenders referred by Probation Officers, or on a court order (and it is noted that Arts and Music development have been welcomed here). This had 100% Supervision Grant funding from the Home Office and worked with 200 offenders annually.

The second facility in this division was an Education and Training Guidance Service provided by the local college in partnership with the Probation Service, giving 15 dedicated hours per week to clients and ex-clients of the Probation Service. Numbers using this facility were not provided.

8.3 In the second division there were four related ETE developments all available to current and previous Probation clients, and all with a specifically employment focus. The Principal Employment Officer was based in this division.

There was a Probation-office based Job Club, providing guidance and job-related skills 37 hours per week for 200 clients per year.

This was an 80%/20% Employment Services funded partnership. This provision was supplemented by Job Search seminars (32 hours per month) attended by 120 further people last year and a "Basic Skills for Job Search workshop" (24 hours per week) used by 150 Job Club clients per year. Attendance at these two facilities could be a requirement of a court order. The Basic Skills workshop began as an Urban Programme funded project in partnership with the LEA and was now funded by Probation Service at least until the end of the financial year. Finally in this division there was a F/T (Probation) Employment Development Officer, funded like the Job Club, and to do similar work, with 200 more clients per year.

8.4 In the third division there were two current projects. One provided a temporary early-release course for inmates from Young Offender Institutions (prisons) (YOIs). Education, occupational skills, job-search skills, and guidance were provided by a voluntary (training) organisation contracted to the Probation Service for these 8 week long courses. [TEC provided the funding, and this is referred to in the TEC information, although the details do not quite tally].

The other project was a job club funded by Employment Services, offering guidance and job related skills, with a full-time Employment Officer employed by the Probation Service. In interview the ACPO for this Service referred to the structure of this and the other two job clubs in other divisions in this area. He pointed out that by appointing an Employment Officer (not a Probation Service Assistant (PSA)) to each job club to manage the Employment Services workers, but be responsible to the Probation Service, it had been possible to offer the "support, warmth and counselling" needed by so many clients and the full range of ETE opportunities (which might be inhibited by the particular targets required of Employment Services personnel). These "supported" Job Clubs were being evaluated.

8.5 The fourth division had yet another pattern of provision with an Education Liaison Probation Officer, and an Employment Officer. The Education Liaison Probation Officer, had the task of accessing clients into education options in colleges and FE centres, and the Employment Officer's brief is "to maximise clients' chances of getting jobs in the conventional labour market or through the development of links with other organisations and agencies involved in job creation and training provision". There was also some part-time support for these two workers. In addition, when the ten-year partnership with the LEA had ended in 1992 a new partnership had been established with the College taking on this responsibility. This had enabled continued funding for educational work in various hostels, which now included an accredited Communication Skills module and a "Parenting" course, for example. No numbers were given for attenders/users of these services.

8.6 Service R was planning many extensions of this existing work. Thus it was hoping to employ another full-time tutor at least until the end of this financial year for Job-search skills and guidance in the prison project already described (8.1). This would be funded by the Probation Service. Negotiations were also under way to develop exactly similar facilities in two more of the six prisons in this Service's area.

8.7 An application was currently under consideration to contract TEC funding (together with a Probation Service contribution) to provide a new facility in another town in the third of the divisions, for current probation clients and those at risk of custody, including attendance by court order. This would offer guidance and job-search skills to an estimated 100 people per year.

Internal Mechanisms

9.1 Services were then asked about internal mechanisms for their managers/practitioners to meet formally or/and as teams to discuss policy and practice issues in relation to ETE work. Service P explained that it had a "time-limited working party, the County Employment group" which was writing the strategy. "When the new projects are in place there will be quarterly meetings involving the project workers (from voluntary organisations) together with the associated Probation teams to review agreements".

9.2 Service Q had a variety of arrangements.

(a) A County Employment Practitioners Forum met regularly to "develop resources, share good practice ensure consistent developments" and address new requirements - for example to set up an appropriate system of monitoring. This involved those employed directly by the Probation Service and others too. The Probation Officer attached to the Social Issues Development Unit was responsible for these meetings and reported to and from them to the County Employment Group.

(b) The County Employment Group brought together the SPOs with ETE divisional line responsibility and was chaired by the ACPO with ETE responsibilities.

There were also

(c) formal mechanisms in this Service whereby ETE issues from the ETE partnership projects and from the PO (above) were brought to mainstream workers and other units on a regular basis, similarly ETE issues from SPOs with ETE responsibilities were brought to divisional Management meetings.

9.3 Service R brought two groups together

(a) The ETE Management Group consisted of the ACPO with ETE responsibility and the 5 SPOs who managed the ETE initiatives in the divisions. The focus of this group was on policy and practice and it then provided briefs for the Practitioners Group to work on (for example to set up a monitoring system, to identify training and staff development needs in this area).

(b) The Practitioner Group was chaired by the Principal Employment Officer and only included practitioners directly employed by Service R, to discuss and develop practice issues.

External inter-agency contact

10.1 All organisations were asked, in some form, to explain the structure, composition and function of their external interagency contacts and meetings.

Service P did not answer this question. Service Q gave details of the four Offender Employment Forums which were a feature of its ETE strategy. Each included at least 8 organisations in addition to the Probation Service, routinely involving the voluntary organisation involved in the project for that division, Employment Services, Careers Service, and the local TEC. Where a division had penal establishments the forum included both Prison Education/Careers and Prison Probation representation. Other representation was from Education, the Chamber of Commerce, Social Services and a representative from the Training Managers' Forum. These groups, made up of middle managers and practitioners, chaired by the divisional SPO met 4-6 times last year. Outcomes reported were the development of the Youth Justice appraisal team, development of Careers advice work in two of the prisons, and staff training programmes.

Service R reported on the termination of its once area-wide ETE forum which was felt to have no identifiable purpose. Present practice sees the calling together of an appropriate local group for a particular task - not on a "standing basis". One division within this Service provided information about its own locality. There the Education Liaison PO had developed formal and informal links with Colleges and FE Centres at all levels, in order "to obtain an easier passage for offenders to be able to take up educational options". Outcomes reported were "a gradual building up of shared expertise between Education and Probation agencies" "negotiating the continuation of financial funding to allow the partnerships to continue".

10.2 Several questions to Probation Services touched on the need for and provision of training and staff development for staff, relative to ETE work and the responses are recorded in Section III of this report.

ETE input into Pre-Sentence Reports

11.1 In an additional interview with each service respondent questions were asked about activities which were very specific to Probation Services. The first of these asked how the Service facilitated an ETE input into Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR). (This is a written report made by a Probation Officer to assist the court in determining the most suitable method of dealing with an offender).

11.2 All three Services indicated that, generally speaking, there was no expectation or requirement of officers beyond what was needed for National Standards : ETE issues for a client would not be relevant unless directly related to the offence in some way [National Standards Part 2 § 15]. ETE programmes would not be recommended as a Schedule 1A condition of a Probation Order by any of the Services i.e. clients would not be attending ETE provision by a court order.

In addition Service Q commented on a current focus on ETE issues for the under 18's provided by a specialist Youth Justice Appraisal team. Staff training courses planned for the coming year would include elements relevant to PSR writers and about addressing ETE issues from the start of supervision.

Inter-agency arrangements to support clients

12.1 The next enquiry focussed on interagency arrangements where clients had been "referred on" or had "moved on" to mainstream education or/and training, asking Services what mechanisms there were for providing support to such clients, including financial support. Service P responded that this was not budgeted for at the moment.

12.2 Service Q indicated that the voluntary organisation much involved in two of its projects had a bursary budget to provide financial help with clients expenses for "fares, tools and equipment".

12.3 This problem was recognised by Service R, which had not yet fully addressed it but (bearing in mind some of the impact of change in other organisations), Euro-funding would be investigated.

13.1 A supplementary question asked about means to "identify and overcome difficulties" expressed by clients engaged in mainstream education or/and training.

Service P referred to a NACRO scheme to provide outreach support to clients after they had been "placed" (in employment or training).

13.2 In Service Q the voluntary organisation involved had a volunteer/client matching scheme to maintain client support. but Probation Officers were also encouraged to do this by receiving feedback from the voluntary organisation on the clients' progress etc. This was another area of planned training for POs.

13.3 Service R responded with the recognition that "*whether clients are involved in a training course or in a new job there is a critical point at three months when people are liable to drift*" - this could lead to a high turnover and unsatisfactory outcomes. This Service was investigating the possibility of some action-research in this area to monitor what happened to clients at this critical point and in so doing to help individuals and identify difficulties and useful strategies.

Monitoring Outcomes

14.1 Next, Services were asked what interagency mechanisms there were for monitoring outcomes, when clients had moved on or been referred on to external education/training providers. All three services referred to the monitoring required by employment projects - e.g. Job Clubs. *"Employment Services needs to know what people are doing next"* (Service P).

14.2 Service Q recognised that any such project must do this monitoring for its funding agency, but also required projects to report back on outcomes to the SPO responsible for that division. (Whether these were collective or individual outcomes was not clear). This Service was also concerned that POs might still not see ETE work as a routine part of Probation supervision programme responsibilities and so, in a sense, were quite happy for this to be *"hived off"* to others; ETE outcomes then became irrelevant.

14.3 Service R was also anxious to take monitoring processes beyond, for example, those outcomes required of Job Clubs by Employment Services, and had given the practitioner group the brief to develop a monitoring system.

Evaluation

15.1 The next question moved from interagency monitoring to Probation Service own evaluation of ETE work. Service P responded that it regarded its ETE work as a *"referral and placement activity"*. *"If, for example our clients get onto ET that was a positive outcome"*. It could not concern itself with *"longer-term outcomes"*.

15.2 Service Q said that not much work was done on the ETE achievements of individuals, but that it was asking its ETE projects about re-offending rates. Because there had been no relevant research/precedents for this the County Practitioners Group had been discussing the possibility of a pilot scheme.

15.3 Service R reported that the New National Standards relating to the 1991 Criminal Justice Act would require the monitoring of:-

- the supervision plan
- the supervision programme (of activities)
- reviews of that plan and programme.

One of the routine questions in this monitoring would be about work on a client's ETE concerns. It might be possible to *"monitor the changes resulting from ETE work with a client and thus bring this fully into evaluating effectiveness"*. ETE staff would also have to monitor their performance.

Sentencers

16.1 The next question turned to Sentencers. Probation Services were asked what information sentencers received about ETE opportunities and how they responded.

Service P found that sentencers recognised employment as an important element in reducing the likelihood of re-offending and they responded positively to recommendations to attend any employment scheme.

16.2 Service Q did not provide information about the response of sentencers, but indicated that they received an

- i information sheet from each ETE project to parallel any information about the client's needs for ETE work provided on the Pre-sentence report
- ii input from the PO with ETE responsibilities at Magistrates' liaison meetings (but that this tended to be preaching to the already converted).

16.3 A similar input from one of the ETE specialists in Service R was well received by magistrates and judges. This Service felt that sentencers reacted positively when PSRs consider referral to a Job Club or to ETE counselling and guidance, because *"the devil makes work for idle hands"* so it was important for offenders to be *"usefully employed"*.

Service Priorities

17.1 Asked where ETE work came in the Services priorities Service P replied "we would prefer clients to have a proper job - that is the priority". "When clients were asked to rate on a scale of 5:1 their agreement (5) or non-agreement (1) with the statement "Government employment schemes are just a racket to fiddle the unemployment figures" they registered a 4.2 agreement. "I share clients' cynicism about ET".

17.2 Service Q acknowledged that ETE did not get mentioned in the Service statement of priorities, and there were no practice guidelines. Nevertheless this Service demonstrated its commitment to the work through the time given to it by the ACPO and the divisional SPOs, by the appointments of the PO (to the Social Issues Development Unit) and the PSAs involved in delivering ETE Services, and by the funding and employee time made available for training courses.

17.3 For Service R also it was "not a high priority in the thinking of most managers, but not resisted, so resources have been dedicated to it". However many regarded such work as tangential to "real" Probation concerns. "It seems difficult to translate objectives into action - how do you measure 're-integration' into the community?"

The Fourth Probation Service - Responses

18. In addition to the questionnaire responses - information was provided about Service S by two Probation teams during semi-structured interviews and discussions.

Questions were asked about present service policy/strategy and the teams' own experiences in relation to employment, training and education for their clients, and what would make this aspect of their work more effective.

19. Both teams confirmed that there was no service policy on this issue, and that each team had a liaison officer (of PSA status) who acted as links person/information source for this area of work, along with many others. However the dominant theme, stressed by both teams throughout the interview session was that their clients' perceptions of education and training, sometimes reinforced by recent experiences, made this a very problematic area of Probation work.

20. Both teams, working in areas with high structural unemployment, ("this town falls off the bottom") perceived cultural barriers to any client motivation towards education and training and even employment. "They're 3rd or 4th generation unemployed, so they've no experience of what work means - family, friends, neighbours - so they can't understand the idea of "doing better" and long term benefits". "Once you use the word education its like raising a stone wall 'it's reading and writing i'n it?' - as true today as 20 years ago".

21. The teams also pointed to other personal barriers to education and training which offenders share with other non-traditional learners - fear of being laughed at, little 'academic achievement', poor schooling experiences, unwillingness to admit to any needs, a perception that "this is not for the likes of them", fear of failure (though to one officer "failing is what they're good at, they get a kick out of failing"). Added to these were the organisational barriers of inadequate finance, intimidating structures, rigid course programmes, lack of support and guidance - again frequently recorded elsewhere.

22. A contributory and disturbing factor evidenced by both teams was the negative recent experiences of those who might 'have a go' at education or training in prison, or out, compounding the other barriers. "He had a course place offered and was on a real high about it. He began the course well but after six weeks they still hadn't even told him whether he'd got a grant, let alone paid him anything. He couldn't survive - and had to stop". Other similar letdowns were described: for example

"The walls of x prison are lined with computers and the lads get all fired up but there's nothing like that for them when they come out";

Students begin courses but have inadequate educational support "they're not aware of the difficulties for our clients";

Schemes built up hopes of work that were unrealistic;

Inmates began to make progress on a prison course and were then moved quite arbitrarily to another prison

"Employers seem unhappy with peripheral awards" and inmates saw NVQs as just "part of prison bullshit" or as part of a prison experience which was to be locked up behind them - the good with the bad.

23. When it came to assessment and referral procedures, both teams made use of their links officers where education and/or training were involved. For both teams such consideration would usually come only once someone was on an order, though one officer commented wryly that *"clients will show motivation at the PSR stage - especially if they think they're going down - that gives a starter, even if it doesn't last long"*.

24. In one team the links person might provide the guidance or might try to arrange for the client to talk with someone with specialist knowledge. A Careers Officer had offered to help in this way, but could only come once a fortnight. Appointments had been made for him to talk on a 1:1 basis with two clients, but when neither had turned up it had felt a great embarrassment. The alternative would be for clients to travel to the city - this did not seem realistic.

25. In the other team the POs made an appointment for their client to see the links officer and to prepare for this clients were asked to put information about themselves, their experience and aspirations into a small "book". This gave the officer some idea of a client's achievements and interests, but also showed any needs for literacy help. The Adult Careers Service had expressed willingness to give services but *"they have to wait months"*.

26. Both links workers had the responsibility of obtaining information about relevant courses or training schemes and perhaps referring them on - though Probation Officers might equally do this directly.

27. Neither worker (or team) saw the local providers as dependably helpful. Individual tutors, for example might phone saying *"we've got some of your clients, we'd better get together"* or there might be some personal dialogue, but there was no *"talking with anyone representing the college"*. The local Youth Service was "good". Contacts were informal. Some support for one team came from the Job Centre where the Careers Service was the Training Agent (TA) for 'Training for Work', so this provided some information and guidance appointments.

28. But basically both workers had to take the initiative themselves in asking about everything. Neither college ever sent information about its FE or Adult Education (AE) programmes to the Service, and *"there's a glossy from the TEC which says nothing"*. Restart gave the impression that it was *"going through a paper exercise"*. One of the liaison workers found college tutors reluctant to share information on their Women Returners' course and administrative workers were cagey about providing more than one copy of a brochure. As one PO said to her team Liaison Worker *"If they don't help you how are our clients going to feel? They've only just come to grips with the 21 hour rule"*.

29. The other worker was always hesitant about making direct client referrals to a College or Training Organisation or indicating Probation Service interest. Many clients did not want that link revealed and local attitudes to offenders made that very understandable:- *"Lock 'em up or deport them"*. *"They (the college) think they (offenders) have got two heads"*.

30. Nevertheless this team had clearly made use of the more positive contacts wherever it could, and also had a number of supportive in-house initiatives running - or planned. "Success stories" included a woman on a high level biology course (*"she's the expert there"* said her PO); a lad who went to agricultural college *"and that seems to be the end of his offending"*; another who left prison in January, but *"continued his A level course with the college straight away"*.

31. Because of the problems clients had in doing anything about their literacy problems, perhaps revealed by the liaison worker's "Personal book" strategy, the office here had its own literacy scheme. A volunteer with Adult Literacy qualifications and background, trained other volunteers who provided a 1:1 service in clients' homes or at the offices. In this way the Probation Service felt it was providing a bridge into community provision.

There was also an "employability" scheme which utilised accredited Probation Service volunteers, 'matching' them to clients to provide support for someone on a training course, or starting work.

32. A further development was 'ready to go'. This was a partnership project (using Home Office money) to work with people just released from custody. This voluntary organisation project, called HELP would build links and support ex-offenders in the area of Housing, Employment and Leisure opportunities.

33. Neither team wanted 'feedback' from those organisations providing education or training for their clients - the impression gained was that any such monitoring would be another bureaucratic burden and inappropriate. One team also indicated that such feedback should come only from clients, so that education/training organisations remained unaware of their offender status or background.

For both teams there was nothing to be gained by a Service policy or official strategy. There was a feeling that the present system with the liaison officer to help, if wanted, worked well for what was required and that any developments might burden them with extra work for few gains.

34. The improvements they would wish to see would be in terms of provider's perceptions or co-operation; networks might be useful especially where they enabled contact and information at the end of the phone; more opportunities for continuing programmes begun in penal establishments and perhaps more structured interagency links. Though one SPO told a sad tale of the way in which, despite such an interagency basis, a well-conceived ETE project with the local TEC and a college, fell apart when one individual left.

35. Understandably perhaps, education and training was not a priority for either team. But whereas one team described several education "successes" and a team member confirmed "*it is very important with those whom it works*", the other team offered no good experiences in this area of work, and seemed rather to share clients negative perceptions, officers perceptions and valuing of education and training may here be related to the levels of referral and support, as indicated by Dixon (EOI Liverpool, § 4.56 to 59). A figure of 5%-10% was suggested as representing the proportion of the teams' clients who might benefit and make use of education and training resources.

FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES

Responses

1. Questionnaires were sent to all 33 Further Education Colleges in the region and 11 were returned completed. There were also two letters instead of completed questionnaires. Between them these responses provided information from a range of medium and large colleges including a college of Further and Higher education. Unfortunately rural colleges are very under-represented, as are North Yorkshire and Humberside.

Mission Statements and Equal Opportunity Policies

2.1 The first question asked colleges to what extent their college mission statement and/or equal opportunities policy referred to, or covered offenders/ex-offenders? They were asked to attach any relevant documents.

The answer to this was unanimous:

No FE College mission statement or equal opportunities policy referred to "offenders/ex-offenders".

However attention was drawn in various ways to the colleges' intentions, for example,

"to offer opportunities for all" (1)
to "encourage ... students ... across all areas of possible discrimination and disadvantage" (20)
to work "constructively with groups who ... often find themselves stigmatised" (10)

and

"to remove institutional and individual barriers to access including those that relate to issues of gender, ability, age, race and social background" (12).

Mission statements or/and Equal Opportunities policy statements then stated the positive steps colleges would be taking under such headings as

2.2 Student Support e.g.

"provide students with personal support, counselling advice and guidance" (14)
"to help the learner to cope with the learning process" (23)
"provides a student-centred environment which encourages the development of self motivation and self discipline" (31)

2.3 Achievement. Progression e.g.

"provide opportunities for each learner to establish and develop recognised competence(s) ... sufficient to provide progression into employment, higher education, other training opportunities or other roles" (23)
"to encourage the social and personal development of students"
"to maximise individual potential" (12)

2.4 Environment e.g.

"create a safe and welcoming environment" (20)
"deal with discriminatory behaviour (which) has a destructive effect on its victims, its perpetrators and others who live and work in the institution" (11)
"develop ... a flexible programme ... including non-September starts" (31)

2.5 Community Involvement

"involve 'outside groups'" (11)

"be responsible to the needs of industry and the community" (20)

"Leisure-related opportunities (will) be offered which may or may not include skills and attitudes of immediate relevance to the world of work but will ultimately enrich the life of the individual person and if possible the community" (23)

2.6 One of the letter writers explained that non-completion of the questionnaire was

"not to be interpreted as lack of interest or concern for the issues raised" (3).

Views on offender learning needs

Colleges were then asked to explain what specific or/and additional learning needs offenders/ex-offenders had, if any.

3.1 With respect to this question it might well have been argued that offenders/ex-offenders were not a homogeneous group in terms of "learning needs" and that it was therefore not possible to ascribe any characteristics to them collectively. This point was not made.

Where there was tacit acknowledgement that there were "specific" needs it was with these comments

"diminished confidence ... need Access-type courses which by-pass conventional education routes" (15)

"often additional basic skills needs" (11)

"perhaps a greater emphasis upon guidance/counselling (needed) to promote integration into the college community" (20)

"The emphasis with this cohort, if it can be generalised is focussed at the lower end of attainment. Many do not recognise their skills" (12)

"Lack of direct progression routes from penal institution to ... outside" (31).

3.2 It might also have been argued that where offenders/ex-offenders were recognised as having "specific/additional" learning needs these were no different from those of many other students. This point was made both tacitly and explicitly by respondents

"the range of needs of offenders and those in custody reflect those of other students" (12)

"we offer support to all individuals as appropriate to them(1) ... we could not necessarily know who are ex-offenders" (1)

Where respondents have given no answer at all or

"no official stance" (6)

this largely corresponds with later information indicating that the college had little experience of work with offenders.

Views on barriers faced by offenders

4.1 The second part of this question invited views as to the particular barriers which might be experienced by offenders/ex-offenders returning to learning and training. Three responses identified practical issues

"funding is often problematic" (14)

"cannot afford to become F/T students" (12)

"may experience irregular unsettled life-style - domestic and financial insecurity" (15)

and the third college recognised the need to be

"flexible to suit the availability of the offender" (10)

4.2 Others pointed to less tangible barriers (in some cases indicating by reference to their equal opportunities or mission statements that such issues were not limited to offenders)

"Peer group pressure - cycle of offending" (31)

"Lack of initial good education experience" (15)

"Barriers may be their own in terms of confidence ... would be assessed on an individual basis and support agreed if appropriate" (1)

"A distinct need to re-establish self esteem and confidence on an informal friendly basis" (20)

"(They lose) self-image (in prison)" (12)

"delayed maturity in respect of education/training aspiration" (15)

Again three colleges gave no, or a negative response.

Fees policies

5.1 Questioned about general concessionary fees policies five colleges indicated clearly that there would be concessionary rates in September 1993, and whilst it might well be that the concessions they described will continue after September two colleges left this uncertain.

One college said quite clearly that with the ending of its management of Penal Education the fee waivers to those inmates coming to the college on release would stop. It did not give any other information as to general concessionary fee policies.

5.2 Amongst the remaining seven colleges five indicated that, in various prescribed situations some fees might be waived. The situations leading to fee waiver included economic and employment circumstances, a residential qualification, the nature of the educational course, the age of the student and certain other benefit status criteria. In some colleges it appeared that such fee remittance applied only to F/T courses, in others to all, in most it was unclear.

5.3 Two colleges referred to "concessionary" or "reduced fees" - though it is not clear what this is from or to - one of these colleges affirmed in general terms that

"the LEA policy on concessionary fees will continue - thus allowing students suffering hardship or claiming DSS Allowances/Benefits to become involved in or continue study at college" (20)

5.4 One college acknowledged that

"other (students fees) are waived after means-testing" (11)

- which others described the same process less overtly

"(students) on low income would have an individual assessment" (1)

"student services offers advocacy assistance for students wishing to claim fee waivers" (14)

5.5 One college which did not provide details of its general fees policy, sent leaflets on three of the provision areas felt to be particularly accessible to offenders/ex-offenders (see § 9), all these were free to unemployed students (31).

Staff responsibilities for this area of work

6.1 Nine of the colleges indicated a named post(s) in respect of liaison responsibilities with criminal justice agencies (although in a subsequent question on the level of liaison activity only four of these colleges recorded having had any relevant meetings in the last year). [See § 8]. Only one college had a specifically nominated post "Educational Support Worker with Ex-Offenders" (31).

Three of these named posts had much broader responsibilities in areas of client/student services. A Heads of Schools (20) and a Head of Catering, Health and Social Care had this role elsewhere. In one college it was the Assistant Principal (12), in another the Director, General Education Faculty External Relations Executive (15) and in another there was a "generic external Liaison Officer" (11).

Little information was given as to the level of post, whether it was F/T or P/T and what proportion of time was allotted to this work. However, where information was given, this particular responsibility was taken on by college staff at every level: 7 main grade, Senior Lecturer, by Heads of Department and others on the management spine including the Assistant Principal.

Most colleges, then, had nominated posts for all such inter-agency liaison.

6.2 Five also had a worker designated for work with offenders/ex-offenders in the community, but apart from College 31 work with offenders was recognised only

"as part of general development work (and not specified in the job description)"(23)

"Offenders" appeared in only one job title - and these job titles were all different yet again.

7.1 An enquiry relating to posts with responsibility for work with offenders in penal establishments produced seven positive responses - three from colleges with contractual links to penal establishments where Prison Education Co-ordinators were members of staff of the college. College (31) also made use of the Education Support Worker for contact in other prison establishments. One of the other four colleges wrote of under-used facilities regarded as helpful to inmates

"Flexi-study tutors/co-ordinator. Tutor-supported open and flexible learning materials/programmes are available. Only one student so far but we would welcome an increased involvement"(23)

Another explained that

"vocational area specialists have linked (to Prison Education provision) on an individual basis supported by Client Services and Counselling and Welfare Manager"(1)

and a third that

"all Heads of school respond to a demand as and when this occurs ... course teams are involved"(20)

Four colleges indicated that no post had this responsibility.

Liaison with Criminal Justice Agencies

8. The next question was framed to elicit information about any structured links with criminal justice agencies (in the community, or in penal establishments), in which the college was involved.

Only four colleges answered this question.

Interpretations of 'structured links' varied greatly, and included seminars for those involved in "bridging" from prison to College from College 20 and "Bridgebuilder" meetings from College 31.

All four colleges also provided details of meetings with an organisational purpose:-

Practitioners from College 20 met with practitioners from a nearby Open prison - seeing increased personal development and NVQ achievements of prisoners on day release to the College as the positive outcome.

Senior Managers from College 15 met with others from the Probation Service four times to clarify demarcation of responsibilities.

College 31 recorded one further example of systematic, structured contact, in which twelve practitioners from Probation Service and Colleges met to exchange updating information about each organisation and to ensure liaison "*across departments*". In this College there were also six internal college meetings in the year involving staff at all levels to improve opportunities for extending progression for ex-offenders. College 11 and the local Probation Service met together at middle manager level to establish informal liaison networks.

Only two of these Colleges also have Prison Education contracts.

Despite a prompt in the question format no response indicated meetings involving TECs in relation to this work.

Provision

9. The next section of the questionnaire focussed on provision made by FE Colleges relevant to this study. They were asked to distinguish between provision they made which was

- (a) exclusively for offenders and
- (b) not exclusive to this group but with special features designed to encourage and facilitate use by offenders/ex-offenders.

9.1 (a) Two colleges made provision exclusively for community-based offenders - both working in Probation premises.

College 31 offered a three-session guidance and occupational skills taster-course in three Probation Centres - this module could be extended and accredited through the Open College network. Twenty four clients/students had been involved in this "joint" initiative.

College 15 had taken over responsibility for some of the work previously done by the LEA in this city and was supporting a range of "*Basic Educational provision in Probation hostels*". No figures were given.

(b) Five colleges affirmed provision in this category although only four indicated the "special features" which would encourage use by offenders. The nature of this provision, as one might expect, was varied. - though Basic Literacy and Numeracy were a common feature - together with guidance.

College 20 was unique here in that it was recording the participation of 6 prisoners on day-release in its vocational courses.

One of the significant aspects of these returns is the three "themes" to the "special features"; with colleges identifying a 'pick and mix' selection stressing either the flexibility of provision, (Colleges 20, 23) or the support given (23, 31) or the financial implications (31).

Funding for these facilities came largely from mainstream FE budgets, but also made use of Home Office grants (Colleges 11 and 20) TEC and European funding (College 31).

Most colleges have, understandably given figures for total attendance at these facilities, not just offenders.

Colleges handled the criminal justice agency link in relation to this provision in various ways - depending on informal liaison (Colleges 11 and 20) using a nominated worker (31) and taking direct referrals from Probation Officers. One College had no such strategies.

Two only of these Colleges are responsible for Prison Education contracts.

Provision for non-traditional learners

10.1 Anticipating the response "*that the range of needs of offenders ... reflect those of other students*" (College 12), a question was also asked about provision generally for the non-traditional learner, and the targeting strategies in this work seen as particularly helpful in facilitating use and attendance by offenders.

Ten Colleges replied affirmatively to this question, six giving details of targeting strategies.

10.2 College (1) writes

"This college is learner centred therefore every student has the opportunity for initial guidance and an individual learning programme designed to meet their needs, including learning support - e.g. tutor, study skills, basic education etc. as well as welfare advice/support and personal support and counselling. The counselling and welfare support is diverse enough to encompass various modes of support and networking to other agencies and cover emotional and behavioural difficulties".

Student counselling, guidance and support was also mentioned by other colleges (11)(14): Colleges called attention to the importance of accessible sites and flexible modes for non-traditional learning

- "flexible focus, informal settings/location" (11)*
- "open workshops on college sites and out on community sites" (23)*
- "flexible workshop opportunities for roll-on roll-off attendance" (31)*
- "community outreach provision" (31)*

Other significant strategies mentioned were

- "Exceptional entry facility - i.e. the waiving of academic entry requirements" (14)*
- "Part-time Higher Education feeder courses" (14)*
- "Links back into the community" (20)*
- "An accreditation system" (11)*
- "Promotion of independence using practical work-based skills within a particular vocational sector" (20)*
- "Home visits" (31)*

Monitoring of offender usage

11.1 Three colleges monitored usage/attendance by offenders and ex-offenders

- "by annual course review" (14)*
- "using standard attendance records and progress reports on Records of Achievement action plans (NVQ)" (20)*
- "Through the Educational Support Worker" (31)*

Six colleges did not answer this question, two record that they do not monitor.

Other arrangements

12.1 Colleges were asked to describe any other arrangements they had to work with offenders in the community, including any links with other organisations in the criminal justice field, or other funders, not covered by previous questions.

The replies to this question included statements concerning colleges' responses when approached by an individual offender/inmate

- "applications directly from offenders ... have always been dealt with sympathetically. Artificial obstacles such as interviews, have been made flexible to suit the availability of the applicant" (10)*
- "Where we have been approached to assist ex-offenders we have been only too pleased to do so where this has been relevant and appropriate" (3)*

12.2 Four other colleges used this section to give information about very varied specific offender-focussed involvement.

College (1) was involved in working jointly with NACRO in linking clients with the college GAPs Service (Guidance and General Access Points).

College (23) had worked with a project training motor vehicle offenders (as an alternative to custody). The college provided a tutor who did staff development on Records of Achievements.

College (20) provided members of its staff to visit penal establishments in the role of Assessors/Verifiers.

College (31) had links to a local NACRO project.

Evaluation - with other agencies

13. The next questions focussed on any (shared) arrangements for evaluating outcomes where Probation clients were known to be making use of any college provision.

One respondent wrote of using an

"inter-prison skills competition using positive/practical skills analysis as an evaluating tool"(20).

College (31) identified more traditional means

"through Probation meetings attended by the Educational Support Worker - also through the Faculty Quality Assurance mechanism"(31)

"Review of positive outcomes in relation to achievement of NVQs"(20).

All other colleges indicated that they had no arrangements or did not reply.

Evaluation - by the College

14. In responding to the question about college evaluation of partnerships or co-operation with other agencies two colleges replied affirmatively

"Informal communications between Practitioners. Student/trainee questionnaire survey at end of course"(20)

"Plans for involvement of external agency (Probation) in Appraisal interviews for Educational Support Worker"(31).

One college replied

"We do not currently get involved in this in relation to criminal agencies"(8).

Of the remainder one replied negatively and the other seven did not reply.

Other aspects of inter-agency liaison

15. The focus then moved on from provision, and monitoring of that provision to two clusters of questions - one about information-giving to the Probation Service and the other about training for - or by - Probation Staff.

Two colleges (31 and 15) routinely provided information to Probation Services about college provision though a third indicated

"not at present, but we are following up this idea"(10).

Three colleges (14, 20 and 31) had provided information to individual Probation Officers and two had offered opportunities for visits or open days to Probation Services or Probation clients. Five had received visits from individual P.O.(s) and client(s) (12, 14, 15, 20, 31).

None of the colleges had taken part in training or staff development for Probation Service personnel, or included them/invited them to college staff training courses.

One college had however, received contributions from the Probation Service in training/staff development for its own staff (other than those working in Social Policy areas)(14).

Training and staff development issues are dealt with in Section 3 of the whole report.

16. Finally Colleges were asked to describe what developments, if any, they planned in the areas of work covered by the questionnaire.

The answers here were largely negative. Five colleges gave no answer. Two replied 'None'.

Three wrote of specifics

"A continued sharing of resources and facilities to meet students' needs generally" (20)

"Increase in specific provision and enhancement of 'bridging' work" (31)

"Release arrangements in two penal establishments (to facilitate) inmates attending college provision" (31)

"Open workshops on more community sites" (23) (my emphasis)

Two colleges made positive offers

"we are always prepared to consider proposals for the extension of our service to a wider audience and would be willing to discuss our provision with appropriate agencies" (3)

"we would be open to any suggested liaison where gaps are identified ..." (1)

CAREERS SERVICES

Responses

1.1 Information about the region's Careers Service involvement in providing guidance for offenders/ex-offenders in the community has come from two sources. In March Karen Morgan had sent out a questionnaire with the very practical aim of compiling a directory of relevant resources available on release for the Y.O.I.s with whom she was working. Knowing that many Careers Services had recently responded to these questions relating to their work with offenders it seemed sensible not to duplicate her and their work, or to reduce the chances of getting information for this research. Although it would limit the range of information available to this project Careers Services in the region were asked only

- (a) to allow this project to re-use the information already given to Karen Morgan
- (b) to answer additional questions only to establish current levels of activity and future trends

2.1 There are 11 Careers Services in this region and 7 responded to the original questionnaire, all these have made the information then given available to this project. Nine of the 11 have responded to the second tranche of questions, including 2 which did not respond to the original questionnaire. Thus there is some information from 9 of the 11 organisations concerned, a very wide coverage.

Staff with special responsibility for offenders

3.1 The first enquiry asked whether any staff in the Service had any specific responsibility for offenders. Quantitatively the answers were

No	3
Yes	4

and 2 Services responded 'Yes and No'.

3.2 Both of these 'Yes and No' answers however, reflected the stance, as expressed by one of these respondents, that,

"All customer-contact staff have a responsibility for offenders - there is no specialist as such".(7)

Two of the organisations answering 'No' indicated a similar position

"the responsibility is shared by all staff"(10)

"Cases involving offenders/ex-offenders are dealt with within the general policy of the service and the specific terms of its external contracts. (5)

3.3 Of the three Services responding affirmatively two spelt out the structure of posts with these specific responsibilities:-

Service 9 described three such posts:

one was in contact with the Juvenile team at a Probation Office,
the second was a Children's Act post dealing with many young offenders,
and the third had responsibilities with black offenders and was linked to the Black Justice forum.

This Service added that there were additional advisers who would also be involved with young offenders through IT centres, special schools and Y.T. and that *"one person had a cross-service brief to link with Probation"*.

Service 6 indicated a geographical spread over 4 areas in addition to special target clients groups, to work with young persons, black YPs, and adults.

3.4 Service 3 had a Careers Officer with responsibility for work with Probation Services on Probation premises, and a Senior Careers Officer for Special Needs.

Service 4 gave two named posts: Careers Adviser for Young Offenders, and Employment Assistant Special Needs.

Work with penal establishments

4.1 Asked if staff were outreaching to or seconded to custodial establishments six Services provided an unequivocal 'No'. One Service, providing input into the curriculum of a Secure Unit/detention centre for young people seemed uncertain as to its status and gave no further detail. Service 4 and Service 9 affirmed these activities.

4.2 Both Services were working exclusively with YOIs i.e. with inmates under the age of 21. The Careers Adviser from Service 4 visited one YOI (Penal Establishment K) every week, and had seen 163 individuals in the year ending 31st March 1993. In addition twenty three group sessions had been held, each involving 6-12 inmates.

Service 9 had made occasional visits to this same YOI in collaboration with a Probation Officer or Social Services Youth Justice Officer. These visits had led to work with four individuals and some input to pre-release courses. In addition Service 9 had received referrals to its adult service from inmates using the intermediary services of the Bridging the Gap project.

The worker from Service 4 also went to another YOI (Penal Establishment L) once a fortnight and had seen 55 inmates individually, and twelve groups of 6-12 people. Service 4's work in YOIs was paid for by the College (now the contractor) providing the prison education service.

Work with Probation Services

5.1 The next question asked about Careers staff outreaching to or seconded to the Probation Service. Five Services answered affirmatively and four negatively, though one of these added that

"discussions with Probation Service about developing guidance services for ex-offenders were currently taking place" (Service 5).

5.2 Two Services were providing careers input to Probation Centres - Service 11 seeing individuals on monthly visits per year, Service 6 providing input to a course on 7 visits per year.

5.3 Two Services (3) and (9) were working in Probation offices, Service 3 doing group work and individual work during 15 visits per year - which had involved 12 people (3 under and 9 over the age of 21).

5.4 The other, Service 9, was involved with a multi-agency network co-ordinating services to "children" and young people being sentenced by the court, and in this initiative the Careers Adviser (Children's Act specialism) worked in an appraisal team consisting of the Youth Justice Liaison Teacher, and the Youth Employment Development Officer. This had involved 30 young people during the last year. It is not clear whether they fell into the 16+ age group.

5.5 This Service (9) also indicated work with the main juvenile team at a large office, providing individual guidance and working on pre-release courses (no figures were given).

5.6 In addition to the work in the probation centre referred to above, Careers Service 6 provided a half day a week for a drop-in centre sponsored by Careers, Probation and Community Development Services. Here 184 clients were seen individually and 147 in groups. This Service also contributed 9 days per year to give Careers input to a pre-release scheme based on a local hostel. In all this work at all sites this Service met 315 clients under 21 and 126 over 21.

5.7 The Employment Assistant for Special Needs from Service 4 had worked in local bail hostels with young people in the statutory age group, developing group sessions, and individual interviews, and assisting with placing in response to referrals made to the Careers Office. However this worker was on long-term sick and no further details were available.

5.8 Service 3 sent a report on a TEC-funded initiative called 'Project Challenge' in which it had been involved with other agencies:-

"to work with young offenders and those at risk of offending using outdoor education as a means of increasing motivation, confidence, personal and social skills, access to guidance and support with employment and training". (See also TECs 4.2)

Work by Careers Services outreaching to offenders described here had largely been statutorily funded in some way. The exception was the TEC funding for 'Project Challenge'.

Work with adults

6.1 Careers Services were also asked whether any of their staff dealt specifically with adults. Although, again, there was a mixture of Yes and No answers reflecting interpretations of the word "specifically", in practice all Careers Services did some work with adults.

6.2 One Service acknowledged that

"due to staffing constraints this is not systematic".(Service 7)

Two Services (5) and (1) indicated that all workers

"have responsibility for work with adults as part of a wider case-load".

6.3 Five Services had special facilities/provision for adults. Four had adult guidance services (6)(9)(3)(4) although 4 indicated that though there was access to facilities there was a limited service. One had an adult team (11) and one a

"separate adult guidance section with town centre office open to the public but also interviews at various premises throughout the district"(Service 10).

6.4 In addition Service 4 had obtained ESF funding in a joint project with a local FE College. One of the posts so established was restricted to working with younger, (unemployed) adults in the 18-25 age group. The other ESF post provided guidance to the whole adult age group on college courses. Offenders might of course benefit from this funding.

Links to local offender employment forums

7. Services were also asked whether there was a local offender employment forum, and if the Careers Service was represented on this. For five Services there was no local forum. One did not know whether there was or not. Three services (1) (4) and (9) had a local forum and were represented on it, though Service 1 indicated that this was a newly established group.

Future developments

8.1 Future prospects for this work faced several difficulties according to respondents.

Two services (5) and (6) wrote of the problems which would arise for clients who

"do not fall into the statutory client group"

and would therefore not be eligible for "core services". External funding arrangements such as the Gateways to Learning Initiative would be necessary to provide such services, for example to adults. One of these Services felt that there were "*prospects for further development*" here. Service 4 pointed out that as "*there is no statutory remit for adult guidance, unless funds are identified (ESF, TECs etc.) it is more likely that guidance will be 'charged for' or not available to adults*" and as indicated earlier (5.1) one Service (5) was actively engaged in such discussions.

9.2 A third Service (10) saw two further difficulties in working with offenders:

"less time available for liaison with other agencies"

"offenders may get less attention because we are less likely to secure a 'satisfactory outcome' as defined by Employment Department"

and these 'satisfactory outcomes' will determine budgets. Another Service (4) indicated, anxieties about quality in the future, particularly in relation to the *"level of guidance/professionalism/autonomy"*.

9.3 A devolved model of service with Careers Officers based in schools and community centres was forecast by another Service, but no comment was made on the potential impact on work with offenders.

9.4 Maybe the four Services from which there are no views would be sharing the experiences of Service 10

"we're predominantly worried with (sic) our continuing existence rather than the effects on one client group".

Respondents

10. There were 13 contributors to the nine Service responses and they each had a different title.

INFORMATION SEEKING FROM TECS

Responses

1.1 There are ten Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in the Yorkshire and Humberside region whose major purpose is to develop opportunities for training and preparation for training in that area, in conjunction with local industry and commerce and the labour market. This may be

to provide training/re-training for unemployed people
or
upgrade the skills of the existing work-force.

Each TEC will discharge that purpose - within overall government guidelines, according to local decisions.

1.2 Five TECs responded to the project questionnaire, representing a useful sample of localities - two large cities, two large rural areas and one a mixture of towns and countryside.

Location of offender issues in TECs

2.1 The first question asked TECs where offender and ex-offender issues would be addressed in their organisation and whether criminal justice agencies (or organisations involved in criminal justice) were represented on any such groups. Their answers, expressed in the following diagram and its explanation illustrate the diversity within TECs themselves.

2.2 Offender issues would be addressed by all the TECs somewhere. In three of the TECs it would be addressed by several groups. Although it appeared as an issue for the Equal Opportunities groups of three TECs, four out of the five dealt with it (also) in "another"

	TEC III	TEC IV	TEC V	TEC VI	TEC VII
Equal Opps. Group	X	✓	X		
Special Needs Group	X				
Task Group					X
Other	✓		X	✓	✓

[X signifies that a representative from a criminal justice agency would actually be a member of the group.]

2.3 The wide response to the category of "other" was explained in various ways. TEC III reported "specific teams responsible"; TEC V reported that there were "ad hoc meetings to address particular issues" and TEC VII that such issues were addressed "internally through the Equal Opportunities Quality Development team". For these three TECs these "other" mechanisms were in addition to groups already named. For TEC VI offender issues were only the concern of an "other" the "Youth Training and Training for Work" group.

2.4 The diagram above shows that three TECs involved a representative from criminal justice agencies in these groups.

TEC III brought Probation Services, Youth Justice Services and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) into a group setting up a feasibility study to provide pre-release training for young offenders in prison.

TEC V, whose groups were "Advisory and information providing" involved New Careers Training NACRO and Bridging the Gap on its Equal Opportunity Group, and Probation Services and New Careers Training NACRO on its ad hoc groups.

TEC VII, whose Task Force acted as its adviser, brought together the Probation Service, Family and Community Services, NACRO and ex-offender specialists from Employment Services, Careers Services and the Black community for this purpose.

TEC representation on offender fora

3.1 The next question looked at the other side of the coin as it were, asking if TECs were themselves represented on Offender Employment Forums or meetings. The same three TECs responded affirmatively (that is TECs III, V and VII), although one (TEC V), interpreted the question as relating to working with specific projects/activities (e.g. a YOI) rather than as was intended "a *general ex-offender employment forum*".

TEC provision for offenders in the community

4.1 Two TECs (III and V) indicated that they had provided specialist training targeted exclusively at offenders/ex-offenders in the community. However the details subsequently given related in one case to work in prisons (i.e. exclusively to offenders but not in the community) and in the other a footnote challenged the actuality - and the possibility of such exclusivity. "*Please note that all our contracted training providers have Equal Opportunities policies and the programmes are open to ALL*". However the details provided indicated the involvement of 10 offenders in New Careers Training which offered social and life skills and construction (Level I) and Painting and Decorating (Level II) occupational skills.

4.2 A further question asked whether in the last year TEC had funded any initiatives targeted specifically at offenders/ex-offenders in the community, and for explanatory detail. Two TECs gave a positive answer, and provided information about very different initiatives. TEC III had entered into partnership with the Youth, Community, and Community Education Departments of its local education department and Careers Service, with additional funding from charities and commercial sponsorship "*to work with young offenders and these at risk of offending, using outdoor education as a means of increasing motivation, confidence personal and social skills, access to guidance and support with employment and training*". Ten young people had been involved in Project Challenge and their achievements, awards and feelings were recorded in the project report.

4.3 The other TEC (VII) pointed out that the initiative they described, though not of itself with clients, was certainly intended to be indirectly to their benefit. This TEC had held three seminars (all of which were oversubscribed) for

- (a) referral services
- (b) training providers
- (c) employers

"with the aim of increasing awareness of, and developing policies for, ex-offenders into employment". As a result of these "*very successful*" events a "*good practice guide and training pack*" had been produced. This TEC was also funding a research initiative into the experiences of young people in care to inform future development.

TEC initiatives in prisons

5. Only three TECs acknowledged that they had been involved in initiatives in prisons.

TEC VII managed "*a regional TEED contract for NACRO to visit all prisons in the region, to action-plan inmates before release*"

TEC V had been involved in pre-release training for two prisons within its boundaries, and in visits to a more northerly YOI to advise offenders there of opportunities for training in their home city.

TEC III had contributed to a substantial pilot project, with the voluntary organisation Share Training. This had involved 50 young offenders in two YOIs, with the objective of enhancing their motivation, skills and knowledge so that they could more readily enter training or employment post-custody. [See § 8.2 for further details].

Information provided elsewhere in the response showed that both the other TECs had also had some unacknowledged prison contact.

TEC VI reported that it had had exploratory visits to HMP A but that these had gone no further.

TEC IV had been involved in "the promotion of NVQs" in another prison.

TEC Boundaries

6. Penal establishments will hold people from many different parts of the country. Asked if these services provided in prisons conformed with normal practice and were exclusively for inmates returning to the area of the providing TEC, two TECs (III) and (V) said Yes. Three said No, but the apparent significance of this response is blurred by the fact that two of the TECs so responding (IV) and (VI) do not appear to be working with individual inmates in these prisons anyway, and that the third (VII) is managing a TEED project directed at all regional prisons, where the area restriction does not apply.

Future plans for initiatives with offenders

7.1 Future plans for initiatives with offenders in the community or in prison, were outlined by all but one TEC, again showing a wide range of activity: some directly with offenders, others developing programmes for specific use by offenders. Thus three TECs were planning or considering new or extended services:

TEC IV "a Gateway initiative for assessment and guidance on Probation office premises"

TEC V "extension of pre-release training"

TEC VII Part funding of two posts to "provide advice, guidance and support within a social work context to

- young people under supervision - including young offenders
- adults referred from the Probation Service".

7.2 Four initiatives were in preparation for new services

- (1) "Working with 2 HMP to establish NVQs in the prisons" (TEC IV)
- (2) "Feasibility study for extending the pilot pre-release scheme for YOIs to the Yorkshire and Humberside region" (TEC III) See § 8.2
- (3) "continuation of 'young people in care' research and evaluation of first year responses" (TEC VII).
- (4) The possible 'reworking' of the TEED Action Planning project to prisons (see § 8.3) - with additional resources.

8.1 More detailed information in both written and oral form has been received about two of these schemes so they can be described rather more fully.

8.2 Following their pilot scheme in (See § 5) TEC III would be undertaking a feasibility study to extend this pilot to involve all the region's TECs in work with all inmates of the region's YOIs.

This pilot scheme had been in operation with two of the region's YOIs. It was understood that this had been set up with the Heads of Inmate Activity in those establishments and also involved prison officers in working with the inmates in a pre-release programme which offered employment related skills, knowledge and motivation inside and a direct and immediate bridge into the YT/AT Training Programme outside for those inmates returning to the TEC's catchment area and provided by the voluntary organisation contracted to deliver these services. The scheme provided additional support for the young person when released, and monitoring arrangements, in co-operation with Probation Services. Positive outcomes included reduction of re-offending and "staying on" rates, as well as skills' progression within the Training Programme.

Although return to Further Education, or involvement in (for example) LEA Basic Skills provision, would also have been regarded as a positive outcome, inmates were encouraged to take up the Training Programme and all inmates from this TEC area were "tracked" on release. The scheme co-ordinator reported that no inmates on the pilot scheme had pursued any course in adult or further education and that all those who did not go onto the Training Programme had gone back into prison.

[This scheme seems to be the same as that described by Probation Service R as the Temporary Early Release Scheme, although the details do not tally exactly].

8.3 Information has also been received from TEC VII, and from the voluntary organisation and from the Probation Service concerned, about the development of another TEED funded scheme offering educational, training and employment guidance to inmates in a cluster of prisons in one area in the region. This is likely to rework an existing "action planning" scheme already managed by the TEC (See § 5.2) and link it (with additional Home Office Probation funding) into existing structures involving both Careers and Prison Education Services. In this scheme, similarly, inmates would plan their intended programme of activity (for training, employment, further education etc.) whilst awaiting release. This plan would go to the "outside" Probation Officer as part of the sentence plan. It would also go to the Service (Training Programme, College etc.) making the provision required. Support to the client and monitoring of outcomes would then form part of the post-custody supervision programme and could be realistically followed up. (Such action plans might also contribute to bail reports).

Other Sources of Funding

9. Finally TECs were asked whether and whence they had received additional funding for any of their actual or planned work with offenders/ex-offenders. Two only replied affirmatively. TEC III had TEED National Development Funding for its feasibility study, and reported that Raleigh International had received "matched funding" from TEED for its Outward Bound Programme for Young Offenders (no details available). TEC VII had funded its seminars with help from TEED National Development Fund.

Respondents

10. Once again all the workers who completed this questionnaire have different job titles - only one actually having the named post to which letters were addressed which was the "Equal Opportunities Manager". Other job titles include "Development and Equality Manager" "Development Consultant" "Education and Training Adviser" "Project Team".

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

Responses

1. Only 3 local education authorities (LEAs) have responded to the questionnaire. There are 11 such authorities in the region. The questionnaires received tell similar stories in rather different tones of voice.

Special Staffing Arrangements

2.1 The first section of the questionnaire was focussed on the year ending 31st August 1992. In response to the first questions, which were about staffing, two services indicated that liaison with criminal justice agencies had been the responsibility of an Adult Education Officer. Authority A indicated that from September 1991-May 1992 one day per month had been dedicated to this work in conjunction with the local Forum for Educational Provision for Ex-offenders. This post was also responsible for cross-departmental or joint officer group meetings which included criminal justice agencies, and for work with offenders in the community.

2.2 From Authority B the Adult Education officer wrote *"I have in the past been very committed to this area of work and done my best to promote it ... we have been flogging a dead horse as far as Probation are concerned and my time, energy and scarce resources are best used elsewhere"*. This authority also funded a 7 teacher post employed by the local FE College for work with offenders/ex-offenders in the community.

2.3 In Authority C liaison with criminal justice agencies and any associated cross-departmental meetings was the responsibility *"by implication"* (sic) of the Principal Social Worker. No one in this authority had any designated responsibility for educational work with offenders/ex-offenders in the community.

2.4 No one in any of the authorities had any responsibility for work with offenders in penal establishments.

Provision : targeted at offenders in the community

3.1 The second question sought information about provision of education, educational guidance or training in the community. All three LEAs made provision, including guidance which was exclusively for offenders in the community. All contributed in this way to educational provision in Probation premises.

3.2 In one case Authority A provided 7½ hours per week Basic Communication Skills in a schedule 1A setting i.e. compulsory attendance for about 50 clients required to attend a Probation centre by Court order. Urban programme paid the major teaching costs with the Probation Service providing teaching materials and premises, there was also direct contact with the local FE College. The description of this programme illustrates the educational contribution here *"The framework for the programme provides the resources for participants to explore vocational interests and link these to Job Skills. Wider opportunities are also explored, be they training, further education or voluntary work. The concepts of planning for change and self empowerment are introduced at a level relevant to individual skills enabling the development of self esteem and confidence. Individual counselling and action planning sessions help to provide direction and support throughout the process"*.

3.3 Authority A later contributed an additional 15 hours per week teaching in Basic Skills and 15 hours in Job Search skills for voluntary attenders at this Probation Centre and at a Probation Job Club - again paid for through Urban programme. 42 clients attended for Basic Skills provision and 73 took advantage of the job club.

3.4 In addition Authority A also had input (not quantified) into a large centre where residence was a condition of a court order for younger male offenders. This had funding from and links with Social Services as well as the Probation Service and although educational provision for the 16-17 year olds was not compulsory *"most choose to do it"*. This catered for 340 young people in a year - though it was unclear how many were over 16 years old.

3.5 Authority B similarly provided Basic Skills (for 8 hours per week) together with Educational Guidance about other education education and training opportunities and vocational guidance, job-search etc. in a Probation Centre where attendance for some clients was compulsory and for others voluntary. This provision was funded jointly by Authority B and the local FE College. No numbers were given for attendance.

3.6 Authority C had similarly funded joint provision with a local FE College, for Assessment, Educational Guidance and Basic Skills. This was initially in an open centre then in Probation Offices for Probation clients who attended voluntarily. No quantification, of teaching hours or attenders, has been provided.

Provision : targeted generally at the non-traditional learner

4.1 All three LEAs believed that some of their provision targeted generally at the non traditional learner was particularly helpful in facilitating use and attendance by offenders. Authority A cited its Educational Advice service for adults, and B pointed to the locally provided courses in the community, for example in their centre for the unemployed. It was noted by Authority B that some offenders made use of TEC and ESF funded courses at the local college. Authority C indicated that the confidentiality of its Advice and Guidance Services, and the flexibility ("*drop in arrangements, individual programmes*") of its ABE provision, were particularly helpful in facilitating use by offenders.

4.2 Two authorities did not ("*could not*") monitor offender usage of this provision, targeted generally at the non-traditional learner. One simply confirmed "*Attendance monitored*" without further explanation.

5. Asked to describe any other arrangements the LEA was involved in to work with offenders in the community Authority A wrote "*Strategic Planning Forum*" without any explanation. Authority B wrote "*generally a poor response from the ACPO and his team. Some Seniors keen but generally response from Probation poor*". Authority C wrote of present organisational difficulties: "*We have tried a number of initiatives with Juvenile Justice, Probation and Voluntary Groups. In terms of adult learners our provision is now limited to Non-Schedule 2 work and we frankly do not have staff to deal even with the strategic implications for Further Education or Adult Education*".

Monitoring and Evaluation

6. The third question asked Education Authorities what (shared) arrangements there were for monitoring progress and outcomes where Probation clients were known to be making use of any education, training or guidance provided by LEAs. Authority A responded that "*under Urban programme a monitoring system was developed between the Probation Service and the local FE College*". Presumably this applied to its contribution to the educational provision in the Probation Centre and the Job Club. A response to a later question provided information about monitoring and evaluation at the residential centre. The respondent wrote that there was "*some record keeping, assessment for internal purposes - nobody ever asks for monitoring or evaluation*". This centre "*receives no previous information on the clients, unless specifically asked for, information does not follow the young person, just the charge sheet*". Authority B did not answer this question. Authority C wrote "*The only effective work in this context has been X College (Adult Basic Education department) and the (Probation) Special Projects Team; - monitoring arrangements were rather casual*".

Interagency Links

7. Interagency links during the year ending August 1992 were the focus of the fourth question.

Some specific practical links were endorsed by two of the authorities (A and B) : both "*routinely provided information about all LEA post-16 provision*", both "*provided significant information to individual Probation officers*" and both "*offered opportunities for visits or open days to the Probation Service or Probation clients*" but whereas Authority A "*had visits from individual POs and clients*" Authority B comments that these facilities were "*offered to Probation but not taken up*". Authority C commented only that there was "*casual contact inspired by regional attempts at joint working*". Only Authority A refers to any formal interagency structure "*Forum for Education Provision for ex-offenders*", though this is not explained here it is referred to again (13.6).

Work with Penal Establishments

8. Only Authority C responded positively to a series of questions relating to links with and work with penal establishments for authorities not involved in penal education.

None of the authorities acknowledged past or future provision of courses for individual prisoners on day-release, or any contribution to pre-release or temporary release courses. Authority C indicated a continuing guidance provision about education and training opportunities in the community for prisoners nearing release.

Arrangements Post-September 1993 - policies and strategies

9.1 Section II of the questionnaire requested information about arrangements and activities after 1st September 1993 i.e. when the incorporation of the FE Colleges was expected to be complete and when LEAs would be clear about their own roles and strategies for the Post-16 sector.

9.2 The first questions in this section explored LEAs' policy statements in relation to post-16 education and offenders. Neither Authority A's strategic plan nor its Equal Opportunities policy refer explicitly to offenders. However, this authority was very explicit in explaining its perception that offenders/ex-offenders

(a) have specific/additional learning needs:-

"They often need basic skills of survival in the community, socialisation skills, group skills, confidence and self-esteem".

(b) and that offenders/ex-offenders have particular barriers to returning to learning and training

"Prejudice, lack of confidence, they feel that training is inappropriate, venues for training may be intimidating. ... they may see themselves as failures ... have experiences of rejection, they undermine themselves. Subculture - drugs, music language etc. may be barriers".

9.3 Authority B has a policy statement which does explicitly recognise/refer to offenders, and it does see offenders/ex-offenders as having specific/ additional needs, but comments *"Prepared to commit resources but poor response"*.

9.4 Authority C has a strategic plan and mission statement, but neither these, nor the authority's equal opportunities policy refer to the needs of or provision for offenders. But "many" offenders/ex-offenders are seen as having some *"learning difficulty, in practice - but the specific one has to do with re-integration and overcoming stigma"* *"The key barrier, as for everyone, is the lack of a clear path from 'training' to employment. This is outside our control"*.

Arrangements for delivery of Schedule 2 and Non-Schedule 2 Work

10. All three authorities have arranged to deliver Non-Schedule 2 work via colleges though A indicates that this contract is only until March 1994. In both Authority A and B, such arrangements include mechanisms for previous "adult education" organisations or institutions to bid for Schedule 2 work, and in both these authorities Schedule 2 work will continue to be provided by the LEA - at community based centres/community colleges. However in Authority C the contract is for FE *"to run integrated vocational/ non-vocational programmes"* and LEA adult education-funded services/institutions will not be bidding for Schedule 2 work, nor will the authority be involved in providing this in any way.

Fees

11. Concessionary fees will be available in all three areas. *"Covering adult education, low income and non- non-vocational courses"* (not specifically for offenders/ex-offenders) in Authority A. *"Free to anyone on benefit and free in community-based centres"* in Authority B. A *"Priority Passport"* in Authority C gives full fee remission for tuition (but not exam fees) to any resident on means-tested benefits in this area, for all Further and Adult Education classes.

Other Changes

12.1 In the last section LEAs were asked what changes in work with offenders/ ex-offenders in the community they now expected (after September 1993) compared with the situations they had described in earlier questions.

12.2 Thus, in respect of changes or developments in staffing arrangements, Authority A reported that there would be *"reduced input from the Community/ Adult Education Officer"*, who now had *"new areas of responsibility"*. Authority B indicated in the letter accompanying the questionnaire that the officer's *"time, energy and scarce resources are better used elsewhere"*. Authority C's response to this was *"none"*.

12.3 In terms of changes or developments in relation to the provision previously described, Authority A reported positive developments at the residential centre to *"provide more Careers Guidance, work placements, and to provide a vocational package"* for the 16+ group; input to the Probation Centre Job Club is not mentioned directly but concern is expressed at the loss of Urban programme funding which had supported this work. Authority B suggested that a question mark now hung over the continuance of the 7 Associate Lecturer Post, and the provision so offered, as this post, (originally funded by the LEA, though employed by the College), was now fully the responsibility of the College. Authority C indicated no changes.

12.4 When asked about any changes now in staff development and training in respect of work with offenders and ex-offenders Authority A said it no longer has control or responsibility for its *"own"* staff (as they once were) in the post-16 sector, and so training and staff development for those staff is no longer its responsibility. LEA B did not respond to this question. LEA C again responded *"none"*.

12.5 Finally education authorities were asked about any anticipated changes in interagency links, and any plans or possibilities for partnership funding. Authority A recorded that *"There is potential, particularly with the TEC and other voluntary agencies. We intend to re-establish the Forum and support the Probation Service to identify further funding"*. Authority C wrote *"local authorities will be increasingly limited in their ability to contribute because of reduced staffing, linked to withdrawal of revenue support for post-16 education"*. Authority B did not reply.

Respondents

13. Four people completed the questionnaire from Authority A - the Policy Development Officer Equal Opportunities, the Continuing and Community Education Officer, a worker from the residential centre, and the Employment Officer of the Probation Service. Respondent B was the Adult and Community Education Officer of that Authority who, in an accompanying letter, apologised *"for this rather depressing and scanty response"*. From Authority C the Education Development Officer (FE) replied.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

1. It was originally agreed that because of
 - (a) the difficulty of identifying the appropriate organisations
 - (b) the difficulty of identifying discrete "education, training or/and guidance" activities (in a residential situation for example)

no questionnaire would be designed for information-seeking from voluntary organisations.

Rather, an attempt would be made to track, via the responses of other agencies, the voluntary organisations involved with them in delivering ETE services.

2. As a result of this "tracking" seven voluntary organisations have been identified as having an involvement in this work. It seems likely that there may be more. For example a voluntary organisation will be working with Probation Service S on HELP (the Housing, Employment and Leisure Project) but it was not known whether this was just the name of the project, or of the organisation.

3. There are relatively few voluntary organisations in the region. Whilst all were happy that their work should be factually recorded there was a lot of anxiety about how attributable comments on that work and on partnerships might be. Several organisations felt that their work was very distinctive and therefore recognisable, several workers expressed a sense of vulnerability or unwillingness to speak for their organisations. To ensure the promised anonymity this account is therefore much briefer, less obviously rooted in evidence and inevitably blander than previous reports on findings.

Work in Prisons

4. Two national and one local voluntary organisation are working in prisons, sometimes in partnership with each other, or with statutory organisations (primarily the Probation Service). All three projects focus on transitional guidance, in terms of employment, education and training for prisoners on release. All three provide employment related skills courses (Job Search skills, etc.) - one also provides Basic Skills. One such project works exclusively with YOIs and is a feasibility study for the extension of such work. All three are looking to development or/and extension in the near future. They are funded by Employment Services, TEC or TEED.

Work in the Community

5. Four localised and two national organisations work with offenders in the community. Two provide three Training and Employment Projects in partnership with Probation Service Q, offering Guidance, Employment related skills and Basic Skills, funded by Home Office with some additional Employment Services resources. One national organisation provides an offender-exclusive Training for Work and Youth Training facility for Probation Service R and will also be working in partnership with Probation Service P on a new employment related project. A local voluntary organisation will be doing the same.

The other national organisation, which provides "supported" Job Clubs in one city with monthly ½ day courses specifically for Probation clients also reported a new initiative for this region: the "Employee Volunteer Programme". In this scheme employees seconded by their employer will spend time in a prison, in a Probation Centre giving support from their own area of expertise to anyone on a course, applying for jobs, or starting work. All the projects were exclusively for offenders on probation (or past clients of the Probation Service).

Other work with offenders

6. Two voluntary organisations, one local, one national, provide opportunities for anyone, but have special links to the Probation Service. One is a very large centre offering a range of occupational, basic and personal development educational skills. It has acted as partner to the Probation Service in work for a Community Service Order scheme, but currently works with offenders on an individual, referral basis, for example on a "Confidence for Men" course.

7. In addition the project officer has made some personal contact with most of the organisations involved, including some extensive discussions. The focus in these enquiries has been on the relationship with the contracting or partnership agency

- in terms of the shared activity
- perceived benefits or difficulties
- for the organisation, for workers, for clients.

Relationship in terms of task

8. Some of the respondents felt that their work was based on a clear partnership statement in which for example aims, objectives, action and evaluation procedures were clearly laid out, and that they were able to provide *"an integrated, very specific and focussed service"*.

9. Others, (some of whom overlapped with the above) felt that, in practice, partnership was (nevertheless) not clear. Their experience pointed more to the organic nature of such a relationship. They felt that perhaps insufficient time had been given to *"understanding each other"* and *"achieving mutual respect"* in the early, planning stages. Then as projects had developed and unanticipated difficulties had arisen for example to do with nomenclature, attitudes, procedures - there had been no adequate strategies or trust for these issues to be openly and realistically dealt with.

10. Concerns were expressed by some that policy makers set up partnerships. Practitioners were expected to use them/making them work. This could result in *"conflict"* or *"unrealistic expectations"*, which then had bad repercussions for the project and the voluntary organisation.

11. One respondent explicitly and others implicitly queried how far it was a real partnership, or whether the statutory organisation was in fact a contractor of voluntary organisation services. One respondent felt that this would certainly be the case when Probation Services were holding their own budget for partnerships. *"The group providing the specialist service will be redefined as an independent charitable organisation"* and would then be contracted to continue existing work. Probation Service trustees to that charity would ensure that work done *"is under their control"*.

12. However other organisations spoke of very positive relationships where the voluntary organisation has *"the trust of Probation Officers ... we can see all the files"* and maintained a close relationship with them *"providing feedback on clients"*. One worker contributed actively to a specialist practitioner group, another spoke of *"the contribution of this resource to the whole supervision programme"*.

Difficulties and benefits

13. There were further insights offered into both the difficulties, and the advantages, for worker and client of the voluntary organisation involvement. Some workers had experienced cold shouldering and possessiveness - in terms of work, and clients. Work on *"offending behaviour"* had not been shared: *"Clients are sometimes suspicious"* (because they don't - or do know the name of the voluntary organisation) *"Some people seem to see us as coming in to do part of their job"* *"I don't think they realise that my skills are essentially complementary to theirs"* *"do they think we are forcing ET down people's throats?"* *"They (Probation Officers) tend to look down on our, supposedly, non-professional attitudes, because we're working for a voluntary organisation"*. *"They (the Sentencers) don't want to sentence people to education because education is not controlled by the Probation Service"*.

14. Again, however there were many positives identified.

"Because of the mixed funding there's no restrictions on the range of guidance we can give".

"They may envy my freedom" (i.e. not part of the criminal justice system)

"They've welcomed my skills and learnt from them".

"Clients know we're not their PO and sometimes that's useful to them".

"We have far more experience and opportunities for networking".

15. As far as their organisations were concerned some workers were anxious lest the voluntary organisations priorities and values should become subservient to the rush for money.

"There's a danger of it skewing the voluntary organisations' original and true ethos"

"Partnership, collaboration etc. - they're the triggerwords to release the money - but they don't think about why or how they'll do it"

"We've come to use the idea of partnership without thinking - as if we believed it was defacto useful, easier in a way, probably cheaper - it may well be useful, and when it works well is better than what a single organisation can provide - but easier and cheaper - never".

INFORMATION SEEKING FROM AND ABOUT RELEVANT SERVICES IN PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Responses

1. Penal establishments' regimes, education and training in prisons, and the relevant transitional arrangements to support offenders' release into the community provided by prisons come within the remit of this project to the extent that these arrangements do (or do not) support education and training for offenders post - custody - i.e. in the community. Information on this derives from both interviews and questionnaires. When the project began (April 1993) the Competitive Tendering processes for Prison Education were still not complete. It was recognised that after a year of acute anxiety many EOs might still not know who had been awarded the contract for the delivery of education to "their" prison, and that, although, supported by the European ruling, their own post might be secure, the future for colleagues and long established work might be in doubt. In this context any additional work, stress or distress was to be avoided. Initial interview requests then, were made to Heads of Inmate Activity (HIAs) in three penal establishments, rather than to the Education Officers (now called Education Co-ordinators or Managers). Discussion with HIAs was also very positively welcomed to the extent that, in the new prison education contractual arrangements they would have a key role in the management of these contracts on behalf of the prison.

2. At the same time a section of the questionnaire sent to FE colleges was addressed to those 7 colleges which used to, or/and would continue to, provide education in the 15 prison establishments in the region. Returns on this were low, so towards the end of October information was also directly sought from and offered by Prison Education Co-ordinators (See § 14-30).

Altogether some information has been provided about twelve of these fifteen prisons.

3. Prison Designations

Prisons are categorised according to the degree of risk posed by the most difficult prisoners they are required to hold.

The twelve prisons represented here include

- Young Offender Institutions 2
- Maximum Security/long-term prisons 2
- 'Closed' prison 1
- Low Security 4
- 'Open' prison 2
- Community Prison 1 (may contain wide range of risk categories)

Two of these prisons also hold people on remand, and there are two prisons for women amongst the group represented. These designations have to be taken into account in interpreting the findings.

INTERVIEWS WITH HEADS OF INMATE ACTIVITY IN PRISONS A, B AND C

The place of education and training within the "positive regime"

4.1 Early in the interview the H.I.A. in HMP A (pre)echoed the view expressed by *Judge Tumin that prison should be "one long pre-release 'course' from the start". To this HIA education and training were an "integral part of a positive regime": providing "opportunities for confidence building, personal change and for the recognition and achievement which are particularly important to those in prison". At the same time education and training could contribute to another aspect of the purposes of the positive regime in maintaining "links with the outside" and preparing the inmate for the future practicalities of domestic responsibilities or/and employment careers beyond the prison.

*Response to NACRO report on resettlement of prisoners 3.8.93

4.2 The HIA from HMP C also underlined the prison's task in preparing inmates for release and keeping them in touch with "the real world". The positive regime should *"enable prisoners to identify their strengths and build on them, recognise weakness and agree ways of countering offending behaviour"*. He believed that with its focus on individual needs, education could help this development of a prisoner's responsibility for himself. Education and training were also valuable in providing a skill base, including core skills, which could be built on, for survival or for employment. He added that such elements were a very important part of sentence-planning which provided the framework of activity for the inmate within the prison and as a link to the real world and to Home Probation Services.

4.3 The third HIA interviewed expressed rather different views, both on the purpose of the regime and of the contribution of education and training. For him the prison should *"condition inmates to do something different; to get up, to get shaved, to wash and get breakfast"* and the regime *"should keep prisoners occupied or they will destroy the prison"*. Education *"gives inmates a chance, but they don't want to know, don't see the relevance, don't want to do anything"*. He felt that accreditation might 'spark interest', though with average sentences of 3-4 months there was insufficient time for much to be achieved, he also felt that inmates were offered opportunities to learn *"multi-skills for all kinds of useful purposes outside"* but that the education/training provision was *"too good for those in here"*. He felt serious concern as to whether *"education and training could now help to prepare prisoners for the world they will be in on release"*.

Transitional activities

5. By far the greater part of these interviews was taken up in discussing the arrangements and activities within the prison (prior to the new contractual arrangements) which did or would support education and training for offenders after their release - characterised here as "transitional activities".

Sentence planning arrangements

6.1 The Prison Service Statement of purpose declares that **"Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law abiding and useful lives in custody and after release"** (my italics).

Sentence-planning is one of the processes in which the prison regime addresses these latter two of its purposes. Discussions or/and interviews (usually of a multidisciplinary kind) with the prisoner identify a programme of activity - to help the prisoner cope with his sentence, to reduce the likelihood of re-offending and to prepare for resettlement post-custody. These decisions are then recorded into the "sentence plan". Until recently only Young Offenders and adults with longer sentences have had this opportunity.

6.2 Prisons A, B and C each had to some extent distinctive sentence-planning arrangements because of their category of intake, though it was understood that the sentence-planning documentation provided by Establishment A was used commonly. In prisons A and C a range of departments within the prison, including education, were involved, *"to decide how the inmate can benefit from the time inside (A)"*. An induction-week programme which included educational assessment then led to a *"compact, agreeing what the prisoner can expect/give (A)"* which is reviewed after 6 months (A).

6.3 In Establishment C the agreed initial plan (if it involved the Education Department) took the form of a contracted timetable stating clearly that *"this can only be changed by negotiation or if circumstances demand"*, and that *"unauthorised absence from class leads to loss of pay"*. This plan would be reviewed yearly.

6.4 In Establishment B the sentence plan focussed on *"basic elements for thru-care - names, and accommodation for release"* it would also identify problems to work on and what was needed to maintain home links for the inmate. It could include the continuance of training if the inmate was already on a course, it did not plan for his education in prison.

Inmate Development and Pre-release courses

7.1 These are closely related to sentence planning and may fill a similar function - especially where prisoners have not been held eligible for sentence-planning. Dip 2, the Through Care Section of the Home Office, describes the overall aims of such courses as "to help prisoners to cope with imprisonment and to increase their desire to resettle themselves in the community on release". Potential modules of such courses include for example "the relationship package", "the accommodation subject package", "the drugs subject package", "the time on your hands subject package".

7.2 In Establishment A the HIA explained that these courses were run by Prison Officers with additional outside help but that although they were intended to run monthly they were not fully active. Discussion on the extent to which education and training issues might be addressed in any of these courses, was forestalled by the Education Officer (who was present at this point), interjecting that the Prison Officers needed to "have their fingers prised off these courses" and "give an opportunity for others to be involved". Concern was expressed at Prison Officers' responsibilities in these courses after only 3 weeks training for this task and at the potential conflict between their usual controlling role, on the wing, and a personal counselling role within the course.

7.3 In Establishment B the courses were run by the education department and were described as "very good" - no details were provided as to content.

7.4 In HMP C the HIA explained that the courses were Prison-Officer-led and additional expertise could be bought in or required of the prison education contractors, in order to tailor-make a course for a specific group. The Education Officer, who was seen separately, said that in fact there were very few pre-release courses as many inmates were transferred to other penal establishments, but that departments worked well together on courses dealing with offending behaviour.

Day parole to attend a course

8.1 A third area of questioning related to the availability and use of day parole, allowing an individual prisoner to leave the prison for a specified time during the day to attend a course. This might be provided by the contractor college, or by other Further, or Higher Education Establishments. This possibility was welcome to Establishment A, where 6 inmates had taken advantage of this facility in the previous year, 4 going to the FE College in the nearby city responsible for the education in the prison, 1 attending the university, and 1 going to a specialist course in another FE College in a city much further away. These activities were financed by a mixture of money from charities and contribution from the individual (with concessionary fee policies helping).

8.2 Establishment B said that day parole could be arranged, and he thought there had been one example in the previous year.

8.3 In the last establishment (C) day parole was not regarded as a reasonable possibility because of the risk factor. However, the HIA reported that once an inmate's release date had been fixed, if he were to be released directly into the community, day-release for an interview (for work or training), might occasionally be arranged. The Education Officer remembered that 3 lower-risk prisoners following O.U. courses had been allowed to attend an O.U. summer school, the previous year.

Temporary release weeks

9. Temporary release weeks or a 'home' week for those nearing the end of sentence were common to all three establishments but did not involve the Education departments. The HIA in prison A felt that this was "the best form of pre-release because it gives realistic opportunities to look at the 'home' situation for accommodation, for jobs, training and education, and for re-establishing relationships and family life". Numbers were not available.

Inmates left Establishment B to go on structured Probation temporary release courses to which social workers might also contribute. Numbers involved were not known.

Guidance facilities towards education and training post-custody

10. The HIA of Prison A reported that they made use of various guidance services: there were occasional visits from Careers Advisers from the local city funded through the European Social Fund; guidance and counselling were provided by Prison Education staff; they made use of the fairly local "Bridging the Gap" Service, and inmates could themselves go out to the local FE College Guidance worker. He felt that as inmates were released to so many locations the prison needed good networks, and that it was regrettable that the TEC would only be concerned with the very few who would be released locally.

The HIA of Establishment B indicated that there was not much call for such provision and that when needed it was provided by Prison Education Department staff.

In Prison C there were occasional links with NACRO, but the majority of inmates were transferred on to another prison, rather than released.

Job Clubs "Return to work" or "Job search skills" etc. courses

11. None of the three prisons had a job club, or return to work/job preparation courses, though A hoped to start a job club before the end of the year, and in B the Education Department was unusually involved in employment issues, usually in individual work with inmates.

Computerised guidance systems

12. None of the establishments used or provided computerised guidance systems (including Campus 2000) for this area of work. In Establishment C only, use was made of Employment Services information about work in prisoners' home areas. Inmates at Establishment A could use the "good programmes" in the city Careers offices, supported by the Education Department.

Potential changes to these transitional arrangements

13.1 The next group of questions moved the focus from existing transitional arrangements to any changes to them which might arise, firstly from the new contractual arrangements for prison education, and secondly from any other organisational or legislative changes.

It was difficult to maintain this focus, and all respondents highlighted a whole range of potential advantages and concerns from a range of changes.

13.2 Conflicting views about the new contractual arrangements were expressed by HIAs and Education Officers where they were present. Thus the HIA of Prison A said that "all existing services would have been recognised as part of the existing curriculum and bidders would have to ensure their continuance and cost them into any bid" and the HIA in Establishment B thought the same. However the Education Officer at Establishment A felt that there was not provision in the contract for adequate non-teaching time, and that this was all important for supporting the educational progress of inmates inside, and providing counselling and advice for their futures outside. The Education Officer in Prison C echoed this, but welcomed what might prove to be closer links between the prison education sector and the College.

13.3 A concern shared by HIAs and Education Officers was the new position of the Education Officer as Education "Co-ordinator" - responsible to the supplier and no longer part of the prison Senior Management Team. There were fears that this Education Co-ordinator would be marginalised, particularly since it would now be regime responsibility to identify prisoner needs for education via the sentence-planning process.

13.4 In one establishment there was concern for the continuance of NVQ development both inside and outside the Education Department - currently co-ordinated by the Education Officer. Whilst there was some doubt as to the 'currency' of NVQ both inside and outside prisons (including a rejection of any training in Textiles as "women's work" in one prison), there was also evidence from both Establishments A and C of systematic and cross-departmental work on NVQs and GNVQs and of developing opportunities. For example the inmates in Establishment A on a Business Administration course were to provide reception facilities and support the new inmates during their induction programme as part of their "work experience".

13.5 Asking what other changes might impact on this work produced replies related to much broader penal or educational issues. For example Establishment A pointed to recent changes which allowed it to recruit its own staff and so ensure staff commitment to its desired ethos.

Establishment B recognised the importance elsewhere of NVQs, but not for their short-stay population.

"An explosion in the prison population" was anticipated by the HIA of Establishment C when the Criminal Justice Act was amended.

INFORMATION FROM COLLEGES AND PRISON EDUCATION CO-ORDINATORS

Responses

14. Information in the form of answers to a questionnaire was provided for the project by:-

- (a) Four Colleges which used to provide education in penal establishments, or which had applied for, or been awarded such contracts.
- (b) Six Prison Education Co-ordinators/Managers.

In addition four co-ordinators provided further material in brief interviews.

These sources of information are combined in the following accounts which refer to nine prisons.

Transitional Arrangements

15. Respondents were asked about the contribution of the Prison Education Department to "transitional arrangements" during the year prior to the new contractual arrangements.

Sentence planning arrangements

16.1 Two establishments provided no information. Of the remaining seven, six affirmed some kind of contribution, though these varied enormously. Prison M commented that their contribution was "brief interviewing". In Prison E and D the "education department was fully involved". "Everyone that comes in has a meaningful programme, and the Education Officer takes a full part in the week long induction programme which looks at Training, Work or Educational needs". Some contributed to a programme of activity (J,K,L) one to a Sentence Planning Board (D). where the prison itself was "not into this yet" ... "there is sentence planning within the education department" (Prison H).

16.2 Criteria for prisoners' access to sentence planning facilities seemed to vary from prison to prison in a way not clearly related to the designation of the prison.

"Sentence planning here has been only with 'lifers' or those with over four years sentence. It will come in for anyone with over a year's sentence".

"This prison is still catching up to ensure sentence planning for men with long sentences convicted before the 1991 Criminal Justice Act".

"There is sentence planning for all convicted now with 18+ months of sentence".

"They are not into (sentence planning) yet here".

Pre-release courses

17.1 Eight of the nine educational departments were involved in Pre-release courses. The ninth implied that such courses were not seen as relevant to that establishment since many men were transferred on to other prisons, rather than released.

17.2 There were wide variations in the responsibilities of the educationalists in these courses. Of the eight, two departments indicated that they ran the courses.

One respondent provided information about courses delivered jointly with Probation Services.

"Pre-release courses used to be run successfully by joint efforts between Education and Probation with officer input. Since they have been officer-led they are far from multi-disciplinary and we no longer have any input whatever"(F).

Five described some kind of "input" into courses which were prison officer led. One spoke of good "multi-disciplinary team delivery" (H) one that *"the induction programme, the sentence planning and pre-release processes are the vehicle to project them (the prisoners) forward"(K).*

17.3 Prison Education departments were involved to very different degrees in these activities. Establishments G and K contributed to 9 and 12 courses respectively during the last year; Establishments J and D were involved fortnightly (26) and Establishment L weekly for both pre-release and induction courses (45 and 45 in the year). Establishment H was involved in "all", but did not put a figure to this. No figures were given by the department from Prison M.

Day parole for course attendance

18.1 Seven of the nine education departments gave some evidence about their support or involvement in such arrangements.

The education department of Prison D had made arrangements for 10 men to attend courses in Colleges in the nearby city or at the University. The Prison Education Department paid fees and examination fees. The co-ordinator said he could send out 10 more, but for the financial constraints. *"The Colleges are always absolutely superb in taking prisoners, even when they have had negative experiences".*

Two inmates from Establishment G had been involved, one to the "providing" college, and the other to another local college. Funding had come from NACRO and the Princes Trust, and an outside Probation Officer had arranged for "Wider Opportunities" budget support. Establishment H indicated that 10 inmates had been involved and that *"fees were waived"*, when the College had also been the suppliers of education in the prison, but that that concession had now been withdrawn. The Manager surmised that the prison education department might have to pay full fees whilst the men were still in custody - although as individuals they would qualify for concessions on release. This might have impossible cost implications.

A similar situation faced Prison M education department *"Fees were waived, this no longer continues, and there is no provision for these fees in our budget"*. The Co-ordinator from Prison E echoed these concerns and added another *"if he is 'safe' enough to be released for a day class, should he be in our prison?"*. Someone suggested that this fees situation was now a matter for Prison Governors to consider.

Establishments J and L commented rather enigmatically that *"all students are linked to college external provision"*. Establishment L suggested that *"approximately 12"* inmates had taken part in such arrangements last year.

Temporary release weeks

19. No prison education departments were involved in temporary release week arrangements.

Guidance facilities for education and training post custody

20.1 All respondents confirmed some education-department involvement in providing guidance on education/training post-custody, or with an external agency such as the Bridging the Gap Service, and there is further detail from eight establishments.

The Department in Establishment D in addition to its own strong links with local colleges had made extensive use of the Bridging the Gap Service since 1985. This had been funded by the LEA to provide 3 hours contact time in the prison and to allow for the information seeking work, or contact with ex-prisoners outside the prison. In the previous year 120 inmates had made use of this valuable service. This provision had also been used by Prison E where it was pointed out that men could arrange to use this facility through their Prison Probation Officer, or on their own initiative as well as via the education department. No figures were given.

20.2 Establishment H also had use of an external agency; the Prisons Rehabilitation Employment and

Education Support Services - this day-a-week facility had been funded out of the education department budget, with considerable support from a F/T worker in the department.

20.3 Guidance was given at Establishment F through its provider college with "approximately 4 visits of 2 hours each per year" for 6 inmates. Establishments K and L had set up a new post since September 1992 using a Careers Adviser (from the local Careers Service) funded by the College through the Prison Education department. This provided Prison K with 2 days and Prison L with 1 day of contact time per week throughout the year. Since September 270 inmates in all had made use of this guidance facility. In Establishment J 5 hours guidance per week was again funded by the prison education department (with 3 visits per year from the Bridging the Gap service) and a total of 230 inmates used these services.

20.4 The prison education department at M wrote of "local" funding (source not named) for about 20 inmates per year and informal contacts. A voluntary organisation provides Establishment G with a "weekly surgery".

Job Clubs and employment-related skills courses

21.1 Provision of these facilities seemed most closely linked to regime considerations in that some departments without them pointed out that inmates are moving on from there to other prisons, or that "there are not enough inmates released to the community each month".

21.2 Two establishments were just developing such provision - one (now due to have begun) involved education department funding as well as some from Employment Services. The other would be fully funded by Employment Services but would also involve NACRO and Apex (See Probation Services § 8.1 and § 8.6). Three establishments had already established either a "job club" or job-search skills courses. The Co-ordinator in Prison K explained that there was a pilot job-search course run in co-operation with Prison Officers. Establishment L wrote that job-search and interview techniques were taught as part of the pre-release courses attended by 450 inmates each year, and Establishment J described a monthly 2 day input to a prison job-club, together with subsequent help with Action Plans etc. This facility was funded by Employment Services.

Computerised guidance systems

22.1 Two departments confirmed substantial use: K "used Kudos and microdoors", at Establishment M "all had access to computer-aided guidance last year".

The Manager in Prison H said that "Campus 2000 is something to think about".

Other activities relevant to transition and release

Information from Prison Education departments

Departments were asked about the availability of information

(a) to inmates

23.1 Six of the seven prisons releasing prisoners into the community also provided them with records of their education or/and training - or these were forwarded on. Such records included the National Record of Achievement books, NVQ and other qualification certificates.

"they have access, too, to anything the Education Department writes about them".

(b) to the external Probation Officers (where they are not in receipt of discharge reports under sentence planning arrangements).

23.2 This question seemed to evoke considerable surprise "We've never been approached about this". "It's very rare for the 'Home' Probation Officer to show interest in education". "Home Probation Officers do not know what the men do in this way". "We've never seen a discharge report".

However, from Establishment H it was noted that "the men often want links to the external Probation Officer"

and "inmates are informed by education staff that education reports can be provided if the Home Probation Officer makes contact with the department" (Prison G).

But it "relies very much on individual officers" (L)

"Nothing is sent directly ... under sentence planning the discharge report will include records of educational achievement" (G)

NVQ involvement

24.1 All the prison education departments had been involved to some extent in the development of NVQ training for inmates. But the degree of involvement clearly varied enormously. Establishment F reported that "only recently has the prison taken on board the idea of introducing NVQs into the workshops", "the education department has given support and advice when requested". On the other hand in Establishment J the Education Officer co-ordinates the work on NVQ prison-wide and: "All courses were now working towards NVQ and GNVQ accreditation where possible. Feasibility studies were going on, examining the possibility of offering different study areas". The local (provider) college had paid for both the college and the prison staff to have assessor training at Establishment G where NVQs in Business Administration, Hairdressing, Commercial Horticulture and Catering were running or ready to run.

Anticipated changes

25.1 Information was sought from these respondents as to the possible impact on transitional work arising from a range of measures affecting their own and related organisations.

The first question focussed on the results of the new contractual arrangements for Prison Education

26.1 Respondents were asked what financial arrangements (if any) were written into the bid to facilitate the transitional work already described.

Only one respondent affirmatively in the exact terms of the question, explaining that the bid "included a F/T guidance worker, but at ATTC rates and a .5 worker for the job club".

College 7 which continued to provide the education in Establishments J, K and L was increasing that support by providing Establishment J with a careers adviser from September 1993 to parallel the existing posts in Establishments K and L. However one of the workers concerned expressed anxiety about accessing "external funding for the guidance project to continue in all three prisons".

26.2 Establishment G explained that Bridging the Gap, the guidance service which they used so much was not in the bid price (per contact hour) because the College had not previously funded it. "The formula (for non contact hours funding) will not really pay for such (transitional support) activities either, but we will always do them". Several respondents had not seen the bid proposals by "their" colleges.

27. Respondents had a lot to say about the wider implications of contractual arrangements which could all, in various ways influence this area of work:

27.1 Six respondents indicated that their department had lost F/T staff (or F/T equivalents) and pointed out that it was such staff who often had the time and therefore the responsibility to support and encourage inmates to make use of guidance facilities and to continue their education or training on release. One respondent noted the loss of a deputy Education Officer and 2 F/T staff.

At the same time it was felt that non-teaching time for remaining F/T staff would be more occupied with administrative work and form-filling.

27.2 Several respondents were concerned that, because the prison education tender was to be "re-bid for" some in three years', some in five years' time, there would be a greater reduction in sharing - information, curriculum development, ideas - between prison education departments where they felt issues of "commercial in confidence" might be at stake. "One consequence is the setting of Prison Education Departments against each other. I shall be anxious or unwilling to give information about this department to just anyone because that contractor might be in competition for my department at the next round". This was seen as having potentially damaging effects where a prisoner was hoping for continuity or progression (in his

education or training programme) in seeking a move from one prison to another, for example in looking for an appropriate "open" prison to complete a sentence passed in high security prisons. That prisoner might have much more difficulty in finding out exactly what another establishment could offer in the way of education or training.

27.3 The same concerns could inhibit openness and sharing in staff development contexts *"Will there be a copyright on ideas?"*. However one Co-ordinator felt that *"Currently people are very sensitive because they've recently been threatened. They'll relax in 6 months or so - then in 2½ years time the shutters may come down again when it's contract-time"*.

27.4 One Manager foresaw similar inhibitions on openness in the new arrangements within a prison where *"there is a great need for honesty to solve problems on a multi-disciplinary basis"* - but the contractual relationship made this more difficult. However another Co-ordinator asserted that *"We shall be doing the same things as ever we did. CEOB wants to force the HIAs into a false role, but the Governors appreciate someone else doing things for them. CEOB don't understand these internal dynamics; they've written themselves out of Prison Education in any purposeful way"*.

27.5 There were however several positive comments too. Some Co-ordinators saw positive benefits from closer links now with "their" contractor/college. Quality assurance strategies, staff support systems and more effective and efficient management were hoped for. One respondent thought that some of the present difficulties could be temporary *"especially where the Governor is supportive of education"*.

28.1 Respondents also reflected on the impact of the current policies for "positive regimes" in penal establishments.

Some pointed to improvements in the criteria for pay whereby *"everyone is attached to a work party and so is paid for work"*. No one had a F/T Educational programme but an inmate *"might be doing a University course in Russian but attached to the industrial Cleaning Unit - perhaps that is realistic" or "the inmate may be released from work for 2 sessions per week without losing work pay"* so there is no disincentive to education. It was, however, pointed out, that Governors still have discretion to weight payments according to the prison's needs.

28.2 Another positive development mentioned was a scheme to "award" inmates points for every hour of satisfactory "work" - this was seen as a great change of perspective focussing on *"the good"* with the intention of creating motivation rather than only noticing *"the bad"* for punishment.

28.3 However Co-ordinators also felt that there was a need for regimes to *"practice what's proclaimed"* and avoid moving men to other prisons so arbitrarily (under pressure for cell-space) so destroying constructive work. *"I pleaded for an individual to be able to stay at x just long enough to complete his course - which he probably wouldn't be able to do elsewhere - but he was still shipped out willy-nilly"*. Another Co-ordinator spoke of the problems of inmates transferred to that prison from training prisons, *"unable to complete what they may have started years ago"*. *"It can make nonsense of a sentence plan"*.

29.1 Respondents felt that the 1991 Criminal Justice Act might be very beneficial to inmates in respect of post-custodial supervision. One co-ordinator suggested that where thru-care plans and aims were developed in conjunction with 'home' Probation Officers it might be useful for inmates to begin regular work, training or education outside, in their own communities before release. New definite arrangements for parole and release were also welcomed in helping prepare effective release action plans, taking examination dates and course-start dates into consideration.

30. The allocation and use of Employment Services funding in penal establishments was welcomed - with reservations:

- (a) that new employment-orientated provision should be integrated into present opportunities - not duplicate or bypass them.
- (b) that those funding - and those employed - should have *"a proven track record of interest and ability with this client group"*.

There would be great concerns if *"providers"* simply *"delivered"* - with little understanding or awareness of the prison establishment - or simply regarded it as a *"market possibility"*.

SOME VIEWS ON VOLUNTARYISM/COMPULSION

The discussion around voluntaryism and compulsion for ETE seems to merit more space than can be provided in the main body of the report.

There are strong cases put on either side.

Arguments against compulsion are probably well-known, and reflect the views of practitioners in both Education and Probation Services. Probation Officers' concerns are that clients should not be constrained by more intervention than is absolutely necessary, especially where such additional conditions are likely to lead to breach action and re-sentencing, possibly with higher penalties than for the original offence. They also point out how inequitable it might be that offenders in one area, where "compulsory" ETE was an acceptable sentence of the court, could then suffer consequences which would not happen for offenders in an other area. Moreover there is some evidence that sentencers themselves are not willing to use this condition - not so much for the reasons given above, as that Education and Training are seen as not within the control of the Probation Service, and as basically a "soft option".

Many working in educational/training agencies would also reject compulsion, partly on the tenet that "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink". They also share concerns with other professionals that there is an essential contradiction (and hypocrisy) in enforcing activity which itself claims to encourage autonomy. Others in this field would argue that educational structures and attitudes should be doing everything possible to avoid the perceived power divide which so alienated many during their time of primary or secondary education.

Some workers and a number of services feel that these are rather simplistic arguments. Some would dispute whether there was such a stark dichotomy between compulsion and voluntaryism in practice, given that the recommendation of such a condition would have been thoroughly discussed beforehand. (Critics object that one might agree to almost anything if that made custody less likely.)

Hensman wrote "that a requirement to attend, e.g. a Day Centre, may help by putting limits round the student/client and getting him into the classroom, but that, once there, the principles of adult education require freedom for the student to make choices about his own studies, goals and participation". Colin Thomas comments on this that "the distinction between the setting of limits and the content of what takes place within those limits seems entirely right". Some would argue that it is too important to leave to voluntary choice when the choosers do not fully understand the value. Jones in *Bridgebuilding* (Spring 1993) asks Probation Officers "to relate the importance of education and employment in the lives of offenders and their own experience". A pragmatic approach points to the value of compulsion in getting someone started, and to the experiences of many offenders (in prison and out) who find themselves thoroughly enjoying something they began with suspicion, to get out of their cells or to please their POs. "Many prisoners in the UK no doubt enter Open University studies with half an eye to forthcoming parole reports, but they continue because they enjoy the intellectual stimulus, the contact with outsiders, the meaningful structuring of their time" Williams (2). A twist to this argument suggests that, for young men in particular, compulsion ("Well I've gotta go haven't I?"), would allow attendance, even enjoyment and benefit from, education or training, but permit them to keep "street cred" with their peer group.

Melanie Phillips, quoted by Colin Thomas, points out that "control" is required in Probation Work and that "offenders know it clearly enough". She suggests that POs should see themselves as "people whose skills depend on an element of control, but who need that control to achieve their primary aim of guiding individuals towards knowledge, growth and development of their potential".

In the present climate for "law and order" issues, these may no longer be academic arguments.

**EXCERPT FROM "WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE?" BY JONATHAN BROWN
IN ADULTS LEARNING VOL 2 NO 10 JUNE 1991**

1. WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE?

Educational Guidance is:

- a helping process which overlaps with personal and vocational guidance
- a process of clarifying options
- the seven activities of guidance
 - informing
 - advising
 - counselling
 - assessing
 - enabling
 - advocating
 - feeding back
- informed by five values
 - client-centred
 - confidential
 - open and accessible
 - independent
 - freely available
- undertaken at all stages of learning.

2. Educational guidance is a process of clarifying options (In which four phases can be identified)

What the adult learners should encounter within the guidance process is that as their options become clearer, they have the opportunity of choosing a learning route which is appropriate to their educational and training needs. This process involves four phases. Obviously, the process is easier to understand if the phases are more or less sequential and linked in time. Progression may not, however, be linear: many clients do not move directly from one stage to another and even when they do it may be over a considerable period of time.

The four phases of clarifying options are identified as those of exploring, understanding, choosing and acting

- **Exploring**

involves both self exploration and context exploration. The self exploration involves questions like 'What are my needs?' whilst context exploration involves trying to find out what is available in terms of learning opportunities ('What education and training is available to me?')

Understanding

may be more appropriately called the phase of the new understanding that comes from a review of the exploring phase.

Choosing

occurs at the point where the options are clear and should lead in to an

Acting phase

of involvement in a chosen learning process.

3. **Educational guidance is the seven guidance activities of informing, advising, counselling, assessing, enabling, advocating and feeding back.**

The process of clarifying options by the client is closely related to the activities undertaken jointly by guidance worker and client. The seven activities wholly or partially undertaken are separately identified to assist understanding and analysis. In practice they form part of a guidance process in which one activity merges into another. The seven-fold identification of activity is the most frequently quoted and helpful section of 'The Challenge of Change'. The strength of the listing is that all are in the -ING form, stressing the dynamism of the process. Concerns have been expressed about some aspects of this formulation. It has been argued that using 'guidance' as an umbrella term is unhelpful in practice, that it suggests a directive position and that 'counselling' is an overarching concept which should encompass the others. This is a fascinating debate, which will continue to illuminate both practice and theory. It is enough to note here that the use of the guidance umbrella with the seven activities has gained wide acceptance and is now the common usage within the educational guidance field. It provides a framework for explanation, the planning of services and for staff development.

4. **Educational guidance is informed by five values**

The location of educational guidance within the framework of related helping processes, together with the understanding of the process of clarifying options and the identification of the seven guidance activities, are all helpful to an understanding of the nature of educational guidance. They do not, however, state the values of the process upon which service standards so depend. A value system is necessary to underpin services, to set objectives and to determine standards. Five values can be identified:

Client-centred

in that the primary concern of the service must be the learning needs, wishes and interests of the client.

Confidential

information received or recorded about clients and their personal circumstances and learning needs should be treated as confidential and not be conveyed to third parties without agreement.

Open and accessible

As far as possible the service should be accessible to adult clients at times and places convenient to them.

Independent

Any guidance given should be based on the needs of the client and not distorted by the needs of the service or any other institution.

Freely available

Charging would be yet another barrier to access so that guidance should normally be free to the client.

These values are not easy to achieve and maintain. They do run up against the agendas of funding bodies, limits of resources, the professionalism and training of staff. However, in terms of practice they are an essential part of educational guidance.

5. Educational guidance is undertaken at all stages of learning.

The final part of the answer to 'What is educational guidance?' deals with time. In a sense the chronology is implied in the phases of the clarifying of options. The major development of educational guidance and the discussion of it has concentrated on one of the four stages where educational guidance is needed by the adult learner (or potential learner).

That one phase is the pre-entry but it is also needed:

- at entry (enrolment)

- within the learning process (on the course)

- at exit (whether this is at the appointed end of the process of learning or whether it is 'pre-mature').

In short the student or potential student should be supported with an appropriate educational guidance facility at all stages in the learning process.

GLOSSARY

ABE	Adult Basic Education
AE	Adult Education
ACPO	Assistant Chief Probation Officer
ACOP	Association of Chief Officers
ALBSU	Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit
AT	Adult Training
AOL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
BB	Bridgebuilders
BBNDU	Bridgebuilders National Development Unit
CEOB	Chief Education Officers Branch
CPO	Chief Probation Officer
DES/DFE	Department of education and Science - now the Department of Further Education
EOI	Educational Opportunities Initiative Liverpool
EO/EC	Education Officer/Education Co-ordinator for penal establishment
ES	Employment Services
ET	Employment Training
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
FEU	Further Education Unit
F/T	Full-Time
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
HIA	Head of Inmate Activity
HO	Home Office
ICG	Institute of Careers Guidance
IDPR	Inmate Development and Pre-Release
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
NACRO	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
NAEGA	National Association for the Educational Guidance of Adults
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NETTS	National Education and Training Targets
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NRA	National Record of Achievement
OU	Open University
PSR	Pre-sentence Report
PO	Probation Officer
SPO	Senior Probation Officer
SOVA	Society of Voluntary Associates
SUGS	Supervision Grants Scheme
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TEED	Training, Enterprise and Education Directorate of the Employment Department
UDACE	Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education
YIAFHE	Yorkshire and Humberside Association for Further and Higher Education
YOI	Young Offender Institutions
YT	Youth Training

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*denotes reference