VISION FOR CHANGE

A guide to support individuals on completion of a sentence
Contents

1. Introduction

Issues for advisers working with this client group 6

2. Understanding your role

3. Understanding your clients’ needs

4. Background to offender learning and skills

Meeting key IAG needs of this client group 33

5. Addressing client needs: IAG issues, interventions and resources 34

6. Advising your client about disclosing convictions 46

7. Jobcentre Plus benefits and services 57

Supporting clients into learning and skills and work 61

8. Supporting clients into learning and skills

9. Supporting clients into paid work

10. Supporting clients into voluntary work

11. Self-employment

Toolkit: resources and further information 93

12. Interactive resources to use with your clients

13. Directory of sources of further support

14. Glossary

15. References
1. Introduction

What is the purpose of this Guide?

This Guide has been produced to assist practitioners working in mainstream information, advice and guidance (IAG) services in their work with clients who are ex-offenders. It may also be useful for information, advice and guidance practitioners supporting offenders. It aims to equip advisers with the knowledge and skills to:

- understand the specific issues facing ex-offenders in relation to participation in learning and skills and employment;
- undertake initial assessments of client needs;
- support the client to make and act upon decisions in relation to learning and work;
- identify any wider needs that need to be addressed, and undertake effective signposting and referral to specialist sources of support as appropriate.

A companion Guide for clients has also been produced and will be available from www.advice-resources.co.uk in autumn 2007.

What is an ‘ex-offender’?

The term ex-offender refers to someone who has completed a sentence imposed by the courts. The sentence may have been served in prison, in the community, or a mixture of the two. On completion of his or her sentence, an ex-offender may be able to access mainstream public services.

The information in this guide may also be useful for information, advice and guidance professionals supporting offenders as they near the end of their sentence.

Potential recruits to some learning programmes and areas of employment are required to undergo Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. These checks will disclose details of any criminal records incurred by the individual, not just convictions before the court. It is therefore possible that people who have not been convicted but have other criminal records, e.g. a police caution, may find themselves classified as ‘ex-offenders’ in specific contexts. Further guidance on this subject is included in Section 6 of the Guide.

What is IAG?

Information, advice and guidance (IAG) are terms over which many Guidance professionals have spent a great deal of time in the pursuit of clear definitions.
For the purpose of this document:

**Information is about:**
- learning and work opportunities;
- vacancies; voluntary opportunities; opportunities in self employment;
- qualifications and equivalence in the UK of qualifications gained overseas;
- routes to learning and work etc.

**Advice is about:**
- promoting the benefits to individuals of engaging in learning and work;
- raising awareness and motivation of users and potential users to access information on learning and work;
- enabling clients to understand the information in relation to their needs etc.

**Guidance is about:**
- helping clients to understand their own needs relating to learning and work;
- helping clients to set and review goals/objectives for learning and work;
- helping clients to produce learning and career action plans etc.

To deliver at each level you will need to have specific skills, knowledge and understanding. It is essential that you only deliver up to the level to which you are competent, and signpost or refer clients to further support as appropriate. For more details see:

- [www.lifelonglearning.co.uk](http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk)
- [www.edexcel.org.uk/quals/nvq/adguid](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/quals/nvq/adguid)
- [http://www.nemocn.org.uk/Qualification%20units/Qualification_Units_IAG.html](http://www.nemocn.org.uk/Qualification%20units/Qualification_Units_IAG.html)

**What is included in the Guide?**

The *Guide* covers key topics and contains a range of resources including:

- background information on offender learning and skills and the issues facing ex-offenders in relation to learning and skills, work and wider needs;
- guidance on supporting clients into learning and skills, employment, and other activities that will develop their skills and employability;
- resources for advisers to use directly with clients covering a range of activities including needs assessment and action planning;
- contact details for organisations, networks and useful websites and publications, to enable advisers to refer clients on, access further information and develop their own skills and knowledge. Key contacts and references are listed throughout the *Guide*, and a national directory and list of references are included at the end.

**How to use the Guide**

The *Guide* includes clear sections on key topics. Either the whole *Guide* or simply the most relevant sections can be downloaded. The material is structured to enable you to find your way quickly to the information you need, with a list of topics covered at the beginning of
each section. Key contacts and further information are included as boxed text within each section, and shaded boxes guide you to relevant material in the toolkit.

A directory of national support agencies is included, but you need to be aware that there are likely to be other projects and agencies working locally that provide specialist services to ex-offenders. Space has been provided for individual advisers or provider organisations to develop your own tailored directory of local services.

Who produced the Guide?

This Guide has been produced by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and Supporting Others through Volunteer Action (SOVA). NIACE is the national organisation for adult learning in England and Wales, and works to encourage more and different adults to engage in learning of all kinds. SOVA works to strengthen communities by involving local volunteers in promoting social exclusion and reducing crime. For further information please visit: www.niace.org.uk and www.sova.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to staff at the following organisations who have contributed to the development of this Guide:

Apex Works  
Bradford College  
BSS/Careers Advice Service Leicester  
BSS/Careers Advice Service Manchester  
Careers West Yorkshire  
CK Careers  
Connexions Leicestershire  
Connexions Tyne and Wear  
Future Pathways  
HMP Wealstone  
Jobcentre Plus Leeds  
Leicester Probation Service  
Nottingham Probation Service  
nextstep Berkshire  
nextstep Black Country  
nextstep Bradford  
nextstep Leeds  
nextstep Leicestershire  
nextstep West Yorkshire  
Positive Steps Oldham
Issues for advisers working with this client group
2. Understanding your role

What this section covers:
- Why is effective IAG for this client group so important?
- How confident are you about working with ex-offenders?
- Checklist for IAG advisers

Why is effective IAG for this client group so important?

The offender population in England and Wales has been rising steadily and currently stands at over 80,000 offenders in prison and approximately 200,000 offenders supervised by the probation service each year in the community. One in three people re-offend within 48 hours of release from prison, and around two thirds re-offend within two years. Learning and skills and employment are not a panacea for re-offending, but evidence indicates that:

- learning and skills development is among the strategies that are effective in aiding reintegration into work, community and family life;

and

- where ex-offenders gain stable employment, or training with secured employment, the likelihood of their re-offending is reduced by two thirds.

Securing work and a regular income can help ex-offenders to establish stability in their housing and family situations, two significant elements in reducing re-offending. But ex-offenders face some of the highest levels of disadvantage and discrimination in the labour market.

By supporting clients into work, or into education and training that has real prospects of leading to work, IAG services can play a vital role in enabling individuals to break out of the personally and socially damaging cycle of offending behaviour. Currently, however, only 6% of discharged prisoners continue with education and training.

Research carried out by the Citizen’s Advice Bureau (2007) has highlighted the inadequacy of support to enable ex-offenders to deal successfully with the multiple problems that they face. It argues that there is an urgent need to improve advice on a range of resettlement issues for both offenders and ex-offenders.
How confident are you about working with ex-offenders?

You may be working with clients who are ex-offenders in any of a range of contexts: for example, as someone working on a telephone helpline at a college or other local provider; as an adviser at the Careers Advice Service; as a probation officer; or as a nextstep information, advice or guidance practitioner.

Research carried out by NIACE for the Learning and Skills Council (2007) into staff competence and capacity among IAG staff found that many providers feel that their staff are unprepared to meet the needs of offenders and ex-offenders, and need more support to develop their skills in this area. You may or may not have experience of working with this client group, and this is likely to affect how confident you feel in doing so.

Personal safety can be a major cause of anxiety, particularly if you have little or no experience of working with offenders or ex-offenders and are delivering IAG face to face. You may perceive clients to have a violent past, or to exhibit unpredictable behaviour linked to mental health difficulties, substance misuse, or frustration at their circumstances. Female advisers may feel particularly vulnerable. It is important to remember most convictions are not for violent or sexual crimes. However, you can legitimately refuse to work with a client if you feel threatened or intimidated.

The following checklist is designed to help you test your confidence in supporting this client group into learning and skills and employment. The questions relate to specific areas covered in this Guide, and will also help you and your service to identify areas for staff development. You can use this checklist to measure your own development: try doing it now, and then again in 6 months to see how your skills, knowledge and understanding have increased.

Using this guide as a resource for staff training within your organisation would be a great way to alert colleagues to some of the barriers and specific needs of the client group. For example, you could work through the guide section by section at team meetings. Or if you achieve mostly A’s on the checklist, you could become a champion for your organisation.

In the ‘Toolkit’

The checklist below is also included in the ‘Toolkit’ section of this guide.
Checklist for IAG advisers

Key
A I am confident about this and have established good practice.
B I haven’t done much on this yet, but I know what I need to do and how to go about it.
C I still need to do a lot of work on this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You and your client</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have the knowledge and skills to deliver effective IAG to clients who are ex-offenders, commensurate with my role.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable delivering IAG to people from this client group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand why raising the level of participation in learning and skills and employment among this client group is an important policy issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand and can recognise the different barriers that my clients may face to engaging in learning and skills and employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAG issues and interventions</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to identify and prioritise client need, and where to find up-to-date information about local organisations to which my clients can be referred for specialist support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I maintain an up to date directory of national and local contacts and other resources to support my work with clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust signposting and referral mechanisms are in place for clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the range of learning and skills and IAG that clients may have received during their sentence, and could use this knowledge to support my work with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can give my clients accurate and current information about when spent and unspent convictions need to be disclosed in learning and work contexts, and about the circumstances under which they may be required to undergo CRB checks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can advise my clients on the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing convictions in learning and work contexts, and provide guidance on the best ways of doing so.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to signpost my clients for further information about disclosure and CRB checks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what benefits and services my local Jobcentre Plus provides, including specialist provision for ex-offenders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how participation in learning and work can affect my clients’ benefits, and can advise them on where to obtain specific financial guidance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to a range of tools for supporting effective needs assessment and action planning, and can use them effectively with clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting clients into learning and skills and employment</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the skills and knowledge to make accurate assessments of my clients’ learning and skills needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can effectively match my clients’ needs to locally available learning and skills provision, including specialist provision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the specialist techniques that are available to help develop clients’ motivation. I am either trained to use these techniques myself, or know where local provision exists to which clients who would benefit could be referred.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the various learning options that are available, and understand how different types of provision may be appropriate for different clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to find out about funding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find out which employers in my area are ‘friendly’ to ex-offenders, and am developing a directory of contacts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to support effective job search for my clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could explain to employers the potential benefits of employing ex-offenders, draw on case study examples and signpost them to further sources of information. I could advocate for my client with a prospective employer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise my clients on sources of further information and specialist support for clients seeking to enter employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could explain to a client the potential advantages of volunteering as a route into paid work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise my clients on sources of further information and specialist support for clients seeking to undertake voluntary work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the attractions of self employment for ex-offenders, and could explain the advantages and disadvantages to clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise clients on sources of further information and specialist support in relation to self-employment, including issues around insurance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Understanding your clients’ needs

What this section covers:
- What is distinctive about this client group?
- What are the main barriers to education, training and employment?
- Practical and material barriers
- Attitudinal barriers
- Techniques for prioritising client need

What is distinctive about this client group?

Even if you do not have specific experience of working with ex-offenders, you are probably already used to supporting clients who have varied and complex needs and many of the approaches and techniques that you use will be transferable to a new context. However, it is important that you understand the particular issues and barriers that face ex-offenders engaging in learning and skills and employment, so that you can provide appropriate support. In addition, you will need to be prepared to signpost or refer some clients to other agencies in order to address urgent difficulties in their personal circumstances, before they are realistically in a position to move into learning or work.

Offenders and ex-offenders make up one of the most marginalised groups in society. They are among those adults registering some of the lowest levels of participation in education, training and employment. Whilst not all of your clients will have profound education, training and employment needs, the information available on the social and educational backgrounds of prisoners indicates that the ex-offender cohort overlaps substantially with other socially excluded and vulnerable groups. For example:

- **Ex-offenders are at least eight times more likely than anyone else in the community to be unemployed**
  - 40% of those under 25 going into prison are unemployed.
  - 90% of all prisoners leave with no job to go to.
  - 50% of people on probation are unemployed.
  - 65% of those who have a job when they are imprisoned lose them at that point.

- **Low levels of qualifications and skills**
  - 52% of men and 71% of women prisoners have no qualifications at all, compared
with 15% of the general population.
Nearly 60% of prisoners have poor literacy and communication skills.
As many as 75% have poor numeracy skills.
These are levels of skill low enough to exclude them from about 96% of available jobs.

- **Black and minority ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in the prison population**

  ![](chart.png)

  *Percentages of male and female prison population and general population from certain BME groups compared.*

**Multiple and complex support needs**

Many clients from this group are likely to have multiple and complex needs, which may present significant obstacles to participation in learning and work. They may be experiencing difficulties, even crises, in relation to a range of practical issues which need to be addressed as a matter of urgency before they are realistically in a position to consider starting a course or getting a job. You may need to support a client to resolve other difficulties in their life before you are able to give them effective IAG for learning and work.

It is neither expected nor appropriate to suggest that IAG advisers should themselves be able to meet the full range of support needs that clients may present. However, you already have a skill set for assisting clients to overcome a range of barriers to accessing education and training or employment and many of those will be appropriate to adapt for use with ex-offenders.

**What are the main barriers to participation in education, training and employment?**

Barriers facing ex-offenders wishing to gain employment or to access education and training fall into two broad categories:
• practical and material barriers;  
• attitudinal barriers.

You must be able to distinguish between different factors, and to identify those where the client needs to be referred to specialist agencies before effective IAG for learning and work can take place.

**Practical and material barriers**

Signposting or referral on to address wider needs requires a comprehensive knowledge of referral agencies and organisations who either work solely with ex-offenders or who include ex-offenders in their target client group. Useful national contacts are included below, and in section 5 of this guide. This information is intended to act as a starting point for you to develop your own localised directory of organisations who work with ex-offenders.

- **A criminal record**

Many of the practical barriers to participation in employment faced by ex-offenders are shared by other socially excluded groups. However, the need to disclose a criminal record presents a specific challenge and one that can be very difficult to overcome.

**Issues for clients**

Anxiety about disclosing their convictions and uncertainty about what they need to tell prospective employers may discourage ex-offenders from applying for work and exacerbate a lack of motivation and confidence in entering the labour market. You need to be able to give clients accurate and appropriate information about what they need to tell employers, and guidance on the best ways to approach disclosure in order to try and minimise its negative impact on their employment prospects. Section 6 of this guide provides detailed guidelines on doing so.

**Issues for employers**

It cannot be denied that ex-offenders’ fears about the impact of disclosure are well founded. Among the greatest obstacle to employment faced by ex-offenders is the negative attitudes of employers.

For about half of vacancies, employers are likely to reject most people with a criminal record. Those with more serious convictions (and even minor sex offences) will be rejected for about 90% of vacancies.

The way that information on criminal convictions is currently used in the recruitment process is largely discriminatory. Employers tend to reject people with a criminal record for the following reasons:

- they are seen as ‘undesirable’, outside the employers’ experience and alien;  
- to show moral disapproval;  
- because of concern that the employer would be held responsible for hiring a person with a criminal record who then offended at work.

Employers receive little advice and support to understand the benefits of employing ex-offenders or to implement human resources practices which would facilitate fair treatment of ex-offenders.
You can play an important role in helping clients to face negative attitudes from employers, both by engaging and advocating with individual employers on behalf of their clients, and by developing a directory of local employers who are known to be ‘friendly’ to the recruitment of ex-offenders. Further guidance on this subject can be found in section 9 of this guide.

### Key contacts and signposting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Tel</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apex Charitable Trust Ltd</td>
<td>St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA</td>
<td>020 7638 5931</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com">jobcheck@apextrust.com</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.apextrust.com">www.apextrust.com</a></td>
<td>Provides employment advice, guidance and training courses to ex-offenders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging the Gap</td>
<td>Bridging The Gap, PO Box 783, Croydon, CR9 1BT</td>
<td>0870 027 3091 / 0870 027 3092 / 0707 781 0056</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@btguk.org">info@btguk.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.btguk.org">www.btguk.org</a></td>
<td>BTG aims to help reduce re-offending by helping discharged prisoners settle into their communities after release. Working through a network of staff and volunteers, it can provide help with form-filling, explaining changes to the benefit system, pursuing accommodation options, finding free training opportunities, identifying employers who take on ex-offenders, preparing a good CV and developing interview skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development</td>
<td>151 The Broadway, London, SW19 1JQ</td>
<td>020 8612 6200</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cipd.co.uk">www.cipd.co.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information and resources for businesses thinking of employing ex-offenders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobcentre Plus</td>
<td></td>
<td>0845 6060234</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk">www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides services to offenders in custody and in the community. Check website for local offices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guide for IAG practitioners supporting individuals on completion of a sentence
Produced for advice-resources by NIACE and SOVA, July 2007
Homelessness and housing vulnerability

This is a critical priority for ex-offenders leaving prison. About a third of the 90,000 or so people released from prison each year in England and Wales have nowhere to live on release. Evidence suggests that many ex-offenders find it difficult to obtain permanent accommodation, and some local authorities will not re-house ex-offenders because they consider that they are not vulnerable and are intentionally homeless.

Lack of accommodation can seriously hamper an ex-offender’s chance of finding employment. Around a quarter of employers would not consider employing a homeless person. Pressing housing issues may need to be resolved before clients can contemplate making a commitment to learning or work.

For many women leaving prison, the issue of housing takes on a particular urgency because it is bound up with their efforts to get their children back. Sixty-six per cent of women in prison have dependent children under 18. Many have no prospect of getting their children back until they find accommodation, but their chances of securing accommodation are reduced because they do not have their children with them.
Key contacts and signposting

Addaction
Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6PU
Tel: 0207 251 5860
Email: info@addiction.org.uk
Website: www.addaction.org.uk

National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.

Shelter
88 Old Street, London, EC1V 9H (Regional Offices)
Tel: 0808 800 4444.
Email: info@shelter.org.uk
Website: england.shelter.org.uk

Help and support for housing and homelessness.

Women’s Link
Tel: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (Ex-offenders)
Website: www.womenslink.org.uk

Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals on finding accommodation, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

• Poverty and debt

Financial stability in the period immediately following release is essential if ex-offenders are to resettle effectively into the community and avoid re-offending. However, poverty and financial exclusion are commonplace. Many prisoners are entitled to a discharge grant on release to help cover living expenses, until benefit claims are processed. The discharge grant has remained fixed at £46.75 since 1997, and CAB suggests that it is insufficient to last for a week, much less the 11 to 18 days in which benefit claims are meant to be processed.

Some newly released prisoners cannot receive their wages or benefits because they do not have any documents to prove their identity in order to open a bank account.

Financial difficulties and debt worsen for many prisoners whilst they are serving a sentence, meaning that on release ex-offenders are faced with unmanageable and spiralling debt. The main difficulties relate to mainstream credit cards and unpaid household bills.
Mental health difficulties

Seventy-four per cent of prisoners detained in 2005 were diagnosed as having some form of mental illness. The majority of these presented symptoms of two or more mental health conditions.

Mental health difficulties can be linked to a wide range of conditions, and the specific symptoms experienced can vary widely between clients. Where possible, you should engage with your client to find out what they want in terms of learning, employment and wider support. The specific nature of a client’s difficulty may mean, for example, that they are unable to participate in group learning but would engage with one-to-one tuition. You need to be aware, however, that people experiencing mental health difficulties may find sustained study difficult without additional support. For some, permanent and regular employment may be an aspiration rather than a current realistic possibility. In the latter case, you should explore with the client the range of other possible options, including learning and voluntary work. Medication may also have an adverse affect, for example on an individual’s ability to concentrate, to work in a sustained way, or to undertake activities at certain times of day.
- **Alcohol and substance misuse problems**

About 60% of prisoners have been using hard drugs before imprisonment. Among women, offending behaviour is disproportionately linked to drug addiction.

Forty-five per cent of offenders under the supervision of the Probation Service are estimated to be misusing alcohol or other drugs.

Alcohol addiction and substance misuse is often linked to chaotic lifestyles. Misuse of alcohol and other drugs may affect an individual’s ability to undertake regular employment and to sustain participation in learning and to progress. Being directly under the influence of alcohol or drugs is likely to impair an individual’s ability to engage effectively in learning, work or the IAG process and to retain information. It may also affect the way that they relate to and interact with you or a tutor, fellow students or work colleagues. The need to satisfy cravings linked to addiction will tend to displace attention to other issues, although individuals wishing to overcome addiction may find that participation in learning provides an effective distraction.

### Key contacts and signposting

**Addaction**
Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6PU  
**Tel:** 0207 251 5860  
**Email:** info@addaction.org.uk  
**Website:** www.addaction.org.uk

National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.

**Adfam**
25 Corsham Street, London, N1 6DR  
**Tel:** 020 7553 7640  
**Website:** www.adfam.org.uk

National charity for family and friends of people with drug and alcohol addiction.
• Lack of relevant qualifications and skills

Government policy on offender learning and skills is intended to help address the low levels of formal qualifications among this client group. However, the offender learning curriculum has a strong focus on basic skills. Although important, basic skills alone are not sufficient to equip clients for the majority of jobs. Research suggests that employers do not greatly value the low level qualifications that are normally gained in prisons.

Many ex-offenders also lack a wide range of other skills and qualities that are widely required for successful participation in the labour market. They often have limited work experience and a history of unemployment or experience of long term unemployment. They may have under-developed cognitive and social skills, reflected in a lack of the personal qualities that are valued by employers such as flexibility, problem solving, team working, communication and motivation. Employers express concern that ex-offenders do not have, or have lost, the discipline or habit of work.

Poor personal appearance and presentation may also make it difficult for ex-offenders to gain work. Released prisoners may have few clothes, and perhaps none that are suitable for job interviews.
### Key contacts and signposting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connexions</strong></td>
<td>Tel: 080 800 13219&lt;br&gt;Website: <a href="http://www.connexions-direct.com">www.connexions-direct.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth support service for 13-19 year olds and for those with learning difficulties to 25. The service is managed locally by Connexions Partnerships that bring together all the key youth support services. For information about a local service see website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills</strong></td>
<td>Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT&lt;br&gt;Tel: 0870 000 2288.&lt;br&gt;Email: <a href="mailto:info@dius.gsi.gov.uk">info@dius.gsi.gov.uk</a>&lt;br&gt;Website: <a href="http://www.dius.gov.uk">www.dius.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of information on priorities in the field, including basic skills and lifelong learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jobcentre Plus</strong></td>
<td>Tel: 0845 6060234&lt;br&gt;Website: <a href="http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk">www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides services to offenders in custody and in the community. Check website for local offices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning and Skills Council</strong></td>
<td>Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT&lt;br&gt;Tel: 0845 019 4170 (National office)&lt;br&gt;Tel: 0870 900 6800 (LSC helpdesk)&lt;br&gt;Email: <a href="mailto:info@lsc.gov.uk">info@lsc.gov.uk</a>&lt;br&gt;Website: <a href="http://www.lsc.gov.uk">www.lsc.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible for taking forward the skills agenda including offender learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Specific learning difficulties or learning disabilities**

  A regional study based in Yorkshire and the Humber (2005) has suggested that around 20% of the prison population has a hidden disability (dyslexia, dyscalculia or dyspraxia) that will negatively affect their performance in learning and work settings.

  Recent research by the Prison Reform Trust (March 2007) suggested that 20-30% of people in prison (16-24,000 individuals) have a learning disability or difficulty that adversely affects their ability to cope. They are unlikely to receive the support they need whilst in prison, and may be cut out of rehabilitation provision.

  It is important that clients’ specific needs are identified and they are referred to appropriate sources of provision. Your service may have staff trained in dyslexia assessment, for
example, but it is likely that you will need to refer clients on to organisations offering specialist provision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key contacts and signposting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Dyslexia Organisation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Floor, Sector House, Minet Rd, Loughborough Estate, London SW9 7TP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7924 9559 (helpline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:dyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.com">dyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.adult-dyslexia.org">www.adult-dyslexia.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work relates to adults with dyslexia (including in employment). Runs support groups and provides a helpline, provides training and tuition, and lobbies on behalf of adults with dyslexia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **British Dyslexia Association** |
| 98 London Road, Reading, RG1 5AU |
| **Tel:** 0118 966 8271 |
| **Email:** helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk |
| **Website:** www.bdadyslexia.org.uk |
| Provides advice to teachers and employers on dyslexia issues, provides training for teachers, has a helpline for individuals on dyslexia, local associations, approves specialist training qualifications for teachers. |

| **British Institute for Learning Disabilities.** |
| Campion House, Green Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 1JL |
| **Tel:** 01562 723 010 |
| **Email:** enquiries@bild.org.uk |
| **Website:** www.bild.org.uk |
| Information training and other services for people with learning disabilities in the UK. |

| **Care** |
| 9 Weir Road, Kibworth Leicester, LE8 0LQ (central office) |
| **Tel:** 0116 2793225 |
| **Email:** info@care-ltd.co.uk |
| **Website:** www.care-ltd.co.uk |
| Support for people with learning disabilities in their daily lives. Check website for local offices. |
• **Issues facing women**

Female ex-offenders are confronted by practical barriers that are different from those of their male counterparts. Around two thirds of women leaving prison have dependent children. This means that women may not be ready to engage in learning or work because they have other priorities, or that the need to secure appropriate and affordable childcare prevents them from doing so.

Only a tiny proportion of women ex-offenders have committed crimes of violence. Most women in prison have been convicted of relatively minor acquisitive crimes such as shoplifting, or defaulted on fines imposed for other non-custodial offences such as prostitution. Over half have suffered domestic violence and around a third have experienced sexual abuse. 37% of women in prison attempt suicide. The Corston Report (2007) argues that many women in prison are vulnerable and the criminal justice system is failing to address their distinctive support and rehabilitation needs. Clients with profound unmet needs relating to their personal and family circumstances are likely to need specialist support.

---

**Key contacts and signposting**

**Women’s Aid Federation of England**  
Head Office, PO BOX 391, Bristol, BS99 7WS, England  
**Tel:** 0117 944 44 11 (general enquiries only)  
0808 2000 247 (helpline service)  
**Email:** helpline@womensaid.org.uk  
**Website:** www.womensaid.org.uk

National charity providing nationwide network of over 500 services to support women and children facing domestic violence.
**Women in Prison**  
1a Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA  
**Tel:** 020 7226 5879  
**Website:** [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk)

Women in Prison (WIP) is a charity working with women at risk of going to prison, in prison and after release to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training.

**Women’s Link**  
Rooms 417 – 419, London Fruit and Wool Exchange, Brushfield Street, London E1 6SL  
**Tel:** 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (Ex-offenders)  
**Website:** [www.womenslink.org.uk](http://www.womenslink.org.uk)

Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals on finding accommodation, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

- **Issues facing young offenders**

Although your clients will generally be adults, it will help you to have some understanding of the specific difficulties experienced by younger people, especially if your work includes some contact with under-19s.

Many young offenders have, sometimes severe, mental and physical health needs, and evidence shows that these are often inadequately addressed whilst they were on sentence. Those who have been in custody are likely to be especially vulnerable. Levels of substance misuse are high. Experience of a disrupted home and family life is common. Young offenders are considerably more likely to have been in care, to have witnessed violence in the home or to have been the victim of crime than young people in the general population. Clients with profound unmet needs relating to their personal and family circumstances are likely to need specialist support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Key contacts and signposting</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Childline</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 08001111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National free helpline for children and young people in danger or distress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Family Rights Groups**        |
| The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL |
| **Tel:** 0800 731 1696          |
| **Email:** office@frg.org.uk    |
| **Website:** www.frg.org.uk     |
| Advice and support for families whose children are involved with social services. |

| **YMCA England**               |
| 640 Forest Road, London. E17 3DZ |
| **Website:** www.ymca.org.uk    |
| A Christian charity that has projects supporting young people in prison and after release. Check website for regional offices. |

| **Rainer**                     |
| Rectory Lodge, High Street, Brasted, Kent TN16 1JF |
| **Tel:** 01959 578 200          |
| **Email:** mail@raineronline.org |
| **Website:** www.raineronline.org |
| Rainer offers under-supported young people a range of services. |

| **SOVA**                       |
| SOVA Head Office (contact for projects in London & South East Region, South West and for national enquiries) |
| 1st Floor Chichester House, 37 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ |
| **Tel:** 020 7793 0404          |
| **Email:** mail@sova.org.uk     |
| **SOVA Regional Office** (contact for projects in West Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside, North West) |
| St. Silas House,18 Moore Street, Sheffield S3 7UW |
| **Tel:** 0114 270 3700          |
| **Email:** sheffield@sova.org.uk |
| **Website:** www.sova.org.uk    |
| Runs a range of national projects providing advice and support to young people. |
Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers can be the most challenging to overcome, because it takes time to alter an individual’s fundamental view of themselves and their relationship to learning and work. Sections 8 and 9 of this guide explore in more detail ways of addressing these obstacles with clients.

- **Negative experiences of education**

Poor formative experiences of education mean that many ex-offenders are likely to hold the view that ‘learning is not for me’. For example:

  - 30% of prisoners regularly truanted from school;
  - 49% of male prisoners and 33% of female prisoners were excluded;
  - 89% of men and 84% of women prisoners left school aged 16 or younger.

Clients may not see that education has value or relevance to their lives. Formal learning in particular may be unappealing. Offenders and ex-offenders are pre-eminently ‘outsiders’ and many will find entering into established forms of education and training, at least in the short term, a daunting prospect.

- **Cultural issues**

Many ex-offenders are likely to return to the communities which spawned the initial offending behaviour. They may continue to associate with, and live amongst, those who support negative attitudes to learning and work. Under these circumstances, it can be difficult for individuals who are already vulnerable to challenge the cultural values of their community and risk ridicule, rejection and isolation.

- **Psychological issues**

Low levels of self-confidence and self-esteem are common among ex-offenders. This often leads to a lack of readiness to take responsibility for oneself and one’s future and consequently a lack of motivation to participate in work or learning. Problems with motivation and personal responsibility are especially acute among those who have been in custody. The formal support structures of prisons are not conducive to the development of responsible independence, and disengagement from them can be difficult and disorientating. The term ‘learned helplessness’ has been used to describe the state into which many prisoners are conditioned.
Techniques for prioritising client need

If a client appears to have complex and multiple needs, you will need to work with them to identify and prioritise what issues have to be addressed, so that effective signposting and referral can take place. You will need to establish whether participation in learning and work is currently a realistic aim, or whether the client needs to deal with wider barriers first. Supporting your clients to deal with these concerns is a critical element of their reintegration into mainstream society.

In the ‘Toolkit’

The ‘Toolkit’ section of the Guide includes a ‘progress profile wheel’, a tool which can be used to support clients to identify where they are in terms of a range of issues facing them: attitudes and motivation, health, accommodation, family and money as well as education and training. It can be used again at a later date, to identify progress made.

Further information


Talisman: the newspaper for adult learning, issue 55, October 2006 (ALI).
4. Background to offender learning and skills

What this section covers:

- How will this chapter help you?
- What is the current policy context for offender learning and skills?
- Who is responsible for offender learning and skills?
- What IAG may ex-offenders have received during their sentence?
- What are the main shortcomings of IAG provision for offenders?
- What learning may offenders have received during their sentence?
- What are the main difficulties with the system of offender learning and skills?

How will this chapter help you?

Policy changes in recent years mean that, increasingly, ex-offenders are likely to have had access to some learning, skills or IAG provision during their sentence. For some, it may have been a requirement. With background knowledge of provision for offenders, you will be in a better position to understand your clients and where they are in terms of their journey in learning and work.

In addition, for various reasons, some clients will not find it easy to tell you what learning, skills or IAG they have received. For example:

- they may not understand what you are asking them about, because they do not recognise the terminology;
- they may not know whether they have received any provision;
- they may be unable to recall exactly what they have done, due to the disrupted nature of provision for offenders;
- they may not have a formal record of learning or IAG undertaken.

By having awareness of what provision clients may have received, you will be better placed to elicit information from individuals who are themselves unsure. Establishing your client’s starting point is essential if you are to provide appropriate IAG.
What is the current policy context for offender learning and skills?

The development of learning and skills provision for offenders is at the heart of the Government’s strategy to reduce the rate of re-offending. In 2005, the Government set out its strategy for improving the skills and employment outcomes for offenders in the Green Paper Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment. In 2006 the Government published Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment: Next Steps, which outlines how changes to learning and skills provision will be implemented.

The changes herald a new era for the development and delivery of learning and skills provision and a new emphasis on:

- increasing participation in learning and skills;
- increasing the number of achievements of basic skills and vocational qualifications;
- increasing the number of ex-offenders gaining sustainable employment;
- the involvement of employers in the design and delivery of programmes.

In the future we can expect:

- greater continuity between the education services offered to offenders in prison and in the community;
- the development of some prisons as specialist vocational training centres;
- the development of a campus model of learning and skills providing more personalised learning for offenders.

It is helpful to understand the different types of sentences offenders may have experienced as some may have been required to engage in learning as part of their sentence.

Offenders can be punished in a variety of ways, including payment of a fine, civil orders, such as anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO’s), community sentences and custodial sentences (prison).

Current community sentences (also called community orders) introduced in the 2003 Criminal Justice Act are intended to be rehabilitative as well as punitive. As such, they allow an offender to be released into the community on condition of good behaviour and fulfilment of certain requirements. Whilst some offenders may be prohibited from engaging in certain activities, e.g. football hooligans may be prohibited from going to football matches, some may be required to participate in certain activities, such as performing unpaid work for the benefit of the community or participating in education or training.

Importantly, as community orders are a sentencing option increasingly being used by the courts, more offenders will have been required to engage in learning as part of their sentence.

Who is responsible for offender learning and skills?

Responsibility for offender learning and skills sits with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working closely with Regional Offender Managers in their commissioning role for Offender Management.
- Offender learning and skills are now part of mainstream post-16 education provision. The LSC has responsibility for the planning and funding of offender learning provision. The Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) was implemented initially in three regions in England, the North West, North East and South West from August 2005. The Service was rolled out nationally on 31 July 2006.
- The National Offender Management Scheme (NOMS) was created in 2004 to commission offender management on a regional basis. The aim is to develop a more integrated system, focusing on the needs of the offender through, and after, their sentence.
- Within each prison, OLASS contracted providers, working with the Head of Learning and Skills, to provide a learning service geared to the needs of the individual, as far as constraints of the establishment will allow.
- The quality of learning and skills delivered in prisons and in the community is subject to external inspection by Ofsted.
- The focus for OLASS is to help offenders gain relevant qualifications, in many cases Skills for Life qualifications in literacy, language and numeracy and national vocational qualifications (NVQ’s) and develop skills needed to gain employment on release.

What IAG may ex-offenders have received during their sentence?

The system for provision of IAG services for offenders has also changed dramatically in recent years as a result of the increased emphasis on learning and skills. The main changes are:

- a greater role for IAG in prisons and in the community, with greater emphasis placed on career choice and entry into employment;
- a continuous IAG service to be available to offenders in custody and in the community;
- IAG services to offenders in prisons and the community are delivered through a multi-agency approach, involving the LSC, Careers Advice Service; Connexions Jobcentre Plus and other private public or voluntary/community sector organisations;
- any provider of IAG supported by LSC funding must be accredited to or working towards the Matrix standard. At the time of writing (April 2007), 19 prisons and 6 Probation Service areas had achieved Matrix accreditation.

Offenders in prison and those supervised by the probation service should have had access to IAG services (which can include housing and benefits advice as well as advice on learning options and work). This should be:

- at induction;
- during learning;
- when planning progression;
- when preparing for release.

Most probation services provide IAG services, either in-house or through partnership arrangements with one or more local providers.
What are the main shortcomings of IAG provision for offenders?

The main shortcomings in the system of IAG provision for offenders highlighted by reports are:

- offenders in prison and the community may not see IAG as a priority, resulting in lack of motivation to attend IAG sessions;
- IAG may not be effectively promoted to offenders, meaning that they do not recognise the potential value of accessing the services available;
- IAG may be a priority at the start of a learning programme but not during it or at the end;
- failure to address clients’ unrealistic ideas of the employment opportunities open to them;
- incorrect information being given by advisers about career and learning options;
- access to IAG services disrupted when prisoners are moved to different prisons;
- failure to treat offenders as individuals with different needs;
- lack of continuity between IAG services available in custody and in the community.

What learning may ex-offenders have received during their sentence?

Offenders will have had varied experiences of learning, depending on their individual needs, the length and type of their sentence, the curriculum offer available at the prison(s) or probation service where they served their sentence and the levels of funding and facilities available.

Adults and young offenders (15-17 year olds), both in custody and in the community, should have access to learning and skills provision that will enable them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and play a positive role in society. Young offenders’ institutions have a formal curriculum and a requirement that young people undertake a set number of hours’ learning.

All offenders of whatever age should have been offered:

- IAG, both to enable them to choose appropriate learning programmes and to ensure that relevant progression routes between programmes are pursued.
- An individual diagnostic assessment to identify learning needs. This may include a dyslexia assessment.
- Development of an individual learning plan to identify learning and skills development required.
- Access to courses offering national qualifications, such as Skills for Life or National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).
- Help to continue their learning after release by having access to courses in prison that are the same quality and covering the same curriculum as those available in the community. They should be helped to make contact with local colleges to continue their learning after release.
- A curriculum in prison designed to provide opportunities for personal development, to change behaviour and make a positive contribution to society. This can include:
• **Skills for Life and Key Skills** – prisons follow the national core curriculum and offer classes in basic and key skills, i.e. literacy, numeracy, English as a Second Language and information technology.

• **Social and Life Skills** – can cover a wide range of practical, academic and personal skills, such as cookery, parenting and money management.

• **Academic courses** – can include Open University courses, A-level and GCSE courses in a range of subjects.

• **Creative and Recreational Classes** – can include arts and crafts, sport and creative writing.

• **Business and IT** – computing classes and qualifications such as European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).

• **Vocational Skills Training** – vocational courses leading to qualifications such as NVQ, City and Guilds or HNC may be offered in a range of skills, such as motor mechanics, industrial cleaning, food preparation, painting and decorating, engineering, fork lift truck driving, construction and generic preparation for work courses.

What are the main difficulties with the system of offender learning and skills?

• **Limited access.** Not all ex-offenders will have engaged in learning. Prisoners on remand are not required to participate in education or training. However they now fall within the scope of OLASS provision so may have undertaken some learning through that project.

• **Interrupted study.** Offenders on short sentences may have missed out on educational opportunities, as there may not have been sufficient time to complete a course and gain qualifications. Some offenders may be transferred to another prison before their course ends. Courses can be disrupted by security measures in prisons, e.g. shortage of prison officers to accompany prisoners to classes.

• **Motivation.** This group of learners may lack the motivation to engage in learning if their attention is focused on their trial. Some ex-offenders may have been unwilling participants in education. Those with negative experiences of school may be unwilling to participate. Sentenced prisoners also cannot be forced to attend classes but participation is often linked to incentive and earned privilege (IEP) schemes, meaning that prisoners may lose privileges or have their release date put back if they do not attend classes.

• **Insufficient attention to individual needs and limited provision.** Some ex-offenders may have been unable to take the classes they wanted or needed. Access to classes is limited and popular classes may have long waiting lists.

• **Over-emphasis on basic skills courses and few higher level courses.** Opportunities for progression can be limited.

• **Lack of continuity.** There may be little continuity between the types of courses and qualifications offered in prisons and in the community, with some prisoners being
Unable to complete courses they began in prison because course start dates are unsuitable or courses are not available.

- **Over-reliance on short term project funding.** Funding for many courses in the community is often short-term from the European Social Fund (ESF), leading to lack of availability.

---

**Further Information**

The website address for the **Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)** is [www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning).


These can both be downloaded from [www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning) by following the links to Document Library/Offender Learning Publications.

The framework for offender learning and IAG is set out in the documents **The Offenders’ Learning Journey for Adult Offenders** (DfES, 2004), and **The Offenders’ Learning Journey for Juvenile Offenders** (DfES, 2004).

These can both be downloaded from [www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning) by following the links to Document Library/General Documents.

Several research reports have highlighted shortcomings in the system of offender learning and skills; for example, Learning and Skills Network Research Report ‘**Maximising the Benefits of OLASS for Female Offenders – an evaluation of the issues**’, E.Walker et al 2006 and SOVA Women into Work project report ‘**Moving Mountains – identifying and addressing barriers to ETE from the voices of women (ex) offenders**’ 2003, by Caroline O’Keefe, published by Sheffield Hallam University.
Meeting key IAG needs of this client group
5. Resources and referral points to help you address client needs

This chart provides suggestions for resources and referral agencies to help you to support clients to address the range of needs that they may have. The indicative resources include website addresses for a range of national organisations. **You can also develop your own directory of local contacts and resources, to ensure effective signposting and referral.** There is space for you to do this at the end of the Directory in section 13 of this guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General information on learning and work for ex-offenders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Employability, e.g. CV development, education and skills training and updating, eligibility, appropriate attitude and appearance, age, qualifications, valuing unpaid work, self employment. | - Develop client awareness of job opportunities  

- Establish good links with sympathetic advisers at your local Jobcentre Plus and be aware of the various routes to training and employment available  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169 Clapham Road London, SW9 0PU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:helpline@nacro.org.uk">helpline@nacro.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.nacro.org.uk">www.nacro.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A wide range of advice and support on issues facing ex-offenders, including detailed guidance on entering learning and work.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|       | • Develop awareness of how to find resources to assist with form filling, CV writing, interview skills (many ex-offenders will have poor literacy skills) | Apex Charitable Trust Ltd  
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA  
Tel: 020 7638 5931  
E-mail: jobcheck@apextrust.com  
Website: www.apextrust.com  
(Advice for ex-offenders on learning, skills and employment.) |
|       | • Maintain knowledge of the local literacy, language, numeracy and ESOL classes | Bridging the Gap  
Bridging The Gap, PO Box 783, Croydon, CR9 1BT  
Tel: 0870 027 3091/ 0870 027 3092 / 0707 781 0056  
Email: info@btguk.org  
Website: www.btguk.org  
(Advice for ex-offenders on a wide range of issues.) |
|       | • Ensure awareness of the value of self employment opportunities for ex-offenders, particularly those with difficult convictions | Unlock – The National Association of Ex-Offenders  
34a High Street, Snodled, Kent ,ME6 5AG  
Tel: 01634 247350  
Email: enquiries@unlock.org.uk  
Website: www.unlock.org.uk  
(Supports ex-offenders to address a range of issues.) |
<p>|       | • Ensure awareness of distance learning opportunities which might suit ex-offenders |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General information on learning and work for ex-offenders</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | **Careers Advice Service**  
**Tel:** 0800 100 900  
**Website:** [http://www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice](http://www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice)  
(National telephone and online IAG service for adults, providing comprehensive information on learning, opportunities, careers, funding etc.) | |
| | | **nextstep**  
**Website:** [www.nextstep.org.uk](http://www.nextstep.org.uk)  
(National face to face adult IAG service – check website for details of local provision.) | |
| | | **Jobcentre Plus**  
**Tel:** 0845 6060234  
**Website:** [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)  
(Provides services to offenders in custody and in the community. Check website for local offices.) | |
| | | **Trades Union Congress**  
Congress House, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3LS  
**Tel:** 020 7636 4030  
**Website:** [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General information on learning and work for ex-offenders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice Guide</td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.adviceguide.org.uk">www.adviceguide.org.uk</a></td>
<td>(Self-employment checklist and directory of local offices with contact details.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisoner Education Trust</td>
<td>Ground Floor - Wandle House, Riverside Drive, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4BU</td>
<td>Tel: 020 8648 7760 Email: <a href="mailto:info@prisonerseducation.org.uk">info@prisonerseducation.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk">www.prisonerseducation.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women into Work</td>
<td>St Silas House, 18 Moore Street, Sheffield, S3 7UW</td>
<td>Tel: 0114 270 3727 Email: <a href="mailto:wiw@sova.org.uk">wiw@sova.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.wiw.org.uk">www.wiw.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Possible interventions</td>
<td>Indicative national resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</strong></td>
<td><em>(Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing and homelessness</strong></td>
<td>• Referral on to specialist support</td>
<td><strong>Shelter</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awareness of how housing and homelessness can present a barrier to learning and work, and of national and local organisations that can provide housing support and advice</td>
<td>88 Old Street, London EC1V 9H (Regional Offices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Liaison with local council on behalf of client</td>
<td>Tel: 0808 800 4444.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@shelter.org.uk">info@shelter.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://england.shelter.org.uk">england.shelter.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(National charity providing housing advice.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street EC1M 6PU</td>
<td>Tel: 0207 251 5860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@addaction.org.uk">mailto:info@addaction.org.uk</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(National charity offering help and support to people affected by alcohol and drug misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women's Link</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooms 417 – 419, London Fruit and Wool Exchange, Brushfield Street, London E1 6SL</td>
<td>Tel: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.womenslink.org.uk">www.womenslink.org.uk</a></td>
<td>(Housing advice run by women for single women without children.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Possible interventions</td>
<td>Indicative national resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</strong> <em>(Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and debt</td>
<td>• Referral on to specialist support</td>
<td>Citizens Advice Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awareness how poverty and debt can act as a barrier to learning and work, and of national and local organisations that can provide advice and support on financial matters</td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.adviceguide.org.uk">www.adviceguide.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Citizens Advice Bureau – check website for local offices.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Jobcentre Plus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 0845 6060234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk">www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Benefits advice – check website for local offices.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health difficulties</td>
<td>• Referral on to specialist support</td>
<td><strong>Mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awareness of how mental health difficulties can affect a client’s ability to enter learning and work, and of national and local organisations that can provide advice and support on mental health issues</td>
<td>15-19 Broadway, Stratford, London E15 4BQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 02085192122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@mind.org.uk">info@mind.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.mind.or.uk">www.mind.or.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Check website for local provision.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Possible interventions</td>
<td>Indicative national resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment**  | **Mental health difficulties** | Nacro Mental Health  
Mental Health Unit, Nacro, 169 Clapham Rd, London, SW9 0PU  
Tel: 020 7840 6718  
Email: mentalhealth@nacro.org.uk  
Website: [www.nacro.org.uk/mhu](http://www.nacro.org.uk/mhu)  
(Specialist information, development and consultancy services for people who have contact with offenders and ex-offenders with mental health difficulties.)  
Turning Point  
New Loom House 101 Backchurch Lane London E1 1LU  
Tel: 02077022300  
Email: promserv@turning-point.co.uk  
Website: [www.turning-point.co.uk](http://www.turning-point.co.uk)  
(Social care for people with complex needs including mental health difficulties – check website for local services.)  
Advice-resources  
Email: ca-advice-resources@lsc.gov.uk  
Website: [www.advice-resources.co.uk](http://www.advice-resources.co.uk)  
(Mental Health Guide for IAG advisers supporting clients with mental health difficulties.) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</td>
<td>(Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Drug and alcohol misuse                    | • Referral on to specialist support                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Turning Point  
New Loom House, 101 Backchurch Lane London E1 1LU  
Tel: 02077 022300  
Email: promserv@turning-point.co.uk  
Website: www.turning-point.co.uk  
(Social care for people with complex needs including drug and alcohol addiction – check website for local services.)                                                                                                                     |
|                                           | • Awareness of how substance misuse can prevent a client from establishing regular learning and work patterns, and of national and local organisations that can provide advice and support on substance misuse issues                                                                                                                                                  | Alcohol Concern  
First floor, 8 Shelton St, London WC2H 9JR  
Tel: 020 7395 4000  
Fax: 0202 7395 4005  
E-mail: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk  
Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk  
(National charity providing information on local services.)                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Adfam  
25 Corsham Street, London, N1 6DR  
Tel: 020 7553 7640  
Website: www.adfam.org.uk  
(National charity for families and friends of people with drug and alcohol addiction.)                                                                                                                                                     |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</strong></td>
<td><em>(Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drug and alcohol misuse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Addaction&lt;br&gt;Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street EC1M 6PU&lt;br&gt;Tel: 0207 251 5860&lt;br&gt;Email: <a href="mailto:info@addiction.org.uk">info@addiction.org.uk</a>&lt;br&gt;Website: <a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a>&lt;br&gt;(National charity offering help and support to people affected by alcohol and drug misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Specific learning difficulties and disabilities**                 | • Referral on to specialist support<br>• Awareness of national and local organisations that can provide advice and support for clients with learning difficulties and disabilities | British Institute for Learning Disabilities<br>Campion House, Green Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, United Kingdom DY10 1JL<br>Tel: 01562 723 010<br>Email: enquiries@bild.org.uk<br>Website: www.bild.org.uk<br>(Information, training and other services.)
Care<br>9 Weir Road, Kibworth, Leicester LE8 0LQ (central office)<br>Tel: 0116 2793225<br>Website: www.care-ltd.co.uk<br>Email: info@care-ltd.co.uk<br>(Support for people with learning disabilities in their daily lives.) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</td>
<td>(Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Specific learning difficulties and disabilities |                                                                                      | Mencap  
123 Golden Lane  
London EC1Y 0RT  
Phone: 020 7454 0454  
Website: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)  
Email: [information@mencap.org.uk](mailto:information@mencap.org.uk) (Services include the learning disabilities helpline – 08088 081 111.) |
|                                                                 |                                                                                      | Dyslexia Action  
Park House, Wick Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 0HH  
Tel: 01784 222300  
Website: [www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk)  
Email: [info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk) (Services and support for people with dyslexia – see website for local centres.) |
| Issues facing women                         | • Referral on to specialist support  
• Awareness of national and local organisations that can provide advice and support for women facing a range of difficulties | Women in Prison  
1a Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA  
Tel: 020 7226 5879  
Website: [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk)  
(Advice and support for women prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families on a wide range of issues.) |
<p>| | | |
|                                                                 |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Possible interventions</th>
<th>Indicative national resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to participation in learning and skills and employment</strong> (Specialist national offender organisations like NACRO, Unlock and Bridging the Gap can also provide advice and support on the issues below.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues facing young people</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOVA Head Office (contact for projects in London &amp; South East Region, South West and for National enquiries)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Floor Chichester House, 37 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7793 0404</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:mail@sova.org.uk">mail@sova.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOVA Regional Office (Contact for projects in West Midlands, Yorkshire &amp; Humberside, North West)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Silas House, 18 Moore Street, Sheffield S3 7UW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 0114 270 3700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:sheffield@sova.org.uk">sheffield@sova.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.sova.org.uk">www.sova.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Runs a range of national projects providing advice and support.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Advising your client about disclosing convictions

What this section covers:

- Why is advice on disclosure so important?
- When do convictions need to be disclosed?
- What are the rehabilitation periods?
- When do spent convictions need to be declared?
- How do Criminal Records Bureau checks work, and do they mean for your client?
- What is the law in relation to sex offenders?
- Disclosure and Higher Education
- What advice should you give a client about disclosing a criminal record?
- Why is it advisable for a client to disclose their criminal record to an employer?
- What is the best way to tell an employer about a criminal record?

Why is advice on disclosure so important?

Anxiety about what they need to tell a prospective employer about their offending history presents a substantial obstacle for many offenders seeking work. The law on disclosure of criminal records is complicated, and ill understood by both employers and employees. It is important that a client understands the circumstances under which they may be asked to disclose convictions and the potential implications of failing to do so.

If applicants are not asked about their criminal convictions, they are not legally obliged to disclose. However, some positions will require mandatory criminal records checks to be carried out, and in any circumstances an employee may be prosecuted and dismissed for failure to disclose when asked any unspent convictions that subsequently come to light. The importance of providing your client with accurate information about disclosure cannot be overstated. A client who fails to disclose unspent convictions when asked is at risk of incurring a further conviction.

Ex-offenders need accurate information about how their own history of offending may affect their search for work, the data that is stored on them and when this can be accessed. Where they need to disclose a conviction, they need guidance and support on how to...
present their case to potential employers in the best light. The information in this section is accurate under current legislation. However, if you have any doubts about disclosure and an individual client and require further guidance, it will always be advisable to seek further specialist guidance.

When do convictions need to be disclosed?

Spent and unspent convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA), many convictions become ‘spent’ – that is, disregarded – after a specified period of time known as the ‘rehabilitation period’.

Once a conviction has become spent, a client does not have to reveal it in most circumstances, including applying for a job. Where a conviction is spent, an employer can generally not refuse to employ someone, or dismiss them, simply because they have a spent conviction. Some exceptions to this rule exist. Certain occupations are exempted from the ROA and spent convictions need to be declared when applying for work (see below ‘When do spent convictions need to be declared?’).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spent convictions: key facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The length of time that it takes for a conviction to become spent depends upon:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the age at which the person was convicted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the type and length of sentence awarded by the court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It does not depend upon the offence committed or, where a custodial sentence was passed, the length of time actually served in prison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prison sentences of more than 2½ years can never become spent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The rehabilitation period starts on the date of conviction, not the date on which the sentence finishes or the offender is released from prison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Once a conviction becomes spent, it remains spent, even if the individual is convicted of other offences at a later date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If someone is convicted of a further serious offence (i.e. an offence that is indictable in a crown court) during his or her rehabilitation period, the rehabilitation period for the first offence will not end until the rehabilitation period for the subsequent offence is also over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If someone is convicted of a ‘summary’ offence (i.e. a minor offence that can only be tried in a magistrates’ court) during his or her rehabilitation period, it will not affect the rehabilitation period of the original offence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If someone receives multiple prison sentences in the course of the same proceedings, the total rehabilitation period will depend upon whether they are to run consecutively or concurrently.
## What are the rehabilitation periods?

The main sentences carry the following rehabilitation periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period for people aged 17 or under when convicted</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period for people aged 18 or over when convicted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence of 6 months or less</td>
<td>3½ years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence (including suspended sentence) of more than 6 months but less than 2½ years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence (including suspended sentence) of more than 2½ years</td>
<td>NEVER</td>
<td>NEVER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines, compensation, probation / community rehabilitation order, community service / community punishment order, combination / community punishment and rehabilitation order, action plan, drug treatment and testing, and reparation order</td>
<td>2½ years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borstal (abolished 1983)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention centres (abolished 1988)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced a new custodial sentence for young people called a detention and training order which has different rehabilitation periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detention and training order of 6 months or less</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
<td>3½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention and training order of more than 6 months</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
<td>3½ years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The rehabilitation period for some sentences varies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation (where convicted before 3 February 1995), supervision, care order, conditional discharge and bind-over</td>
<td>1 year or until the order expires (whichever is the longer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure training (abolished in 2000) and attendance centre orders</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital order (with or without a restriction order)</td>
<td>5 years or 2 years after the order expires (whichever is the longer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral order</td>
<td>Once the order expires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The following are not classified as criminal convictions:

- cautions;
- reprimands;
- final warnings.

They are not covered by the ROA and so do not have rehabilitation periods. They may be regarded as instantly becoming spent. However, they do form part of a criminal record and will be revealed on a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

When do spent convictions need to be declared?

Some offices and occupations are exempted from the ROA. In these cases, potential employers are entitled to ask for details of all convictions, both spent and unspent, and
applicants for such posts are legally obliged to declare them. They will be required to provide proof of their record by undergoing a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

The main exceptions broadly relate to:

- work with children (note that people with certain convictions are barred by law from working with children);
- work with vulnerable adults, such as the infirm, elderly or mentally ill;
- work concerned with the administration of justice, such as police officers and lawyers;
- professions that have legal protection, such as doctors, dentists, vets, nurses and pharmacists;
- senior managers in banking and financial institutions;
- work involving matters of national security.

Further information

The publication *I Can’t Do That, Can I?* contains comprehensive information on the relevance of criminal convictions to different occupational areas. It can be searched and a copy downloaded at: [www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/IcantdothatcanI/cover.htm](http://www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/IcantdothatcanI/cover.htm)

How do Criminal Records Bureau checks work, and what do they mean for your client?

Under the Police Act 1997, certain organisations in England and Wales are exempted from the terms of the ROA. They are permitted to carry out checks to obtain information on the criminal records of potential employees and volunteers as part of their normal recruitment process. Such organisations are known as ‘Registered Bodies’. Criminal record checks (called ‘Disclosures’) are carried out via the Criminal Records Bureau.

You should not assume that having a criminal record will necessarily bar someone from being employed in an exempted occupation. All Registered Bodies are bound by a code of practice. In order to refuse to employ someone because of a criminal record disclosed via a CRB check, employers have to show that the offence is relevant to the job in question.

In order to obtain information about criminal records, employers can ask a successful job applicant to agree to a criminal record check being carried out. The applicant will be asked to give their signed consent, and the employer will contact the CRB.

There are currently two types of CRB check, and the type of check required will depend upon the nature of the work in question.
Standard disclosure

Applies to posts exempted under the ROA. Standard disclosures show details of:

- spent and unspent convictions;
- cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer.

If the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults, the following databases may also be searched:

- Protection of Children Act List
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults List
- Information that is held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (formerly known as List 99)

Enhanced Disclosure

This is a higher level of check and applies to posts that involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and vulnerable adults. Enhanced Disclosures contain the same information as the Standard Disclosure, but with the addition of information from local police records that is considered relevant for the post.

Further information

Full details of the process for undertaking CRB checks, including guidance for applicants, can be obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Criminal Records Bureau
Tel: 0870 90 90 811
Website: www.crb.gov.uk.

What is law in relation to sex offenders?

Under the Sex Offenders Act 1997, anyone convicted or cautioned in respect of sexual offences is required to notify their local police of their name, address, date of birth, national insurance number, and any change of address or qualifying periods of a stay away from home. The length of time for which the requirement to notify remains depends upon the sentence received.

For those convicted of certain serious sexual offences, the police can apply for a community protection order. The order will last for a minimum of five years, and can bar an individual from areas frequented by children.
You need to be aware that a client who is subject to a community protection order will not be able to undertake learning where under-16s are likely to be present. This includes adult learning premises which have crèche facilities.

**Further information**

Details of the notification periods for people who are registered sex offenders can be found at:

**Disclosure and higher education**

If a client wishes to apply for a course in higher education (HE) they need to be aware that their convictions will debar them from some areas of study.

The Universities and Colleges Application System (UCAS) form includes a question about criminal records. This is to prevent people who have relevant convictions from studying on vocational courses leading to jobs in which they would not be able to be employed, such as teaching, health care and social work. Applicants for these courses are required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings. For courses that do not include work with children or vulnerable adults, applicants need only declare relevant convictions.

**Further information**

Further guidance may be found on the UCAS form and in the UCAS booklet *How to Apply*. More information can be obtained from UCAS.

**UCAS**

Rosehill, New Barn Lane, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 3LZ

tel: 0870 1122211

e-mail: enquiries@ucas.ac.uk

Website: www.ucas.ac.uk.

Certain courses outside the UCAS system, such as postgraduate teaching courses, may also ask applicants for details of spent and unspent convictions.
What advice should you give a client on disclosing a criminal record?

Having a criminal record undoubtedly makes it harder for people to find work. It can be difficult to tell potential employers about a history of offending behaviour, and evidence suggests that employers often discriminate against applicants with a criminal record.

Ultimately, it is up to the client to decide whether or not to tell prospective employers about their convictions. But it is always best to advise a client to be honest about their past if they are asked. The following principles form the starting point for giving advice.

• If you are not asked about your convictions, you do not have to disclose.

• Applicants whose convictions are spent under the ROA and who are not applying for a post that is excepted under its terms can answer ‘no’ if they are asked about previous convictions on an application form or during an interview.

• Spent convictions alone are not sufficient grounds for refusing to employ someone or for sacking them in most areas of work.

• Applicants for work that is exempted from the terms of the ROA will be legally required to undertake a CRB check which will disclose their criminal record, including spent and unspent convictions.

• A successful applicant who fails to disclose unspent convictions on an application form or at interview when asked to do so may be dismissed and could be prosecuted on the grounds of having deceived an employer if they are subsequently found out.

Why is it advisable for a client to disclose their criminal record to an employer?

From the client’s point of view, the disadvantages of disclosing their criminal record when they are not legally required to do so may seem to far outweigh any advantages. You can support them to understand the potential benefits of telling an employer, as well as the possible negative consequences of not doing so.

The advantages and disadvantages can be summarised as follows:
### Telling an employer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The employer will see that they are trying to make a new start, and give them a chance.</td>
<td>If they tell the employer, they may not get the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer may have more respect for them if they are honest about their record.</td>
<td>It may take longer to get a job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will not need to worry that their employer may find out at a later date and sack them for not telling.</td>
<td>They will find it difficult to tell their employer about their record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They cannot be prosecuted for not telling.</td>
<td>They may be anxious that colleagues might find out about their record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will not have to worry that someone else will tell their employer about their record.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Not telling an employer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They may get a job much more quickly.</td>
<td>Anxiety that their employer will find out anyway will always hang over them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They need not worry about having to explain their conviction.</td>
<td>The employer might hear about their conviction from someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are found out, they could be sacked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are found out, they may be prosecuted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are sacked, they will not get a good reference, and are likely to find it even harder to get a job in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being sacked may affect their entitlement to Jobseekers’ Allowance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SOVA

### In the ‘Toolkit’

A copy of the above table can also be found in the ‘Toolkit’ section of this guide.
What is the best way to tell an employer about a criminal record?

The key to supporting clients to feel more confident about disclosing their criminal record is to provide them with sound advice on the best way to do it. The aim should be to enable them to present their case to a potential employer in the best possible light, and to minimise the degree to which their offending history detracts from the rest of their application.

Disclosing on an application form
If an application form asks about convictions or criminal records, the best way to disclose is in a sealed letter attached to the form and marked ‘Private and confidential’, and writing ‘See letter’ in the space on the application form.

CVs
Gaps in employment or learning history due to time spent in custody can be made less conspicuous by creating a skills-based CV, rather than one which is chronological.

Disclosing at interview
Candidates should try to wait until they have made a good impression in the interview before talking about their conviction. At the end of most interviews, the employer will give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions or add anything further, and this is the time to discuss a criminal record. However, candidates also need to be prepared for the employer to bring up the issue of criminal records at any time during an interview.

When disclosing a conviction, the applicant needs to convince an employer that their crimes are in the past, that they have moved on, and that they no longer pose a risk. It is important to be as positive as possible when disclosing, whether by letter or at interview.

The following approaches are likely to prove most effective.

- Keep discussion of the offence(s) to a minimum. Do not go into great detail. Keep the explanation brief, mentioning only the type of conviction, the date and the sentence given or time served.
- Mention briefly any personal problems which contributed to the offending behaviour, but have since been successfully overcome, e.g. drugs, debt, relationship difficulties. Express regret, and explain that these issues are in the past.
- Accept responsibility for what happened, stress that the offence was a mistake and display regret.
- Try to give reasons why the employer should discount the conviction.
- Do not criticise the criminal justice system or suggest that you were unfairly treated.

Most importantly, the candidate’s best chance of success lies in persuading an employer that they have the skills, experience and other qualities to succeed in the job for which they have applied. Their application needs to focus on showing why they are suitable, and their merits should not be overshadowed by the need to disclose.

If a client has already made a number of applications for work, it is worth exploring the possibility that their criminal record may not be the reason for their lack of success. They may need support to look again at their own skills and abilities, and to match these to appropriate jobs.
Further information

Further information about the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, when convictions become spent, and guidance on disclosing convictions can be obtained from:

NACRO
169 Clapham Road London, SW9 0PU
Tel: 0800 0181 259
Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk
Website: www.nacro.org.uk

Apex Trust
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA
Tel: 020 7638 5931
E-mail: jobcheck@apextrust.com
Website: www.apextrust.com

Further advice on supporting clients into work can be found in Section 9 of the Guide.
7. Jobcentre Plus benefits and services

What this section covers:

- Why is Jobcentre Plus important?
- What services does Jobcentre Plus provide?
- Are there any specific services for ex-offenders?
- How will participation in learning and work affect your client’s benefits?

Why is Jobcentre Plus important?

Clients who have served a sentence either in prison or in the community will be eligible for greater support from Jobcentre Plus (for example more intensive help with job search and access to training). However, they will only be able to access this support if they make Jobcentre Plus aware that they have a recent conviction, and you should encourage them to do so. You should maintain current awareness of relevant projects offered through your local Jobcentre Plus offices, so that you can refer clients as appropriate.

Under the government’s FRESHSTART initiative for people finishing custodial sentences, an interview should be arranged for released prisoners at their local Jobcentre Plus, typically to take place on the day following release. Although the government has issued guidance to Jobcentre Plus offices to encourage them to place former prisoners in the first cycle for ‘signing on,’ which will trigger a part payment of Jobseeker’s Allowance, this is not a formal requirement.

Supporting your client to access benefits for which they are eligible will help them to address immediate financial hardship. You should always check with Jobcentre Plus about current benefits and rules relating to participation in learning and work to ensure that you give clients accurate and up-to-date information and do not inadvertently jeopardise their financial stability.

What services does Jobcentre Plus provide?

Jobcentre Plus provides help and advice on jobs and training for people who can work, and financial help for those who cannot.
Jobcentre Plus offices replace separate job centres and social security offices. There are Jobcentre Plus offices in most large towns and cities. Details of local offices can be found in the phone book or from the Jobcentre Plus website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**The Work You Want, the Help You Need** provides a comprehensive list of benefits and services that are available from Jobcentre Plus and elsewhere, for people of working age. It can be downloaded from the Jobcentre Plus website.

Jobcentre Plus provides help around:

- job vacancies;
- looking for work;
- benefits;
- leaflets and guides;
- New Deal training and work;
- working and training in Europe;
- information about training;
- information about self employment.

Details are available from centres or through their website.

**Other services include:**

Jobseeker Direct: a way of applying for a job by telephone

Programme Centres provide a range of help to look for a job including:

- preparing for interview;
- applying for a job;
- access to free stamps, newspapers and stationery.

**Related websites include:**

[www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com): A website detailing flats/houses to share or rent, items for sale, community activities, jobs, and chatrooms related to each of these categories. The website operates for cities in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales as well as a number of other countries in the world.


**Are there any specific services for ex-offenders?**

The leaflet *Just for the Record: help and advice for people with a criminal record* includes advice on disclosure and other employment-related issues.

It can be downloaded from [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)
You can also check whether there are projects (e.g. ESF projects) running in your area offering support with preparation for work for which clients are eligible.

**How will participation in learning or work affect your client’s benefits?**

If your client starts a learning programme of more than 16 hours a week, this is classed as full time. Clients will generally no longer be considered by Jobcentre Plus to be available for work, and will not be eligible to claim Jobseeker’s Allowance. You should always check with Jobcentre Plus about the application of the so-called ‘Sixteen Hour Rule’ before advising a client to engage in a substantial programme of learning, as it may have a significant adverse impact on their financial situation.

For clients wishing to take a job, full or part time, the benefits situation is likely to be complex. They should contact their local Jobcentre Plus to find out what the financial implications are of starting work. Jobcentre Plus will be able to undertake a Better Off Calculation (BOC), which will give them an estimate of their income after taking work. As a result of starting work, clients will become ineligible to some benefits but may be able to claim others. Many people do not claim the full range of benefits to which they are entitled, because the system is complex to understand and because they not be made aware of them. The local Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to give your client impartial advice on benefits.

### Key contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looking for a job</th>
<th>Jobseeker Direct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 0845 6060 234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textphone: 0845 6055 255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk">www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Check website for local offices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Deal training and work</th>
<th>New Deal Helpline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 0845 606 2626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textphone: 0845 606 0680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk">www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confidential information about benefits</th>
<th>Benefit Enquiry Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 0800 8822 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textphone: 080024 33 55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Minimum Wage</th>
<th>Tel: 0845 6000 678</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textphone: 0845 915 3296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.tiger.gov.uk">www.tiger.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Tax Credits | Tel: 0845 300 3900 |
| Child tax credit or working tax credit | Textphone: 0845 300 3909 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>or if you want a claim pack</th>
<th><a href="http://www.hmrc.gov.uk">www.hmrc.gov.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Check website for local offices)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Fuel Payments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 0845 915 1515</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textphone: 0845 601 5613</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supporting clients into learning and skills and work
8. Supporting clients into learning and skills

What this section covers:

- How to identify client need
- What techniques can be used to tackle low motivation?
- What is pro-social modelling?
- What is motivational dialogue?
- What specialist support is available to help ex-offenders into learning and skills?
- What provision is available?
- What funding is available?

“Encouraging prisoners into education and training can be pivotal to their crime free future.”

Frances Crook, the Howard League for Penal Reform.

How to identify client need

Starting points

Ex-offenders will have a wide range of learning and skills needs. Some will already have degrees, others may have no qualifications. However, as can be seen from the table below, offenders as a group have fewer qualifications than the wider population, and may have had more negative experiences at school or of education subsequently.
Supporting the learner’s journey

There are two inter-related aspects that may affect individuals who have received a sentence, either in custody or in the community:

- There is the journey in learning, from the individual’s starting point to achievement and new plans.
- On release, ex-offenders may have a range of issues to deal with. Ex-offenders often have chaotic lifestyles with many problems and may associate with people who have negative values. It can be a difficult process to identify and unravel appropriate support. There is unlikely to be a quick fix solution. For many offenders/ex-offenders with these multiple issues, specialist support will be needed. Section 5 of this guide provides resources to help you support clients with complex needs.

Of course, there are also many offenders will not be in this situation. They may have been convicted of a single offence and be anxious not to experience the consequences again, and their lives might otherwise be relatively stable. Supporting them into learning or employment may be a more straightforward process.

Assessing your client’s multiple needs

The issue of motivation and readiness to learn is complex. There will be occasions when it is not appropriate for your client to pursue learning and skills or employment until other issues have been resolved, for example mental health needs, housing needs and support with substance misuse. There is a danger of setting up ex-offenders to fail. Section 3 of this guide includes further details on identifying and addressing multiple needs.

Assessing the needs of ex-offenders

Lack of continuity has been identified as the single most frustrating factor in relation to learning and work interventions. Section 4 of this guide looks at the IAG support and
learning and skills provision offenders may have received while either in prison or serving their sentence within the community.

The Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) aims to offer a seamless journey for offenders in prison, on probation and on release. The aim is to provide information, advice and guidance throughout an offender’s sentence together with an individual record and learning plan which will accompany people as they move around and beyond the criminal justice system. At the time of publication, the development of an electronic system to facilitate the transfer of records between offender establishments and providers is being evaluated.

You will need to check directly with your client what previous information, advice and guidance they have received, and whether they have a learning plan. The process of identifying needs of ex-offenders will be broadly similar to that used with any other client. The metaphor of the learning journey introduces and promotes the idea of continuity and a positive approach to change.

You will need to work with clients to consider:

- their preferred ways of learning, including pace, self study, part time;
- what funding is available;
- their study skills, including writing, reading, communication and maths skills;
- any particular support required, including crèche, translator, physical learning aids;
- the distance they are willing to travel.

In the ‘Toolkit’

The action plan template and learning line (with guidance on how to use the learning line) included in the Toolkit section of this guide are possible tools to assist you to support clients identify their learning needs and plan their journey.

What techniques can be used to tackle low motivation?

Since many offenders have previously had negative experiences of education that have left them disaffected, low levels of motivation can present significant barriers to learning. The role of the adviser is key in supporting offenders into learning, through engaging and sustaining their interest.

You will support clients’ motivation by offering clear information, advice and feedback and through supporting learners to identify goals and targets. In addition it will be important to:

- communicate your interest in understanding their needs;
- support their determination or increase their desire to change;
- explore ambivalence in relation to decision-making;
- help learners remove the obstacles to change.
It may be a particular challenge to support such clients into being receptive learners. Mental health and drug misuse may also mean that supporting potential learners can be a roller-coaster experience for advisers. You will always need to refer clients to sources of additional support as appropriate.

Two techniques that are recognised as being particularly useful for assisting ex-offenders to think about change and directly tackling the issue of motivation are:

- pro-social modelling;
- motivational dialogue.

Providing these kinds of support requires specialist skills. If you are not trained in using these approaches it will be appropriate for you to refer clients on. Maintaining a directory of local organisations who can offer these more specialist services is important.

What is pro-social modelling?

This technique is based on the view that agencies and organisations working within the criminal justice system can influence the attitudes and behaviours of the people with whom they work, and has become a core element of work with offenders and ex-offenders. It is not suggested that this approach has all the answers. It is recognised that the environment and other factors also impinge on clients’ behaviour, but the focus is on changing attitudes and behaviour.

Pro-social behaviour is not just the opposite of anti-social behaviour (including non-criminal behaviour). Pro-social modelling refers to the process by which workers act as good motivating role models in order to bring out the best in people, and identifies strategies for supporting changed behaviour.

Aspects of good practice for advisers include:

- setting the parameters of what is feasible;
- demonstrating optimism that the client can make positive changes;
- using positive and solution-focused language;
- discouraging, by challenging and confronting, undesired values and behaviour;
- being clear with the client about your role;
- seeking out and using opportunities to praise or affirm efforts to engage with change;
- avoiding stereotyping;
- using language and concepts the client can understand and working with different thinking and learning styles.

The complex emotional and behavioural dynamic which exists between clients and advisers is represented by the diagram below\(^1\) which builds on cognitive behavioural therapy.

---

\(^1\) From Transforming Behaviour; Sally Cherry; 2005, p17 Fig 1.2

Guide for IAG practitioners
Produced for advice-resources by NIACE and SOVA
What is motivational dialogue?

Motivational dialogue is based on the view that people are more convinced by arguments they have thought about themselves than by arguments that have been presented to them by others.²

Motivational dialogue tries to elicit statements from clients that acknowledge:

- they have some difficulties;
- they are anxious about the way things are and want to change;
- that life will be better in some way if they do change.

An important role for advisers is in assisting clients to:

- recognise the nature of their problem;
- show concern about the effects of their problem on themselves and others;
- explore the strength of their intention to change;
- express their optimism about the possibility of change and work towards this.

This can be done through a combination of:

- open questions;
- reflections;

² This section draws on information from the DfES Standards Unit: “Introduction and background to motivational dialogue”. The work was developed as part of Success for all and is available on the internet at: http://www.sflqi.org.uk/online/materials/02%20Embedding%20SIL/07%20Engaging%20and%20Motivating%20Learners%20(2.7)/06%20Eng%20Mot%20Lrnrs%20-%20Resource%20Motivate%20Dialogue.pdf
• summaries;
• summaries with bias;
• losses and gains analysis to explore ambivalence;
• scaling tool to explore optimism.

**Useful Questions**
*(Based on motivational dialogue³.)*

**Problem Recognition**
How has this been a problem?
What difficulties has this caused you?
How has not being able to write well caused you problems?
In what ways do you think others have been harmed by your behaviour?

**Concern**
What do you think will happen if you do not change your behaviour?
What can you imagine happening if you stay at home?
What worries do you have about not being able to control your temper?

**Intention to Change**
What would be the benefits of improving your spelling?
What would make you go to the interview this time?
I can see you still feel unsure. What could make you feel more positive about this move?

**Optimism**
What makes you think things will be different this time?
What do you think will work for you if you decide to try and change?
What would make you attend your interview this time compared to last time?

**Traps that reduce the likelihood of change**
*(Based on motivational dialogue⁴.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trap</th>
<th>Antidote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempting to persuade through argument</td>
<td>Use questioning skills and reflective listening to encourage learners to articulate their own reasons for change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trap</th>
<th>Antidote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Premature focus</strong></td>
<td>Spend time listening to the learner, asking well-chosen questions and reflecting back and checking that the issues have been identified correctly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Further information**

- **Pro-social modelling**
  Sally Cherry (2005) *Transforming Behaviour*

- **Motivational dialogue**
  DfES Standards Unit: Information and Background to Motivational Dialogue (Success for All), via website:

**What specialist support is available to help ex-offenders into learning and skills?**

Most current official schemes to support offender learning and skills stop short when a sentence expires. However in addition to the general support available from Careers Advice Service, local IAG advisers, job centres and local libraries, a number of national and local organisations support ex-offenders into education, training (and employment). A first port of call to find out about specialist local organisations could be Jobcentre Plus.

A list of national organisations who provide specialist support can be found in Section 13 of this guide. You should also develop your own directory of local agencies.

**Key contact**

**NACRO**
169 Clapham Road London, SW9 0PU
Tel: 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)
Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk
Website: [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

Resettlement Plus Helpline 020 7840 6464 provides details of local education and training schemes. NACRO’s website: [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk) gives access to advice leaflets.
What provision is available?

The purposes of education for offenders and ex-offenders are the same as for all learners: to equip people with the skills, knowledge and understanding they will need to lead life as workers, as citizens and to be fulfilled in their personal and family life.

As a result of the new OLASS contracts, some providers in your area will be developing specialist knowledge and understanding around the provision of learning and skills to offenders. You will be able to obtain details of who these providers are from your regional Learning and Skills Council. Contact details can be found at www.lsc.gov.uk.

You may want to take account of the following specific types of provision, depending on the particular needs and interests of your client.

First Steps Learning

A skills and qualifications focus is not necessarily the appropriate starting point for all people. Activities that can give people a sense of self esteem can often be the way into learning and skills. Many ex-offenders may not have accessed learning during their sentence. Drama, music, dance, art, personal development, health and wellbeing, community development and family learning can be important springboards into further personal development and learning, as well as being complete learning pathways in their own right.

The Arts

The Arts can enable people, make powerful personal statements, increase confidence and re-direct energies in a non-harmful way. They can also provide stepping-stones to employability through the development of transferable skills such as team working, problem-solving and the ability to experiment and innovate as well as the development of practical skills.

Further information

Further information on arts education for offenders and ex-offenders can be found at:

Arts on the Out
Website: www.artsontheout.co.uk
A web-based resource.

Koestler Trust
Joss Blake, Steve Porter or Ceri Williams
The Koestler Arts Centre
168a Du Cane Road
London W12 0TX
Tel: 020 8740 0333
Email: info@koestlertrust.org.uk
Website: www.koestlertrust.org.uk
Writing, Reading, Speaking and Listening, Numeracy and ESOL

The development of these skills is only one part of any learner’s journey. All too often basic skills learning can dominate the opportunities offered to ex-offenders. Nevertheless they are an important part of that journey. They can be studied in their own right or embedded as part of a vocational or other course. Over 138,000 people achieving a first literacy or numeracy or language qualification by July 2005 were offenders in prison.

Life skills

Ex-offenders may benefit from courses to support people in everyday living, provided by adult and community learning providers, credit unions and Citizens Advice Bureaux. Such courses can include money management, claiming benefits, understanding your pay packet, what to do if you get into debt, cooking, parenting and supporting your child’s learning. Currently, the number of these courses is limited, so you will need to check local availability.

Work experience, learning and skills: New Deal

The Government New Deal scheme offers learning and skills and work experience. Some schemes are voluntary and some mandatory and will affect benefits if refused. They are available to people:

- age 18-24 and have been claiming Job Seeker’s Allowance (JSA) for 6 months or more;
- 25 years+ claiming JSA for 18 out of the last 21 months;
- age 50+ and out of work for 6 months or more;
- lone parents and their youngest child is less than 16 years and the parent is not working or working less than 16 hours per week;
- in receipt of disability/health-related benefits;
- who are the partner of someone claiming a working age benefit on their behalf for 6 months or more.

Further information

Further information on work-related training opportunities can be found at:

Jobcentre Plus
Tel: 0845 6060234
Website: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
Apprenticeships

These are available in most industries and give people a chance to get a recognised certificate at NVQ level 2 and in key skills. Advanced apprenticeships offer technical certificates at NVQ level 3 and above.

Further information

Further information on apprenticeships is available at:
www.apprenticeships.org.uk
0800 015 0600

Different ways of learning

People learn in a variety of ways. As with all learners, ex-offenders need to be encouraged to think about how best they learn. For example distance learning can be very demanding in terms of self-discipline and does not suit everyone. It requires students to organise their own time and to take responsibility for their own learning. Ex-offenders may not have had access to the internet and may need a blended learning approach which includes tutor support as well as access to learning programmes.

Key contact

The learndirect website www.learndirect.co.uk, or the learning travelline in the Toolkit section of this guide will help you to support clients to think through their range of options.

Learndirect
Tel: 0800 101 901
Website: www.learndirect.co.uk

What funding is available?

Ex-offenders will be subject to the same fees and costs as other learners.

The Funding Directory, developed by advice-resources, is a fully searchable database of funding opportunities from non-charitable sources (e.g. adult learning grants and career development loans). It includes a deadline prompt and news updates. The service can be accessed free at www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/general/dir/fun_dir
A number of charities and organisations offer support to offenders and ex-offenders to cover their learning and skills expenses. Look into your local networks and add any relevant contact details to your directory of further support.

The Funder Finder database is a key source of information regarding possible organisations supporting ex-offenders.
9. Supporting clients into paid work

What this section covers:

- What are the employment issues for ex-offenders?
- Supporting access to employment and assessing need
- Job search
- Advocating for clients with employers and intermediaries
- Do particular groups have distinctive employment needs?

The challenges of supporting ex-offenders into work are high but the value is immense:

“No one should be under any illusion that providing offenders with the skills they need to seek, secure and sustain decent jobs is a cure-all. None the less there is widespread recognition that having a regular income can help ex-offenders to establish stability in their housing and family situations, two significant elements in reducing re-offending.”

Adult Learning Inspectorate, Talisman October 2006

The Government believes that employment is one of the key factors in reducing the risk of re-offending, and breaking the cycle of crime.

Government statistics show that if a person with a criminal record finds settled employment or receives training with secured employment at the end, the chances of re-offending are cut by two thirds. 5

The current Government strategy on supporting offenders into work is outlined in section 4 of this guide.

What are the employment issues for ex-offenders?

The particular needs of ex-offenders vary considerably. Individually tailored support is key to an ex-offender’s resettlement. Some clients need little support to find work. This may be particularly the case if they had a job before their conviction. Others may need more help, with an introduction to work through volunteering, social enterprise, training programmes, mentoring, or work experience.

5 Apply Within - DVD produced by the SOVA ‘Women into Work’ project.
**Barriers**

Barriers to ex-offenders getting work may include the following:

- low skills;
- poor previous experience of schooling;
- a history of drug or alcohol abuse;
- limited work experience or specific job-related skills;
- housing problems;
- a criminal record can restrict some areas of employment available;
- limited interest from some employers in taking on ex-offenders.

**Barriers to employment: some statistics**

Over a third of employers would exclude all ex-offenders from their recruitment process.

A third of the 90,000 or so people released from prison in England and Wales have nowhere to live on release.

It is estimated that over two thirds of people released from prison have no job to go to and ex-offenders are eight times more likely to be unemployed than anyone else in the community.

**What jobs can ex-offenders not do?**

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, certain offences are considered as ‘spent’ after a period of time. This varies according to the length of sentence and age of offender at the time of conviction. However the provisions of this act are not widely understood by many employers. For more information about restricted areas of work and spent convictions see section 6 of this guide.

**Who are the ‘friendly’ employers?**

Given suitable support, proper risk assessment and carefully chosen placements some employers will be prepared to give offenders and ex-offenders a chance.

Business in the Community is a network of over 750 UK companies committed to improving their positive impact on society. Their website [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) contains a list of members and provides help and guidance on employing ex-offenders including:

- risk assessment;
- award-winning examples of good practice;
- legal framework about employing ex-offenders;
- research;
- creating employment policy related to the employment of ex-offenders.
You should develop your own local directory of employers who have a good track record of providing employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

Supporting access to employment and assessing need

What support may clients have already received?

Section 4 outlines the support offenders may have received if they were in prison. Although the quality of training in prisons has improved markedly over recent years there remains much to be done to prepare offenders for the world of work. Work opportunities for offenders currently rely heavily on the enthusiasm and commitment of individual prison staff and their contacts with local employers. Prison staff, who are specialist resettlement officers, often pre-screen candidates before putting forward offenders for a personal interview with an employer, and employers are advised by the personal recommendations from prison staff who have an understanding of the needs of employers they have contact with.

Motivating and engaging clients

Issues around motivation and motivational techniques are outlined in section 8 of this guide. Two key approaches to tackling low motivation that you could consider using with clients – pro-social modelling and motivational interviewing – are described in detail.

Effective guidance into work for ex-offenders

Effective guidance into work would consider the following areas:

- preferred employment;
- work history;
- educational history;
- qualifications and training;
- offending history;
- restricted areas of work;
- risk assessment;
- transferable skills;
- personal qualities and skills;
- reading, writing language and numeracy skills;
- personal barriers to employment education and training.

In the ‘Toolkit’

An example of an action plan for supporting access to work is included in the Toolkit.

---

6 ALI Talisman Oct 2006 p2
Job Search

Job Search Skills

Jobcentre Plus is a good starting point for advice about local support. You should also be aware of local projects which ex-offenders may be eligible to join.

A range of organisations provide job search skills courses. Elements include:

- places to look for work;
- researching the job;
- researching the company;
- filling in application forms;
- CVs;
- interview skills: appearance, attitude, first impressions, travel to interview.

There are many practical guides on aspects of job search skills. Some present particular advice for ex-offenders on filling in CVs and job application letters. NACRO’s Sorting yourself out guide to applying for work (with a criminal record) is a good example. (See also the companion guide to this one.)

Filling in application forms and CVs

Section 6 of this guide discusses disclosure of criminal records in detail.

Although some employers will turn ex-offenders down if they disclose their criminal record, many employers will still consider applicants if they do not think their conviction is relevant. It is important to be as positive as possible when disclosing, whether by letter or at interview.

The following approaches are likely to prove most effective.

- Keep discussion of the offence(s) to a minimum. Do not go into great detail. Keep the explanation brief, mentioning only the type of conviction, the date and the sentence given or time served.
- Mention briefly any personal problems which contributed to the offending behaviour, but have since been successfully overcome, e.g. drugs, debt, relationship difficulties. Express regret, and explain that these issues are in the past.
- Accept responsibility for what happened, stress that the offence was a mistake and display regret.
- Try to give reasons why the employer should discount the conviction, for example because the crime was committed some time ago, because it is not relevant to the job being applied for, or because the crime sounds more serious than it was.
- Do not criticise the criminal justice system or suggest that you were unfairly treated.
- Emphasise real keenness to find work and a determination not to re-offend.

The important thing is to reassure employers that there is no longer a risk, and to show that the applicant has the right skills to do the job.
Where application forms ask about convictions or criminal records, it may be best to enclose a separate letter explaining the situation, and write ‘see letter’ on the form. In the letter clients should give a short account of the offence and their attitude to it. They should seal the envelope and mark it as ‘private and confidential’.

Chronological gaps in work history due to a prison sentence could be identified by writing ‘Not in employment’. Details could then be provided in the covering letter or at interview.

When clients are applying for a job by sending a CV, gaps in employment (or learning) history could be identified by writing either ‘Not in employment’ or ‘Unavailable for work – due to personal circumstances’. Again, these could be expanded upon in a covering letter or at interview. Alternatively, gaps in employment could be made less conspicuous by creating a skills-based CV, rather than one which is chronological.

Examples of CVs can also be found on the Jobcentre Plus website. The advice-resources website (www.advice-resources.co.uk) and Careers Advice Service website www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice also have CV builders. These resources are free. It is worth noting that some websites offer a paid service to develop a CV.

In the ‘Toolkit’

A template for a skills based CV can be found in the ‘Toolkit’ section of this guide.

Examples of covering letters can be found in the NACRO resettlement practitioner guide: Applying for work with a criminal record and are also obtainable through the NACRO website: www.nacro.org.uk

All the general rules about making strong job applications apply. Clients need to:
• make sure they show they can do the job;
• ensure that the application looks good;
• focus on applying for the jobs they are most likely to get;
• follow the application procedures specified for each job – e.g. don’t send a CV if the post requires an application form;
• avoid giving employers any reason to reject them at the initial sift phase.

If clients still cannot get jobs...

If, despite the support of an adviser, clients still are unable to find employment, it may be because their record is so serious that an employer cannot accept it. Or it may be a combination of a criminal record and aspects of their current lifestyle or long bouts of unemployment. In this case, clients may wish to consider training or voluntary work.

Before accepting a job....

Jobcentre Plus has a number of services for clients who are thinking about starting work or have been offered a job and are:
• worried about making ends meet until their first pay packet arrives, or
• unsure if it is the right job.
**Better Off Calculation**
Clients can ask for an interview with their personal adviser at Jobcentre Plus to request an estimate of how they may be better off receiving their wage as opposed to benefits.

**Rapid Reclaim**
Clients can use this service to claim benefit again within 12 weeks of a previous claim ending. It aims to give confidence to start a new job if they are not sure it will last and they are concerned it will be difficult to claim benefit again.

**Work Trial**
A chance to try out a job for up to 15 working days to test if it is the right job for clients and to show employers they are the right person for the job. It is a volunteer programme and benefits are not affected. Access depends on claimants’ circumstances.

**Job Grant**
A non-taxable payment to those who have been receiving benefits continuously for 26 weeks or more and are moving into full time (16 hours plus) work.
- £100 for single people and couple without children
- £250 for lone parents and couple with children

**Mortgage Support**
It may be possible to claim for a mortgage interest run on payment in the first weeks after starting work, if clients have been receiving previous support with mortgage and house loan payments.

---

**Advocating for clients with employers and intermediaries**

You may be able to play an important role in supporting clients into work by advocating with local employers and their intermediaries. Developing your skills, knowledge and understanding around how to approach employers and work with them can widen opportunities for clients.

Research undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007) suggests that the majority of employers would consider employing ex-offenders if:

- applicants were shown to have the relevant skills;
- information about the support available to employers taking on ex-offenders were more widely disseminated.

You will need to show that your client has the skills needed to do the job, and this is likely to include ’soft’ skills that employers value, such as honesty, reliability, team-working and communication.

There is a range of material available which explains the potential benefits to employers of recruiting ex-offenders and addresses any concerns they might have. Materials include case studies, frequently asked questions and advice on recruitment practices.
Some myths about employing ex-offenders

Ex-offenders are high risk and untrustworthy
- Most people with a criminal record have never been to prison. Most offences are carried out by young men between 18 and 25 years. They often have to declare their conviction long after it ceases to be relevant to their lives.

Ex-offenders will not stay long in employment
- Research shows that there is no significant difference between the length of time individuals with a criminal record stay with an organisation compared to those individuals who do not have a criminal record.

Other employees will feel uncomfortable working with ex-offenders
- With 1 in 5 adults having a criminal record most people are already working alongside an ex-offender – they just don’t know it.

Ex-offenders are inexperienced, unskilled and unmotivated
- 1 in 5 adults have a criminal record. They cover the range of skills experiences and attitudes that organisations need.

Ex-offenders are likely to re-offend
- Home Office statistics show that if a person with a criminal record finds settled employment or receives training with secured employment at the end, the chances of their re-offending are cut by two thirds.

Ex-offenders require more supervision
- Applicants should be appointed on merit and on this basis should not need any more support than other employees.

What is the business case for employing ex-offenders?
- Recruitment costs to businesses can be reduced if linked to a rehabilitation scheme.
- Recruitment difficulties can be resolved: skills gaps filled.
- Retention: research has shown that 47% of employees with a criminal record stayed at the same organisation for over 3 years.
- Many employers have found ex-offenders just as hard working, reliable and loyal as any other employee.
- Many businesses recognise that it is cheaper to the economy to help put someone into a job than back into prison.

Opportunities with large scale employers

Many public sector and large companies have human resource policies concerning the employment of ex-offenders. Some will have clearly articulated the business case for delivering safe and fair recruitment policies.

In public sector and large-scale employers with good practice in employing ex-offenders, recruitment staff are likely to have been trained in their organisations policy for employing ex-offenders.
ex-offenders and in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. HR staff should be aware of the issues surrounding employing ex-offenders, and managers and employees should have access to training on understanding the organisation’s policy and their own responsibilities with regard to ex-offenders.

Opportunities of work with small and medium sized businesses:

There are advantages and disadvantages for ex-offenders seeking work with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Advantages

- SMEs together account for more than half of the employment in the UK so offer a sizeable potential opportunity.
- Many ex-offenders find it difficult to cope with the size, protocols and structures of large organisations and working in less formalised environments may feel preferable.
- There are a growing number of case studies of small and medium sized businesses that have had positive experiences of employing ex-offenders related to competence, reliability and lack of risk to colleagues or clients.

Disadvantages

- SMEs often have little knowledge or understanding of offenders and the nature of their offences and little support and advice from official quarters.
- Many SMEs do not have written policies on recruiting people with criminal records.
- In small businesses employees may be expected to ‘hit the ground running’; take responsibility for their own development; adapt quickly and take on wide ranging responsibilities. Many ex-offenders may not yet be ready to take on these kinds of challenges.
- The contribution of individuals can have a direct impact on the performance of an SME and many employers can find strong reasons for not taking on the risk of employing ex-offenders.

Further information

Business in the Community
137 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7RQ
Tel: 0870 600 2482
Email: information@bitc.org.uk
Website: www.bitc.org.uk

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)
151 The Broadway, London, SW19 1JQ
Tel: 020 8612 6200
Website: www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/dvsequl/exoffenders

---

8 The Adult Learning Inspectorate; Talisman; page2, October 2006
Do particular groups have distinctive employment needs?

Women

There is now a body of research evidence which points to women prisoners having lower education levels and less stable housing than men in prison. They are also much more likely to be the sole carers of children and responsible for the maintenance of a home. At least 70% have some kind of mental health problem and their rates of substance misuse are higher than among male offenders.

It is therefore the case that while many women who are offenders aspire to having a job, some may not be able to benefit from job search or move into a job placement in the week they are released, if their priorities at this stage are accommodation and their children. As with all advice and support, it needs to be appropriate to need. Some organisations support the specific needs of women who are ex-offenders.

Persistent offenders

A number of probation services are beginning to pilot ways of working with prolific and persistent offenders (PPOs). There is intensive supervision from the police after release and very close working between the police and the PPO team. Often the focus is on bringing structure into the lives of persistent offenders and offering a range and depth of support.
**Further information**

The following organisations and charitable trusts can provide further information and support:

**National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)**
169 Clapham Road, London, SW9 0PU  
**Tel:** 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)  
**Tel:** 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)  
**Email:** helpline@nacro.org.uk  
**Website:** [http://www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

The crime reduction charity provides education, training and employment opportunities, including work tasters and placements, to some 10,000 prisoners, ex-offenders and unemployed people in partnership with employers, government agencies and voluntary bodies.

**Red Kite Learning**
5-13 Trinity Street, London, SE1 1DB  
**Tel:** 020 7378 9400  
**Email:** info@rkl.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.rkl.org.uk](http://www.rkl.org.uk)

A social enterprise that believes in helping people, including ex-offenders, achieve their full potential. They provide online resources free to all and face-to-face support for people in the London area. Online resources related to employment include:

- Interview Assistant, including: researching the job, researching the company, appearance, planning your journey to interview, attitude, first impressions, the interview itself.
- Basic Skills Worksheets, including job search-related worksheets.
- CV wizard.

**St Giles Trust**
64-68 Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell, London SE5 8JB  
**Tel:** 020 7703 7000  
**Email:** info@stgilestrust.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.stgilestrust.org.uk](http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk)

Based in the south east of England. This trust helps offenders find a home and a job.

**Apex Charitable Trust Ltd**
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA  
**Tel:** 020 7638 5931  
**E-mail:** jobcheck@apextrust.com  
**Website:** [www.apextrust.com](http://www.apextrust.com)

Seeks to help people with criminal records to obtain appropriate jobs or self employment by providing them with the skills they need in the labour market and by working with employers.
to break down barriers. They have 21 projects around the country.

**The Prince’s Trust**  
18 Park Square East, London NW1 4LH  
**Tel:** 020 7543 1234  
**Website:** [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)

Provides a range of support to help young people between the ages of 14-30 change their lives.

**Women in Prison**  
1a Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA  
**Tel:** 020 7226 5879  
**Website:** [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk)

Delivers a range of education and resettlement services to women in and leaving prison. They provide housing and resettlement advice; fund open learning and educational materials; provide advice and guidance on education training and employment in most women’s prisons.

**Rainer**  
Rectory Lodge, High Street, Brasted, Kent TN16 1JF  
**Tel:** 01959 578 200  
**Email:** mail@raineronline.org  
**Website:** [www.raineronline.org](http://www.raineronline.org)

Offers under-supported young people a range of services designed to give them the emotional and practical support to lead successful and fulfilled lives.
10. Supporting clients into voluntary work

What this section covers:
- What are the advantages of volunteering?
- Do volunteers need to disclose a criminal record?
- Does voluntary work affect benefit claims?
- Finding out about voluntary work opportunities

What are the advantages of volunteering?

Many ex-offenders will have little history of legitimate employment and may have experienced long term unemployment. This will be particularly so for younger people, and for women with dependent children. Lack of work experience compounds the difficulties which ex-offenders face in entering the labour market.

Voluntary work is attractive and beneficial for ex-offenders because, besides being interesting and rewarding in itself, it provides an opportunity to gain work experience.

By undertaking voluntary work your client can:
- gain experience to include on their CV and talk about at job interviews;
- develop new skills that will enhance their employability, such as team working, communication, self-reliance and problem-solving;
- demonstrate to employers that they are committed and reliable and have moved on from offending behaviour;
- gain references from after the time of conviction;
- develop existing skills;
- keep in touch with the routine and world of work;
- build self-confidence and self-esteem by making a positive contribution to the community and society and meeting new people;
- develop and maintain motivation whilst looking for work;
- explore new and different areas of employment;
- meet people and develop a network of new contacts.
Do volunteers need to disclose a criminal record?

One of the attractions of volunteering for ex-offenders is that is provides an opportunity to enter the workplace and make a good impression without the need to disclose a criminal record.

However, your clients need to be aware that if they are seeking to volunteer in an area of work that is exempted from the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – for example work that will involve substantial contact with children or vulnerable adults – they may be asked to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check and their conviction will be disclosed. You should ensure that they understand these restrictions when supporting them to consider volunteering as an option.

Further information

Volunteering England has produced a range of materials to support organisations that take on volunteers to adopt fair, appropriate and equitable recruitment practices in relation to ex-offenders, for example, Involving Ex-offenders in Volunteering, produced in association with NACRO. These are available via their website.

Volunteering England
Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL
Tel: 0845 305 9379
Email: volunteering@volunteeringengland.org
Website: www.volunteering.org.uk

How does voluntary work affect benefit claims?

You should always check with Jobcentre Plus before advising clients about the impact on benefits of undertaking voluntary work. Failure to give correct information could jeopardise your client’s financial stability.

Jobseeker’s Allowance

There is no limit to the number of hours of voluntary work a claimant can undertake. However, they must continue to meet the rules on actively seeking work, and be willing and able to attend a job interview at 48 hours’ notice and to take up paid employment at a week’s notice.

You should advise clients to tell Jobcentre Plus about any voluntary work they undertake. They are also required to tell JCP about any payments they receive, including payments in kind such as meal vouchers, as these may affect entitlement to benefits. Payments for expenses incurred, including travel expenses, will not affect benefits.
Incapacity Benefit

There is no limit to the number of hours of voluntary work that a claimant can undertake. However, they need to inform Jobcentre Plus that they intend to start volunteering, and receive confirmation that they will be allowed to do the work.

New Deal

Voluntary work can be undertaken as an option under the New Deal for 18-24 year olds. Clients will receive £400 in addition to their usual benefits.

Key contact

Jobcentre Plus:
Tel: 0845 6060234
Website: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

For local contact details and specific advice on benefits.

Finding out about voluntary work opportunities

Further Information

Local information

Local press, libraries and community centres are likely to have information about volunteering opportunities available in the area.

Local Volunteer Bureau or Volunteer Information Centre

Local centres offer informal discussions or in-depth interviews to prospective volunteers.

Volunteering England
Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL
Tel: 0845 305 9379
Email: volunteering@volunteeringengland.org
Website: www.volunteering.org.uk

www.do-it.org.uk
This website covers all aspects of volunteering. It includes a database of over 500,000 opportunities to volunteer across the UK, regularly updated with data from 350 volunteer bureaux and 250 national and regional charities.

Guardian
Wednesday’s newspaper contains details of national volunteering opportunities.
Direct contact with organisations
Where a client knows which organisation they would like to work for, a direct approach can be made.
11. Self-employment

What this section covers:

- What are the attractions of self-employment for ex-offenders?
- What about insurance?
- Where can clients go for advice and support on becoming self-employed?

What are the attractions of self-employment for ex-offenders?

Many ex-offenders are attracted to self-employment because it is seen as a way of overcoming the significant and distinctive disadvantage that they face in the labour market. It offers a way of getting into employment without having to disclose their criminal record to a prospective employer or explain gaps in employment history. However, clients need to be prepared for the fact that self-employment is also a very tough option, and their criminal record will still need to be disclosed to obtain insurance.

Some other features of self-employment that may make it attractive include:

- flexibility to work at home or around other commitments such as childcare;
- independence and a chance to reap the rewards of work;
- the choice of what work to do and when and how to do it;
- no boss, company hierarchy or office politics;
- fewer worries about becoming unemployed.

Research confirms that, especially during the early stages, hours are long and pay is low and new businesses are vulnerable. In addition some of the characteristics that have been linked to successful self-employment are not typically associated with ex-offenders, for example:

- high levels of self-motivation and self-discipline;
- self-confidence to take responsibility for making decisions;
- high levels of qualification;
- a good employment history, or previous experience of self-employment.

To succeed, clients will need access to high quality advice and support, to enable them to develop their business and enterprise skills and to access funding. Financial and non-financial support is vital to start up a business and ensure sustainability.
Ideally, clients who are serious about self-employment will have begun to explore this option whilst serving their sentence. There are a number of projects, agencies and initiatives working with offenders, both in prison and in the community, which aim to equip them for subsequent self-employment. Further details can be found at the end of this section.

The advantages and disadvantages of self-employment can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No need to disclose convictions to prospective employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to explain gaps in employment history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of what to do and when and how to do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility to work at a place and time to suit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No boss or company hierarchy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No office politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No worries about being sacked or made redundant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to disclose conviction to obtain insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for knowledge and skills to set up and run a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for funds for initial outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long working hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low pay, especially during the early stages of the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New businesses are vulnerable until established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No job security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of contact with work colleagues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the ‘Toolkit’

The above table is also included in the ‘Toolkit’ section of this guide.
What about insurance?

Depending on the nature of their business and how they intend to trade, self-employed people are required by law to take out certain types of insurance. The need to obtain insurance poses a particular difficulty for ex-offenders. While an ex-offender does not need to mention any spent convictions when buying insurance, they are required to declare any unspent convictions. The disclosure periods for insurance are the same as those for employment, and are set out in Section 6 of this guide.

When ex-offenders reveal their conviction to an insurance company it may mean that they are refused cover or that they have to pay extra for that cover. It is not only offenders themselves who have problems with insurance – their families and partners are often affected as well, for instance often having to pay extra for household insurance.

However it is absolutely essential that an ex-offender declares any unspent conviction when purchasing insurance. If they do not do so and then have to make a claim, the insurer would not have to pay out on the claim. In addition, the person would be breaking the law and could be prosecuted for fraud.

Further information

Specific advice on obtaining insurance can be obtained from the following:

**NACRO**
169 Clapham Road, London SW9 0PU
Tel: 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)
Tel: 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)
Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk
Website: [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

**Unlock**
34a High Street, Snodled, Kent ME6 5AG
Tel: 01634 247350
Email: enquiries@unlock.org.uk
Website: [www.unlock.org.uk](http://www.unlock.org.uk)

Where can clients go for advice and support on becoming self-employed?

**BEAT (Business, Enterprise, Advice and Training)**

This initiative helps prisoners in a number of establishments to develop business plans and provides advice and ongoing support during the first two years of trading.

Tel. 0207 7934294
Business Link
Tel: 0845 600 9006
Website: www.businesslink.gov.uk
Check website for local offices.

Business advice and a range of other services are available to help people who want to set up their own business. Business Link also helps small businesses that have recently started up. Advisers can offer in-depth help with business planning. It operates through a network of local offices.

Citizen’s Advice Bureau
Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk
www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/employment/self-employment_checklist.htm

Check website for local offices.

The CAB’s online advice resource, Adviceguide, provides a comprehensive checklist for those considering self-employment.

Jobcentre Plus
Tel: 0845 6060234
Website: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Check website for local offices.

Advice is available for people wanting to start up their own business. Business start-up grants of between £20 and £90 a week for between 26 and 66 weeks may be available. Some programmes offer a three-stage training course, delivered by specialists in self-employment.

Prince’s Trust
18 Park Square East, London NW1 4LH
Tel: 0800 842 842
Website: www.princes-trust.org.uk

Financial support and a range of business support services are available to unemployed people aged between 18 and 30. This includes ongoing advice and support from a volunteer business broker for three years from start-up.

The ACORN project works specifically with offenders and ex-offenders.

PRIME
Astral House, 1268 London Rd, London SW16 4ER
Tel: 0800 783 1904
Website: www.primeinitiative.org.uk
Business support, advice and training as well as financial support is available to help people aged 50 and over to set up their own business.

Shell LIVEWIRE  
Design Works Unit 15, William Street, Felling, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE10 0JP  
Tel: 0845 757 3252.  
Email: enquiries@shell-livewire.org  
Website: www.shell-livewire.org  

Through a network of local offices, advice and support are offered to people aged 16 to 30 wishing to set up their own business.
Toolkit: resources and further information
12. Interactive resources to use with your clients

Contents

- Checklist for IAG advisers
- Progress profile wheel
- Advantages and disadvantages of disclosing a conviction
- Learner training needs and action plan
- Learning journey travel line
- Progress to work action plan
- Skills-based CV template
- Advantages and disadvantages of self-employment
Checklist for IAG advisers

Key

A  I am confident about this and have established good practice.
B  I haven’t done much on this yet, but I know what I need to do and how to go about it.
C  I still need to do a lot of work on this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You and your client</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have the knowledge and skills to deliver effective IAG to clients who are ex-offenders, commensurate with my role.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable delivering IAG to people from this client group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand why raising the level of participation in learning and skills and employment among this client group is an important policy issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand and can recognise the different barriers that my clients may face to engaging in learning and skills and employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAG issues and interventions</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to identify and prioritise client need, and where to find up-to-date information about local organisations to which my clients can be referred for specialist support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I maintain an up to date directory of national and local contacts and other resources to support my work with clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust signposting and referral mechanisms are in place for clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the range of learning and skills and IAG that clients may have received during their sentence, and could use this knowledge to support my work with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can give my clients accurate and current information about when spent and unspent convictions need to be disclosed in learning and work contexts, and about the circumstances under which they may be required to undergo CRB checks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can advise my clients on the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing convictions in learning and work contexts, and provide guidance on the best ways of doing so.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to signpost my clients for further information about disclosure and CRB checks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what benefits and services my local Jobcentre Plus provides, including specialist provision for ex-offenders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how participation in learning and work can affect my clients’ benefits, and can advise them on where to obtain specific financial guidance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have access to a range of tools for supporting effective needs assessment and action planning, and can use them effectively with clients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting clients into learning and skills and employment</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have the skills and knowledge to make accurate assessments of my clients’ learning and skills needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can effectively match my clients’ needs to locally available learning and skills provision, including specialist provision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the specialist techniques that are available to help develop clients’ motivation. I am either trained to use these techniques myself, or know where local provision exists to which clients who would benefit could be referred.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the various learning options that are available, and understand how different types of provision may be appropriate for different clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to find out about funding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find out which employers in my area are ‘friendly’ to ex-offenders, and am developing a directory of contacts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to support effective job search for my clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could explain to employers the potential benefits of employing ex-offenders, draw on case study examples and signpost them to further sources of information. I could advocate for my client with a prospective employer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise my clients on sources of further information and specialist support for clients seeking to enter employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could explain to a client the potential advantages of volunteering as a route into paid work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise my clients on sources of further information and specialist support for clients seeking to undertake voluntary work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the attractions of self employment for ex-offenders, and could explain the advantages and disadvantages to clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could advise clients on sources of further information and specialist support in relation to self-employment, including issues around insurance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progress Profile Wheel

How to use the progress profile wheel

This is a visual aid to help clients and advisers see where the client is. It identifies a range of issues which may affect clients’ ability to learn and move into work including personal and financial issues, health issues and motivation. The aim is to help clients who may have multiple issues to address priorities. It may help them recognise that certain personal issues may best be addressed before moving into learning. It could also be used over a number of meetings to see where progress has been made. Like any assessment tool, it comes with a health warning: use sensitively. For some clients, there may be regression in some areas of their lives, e.g. drug use. There will be a need to point out areas where progression has been made, in order to develop a positive focus.
Progress Wheel

5 Positive strengths identified that could contribute to successful transition(s)
4 No issues identified which could hinder successful transition(s)
3 General issues identified
2 Significant and/or specific issues identified
1 Critical and/or complex issues identified

1 & 2 – Progress 2 work
3 – to be discussed
4 & 5 – Progress 2 independence
## Advantages and disadvantages of disclosing a conviction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telling an employer</th>
<th>Not telling an employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer will see that they are trying to make a new start, and give them a chance.</td>
<td>If they tell the employer, they may not get the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer may have more respect for them if they are honest about their record.</td>
<td>It may take longer to get a job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will not need to worry that their employer may found out at a later date and sack them for not telling.</td>
<td>They will find it difficult to tell their employer about their record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They cannot be prosecuted for not telling.</td>
<td>They may be anxious that colleagues might find out about their record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will not have to worry that someone else will tell their employer about their record.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Advantages</strong></th>
<th><strong>Disadvantages</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They may get a job much more quickly.</td>
<td>Anxiety that their employer will find out anyway will always hang over them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They need not worry about having to explain their conviction.</td>
<td>The employer might hear about their conviction from someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are found out, they could be sacked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are found out, they may be prosecuted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If they are sacked, they will not get a good reference, and are likely to find it even harder to get a job in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being sacked may affect their entitlement to Jobseeker’s Allowance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SOVA
Learner Training Needs & Action Plan

Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspirations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Education and Training Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Activity / Course</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Units taken (completed: Y/N)</th>
<th>Dates (from – to)</th>
<th>Awarding body/level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessments

#### Skills for life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Level, e.g. Pre-entry, Entry 1, 2, 3, Level 1, 2</th>
<th>Notes/comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional support needs (e.g. dyslexia)?**
## ESOL support needs?


## Employment and Work Experience Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>Employer Name and Address</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Dates (from – to)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other life skills/experiences

Language Skills (List competency of all languages used in the following areas)

Speaking/understanding:

Reading/writing:

Fluent in English: [ ]

Other details:
Next Steps/Actions to be taken

Learner’s Aims:
Next Steps Action Plan:

Short term

Medium term
Long term

Signed (Client)…………………………………………………………………………………   Date…………………………
Signed (Adviser)………………………………………………………………………………  Date………………………

Guide for IAG practitioners
Produced for advice-resources by NIACE and SOVA
Learning Journey Travel Line

How to use the learning line

The learning journey travel line uses the metaphor of the learning journey in a visual format to raise clients' understanding of their options and find an appropriate course of study. It could help to give structure to and guide an interview, or be a useful starting point to a potentially difficult interview, both in telephone and face to face situations. Its aim is to give the client and adviser an overview of what needs to be considered when starting to engage in learning. It is not a comprehensive list, but aims to cover broad categories, including starting points, how clients want to learn, possible study skills and possible exit routes. It could be used with individuals or to prompt group discussion, and it could be used before filling out an action plan.
**PROGRESS TO WORK ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN**

**Name**  ..............................................................  **Date**  ........................................

**Employment History:**

**Assessment:**

**Skills for Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Level, e.g. Pre-entry, Entry 1, 2, 3, Level 1, 2</th>
<th>Notes/comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional support:**

What additional support has been provided – for example, for dyslexia?

What ESOL support has been given?
### Qualifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning activities/courses – started but not completed</th>
<th>Units completed</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Awarding body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning activities/courses – completed</th>
<th>Achievement date</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Awarding body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Training:

### Personal Qualities and Skills:

### List of personal barriers to training/education/employment:
### Action Plan

#### Long Term Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Immediate Goals

**These are my immediate goals –**

**the things I want to do as a priority**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>…………………………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed (Client) …………………………………………………….  Date………………………

Signed (Adviser) …………………………………………………….  Date ………………………
Curriculum Vitae

<Name>

Address:

Postcode:
Telephone number:
Mobile number:
Email address:

Profile


Key skills and abilities suitable for this post

•

•

•

•

•

Achievements

•

•

•

•

Employment details (paid and voluntary work)

Job title:
Employer’s name:
Town or city:
From: To:
Main duties:

•

•

•

•
Job title: 
Employer’s name: 
Town or city: 
From: To: 
Main duties: 
• 
• 
• 
• 

Qualifications and training
Date Course Qualification College/provider

Interests

References
1. Name: 
   Address: 
   Telephone: 
   Relationship: 
2. Name: 
   Address: 
   Telephone 
   Relationship:
## Advantages and disadvantages of self-employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No need to disclose convictions to prospective employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to explain gaps in employment history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of what to do and when and how to do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility to work at a place and time to suit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No boss or company hierarchy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No office politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No worries about being sacked or made redundant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to disclose conviction to obtain insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for knowledge and skills to set up and run a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for funds for initial outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long working hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low pay, especially during the early stages of the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New businesses are vulnerable until established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No job security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of contact with work colleagues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Directory of sources of further support

This directory includes details of referral agencies and also materials to support your wider professional development. It covers the following topics:

- Specialist contacts
- IAG resources
- Housing and homelessness
- Poverty and debt
- Mental health difficulties
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Specific learning difficulties and disabilities
- Issues facing women
- Issues facing young people and families
- Information regarding the Criminal Justice System

Specialist contacts

**Apex Charitable Trust Ltd**
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA
Tel: 020 7638 5931
E-mail: jobcheck@apextrust.com
Website: [www.apextrust.com](http://www.apextrust.com)

Provides employment advice, guidance and training courses to ex-offenders.

**Bridging the Gap**
Bridging The Gap, PO Box 783, Croydon, CR9 1BT
Tel: 0870 027 3091 / 0870 027 3092 / 0707 781 0056
Email: [info@btguk.org](mailto:info@btguk.org)
Website: [www.btguk.org](http://www.btguk.org)

BTG aims to help reduce re-offending by helping discharged prisoners settle into their communities after release. Working through a network of staff and volunteers, it can provide help with form-filling, explaining changes to the benefit system, pursuing accommodation options, finding free training opportunities, identifying employers who take on ex-offenders, preparing a good CV and developing interview skills.
**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
**Website:** [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)  
The website provides a directory of local offices with contact details.

Citizens Advice Bureaux provide free, confidential and independent advice to help people resolve their debt, benefits, housing, legal, discrimination, employment, immigration, consumer and other problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development</th>
<th>151 The Broadway, London, SW19 1JQ</th>
<th>Tel: 020 8612 6200</th>
<th>Website: <a href="http://www.cipd.co.uk">www.cipd.co.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and resources for businesses thinking of employing ex-offenders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clinks**  
25 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JH  
**Tel:** 01904 673970  
**Email:** [info@clinks.org](mailto:info@clinks.org)  
**Website:** [www.clinks.org](http://www.clinks.org)  
A membership body supporting voluntary organisations working with offenders and their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Reduction Initiatives</th>
<th>Tower Point, 3rd Floor, North West Suite, Tower Point, 44 North Road, Brighton, BN1 1YR</th>
<th>Tel: 01273 677019</th>
<th>Website: <a href="http://www.crinet.co.uk">www.crinet.co.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRI works in both criminal justice and community settings providing integrated services in partnership with organisations in the statutory and independent sector including the police, probation, prison service, local authorities and health services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jobcheck</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jobcheck helpline:</strong> 0870 608 4567</td>
<td><strong>E-mail:</strong> <a href="mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com">jobcheck@apextrust.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides confidential information and advice on a variety of issues that affect ex-offenders, for example, when a conviction becomes spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and the Criminal Records Bureau. It also advises companies about employing ex-offenders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Inside Out Trust | Hilton House, 55-57a High Street, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, BN6 9TT | Tel: 01273 833050 | Email: [info@iotrust.plus.com](mailto:info@iotrust.plus.com)  
Website: [www.inside-out.org.uk](http://www.inside-out.org.uk) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities for offenders and ex-offenders to help them integrate into the community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Careers Advice Service
**Tel:** 0800 100 900  
**Website:** [www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice](http://www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice)

Online information on courses and training classes nationwide.

### National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)
**169 Clapham Road, London, SW9 0PU**  
**Tel:** 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)  
**Tel:** 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)  
**Email:** helpline@nacro.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

A national organisation providing an information and advice service that covers all aspects of rehabilitation and resettlement for prisoners, ex-offenders and people working with them.

### New Bridge Foundation
**27A Medway Street, London, SW1P 2BD**  
**Tel:** 020 7976 0779  
**Email:** info@newbridgefoundation.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.newbridgefoundation.org.uk](http://www.newbridgefoundation.org.uk)

Supports, advises and mentors people in prisons, assists ex-offenders in finding employment, training and education and encourages the integration of ex-offenders into the community. Produces the newspaper ‘Inside Time’, the national newspaper for prisoners.

### Prisoner Education Trust
**Ground Floor - Wandle House, Riverside Drive, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 4BU**  
**Tel:** 020 8648 7760  
**Email:** info@prisonerseducation.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.prisonerseducation.org.uk](http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk)

Research and information about distance learning and offenders and ex-offenders – how to enrol, how to stay motivated, support, handing in coursework, continuation of learning from custody to community by distance learning.

### St Giles Trust
**64-68 Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell, London, SE5 8JB**  
**Tel:** 020 7703 7000  
**Email:** info@stgilestrust.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.stgilestrust.org.uk](http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk)

St Giles’ mission is to prevent offending and improve community safety by enabling disadvantaged offenders and homeless people to build independent and successful lives.

### The Prince’s Trust
**18 Park Square East, London, NW1 4LH**  
**Tel:** 020 7543 1234  
**Website:** [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)
UK charity that helps young people, including ex-offenders, overcome barriers and get their lives working through practical support including training, mentoring and financial assistance. Offices throughout the UK.

**Unlock – The National Association of Ex-Offenders**  
34a High Street, Snodled, Kent ME6 5AG  
**Tel:** 01634 247350  
**Email:** enquiries@unlock.org.uk  
**Website:** www.unlock.org.uk

Supports ex-offenders and serving prisoners to overcome social and financial exclusion.

**Women in Prison**  
1a Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA  
**Tel:** 020 7226 5879  
**Website:** www.womeninprison.org.uk

Women in Prison (WIP) is a charity working with women at risk of going to prison, in prison and after release to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training.

**IAG Resources**

**advice-resources**  
**Tel:** 0114 291 5270  
**Website:** www.advice-resources.co.uk  
**Email:** ca-advice-resources@lsc.gov.uk

advice-resources is the national one-stop shop for careers professionals. Set up in 2004 by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide tools, guides, directories and fact sheets for information, advice and guidance advisers to help their clients.

**Connexions**  
**Tel:** 080 800 13219  
**Website:** www.connexions-direct.com

Youth support service for 13-19 year olds and for those with learning difficulties to 25. The service is managed locally by Connexions Partnerships that bring together all the key youth support services. For information about a local service see website.

**Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills**  
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT  
**Tel:** 0870 000 2288  
**Email:** info@dius.gsi.gov.uk  
**Website:** www.dius.gov.uk

Range of information on priorities in the field, including basic skills and lifelong learning.
**Jobcentre Plus**  
**Tel:** 0845 6060234  
**Website:** [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)  
Provides services to offenders in custody and in the community. Check website for local offices.

**Learning and Skills Council**  
Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT  
**Tel:** 0845 019 4170 (National office)  
**Tel:** 0870 900 6800 (LSC helpdesk)  
**Email:** info@lsc.gov.uk  
**Website:** [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)  
Responsible for taking forward the skills agenda including offender learning.

**matrix**  
EMQC Ltd is responsible for the Assessment and Accreditation of organisations to the matrix Standard and acts as the Accreditation Body. You will need to contact EMQC Ltd if you would like further guidance on using the matrix Quality Mark.

EMQC Ltd, Pentagon House, Third Floor South Wing, Sir Frank Whittle Road, Pentagon Island, Derby, DE21 4XA  
**Tel:** 01332 866 902  
**Email:** bookings@emqc.co.uk  
**Website:** [www.matrixstandard.com](http://www.matrixstandard.com)  
The quality standard for organisations delivering information, advice and guidance services to adults.

**National Guidance Research Forum**  
**Email:** guidance.research@gmail.com  
**Website:** [www.guidance-research.org](http://www.guidance-research.org)  
Website promoting research and evidence-based practice in guidance. Includes Labour Market Information.

**nextstep**  
**Website:** [www.nextstep.org.uk](http://www.nextstep.org.uk)  
Provides information and advice about learning and work to adults over 20. Check website for details of local offices.
## Housing and homelessness

**Addaction**  
Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6PU  
**Tel**: 0207 251 5860  
**Email**: info@addiction.org.uk  
**Website**: www.addaction.org.uk  

National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse. Offers services to homeless drug users.

**Shelter**  
88 Old Street, London, EC1V 9H (Regional Offices)  
**Tel**: 0808 800 4444.  
**Email**: info@shelter.org.uk  
**Website**: england.shelter.org.uk  

Help and support for housing and homelessness.

**Women’s Link**  
**Tel**: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (ex-offenders)  
**Website**: www.womenslink.org.uk  

Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals on finding accommodation, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

## Poverty and debt

**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
**Website**: www.adviceguide.org.uk  

Can provide advice and support on financial matters. Check website for local offices.

**Jobcentre Plus**  
**Tel**: 0845 6060234  
**Website**: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk  

Benefits advice – check website for local offices.

## Mental health difficulties

**Mind**  
15-19 Broadway, Stratford, London, E15 4BQ  
**Tel**: 020 8519 2122  
**Email**: info@mind.org.uk  
**Website**: www.mind.org.uk  

Mind is the leading mental health charity in the UK.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Nacro Mental Health</strong></th>
<th>Mental Health Unit, Nacro, 169 Clapham Rd, London, SW9 0PU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7840 6718</td>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:mentalhealth@nacro.org.uk">mentalhealth@nacro.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.nacro.org.uk/mhu">www.nacro.org.uk/mhu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nacro Mental Health provides a range of development, information and consultancy services for practitioners and agencies that work with offenders with mental health difficulties. It aims to support the development of effective policy and practice in relation to their care and treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Turning Point</strong></th>
<th>New Loom House, 101 Backchurch Lane, London, E1 1LU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7702 2300</td>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:promserv@turning-point.co.uk">promserv@turning-point.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.turning-point.co.uk">www.turning-point.co.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support for people with serious problems related to alcohol, drugs, mental health and learning difficulties – check website for local services.

### Drug and alcohol misuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Addaction</strong></th>
<th>Addaction Central Office, 67-69 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6PU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7251 5860</td>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:info@addiction.org.uk">info@addiction.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Adfam</strong></th>
<th>25 Corsham Street, London, N1 6DR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7553 7640</td>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.adfam.org.uk">www.adfam.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National charity for family and friends of people with drug and alcohol addiction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Alcohol Concern</strong></th>
<th>First floor, 8 Shelton St, London, WC2H 9JR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 020 7395 4000</td>
<td><strong>Fax:</strong> 0202 7395 4005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-mail:</strong> <a href="mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk">contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk</a></td>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk">www.alcoholconcern.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National charity providing information for local services.
### Drug Strategy
**Website:** [www.drugs.gov.uk](http://www.drugs.gov.uk)

Website for drug professionals, and others interested in the drug prevention strategies.

### Turning Point
**New Loom House, 101 Backchurch Lane, London, E1 1LU**
**Tel:** 020 7702 2300  
**Email:** promserv@turning-point.co.uk  
**Website:** [www.turning-point.co.uk](http://www.turning-point.co.uk)

Support for people with serious problems related to alcohol, drugs, mental health and learning difficulties – check website for local services.

### Specific learning difficulties and disabilities

#### Adult Dyslexia Organisation
**Ground Floor, Sector House, Minet Rd, Loughborough Estate, London, SW9 7TP**  
**Tel:** 020 7924 9559 (helpline)  
**Email:** dyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.com  
**Website:** [www.adult-dyslexia.org](http://www.adult-dyslexia.org)

Work relates to adults with dyslexia (including in employment). Runs support groups and provides a helpline, provides training and tuition, and lobbies on behalf of adults with dyslexia.

#### British Dyslexia Association
**98 London Road, Reading, RG1 5AU**  
**Tel:** 0118 966 8271  
**Email:** helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Provides advice to teachers and employers on dyslexia issues; provides training for teachers; runs a helpline for individuals on dyslexia; has information on local associations; and approves specialist training qualifications for teachers.

#### British Institute for Learning Disabilities
**Campion House, Green Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 1JL**  
**Tel:** 01562 723 010  
**Email:** enquiries@bild.org.uk  
**Website:** [www.bild.org.uk](http://www.bild.org.uk)

Information training and other services especially for people with learning disabilities in the UK.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Care**                      | 9 Weir Road, Kibworth, Leicester, LE8 0LQ (Central office.)             | **Tel:** 0116 2793225  
**Website:** [www.care-ltd.co.uk](http://www.care-ltd.co.uk)  
**Email:** info@care-ltd.co.uk | Support for people with learning disabilities in their daily lives. Check website for local offices.                                      |
| **Dyslexia Action**           | Park House, Wick Road, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0HH                           | **Tel:** 01784 222300  
**Website:** [www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk)  
**Email:** info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk | National charity providing services and support for people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties. Services are available from 26 local centres. |
| **Mencap**                    | 123 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0RT                                      | **Phone:** 020 7454 0454  
**Website:** [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)  
**Email:** information@mencap.org.uk | Mencap is a learning disability charity working with people with a learning disability and their families and carers.                    |
| **Women's Aid Federation of England** | Head Office, PO BOX 391, Bristol, BS99 7WS, England | **Tel:** 0117 944 44 11 (general enquiries only)  
0808 2000 247 (helpline service)  
**Website:** [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)  
**Email:** helpline@womensaid.org.uk | National charity providing nationwide network of over 500 services to support women and children facing domestic violence.                |
| **Women in Prison**           | 1a Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA                  | **Tel:** 020 7226 5879  
**Website:** [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk) | Women in Prison (WIP) is a charity working with women at risk of going to prison, in prison and after release to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training. |
**Women's Link**  
Tel: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (Ex- offenders)  
Website: [www.womenslink.org.uk](http://www.womenslink.org.uk)  
Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals on finding accommodation, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

---

**Issues facing young people and families.**

**Childline**  
Tel: 0800 1111  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
National free helpline for children and young people in danger or distress.

---

**Family Rights Groups**  
The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London, E8 3DL  
Tel: 0800 731 1696  
Email: office@frg.org.uk  
Website: [www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)  
Advice and support for families whose children are involved with social services.

---

**YMCA England**  
640 Forest Road, London, E17 3DZ  
Email: mail@raineronline.org  
Website: [www.ymca.org.uk](http://www.ymca.org.uk)  
A Christian charity that has projects supporting young people in prison and after release. Check website for regional offices.

---

**Rainer**  
Rectory Lodge, High Street Brasted, Kent, TN16 1JF  
Tel: 01959 578 200  
Email: mail@raineronline.org  
Website: [www.raineronline.org](http://www.raineronline.org)  
Rainer offers under-supported young people a range of services.

---

**SOVA**  
SOVA Head Office (contact for projects in London & South East Region, South West and for national enquiries)  
1st Floor, Chichester House, 37 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6DZ  
Tel: 020 7793 0404  
Email: mail@sova.org.uk  
SOVA Regional Office (contact for projects in West Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside, North West)  
St. Silas House, 18 Moore Street, Sheffield, S3 7UW  
Tel: 0114 270 3700
Email: sheffield@sova.org.uk  
Website: www.sova.org.uk

Runs a range of national projects providing advice and support to young people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Justice Board for England and Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 Cateret Street, London, SW1H 9DL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 020 72713033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@yjb.gov.uk">enquiries@yjb.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.yjb.gov.uk">www.yjb.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-departmental public body which aims to prevent offending by children and young people. Details of regional offices are available on the website.

### Information regarding the Criminal Justice System

**Crime info**  
Website: www.crimeinfo.org.uk

Website provided by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS) at King’s College London.

**Criminal Justice System**  
Email: public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk  
Website: www.cjsonline.gov.uk

Introductory information on the CJS.

**The Court Service**  
Customer Service Unit, 5th Floor, Clive House, Petty France, London, SW1H 9HD  
Tel: 0845 456 8770  
Email: customerservicecshq@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk  
Website: www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk

**HM Chief inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) for England and Wales**  
HM Inspectorate of Prisons, First Floor, Ashley House, 2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ  
Tel: 020 7035 2136  
Website: inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprisons

Produces reports on Prisons.

**HM Prison Service**  
Parliamentary, Correspondence and Briefing Unit, HM Prison Service Headquarters, Cleland House, Page Street, London, SW1P 4LN  
Website: www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk

Website for the Prison Service containing wide range of information and statistics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Howard League of Penal Reform</td>
<td>1 Ardleigh Road, London, N1 4HS</td>
<td>Tel: 020 7249 7373</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@howardleague.org">info@howardleague.org</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.howardleague.org">www.howardleague.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@howardleague.org">info@howardleague.org</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.howardleague.org">www.howardleague.org</a></td>
<td>Independent body working for reform of the penal system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Monitoring Board</td>
<td>The IMB Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Ashley House, 2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ</td>
<td>Tel: 0845 010 7938</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk">mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.imb.gov.uk">www.imb.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk">mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.ppo.gov.uk">www.ppo.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Independent ‘watchdog’ for prisons. Regional contact details are available on the website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisons and Probation Ombudsman</td>
<td>Ashley House, 2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ</td>
<td>Tel: 0845 010 7938</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk">mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.ppo.gov.uk">www.ppo.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk">mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.ppo.gov.uk">www.ppo.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>Investigates individual complaints about prison and probation services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 14. Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advice</strong></td>
<td>(LSC Definition for Contracting Purposes.) The provision of advice about learning and work over and above the provision of information, usually conducted on a one-to-one basis. This may require explanation of some of the information provided, how to access and use information, and identifies the need for and location of follow-on services, including in-depth services such as career guidance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Anti-Social Behaviour Order** | Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) are court orders which prohibit the perpetrator from specific anti-social behaviours. An ASBO can ban an offender from:  
  - continuing the offending behaviour;  
  - spending time with a particular group of friends;  
  - visiting certain areas.  
  
ASBOs are issued for a minimum of two years.  
An ASBO is a civil order, not a criminal penalty – this means it won’t appear on an individual's criminal record. However, a breach of an ASBO is a criminal offence. |
| **Bail**            | Where a person has been formally charged but is released from custody. There may be conditions attached to the bail such as compliance with certain requirements. |
| **Caution**         | A Police Caution is a formal warning given by or on the instructions of a senior Police officer. A Caution can only be given to an adult who has admitted guilt for an offence. The Police Caution is administered where that person could have been charged or prosecuted for the offence (but isn’t) and is only given for minor or less serious offences.  
The Police Caution is recorded on the Police National Computer and can be taken into consideration by the court if that person is convicted and sentenced for a further offence. |
| **Career**          | The sequence of a person’s work experience over time. |
| **Charge**          | A formal accusation against a person. |
**Codes of Practice**

Codes published by the Criminal Records Bureau that set out the requirements with which organisations using disclosure material must comply.

**Community Punishment Order**

Also known as community service. A community punishment order is a sentence of the court. Offenders work unpaid for up to 240 hours on local community projects under close supervision. This can be combined with a community rehabilitation order.

**Community Rehabilitation Order**

A community sentence that involves regular contact with the probation service for between 12 months and 3 years. This may also include attending an offender behaviour programme to tackle the reasons why the crime was committed.

**Conviction**

When a person has been found guilty of an offence in court, the conviction appears on the offender’s criminal record.

**Criminal Record**

A person’s offence will still remain on the Police National Computer even after it has become spent – it will not be deleted. The record contains details of convictions, cautions, reprimands, final warnings etc.

**Criminal Records Bureau**

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), an Executive Agency of the Home Office, provides wider access to criminal record information through its Disclosure service. This service enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involve children or vulnerable adults. The CRB was established under Part V of the Police Act 1997 and was launched in March 2002.

Organisations wishing to use the service can ask successful job applicants to apply for one of two types of check. These are called Enhanced and Standard Disclosures.

**Custodial Sentence**

A Custodial Sentence is where your liberty is restricted, through a prison sentence or stay in a youth justice centre.

**Discharge**

The offender is found guilty of an offence, and the conviction appears on the criminal record but either no further action is taken at all (absolute) or no further action is taken as long as the offender does not offend again in a certain period (conditional).

**Disclosure**

A document that lists an individual’s criminal convictions and any other relevant information.

**Dispersal Prison**

High security prison. There are a number of high security prisons around the country which are used to disperse prisoners who need the highest levels of security, rather than keeping them all in one place.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronic Monitoring (Tagging)</th>
<th>A person on bail, curfew order or home detention centre at the end of the prison sentence has an electronic tag. This is worn on the ankle or the wrist and notifies monitoring services if the person is absent during curfew hours.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estate (Prisons)</td>
<td>HM Prison Service refers to its prisons as estates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>(Guidance Council Definition.) An in-depth interview or other activity conducted by a trained adviser which helps clients to explore a range of options, to relate information to their own needs and circumstances, and to make decisions about their career (i.e. their progression in learning and work). It may or may not include psychometric assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>(LSC Definition for Contracting Purposes.) The provision of information on learning and work, without any discussion about the relative merits of the options, through: printed materials (such as leaflets), audio-visual materials (such as DVDs/videos), computer software (on CD or via internet), and verbal information to the service user on a face-to-face basis or via a telephone or web-based service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Difficulty or Disability</td>
<td>(Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000.) ‘A person has a learning difficulty if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons his/her age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided by institutions providing education or training of young persons of his/her age.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licence</td>
<td>Period after release from custody spent under the supervision of the probation service, often with conditions attached. Breaking the conditions of the licence may result in a return to custody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life License</td>
<td>Applicable to an offender sentenced to life that has served their minimum sentence. Operates the same way as a licence but remains in force for the rest of their natural life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Offender Management Service (NOMS)</td>
<td>NOMS includes a number of organisations, in particular the prison and probation service, and is putting a system in place to deliver end-to-end management of offenders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OASys

OASys is a risk and needs assessment tool. It assesses the likelihood of offenders being re-convicted and the risk of harm they pose to other people and themselves.

It identifies and classifies offending-related needs, such as lack of accommodation, poor educational and employment skills, substance misuse, relationship problems, and problems with thinking and attitudes.

From these assessments, sentence plans are drawn up within OASys to manage and reduces these risks and needs.

OASys has been developed jointly by the Prison and Probation Services to provide a ‘seamless’ service for the assessment of offenders throughout sentences, whether in community or prison.

Offender

An individual who has been convicted of committing a crime.

Probation

See Community Rehabilitation Order.

Probation Service

The National Probation Service for England and Wales (NPS) is the law enforcement agency that supervises offenders in the community – those subject to court orders and those released on licence from prisons.

Rehabilitation

Work to enable offenders to put crime behind them. This often involves tackling the specific reasons for the offending (e.g. drug use, lack of understanding of victims’ feelings) as well as dealing with other factors which are known to help people lead crime-free lives – education (basic skills), housing, employment, and parenting skills.

Rehabilitation period

A rehabilitation period is a set length of time from the date of conviction. After this period, with certain exceptions, an ex-offender is not normally obliged to mention their conviction when applying for a job or obtaining insurance, or when involved in criminal or civil proceedings.

The length of the rehabilitation period depends on the sentence given – not the offence committed. For a custodial sentence, the length of time actually served is irrelevant. Custodial sentences of more than 2 ½ years can never become spent.
| The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 | The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent', or ignored, after a 'rehabilitation period'. However some jobs are exempt from the act. This includes work that involves access to children, young people, the elderly, disabled people, alcohol and drug misusers and the chronically sick. In such cases organisations can ask the applicant for details of a conviction irrespective of whether they are spent or unspent. |
| Remand in Custody | A defendant who is imprisoned whilst awaiting trial. |
| Re-settlement | The re-integration and re-housing of an offender after release from custody. |
| Restorative Justice | An approach which seeks to put right the harm caused by the offence. This may involve a meeting between the offender and victim, with a mediator, where the victim can tell the offender how the offence has affected them and the offender can try and put things right. |
| Sentence | If a defendant in a court case is found guilty of a crime, a judge or magistrate will decide on a suitable punishment. This is called ‘sentencing’. There are four sentencing options: discharges, fines, community sentences and imprisonment. |
| Spent Conviction | A conviction that no longer has to be declared by an individual as the rehabilitation period has expired. |
| Suspended Sentence | A custodial sentence that will not take effect unless there is a subsequent offence within a specific period. |
| Unspent Conviction | A conviction for which the rehabilitation period has not ended. |
| Youth Offending Team | There is a YOT in every local authority in England and Wales. They are made up of representatives from the police, probation service, health and education services, as well as drugs and alcohol misuse and housing officers. The YOT is responsible for co-ordinating the work of youth justice services. |
15. References

Adult Learning Inspectorate *Talismen: the newspaper for adult learning*, issue 55, October 2006


DfES (2004) *The Offenders’ Learning Journey – Adult Offenders*


LSC / NIACE (2007) *Mapping Staff Competence and Capacity to Deliver IAG Services to Adults*.

NACRO – series of good practice leaflets and guides – [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)


