



European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

This project is funded by:



Leading learning and skills

Project Case Study

Skills for Jobs for Offenders, Lancaster and Morecambe College

Project Overview

The Skills for Jobs for Offenders programme is delivered by Lancaster and Morecambe College, working in partnership with the Lancashire Probation Trust and Lancashire based social business CXL.

Aiming to support people into sustainable employment, the programme works with unemployed offenders, aged 18 or over, who live in Lancashire or reside within a North West prison and will return to Lancashire once their custodial sentence is complete.

The college received funding for the programme totalling £500,000 from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 European Social Fund (ESF) Co-finance Plan to deliver a fully integrated service of learning and skills provision to offenders living in the community or within two years of release from custody.

How it Works

Participants are referred onto the programme by their offender manager who arranges appointments for potential applicants at one of the twelve Job Clubs based across Lancashire.

At the Job Clubs, run by the college in conjunction with the two partners, an employment and learning officer from Lancashire Probation performs an initial interview with the offender and completes an Individual Referral Record (IRR).

The employment and learning officer then refers the offender to a college tutor for a Skills for Life assessment, then to a CXL information, advice and guidance (IAG) worker for guidance based on the outcome of the college assessment.

If the CXL IAG worker finds that the offender is motivated, close to being job ready and willing to engage, then the learner signs a contract of commitment to the Skills for Jobs for Offenders programme and an action plan of activity is drawn up to recognise key goals and support required.

The programme takes a multi agency approach, enabling offenders to access a wider range of support and a more holistic service. Each participant is assigned a CXL key worker who provides support and guidance and focuses on building the employment skills of the offender.

Motivational training is offered alongside the employability skills training and works to build independence, self-esteem, personal awareness and self-motivation.

The Lancashire Probation employer engagement service advisors also work with participants to broker suitable job opportunities. Once employment is secured the service works to support employers who have taken on offenders.

The CXL key worker continues to support the participant once in employment to help ensure that the employment is sustained.

Impact and Success

Project Manager Susan Keenan, Integrated Employment and Skills Manager at Lancaster and Morecambe College comments: "The programme highlights to offenders that there are people and services available to help them increase their skills and attitudes and in turn help them find employment.

"We hope that by helping to place offenders within sustainable roles, it will help to reduce re-offending rates in Lancashire."

Since the programme began running in early January 2009, 342 participants have signed up and received an initial assessment, planning and support session and had action plans produced for them.

To date 195 participants have started on the various learning programmes offered, and 45 offenders have progressed onto employment, 14 of which are in sustainable employment with future training in place.

Susan continues: "Some of the learners identified for the project have previously suffered with a lack of confidence or motivation, poor attendance and punctuality or problems working with others. The advice and support available through the programme has enabled many to overcome these barriers, and given them the skills and confidence boost they needed to secure employment."

Ends

12 March 2010