

**Developing an
Improved
Learning and
Skills Offer for
Offenders in the
Community**

***September
2009***

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DEVELOPING AN IMPROVED LEARNING AND SKILLS OFFER FOR OFFENDERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Section One Executive Summary

1. This paper has been written:
 - to address the concerns raised in the National Audit Office report 'Meeting Needs? The Offenders' Learning and Skills Service' (March 2008) and present an OLASS in the Community (OIC) Action Plan;
 - to respond to issues raised at a series of 9 LSC/Probation road shows which took place between December 2008 and February 2009, and address these in the Action Plan;
 - to identify how these improvements can be implemented while both NOMS and the LSC are undergoing major structural change.
2. Principal issues raised with regard to OLASS in both the NAO report and the road shows were:
 - How effectively are we meeting the needs of the individual through an integrated, responsive service?
 - Commissioning – how to make the most effective use of resources.
 - Improving partnership working and communication.
 - The effect of Machinery of Government changes on service delivery.
3. Key stakeholders working with the LSC are:
 1. National Offender Management Service (NOMS) which includes the Prison and Probation Services
 2. Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)
 3. Jobcentre Plus
 4. Providers from all sectors (FE, private and Third Sector)
4. In the current economic downturn, supporting offenders into employment is even more of a challenge than it was even a few months ago. Being in sustainable employment is the single most important factor in reducing re-offending; it can reduce the risk by between a half and a third. 52% of male offenders and 71% of female offenders have no qualifications at all, while 48% of all offenders have literacy skills below Level 1 and 65% of all offenders have numeracy at or below Level 1 (*Skills for Life: Changing Lives* – DIUS March 2009); half of all prisoners do not have the skills required for 90% of jobs. (Prison Reform Trust).

5. There are many more offenders under supervision of probation (230,000) at any one time than in custody (81,000 adults) and the LSC acknowledges that arrangements for OLASS in custody are better developed than for the community for a number of reasons, not least because custodial contracts are supported by ring-fenced funding in discrete contracts. There has been no equivalent of the development of the national OLASS 3 custodial specifications for Adult Offender Learning and Skills (which introduces a specific offender learning offer), Careers Information and Advice, and Young People's Learning and Skills. However, the LSC is clear that, leaving aside any funding considerations, the employment and skills focus in the community should be on integrating offenders into mainstream programmes wherever possible as part of their social rehabilitation and progress towards employment.

6. As a result of feedback on the draft version of this paper, it has been decided to publish this shorter version which focuses on key priorities from the NAO report and the road shows, and presents the OIC Action Plan in Section 5. It is intended that the plan will be updated quarterly and shared with partners on an ongoing basis as part of the reporting mechanism to the National Executive Group (NEG). The first version of the plan covers the transition period to the abolition of the LSC on 31st March 2010. Additional information on how OLASS is currently delivered will be contained in a separate paper highlighting good practice in delivery, partnership working and commissioning. It is planned to publish this by the end of August 2009.

7. Information on some of the key policy drivers which underpin this area of work is contained in Annex 1.

8. OLASS data summary is contained at Annex 2.

Section Two

LSC/ Probation Road Shows – Main Findings

9. The 9 road shows focused on an LSC paper entitled 'Reconciling Supply and Demand' for discussion between NOMS and the LSC. Jobcentre Plus colleagues attended some, but not all, road shows. The agreed objectives were:
- To find out to what extent LSC or Jobcentre Plus mainstream provision meets the skills and employment needs of offenders under probation supervision.
 - To highlight gaps in LSC provision to meet offenders' needs.
 - To identify if LSC discrete funding (referred to as partnership funding, currently £9.4 million nationally) will be required to supplement mainstream provision in the future. (Partnership funding has been agreed until July 2010).
 - To identify why the conversion rate from probation referrals to starts and achievement of qualifications is still so low. The success rate target set by probation is 16%, very much lower than mainstream qualifications targets. (62% is the target set for OLASS custodial providers from August 2009 in line with the target for FE short courses).
 - To assess to what extent current arrangements meet the requirements of the Offender's Learning Journey (OLJ – See Annex 3).
 - To identify barriers to offenders accessing mainstream provision (LSC and Jobcentre Plus).
10. The main issues that were discussed at these events were as follows:
- How to improve partnership working.
 - Concerns about the impact of Machinery of Government (MOG) on the management of OLASS in the community.
 - Engaging and referring offenders between probation, providers (for IAG and learning funded by LSC or Jobcentre Plus) more effectively.
 - Ensuring that flexible and responsive provision is commissioned to meet learners' needs.
 - Accessing sufficient Skills for Life provision to meet offenders' needs.
 - Responding to the needs of offenders with learning difficulties and disabilities.
11. **Partnership Working:** current partnership arrangements are based on LSC Partnership staff working with their probation area counterparts (ACO and/or ETE Managers) to determine on an annual basis how OLASS will support offenders under probation supervision and how the partnership money (£9.4 million nationally) will be spent. Prior to 2006, this money was used to buy Skills for Life provision only and in some cases the funding was passed to probation areas to contract for this. From 2006, the LSC has held all contracts and has where possible paid for Skills for Life provision from its mainstream funds; FE providers can draw down an uplift to support SfL delivery to offenders. It has therefore become possible to use the partnership

funding to buy bridging or developmental provision to address other aspects of the Offender's Learning Journey (OLJ).

12. **Machinery of Government (MOG) Changes:** In all regions, there are sub-regional or regional groups whose purpose is to support OLASS delivery and develop a strategy to improve the range of provision on offer in line with the OLJ. These groups feed into the regional ETE/Employment and Skills Partnership Pathway Board or equivalent. The action plan includes a work stream to identify how the changes to the LSC resulting in the creation of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) from 1st April 2010 will impact on local partnership arrangements. The Skills Funding Agency will operate nationally and regionally but not at local level. The YPLA will work regionally with Local Authorities, which will have responsibility for supporting young offenders up to and including the age of 18. The work of Youth Offending Teams will be subsumed into these arrangements. Part of the LSC transition work is to ensure that lines of communication are in place between the SFA and YPLA to manage the interdependencies (principally for 18/19 year olds). SFA reports to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the YPLA reports to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This aspect is dealt with in Section 4.

13. The LSC is planning to move to shadow arrangements from October 2009 to test out the new ways of working before the SFA and YPLA begin full operations on 1st April 2010. This transition period coincides with the settling down period following the appointment of DOMs on 1st April 2009 and changes to the NOMS regional structures, plus the move to trust status for probation areas. The same work stream will monitor the impact of these changes on the priority given to the Employment and Skills pathway and commissioning provision to support it, from both national and regional standpoints. Anxiety was expressed at the road shows about the level of priority that this pathway will have within the new NOMS regional arrangements; it was felt that the changes to the structures do not prioritise the employment and skills pathway, which is still often seen as optional rather than a priority in reducing re-offending.

14. Partnership agreements to support OLASS delivery in the community will be reviewed and rewritten starting in August based on these changes. This work will be developed to support the DOMs' revised Accountabilities Framework, Regional Reducing Re-offending Strategies and, where appropriate, Local Area Agreements.

15. More effective ways of managing national and regional communications about OLASS will also be reviewed as part of the action plan.

16. **Engaging and Referring Offenders:** NOMS have changed their data collection arrangements for 2009/10 to trial collecting outcome-based MI from probation areas on referrals into accredited provision, starts resulting from referral and qualifications achieved. It is hoped that this will reduce the attrition rate and increase the number of offenders achieving qualifications relevant to

employment. Reference is also made to creating or continuing MIAP Learner Plan/ Individual Learner Plans to support progression. The MIAP Learner Plan is being used in prisons from August 2009 as part of the OLASS 3 arrangements. As the Learner Plan is not currently being used by mainstream providers in the community, it cannot be introduced as yet for use by probation and providers, as this would identify the learners as offenders. The approach to the use of MIAP with offenders in the community is therefore being reviewed as part of the OIC Action Plan, as is an approach to aligning LSC/SFA and NOMS data collection arrangements.

17. **Commissioning Flexible and Responsive Provision:** it is likely that with the move to the SFA, provision will be commissioned regionally to meet local need. By developing a national business process model for OLASS, it should be possible to refer the majority of offenders into mainstream provision funded by the SFA or Jobcentre Plus; referral into specialist provision for offenders who present an unacceptable risk or who have particular needs should also be part of the model for probation. The business process model can be adapted to meet the specific regional needs as defined in the regional Employment and Skills Strategy supported by key partners (LSC/SFA, Jobcentre Plus, NOMS via the DOM) and stakeholders (providers, employers). Work is being done through BIS on PSA 23 to ensure that FE providers become more flexible in their approach by offering more out of hours, evening and roll on roll off provision to meet community needs. This coincides with the SFA's need to commission more flexible provision to meet the needs of employers in programmes such as Train to Gain. The good practice paper will include information on where and how such developments are being used to support OLASS and suggest how they could be implemented more widely.

18. The LSC/SFA will continue to work with providers to ensure that they include offenders as one of their priority groups. The data work stream in the action plan will include LSC analysis on FE ILR data to identify which providers are not engaging with offenders and where there are gaps. The national LSC OLASS team are working to develop an offender strand in the LSC/SFA programmes mentioned in the next section e.g. Apprenticeships.

19. **Accessing appropriate Skills for Life provision:** In March 2009 DIUS (now BIS) published the Skills for Life strategy refresh document 'Skills for Life: Changing Lives' which included offenders in custody and community as priority learners to encourage progression into employment. The strategy confirms a learner entitlement up to Level 2 for literacy and numeracy; ESOL provision does not carry automatic fee remission but the new strategy puts the onus on Local Authorities to work in partnership to deliver to vulnerable and excluded groups. The LSC will work with probation to identify referral routes into employability skills and other vocational programmes with embedded Skills for Life provision. This does not preclude delivery of discrete Skills for Life provision for probation but the SFA will not fund such programmes exclusively from partnership funds when there is a plethora of mainstream funded provision available.

20. Some probation colleagues have a clear preference for on site provision because it makes access and liaison with probation staff easier when the provision forms part of an order. FE providers can and do deliver successfully in probation offices but if the accommodation is unsuitable for learning, especially where access to IT is limited, and classes are cancelled at short notice, this can be unsatisfactory. If the number of referrals is low and these do not convert to starts, the provider cannot draw down mainstream funding and has to be compensated from partnership money. As indicated above, partnership money cannot be guaranteed beyond July 2010 so it is incumbent on all probation areas to explore the alternatives with their LSC/SFA colleagues. LSC staff are taking this forward in region.

21. Partnership money is being used effectively in some areas to fund bridging courses which support offenders into mainstream provision. Examples of this will be included in the good practice paper. The business case to the SFA for continuing to have ring-fenced partnership funding will be based on its use to build capacity and add value to mainstream arrangements. The LSC will complete a review of provision in January 2010 to form the basis of the business case.

22. **Offenders with learning difficulties and disabilities:** the LSC has funded the development of a 'Hidden Disabilities Questionnaire' by Professor John Rack of Dyslexia Action. This has been piloted in prisons and gives indications of possible dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder and a number of other conditions which hinder success in learning, de-motivating the learner and sometimes leading to dysfunctional behaviour. Use of this tool has been recommended as part of OLASS 3 in custody and the OIC Action Plan includes a work stream on developing roll out of its use with offenders in the community.

23. The work stream on improving data quality in the Action Plan underpins any improvement in the quality of the service as it will enable partners to identify the level of need and see how effectively it is being met. At the moment, it is not clear how many offenders either could or do benefit from the OLASS, making planning of how much provision is required difficult.

Section Three

Offender Learning Offer – Adults

24. As described in the previous section, the OLASS offer in the community has been based on the Skills for Life delivery, often on probation premises, that supports ETE orders. The challenge for both LSC and probation staff has been to move this very limited offer towards the full OLJ offer. (See Annex 3). The LSC remains committed to developing OLASS in the Community (LSC Statement of Priorities, November 2008) and appointed staff with a specific remit to do this in the national OLASS team in April 2009.

25. The curriculum for OLASS 3 in custody being introduced from August 2009 includes a national Careers, Information and Advice Service (CIAS) which will supply interventions as follows:

- Universal Service at Induction: full information given on the options available and how these can support employability.
- 1:1 diagnostic interviews: these result in the production of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with short, medium and long term goals to improve an offender's skills and move them towards employment. The learner will be issued with a Unique Learner Number (ULN) and the ILP will be registered on MIAP by the provider.
- Reviews: these will be done regularly to ensure that the MIAP Learner Plan (ILP) has been actioned or if further input is requested.
- Pre-release interviews: these focus on ways of continuing the ILP through the gate.

26. The CIAS refers offenders into the full range of activities available in the prison to support the offender towards employability and employment. This includes OLASS learning and skills provision.

27. The learning offer is delivered by another provider and the core offer is made up of:

- Functional skills - literacy, numeracy and ESOL (Skills for Life) plus ICT
- Employability skills – as defined by Asset Skills.
- Vocational skills delivered through accredited qualifications (NQF). OLASS is a pilot for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) which will allow individual credits to be built into qualifications. The Foundation Learning Tier currently being piloted provides progression pathways from Entry levels and Level 1. (See page 12).

28. The core curriculum will account for 80% of the delivery in each establishment. 20% of delivery will be based on purposeful, non-accredited learning for personal development or the arts curriculum designed to motivate

offenders into learning and lead to wider progression. As previously indicated, it is expected that the core curriculum achievement rate should not be below 62% for accredited qualifications.

29. All the components of the OLASS 3 custody offer are available in the community through mainstream resources and in some areas are already being accessed. The process map on page 11 illustrates the components of OLASS and where it links with key partners – Probation and Jobcentre Plus. The chart on page 14 illustrates how the Jobcentre Plus Customer Journey supports offenders and what the partnership links are, including to OLASS and IES, as well as other services offered.

30. The IES box in blue illustrates what is currently pilot activity for the LSC and Jobcentre Plus. Until 2010, IAG will be delivered through *nextstep* contracts which offer the Universal Service (group sessions similar to those described for the prisons) and a Differentiated and Personalised Service (DAPS) similar to the 1:1 diagnostic interviews. The new adult advancement service will take over from *nextstep* and will have a wider remit, as it will refer to a variety of services that support individual needs – in effect, the other reducing re-offending pathways. In the IES model, *nextstep* /advancement service advisers are co-located wherever possible in Jobcentre Plus for immediate referral so that anyone requesting information about employment or benefits will be encouraged to improve their skills where appropriate. These providers will use the Skills Health Check which underpins the Learning Plan for the individual.

31. MIAP (Managing Information Across Partners): MIAP Learner Plans will be used in prisons from August 2009. The plan is the vehicle for recording and capturing information about individual learners which can then be accessed on the database by registered users including providers and learners themselves. A Unique Learner Number (ULN) is issued to each offender with their agreement to enable access to the plan. Using the ULN, information on all learners will be accessed; the ULN is being issued to all those aged 14 and above in education and training. It is envisaged that OLASS providers will issue and update the learner plan in custody and that Prison Service staff should also be registered users so that relevant activity e.g. in the kitchens, can be captured on the plan. There is nothing on the plan which identifies the learner as an offender.

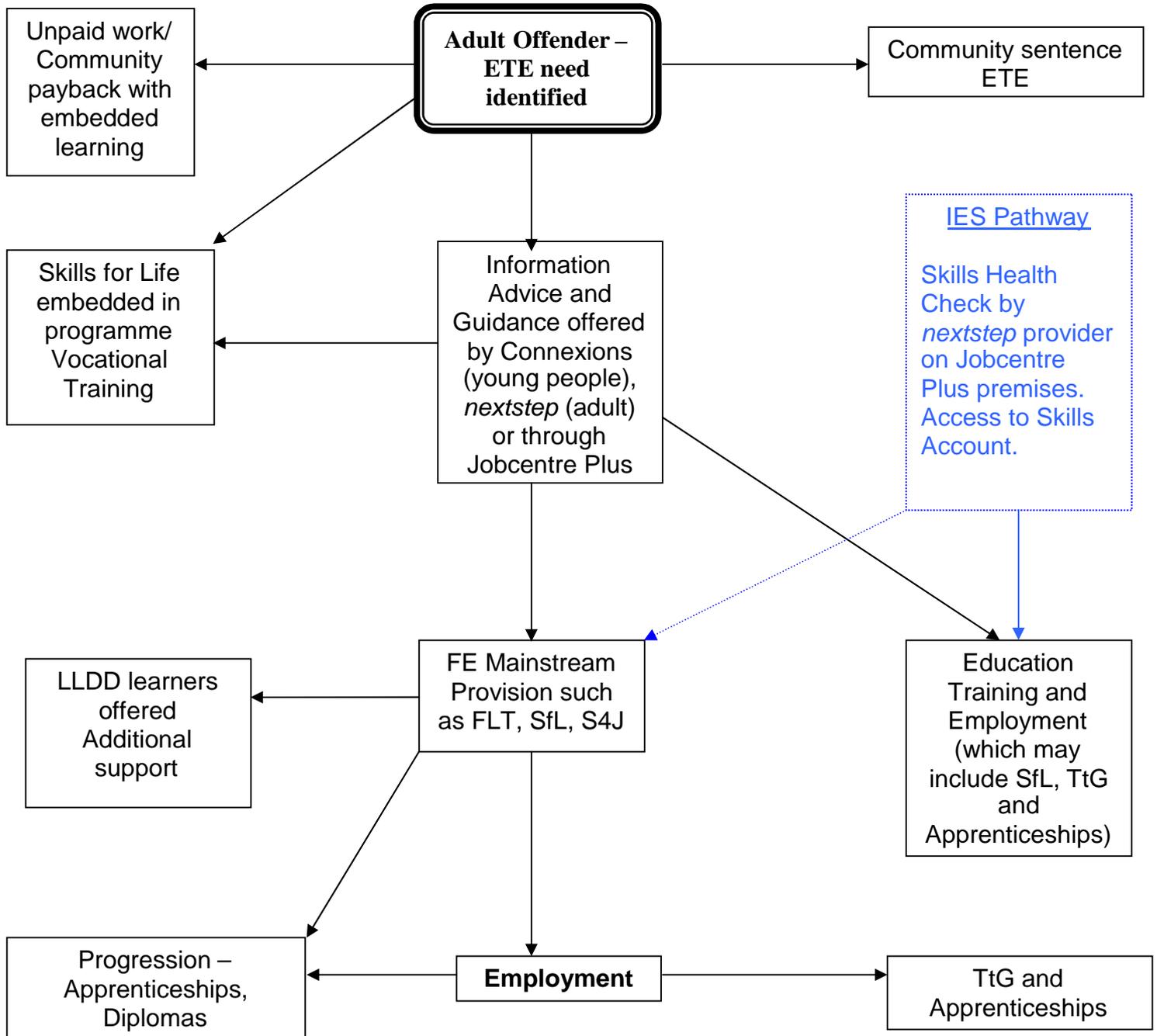
32. MIAP is a national approach being rolled out for all learners and its use could link offenders to mainstream activity more effectively and provide the integration that OLASS has so far lacked. MIAP offers three services for learners:

a) An internet-based Learner Registration Service which enables education providers to generate a Unique Learner Number (ULN) for anyone over the age of 14 in UK education and training following input of learner personal information.

The ULN is a randomly-generated 10 digit number that will allow learners to build a lifelong record of their learning participation and achievements, which

Text continues on page 15

OLASS Learning Pathways for Offenders in the Community –Adults



Key : IES – Integrated Employment and Skills

SfL – Skills for Life

FLT – Foundation Learning Tier

S4J – Skills for Jobs

TtG - Train to Gain

LLDD – learners with learning difficulties and disabilities

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY – UNEMPLOYMENT TO EMPLOYMENT

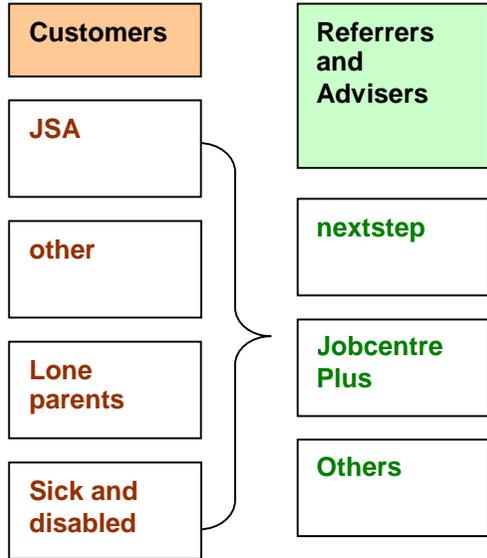
The map on page 13 illustrates the provision available within **the IES model**. Offenders can also be referred to other LSC Adult Responsive provision which would include :

- the **Skills for Life** entitlement offers support for adults to increase their literacy to Level 1 and numeracy skills to Entry Level 3. Anyone with skills below Level 2 is entitled to an initial assessment and would receive support to increase their skills to this level. ESOL provision does not have automatic fee remission but under new arrangements, vulnerable and excluded groups should be offered ESOL support.
- **Foundation Learning Tier:** the FLT is currently being piloted (2009/10) and is designed to help those with low level skills (Entry level and Level 1) progress into further learning. The FLT consists of a number of Progression pathways which will include vocational skills, Functional Skills (Skills for Life and ICT) and personal and social development opportunities. The Pathways will consist of short, achievable courses to be credits under the Qualifications and Credit Framework also being developed. There is a strong focus on developing employability skills. The OLASS 3 custodial offer includes FLT as part of its core, and it will be possible for offenders to continue to complete Progression Pathways both in custody and community for adults and young people. There will also be Pathways designed for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities who may be progress to Level 2.
- **Safeguarded Learning:** this includes learning for cultural, leisure, community development and personal fulfilment. Learners who can afford to pay will be required to do so. Within this, there are programmes for Neighbourhood Learning for Deprived Communities and Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy which can provide an alternative route for some learners.
- **Skills for Jobs and Employability Skills Programmes:** pre-employment courses offered to support jobseekers.
- **Train to Gain:** is offered to employers to upskill their staff. It includes delivery of literacy and numeracy. Offenders in employment or released on temporary licence to go to work are eligible for this support via their employer.
- **National Apprenticeship Service:** NAS began operating on 1st April 2009 within the LSC and will move to the SFA. The Service will support employers, Apprenticeship providers from initial interest through to completion and provide a range of support services, including matching apprentices to employers.

East of England IES Trial

Pre employment training

These are the main programmes that people can access. They can move between programmes as appropriate, or access provision not on this list, to gain the necessary skills for employment.



ESF (JCP funded)

What: Flexible Routeways / Intermediate Labour Market
 For whom: JCP customers for whom mainstream provision is unsuitable
 Providers: Shaw Trust, Seetec, In Training (ESD) Ltd, Ceemac

Skills for Jobs

What: a range of activities to help people improve their skills in order to achieve sustained employment
 For whom: unemployed adults (19+) / JCP customers identified as suitable for LEP opportunities
 Providers: EYS, CLIP, NTS, TCHC, Princes Trust

Employability Skills Programme

What: Literacy, Numeracy, ESOL and employability skills.
 For whom: any Jobcentre Plus customer with a basic skills need (except pre-entry ESOL)
 Providers: Nacro and Seetec

Programme Centre

What: Individually tailored job search, also specific help to overcome barriers to obtaining work
 For whom: People unemployed for 26 weeks or more unless they qualify for early entry, through particular disadvantage
 Providers: Seetec and A4E

NDLP

What: New Deal for Lone Parents – allows lone parents and partners to access LSC-funded training.
 For whom: Lone Parents
 Providers: Any LSC funded provider

Pathways to Work

What: Targets support on an individual basis. Has focus on job entry and retention. Will underpin Employment Support Allowance
 For whom: customers on Incapacity Benefit
 Providers: Shaw Trust, Reed Partnership, Essex - JCP Led.

New Deal

What: A programme of education, training, work experience and job search support.
 For whom: unemployed 6 months, on JSA
 Providers: TNG, Kennedy Scott, North Herts College, Shackleton Associates, YMCA, Seetec, Armstrong Learning, NWES, A4E.

Employment

Pre employment support

Local Employer Partnerships

What: employers agree to some or all of a range of measures, including guaranteed interviews, work trials etc. Bespoke pre-employment training can be provided
 For whom: JCP priority customers
 Providers: Skills for Jobs providers in the first instance.

Work trials

What: Up to 15 days work trials
 For whom: JCP customers

Train to Gain

What: impartial and independent advice to businesses; matching any training needs identified with training providers; ensuring that training is delivered to meet business needs.

New Deal wage subsidy

What: a weekly wage subsidy paid to employers who employ people on New Deal

Apprenticeships

What: a mix of on and off the job learning, working towards nationally recognised qualifications.

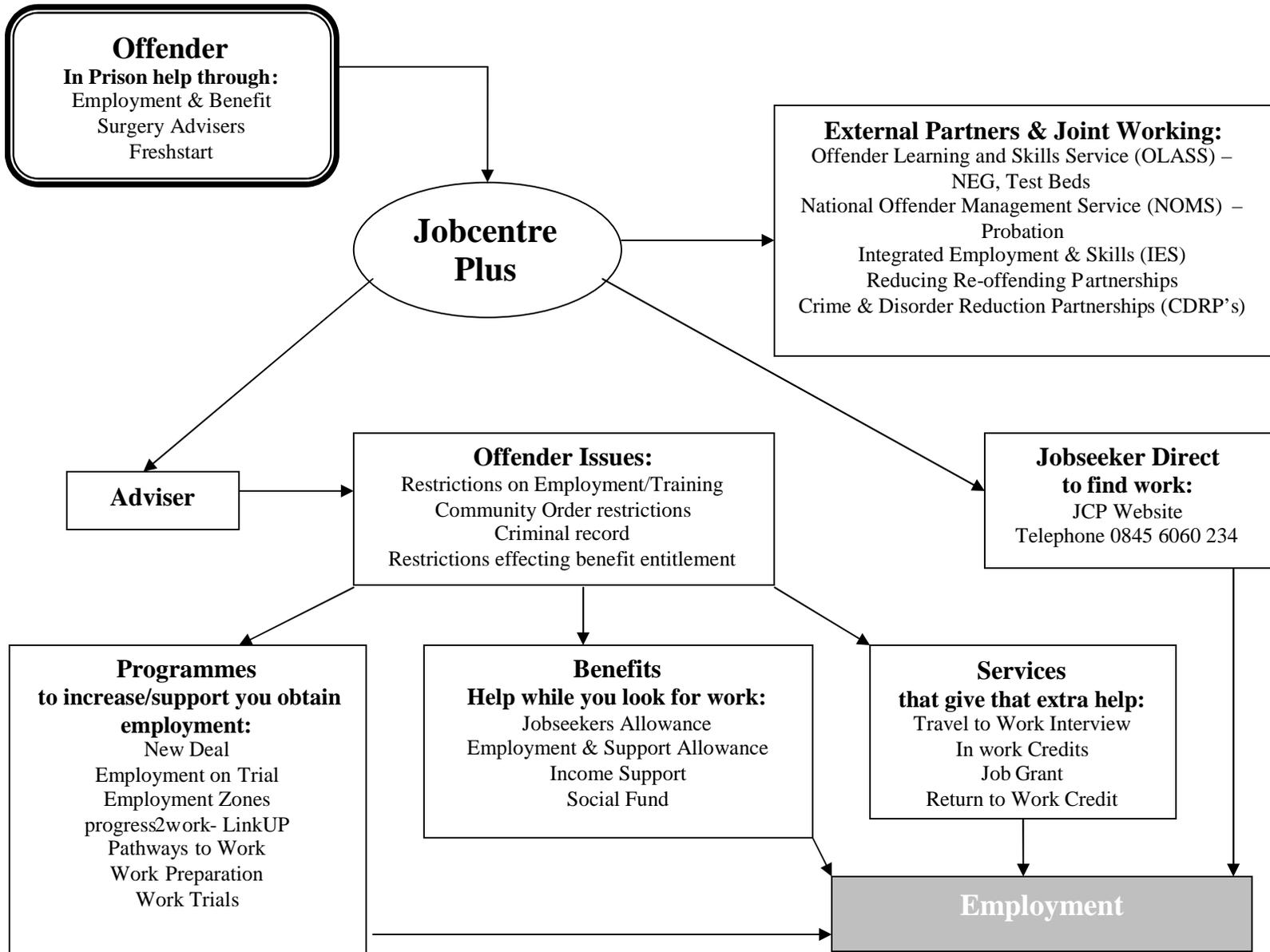
Key:

Red border: suitable for those who are some way from achieving sustainable employment / have significant barriers to employment.

Orange border: suitable for those who need some support and training to become ready for work.

Green border: suitable for those who are nearly ready to enter labour

Jobcentre Plus Customer Journey



Continuation from page 10.

they can access and choose to share.

b) Personal Learning Record – A formal record of achievement which in the future will be populated with information from the awarding bodies. This is currently in pilot.

c) Learner Plan – currently for use only in the secure estate which records a learner's goals, assessments and activities. Use by learners across mainstream education is under review.

Through the ULN, registered providers and prison staff can access information on offenders transferring into a prison from other areas. As its use becomes increasingly widespread, it will be possible to pick up information on prior learning and experience and so avoid the constant re-assessment and repetition that offenders experience. This will contribute to a more efficient use of resource and should be more motivating for the offender.

33. The CIAS provider will have responsibility for checking whether an offender has a ULN and for setting up ULNs for learners who do not. They will access existing Learner Plans or set up new ones. During the pre-release intervention in custody, the CIAS provider will make sure that the offender understands how the ULN and Personal Learner Record can be used and provide an offender with a printed copy of their Learner Plan Report. The ULN is also attached to the Skills Account; this indicates the training opportunities and funding available to support an individual's learning and skills development. Skills Accounts are also being piloted currently as part of Integrated Employment and Skills (IES) trials. Taken together, all these developments will support progression beyond an offender's contact with probation and back into the mainstream.

34. From an LSC perspective, the IAG intervention is pivotal not only to finding out what interventions would best meet the needs of the individual and move them towards employment, employability or personal skills development, but also to identifying the provider(s) who can deliver these interventions. There was a concern at the road shows that Offender Managers find it difficult to know where they should refer offenders for ETE provision; the IAG provider should make the recommendation and the Offender Manager can then action it, presuming that there are no outstanding risk elements. The national LSC OLASS team is working with colleagues developing the advancement service to embed an offender-specific strand in the specification for the new service. A major part of the advancement service team's work is a workforce development strategy to build provider capacity; this is particularly pertinent for OLASS.

35. The IES service is a joint initiative between the LSC/SFA and Jobcentre Plus. The regional strategic plans for offender skills and employment will include input from the LSC/SFA, Jobcentre Plus and NOMS. The LSC/SFA's role is clearly skills development and Jobcentre Plus focuses on employment; however, there

are areas of overlap around employer engagement and some types of delivery which will be resolved through the IES approach. The direct working relationships between Jobcentre Plus and probation areas are variable; Jobcentre Plus regional teams will be the natural link with the SFA and the DOM but it is important that the agenda is understood at district office level. Work done under the Test Bed and with Innovations money has led to joint workshops between Probation and Jobcentre Plus in the East of England and the identification of offender champions in each office in the North East. These examples will be highlighted in the good practice guide as they support the development of both OLASS and the ETE pathway. The LSC OLASS team is working with Jobcentre Plus at national level to identify and share best practice.

36. Another joint area of work with Jobcentre Plus is employer engagement. Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs) are Jobcentre Plus partnerships with employers, which are supported by DWP, BIS and the LSC/SFA, to tackle the increasing recruitment and skills challenges of the labour market. Jobcentre Plus will seek to place disadvantaged jobseekers with employers, supported by mentoring, work trials and pre and post-employment training offered jointly with the LSC. Some regions have mapped the full offer available through IES and LEPs and an example produced as part of the East of England IES trials is included on page 13. Definitions of some of the terminology regarding programmes are included on page 12 as part of the key to the IES map.

37. There is an action plan work stream on management and sequencing of referrals. This would include identifying how and when the following processes should happen. Some of this has already been mapped for the MIAP pilot:

- Referral to *nextstep* or other IAG providers to create an ILP; interaction between Offender Manager and provider
- Introduction of MIAP within this process; issue ULN and use MIAP Learner Plan
- Access and referral to Skills for Life provision on or off premises
- Referral to other provision off site including to Jobcentre Plus
- Inclusion of those on Unpaid Work
- Picking up other referrals – later in order, from custody, from out of area
- Coverage for those without a specific ETE requirement
- Supporting offenders to take up referrals

38. Capturing these processes in a map or model will help to resolve some of the operational difficulties described at the road shows about where specific responsibilities lie and how problems can be escalated. With the SFA working regionally and the possibility of fewer dedicated ETE staff within probation trusts, there has to be operational clarity for Offender Managers to support referrals. If provision is funded and supported by the SFA and Jobcentre Plus, the onus will be on NOMS to mentor and support offenders so that they can, and do, take advantage of what is on offer. It is envisaged that the NOMS co-financed activity will offer support in this area.

39. The roll out of the 'Hidden Disabilities Questionnaire' (HDQ) described at paragraph 22 will help give an indication of the nature and type of difficulties experienced by individuals. In many cases, it will be possible for LSC-funded providers to address these needs through their Additional Learning Support budgets. However, if the needs identified require highly specialised support which is not available, these offenders will have to be referred on a case by case base to those organisations who can meet their needs. As indicated in the action plan, it will take some time to provide training to all providers and other staff on the use and implementation of the HDQ. There is a work stream in the action plan on staff training.

40. The LSC intends to organise events for providers and probation colleagues in the autumn to raise the profile of OLASS in the community with providers and have workshops on what both sides need to know to work successfully with offenders. The good practice guide has already been mentioned but there is also a need for provider guidance to give them a greater understanding of the probation requirements and also to illustrate that most offenders are not radically different from other disadvantaged groups. Most providers already deliver to offenders and ex-offenders without being aware that they are doing so. The provider events will also target a broad range of providers to encourage them to include this priority area in their planning as part of their overall community strategy.

41. The Test Bed activity which took place in West Midlands and East of England from September 2007 to March 2009 included a project on reviewing how better models could be developed to make Unpaid Work more meaningful in employment and skills terms. This will be included in the good practice guide.

42. Test Beds also developed Employability Compact models; this work is being taken forward by NOMS as part of a broader compact with offenders. The Virtual Campus, an ICT based platform for delivering learning and skills and supporting offender progression into employment, was also piloted in prisons and to a lesser extent in the community. Work on this is ongoing in the two regions and an evaluation is being carried out on its role and usefulness in the community. This work is being aligned with the MIAP pilot.

43. One of the requirements of OLASS is that the learning and skills provision offered to offenders is of comparative quality to that received by other learners. For those in the community in mainstream provision, this will be the case by definition. However, with the publication of a new Ofsted Inspection Framework and the embedding of their report in the main Probation Inspection report, there is an increased focus on meeting users' needs and it is important that the provision offenders are referred into does this. There is an inspection and quality strand in the Action Plan to progress joint working on inspections and quality requirements.

Section Four

Offender Learning Offer – Young People

44. As described at para 11, the responsibility for supporting young offenders in custody and the community passes to Local Authorities, supported by the Young People's Learning Agency, in 2010 as part of their remit for planning, commissioning and funding 14-19 education and training. The OLASS 3 custodial contracts for Youth Offending Institutions (YOIs) funded by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for those up to 18 are held by the LSC and will pass to Local Authorities in September 2010.

45. A complicating factor is that young offenders stay in YOIs until their 18th birthday (or beyond if they are due for release) but at 18, they move into the adult estate. As the SFA's remit is for 19+ and they hold the OLASS contracts for the adult estate only, there will need to be an interdependent relationship with the YPLA and Local Authorities to ensure that 18 and 19-year olds do not fall through the net.

46. The Connexions Service is responsible for delivering Information, Advice and Guidance (Careers Information and Advice) to young people in custody and community; *nextstep* for 19+ or CIAS in custody. In addition, Connexions will keep responsibility for those with learning difficulties and disabilities until they are 24 years old. DCSF informed all Connexions services that they would assume responsibility for YOIs in custody from April 2008 but because IAG was already being provided by OLASS to supplement this, there has been little change. Under the OLASS 3 arrangement, the young people's estate has been separately contracted for and there is no CIAS element, meaning that as the Connexions service assumes full responsibility, there will be a gap in service or a change in the service offered.

47. The LSC is working closely with REACT, which is supporting Local Authorities to understand the required changes and ensure their implementation as the YPLA shadow arrangements are put in place.

48. The offer for young offenders in the community which Local Authorities are required to provide, in line with government legislation, is:

- Every young person participates in education or training to the age of 17 by 2013, and the age of 18 by 2015
- Information, Advice and Guidance is available to every young person by 2008 (as indicated above)
- Every young person can access an appropriate diploma course by 2013

49. Young offenders in the community are supervised by Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) funded by the YJB but based in Local Authority areas. The YJB

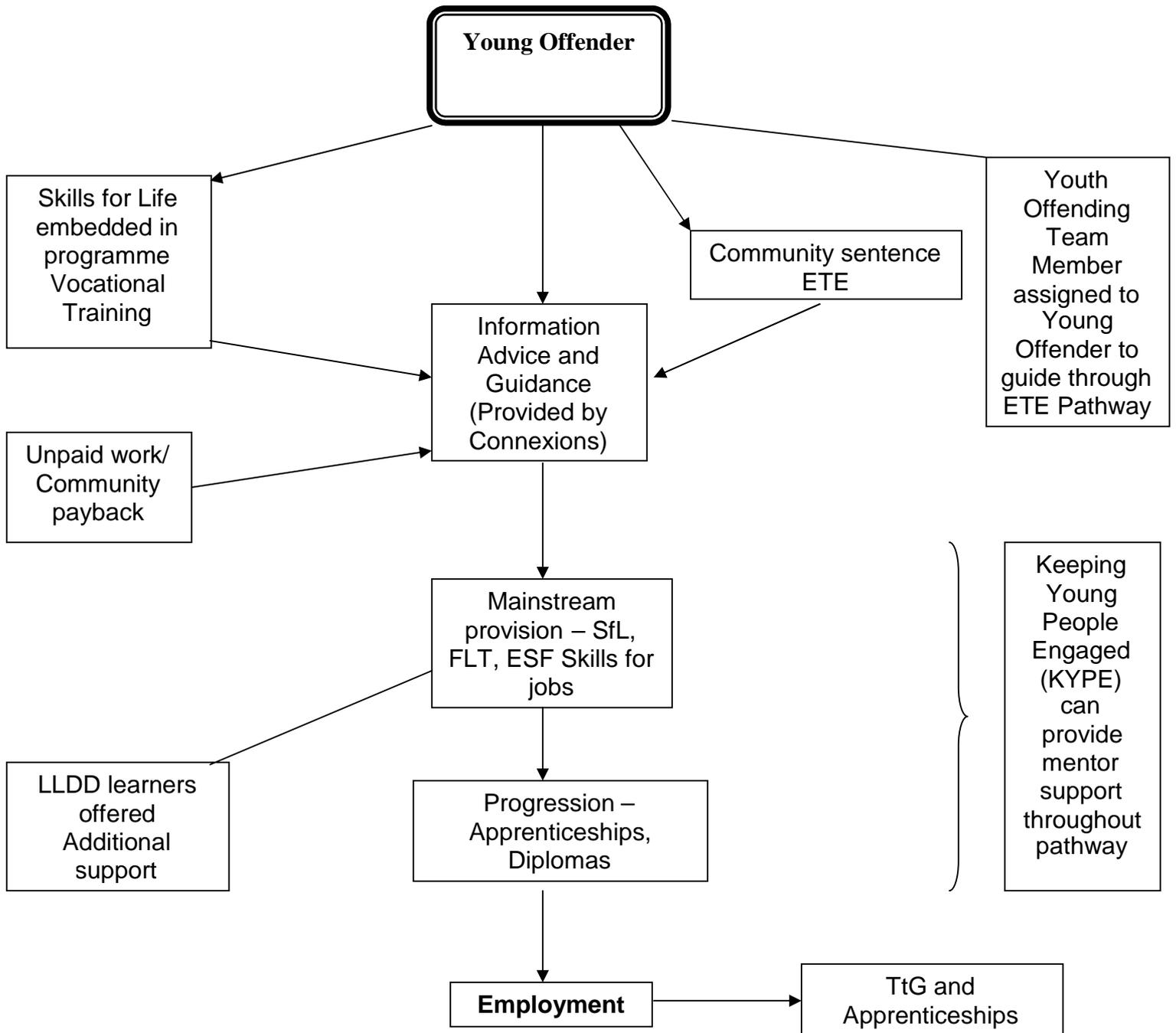
has set YOTs a target to ensure that 90% of the young offenders they supervise are in suitable education, training or employment during and at the end of their sentence.

50. The curriculum in YOIs is based on the Offender's Learning Journey for Young People. From September 2010 this will be replaced by the National Delivery Framework designed to align the offer as closely as possible to mainstream education. The offer will be based on the National Curriculum for those in compulsory education; once they are over the statutory school leaving age, the adult curriculum and offer will apply.

51. The map on page 20 illustrates the learning pathways for young people.

52. Work on the interdependencies between the SFA and YPLA is being taken forward by the LSC as part of its mainstream transition work and so is not specifically referenced in the Action Plan.

Learning Pathways for Offenders in the Community –Young People



Section Five

The Action Plan

53. The LSC action plan which will be implemented by working with NOMS and Jobcentre Plus is on page 22 onwards. Updated versions of the plan which record progress will be shared as indicated in para 6.

54. Information on current delivery plans has been collected by NOMS and the LSC respectively and is being collated to provide an introduction to the good practice guide.

55. Further information on the work described in this paper can be obtained from:

Val.chiesa@lsc.gov.uk

John.Armitage@lsc.gov.uk

56. Further information on LSC programmes can be found on www.lsc.gov.uk

ACTION PLAN FOR DEVELOPING AN IMPROVED OFFER FOR OFFENDERS IN THE COMMUNITY April 2009-March 2010.

Work Stream	April – June 2009	July- September 2009	October – December 2009	January – March 2010
LSC Publication ‘ Developing an Improved Learning and Skills Offer for Offenders in the Community’	<p>April – draft paper shared with NOMS, DIUS, JCP and LSC for comment.</p> <p>June – draft paper revised and action plan included. Work on good practice guide and NOMS/LSC activity matrix begun.</p>	<p>July – final draft of paper disseminated to LSC nationally and submitted for approval.</p> <p>August – work on good practice guidelines for OLASS commissioning and delivery continues.</p> <p>September – funding for Provider/Probation events confirmed.</p>	<p>October – Planning begins for provider/probation events on use of mainstream funding.</p> <p>Dissemination of paper to all partners nationally.</p> <p>Update of action plan.</p>	<p>March – review and possible updating of publication to include information on status of delivery arrangements.</p>
Improve partnership working	<p>April – NLSC community team follow up roadshows with visits to regions to develop action plan and delivery model to include IAG and use of MIAP . Collect information of referral mechanisms and suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>May - meeting with</p>	<p>July – meeting with JCP re joint working on offenders.</p> <p>September – work continues on delivery model with NOMS and JCP based on activity matrix and regional good practice. Develop input for regional conferences for providers/probation areas.</p>	<p>October – ongoing review of shadow arrangements and impact of changes to NOMS and LSC to national and regional arrangements (Trusts and winding down of LSC partnership teams). Development of transition strategy from LSC to SFA management arrangements.</p>	<p>February – SFA OLASS management structures confirmed and exit strategy from LSC arrangements implemented.</p> <p>Further review of partnership agreements to align with Trust/SFA changes.</p>

	NOMS to discuss action plan.	LSC to update NOMS on SFA shadow arrangements. PA Consulting work on partnership agreement and Accountabilities framework on going. Regional Visits ongoing.	October – SFA shadow arrangements commence. Confirm communications strategy.	
Partnership Funding and Contracts	April – funding confirmed to March 2010. Financial year contracts re-negotiated or re-tendered. Paper submitted to Employment and Skills Board re continuation of partnership funding. June – funding confirmed to July 2010. Report completed on 08-09 delivery.	July – Academic year contracts re-negotiated or re-tendered. August – academic year contracts begun.	October – mid year/first quarter monitoring of OLASS community contracts.	January - NLSC issues template to regions to confirm regional delivery requirements for OLASS community delivery under SFA. February – NLSC completes and submits business case for partnership funding from the SFA. March –decision re use of mainstream and flexible programmes across regions and possible continuation of partnership funding

		community data review meeting with NOMS	matching across NOMS and LSC.	
LLDD Assessment	June – meeting re ‘Crossing the Communications Divide’. Possible roll out.	July – presentation of Hidden Disabilities Questionnaire to OLASS custodial providers. Plan developed for roll out to probation areas.		
Mentoring	April/May – regional meetings re NOMS ESF specification.	Review of results of NOMS ESF bids and impact on OLASS. Identification of good practice examples as part of good practice guidelines.		
Test Bed Follow Up	Employability Compact: work taken forward by NOMS as part of broader Compact work. Virtual Campus: WM and EE continue pilot work Ministerial sign off required to support national roll out.			
Staff Training		Undertake TNA?		

<p>Inspections</p>	<p>SAR: Present proposal for Probation Area self-assessment process to take account of learning outcomes and impact Inspection: New Ofsted inspection framework published</p>	<p>SAR: Refine self-assessment process and identify test sites for piloting approaching. Inspection: Guidelines for Judicial Services inspections published including joint HMI Probation inspections. Quality Improvement: review links use of LSIS support.</p>	<p>SAR: Pilot self-assessments using wider approach. Inspection: First inspections under the new inspection framework take place.</p>	<p>SAR: Evaluate self-assessments using the wider approach and make further recommendations for template for probation areas. Inspection: Inspections under the new Inspection Framework – contribute to and inform SAR evaluation and development.</p>
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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Policy Drivers

There have been a number of key policy documents, strategies, reviews and legislation which have driven the offender learning and skills agenda in recent years, summarised here. Many of these are not specific to offender learning, but it is essential that offenders are included in the major developments in learning, skills and employment.

LSC / Skills Funding Agency

The Leitch Review of Skills

The *Leitch Review of Skills - Prosperity for all in the global economy: World class skills* (December 2006) found that there is a direct correlation between skills, productivity and employment. [The Leitch review](#) demonstrated the importance of skills for adults and employers in order to guarantee the UK's economic prosperity. It highlighted the impact that poor skills have on social welfare and the link to employment:

“Those on lower incomes are both more likely to be victims of crime and more likely to commit crime. Offenders are far less likely to have qualifications and so tend to have poorer pay and employment prospects:hence increasing the opportunity cost of offending.....”

Leitch, 2006: 37 para 1.44

‘The Learning Revolution’ White Paper (2009) – Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills

‘The Government recognises that informal adult learning can transform individual lives and boost our nation’s well-being. At its best, it can bring people and communities together, challenge stereotypes and contribute to community cohesion. It can unite the generations and help people remain active and independent into old age. At its simplest, informal learning can help build people’s confidence and add to their personal fulfilment. For the low-skilled and those with a bad personal experience of formal education, an informal approach can provide a way back. In some cases it can be an important stepping stone to further learning, qualifications and more rewarding work’

It is important that those involved in learning for offenders in the community monitor the development which will form part of [The Learning Revolution](#) and ensure that offenders can make best use of informal learning where it is appropriate for them.

AACS - Shaping the future – a new adult advancement and careers service for England (DIUS - October 2008)

The new Adult Advancement and Careers Service (AACS) will merge the information and advice services of learndirect and Nextstep providers together with Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus

Raising Expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future (DWP - December 08)

This [Raising Expectations White Paper](#) sets out a vision and route map for a welfare state where everyone is given the help they need to get back to work, matched by an expectation that they take up that support.

Work Skills (DIUS / DWP - June 2008)

The welfare and skills paper [Work Skills](#) published by DIUS and DWP in June 2008 set out how benefit claimants who need to improve their skills to get a job would have to attend compulsory training. This would be backed by improvements to the training system to give adults access to a new 'skills account' to fund vocational courses.

NOMS

The paper 'Strategic Plan for Reducing Re-offending 2008-11: Working in Partnership to Reduce Re-offending – A consultation' was published in November 2008. [The paper](#) provided an opportunity for partners across government, in the regions/Wales and in local communities to review work to date, answer questions on key issues and agree new priorities to reduce re-offending over the next three years.

All Partners

Public Service Agreement (PSA) 16 White Paper (2007)

This Public Service Agreement (PSA) will support adults who are at risk of social exclusion. It recognises that some people suffer from a combination of problems and circumstances which make it very difficult for them to participate in society. Too often these people fall between different service providers, are not given the range of support they need, or fall out of contact with services entirely.

Evidence suggests that ensuring individuals at risk of social exclusion have a stable home and the appropriate life skills to maintain it, and are either in a job or involved in productive, employment-focused activity, can help reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes in the future. Without the firm foundations of a job or settled accommodation, the most disadvantaged adults risk a lifetime of social exclusion for themselves and their children, and potentially place a lifetime cost on society.

The Government is committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable adults are offered the chance to get back on a path to a more successful life, **by increasing the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and in employment, education or training.**

The paper also emphasises the importance of Local Area Agreements which see central and local areas (local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships plus other key partners) working together on agreed priorities at a local level.

The [PSA 16 White Paper](#) includes offenders as a priority group along with care leavers, adults with mental health issues and adults with serious learning disabilities. There is a particular focus on assisting the offender when they make the transition from custody to community and ensuring the correct help and guidance is available.

ANNEX 2**Offender Skills Curriculum Area Reviews (OSCARs)**

Summary Data 2006/07

Region	No. Under Probation Supervision	No. of Learners	No. of Learning Aims	No. of Achievements
East of England	20,065	474	527	280
East Midlands*	17,601	-	-	-
London	42,468	1,501	1,535	1,119
North East	14,073	518	873	455
North West	40,288	4,131	5,674	2,353
South East	27,222	196	218	47
South West	14,580	10	16	-
West Midlands	29,175	660	1,006	697
Yorkshire & Humberside	24,704	1,207	1,757	1,182
Total	230,176	8,697	11,606	6,133

*Incomplete

Source: 2006/07 ILR

Summary Data 2007/08

Total	243,873	7,958	10,814	7,250
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Source: 2007/08 ILR

The breakdown by region will be included at a later date.

The success number of achievements from number of learning aims for 2006/07 is 53% and for 2007/08 is 67%, an increase of 14%.

Number of Learners - The definition for identifying these was "Learners have been identified by having OLASS Flagged Learning Aims but their Home Postcode (L17), Current Postcode (L22) and/or their Delivery Location Postcode (A23) (for at least one of their Learning Aims) does not match that of a prison.

Skills for Life

Region	2006-07			2007-08			% Difference 07/08 to 06/07
	Referrals Total	Awards Total	% Success	Referrals Total	Awards Total	% Success	
East of England	4,512	1,034	23	4,864	722	15	-8
East Midlands	4,520	1,231	27	4,631	1,192	26	-1
London	11,592	1,530	13	12,271	890	7	-6
North East	3,683	651	18	4,581	564	12	-5
North West	10,251	1,213	12	11,996	1,354	11	-1
South East	5,650	852	15	6,948	595	9	-7
South West	5,648	1,339	24	5,871	1,069	18	-6
West Midlands	6,531	1,079	17	6,632	697	11	-6
Yorkshire & Humber	4,050	739	18	6,831	764	11	-7
Total	56,437	9,668	17	64,625	7,847	12	-5

Information is not collected about the following:

- Direct links between referrals and awards – for instance, does one person achieve more than one award;
- The destination of the referral – which provider, how many turn up and what is the time lag;
- Any follow on progression routes from Skills for Life – someone may be referred for Skills for Life, but may actually end up on a different course, or may move on to further education and/or employment as a result of the Skills for Life course.

Community Payback, Employment and ETE

Region	Community Payback (formerly UPW)	Sustainable Employment 2007/08	ETE Community Sentence April 2006 – March 2007	ETE (DTOs) April 2006 – March 2007
East of England	325	523	2,235	207
East Midlands	457	462	1,999	265
London	792	974	3,359	470
North East	419	626	1,874	133
North West	649	925	3,932	614
South East	438	780	2,975	231
South West	242	492	1,933	131
West Midlands	400	591	2,794	392
Yorkshire & Humber	400	584	3,056	429
Total	4,122	5,957	24,057	2,872

Unpaid Work / Community Payback - The analysis is of the raw data behind the August 2007 snapshot audit undertaken by NOMS. Offenders can be ordered by the courts to undertake between 40 and 300 hours of Community Payback as one of the 12 requirements in the Community Order.

Sustainable Employment - This is defined as employment of at least 4 weeks after placement.

Education, Training and Employment - Shows the number of offenders above school age sentenced to Community. Sentences and Detention Training Orders (DTOs), sentence length and the percentage of those sentenced to greater than 16 hours by YOT area.

ANNEX 3

OFFENDER'S LEARNING JOURNEY

The Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) is based on the Offender Learning Journey (OLJ) for Adults, currently being revised. The [OLJ](#) sets out what should be delivered to offenders in custody and in the community. The offer should include:

- **Information, advice and guidance (IAG):** now referred to as careers information and advice (CIA). Advice sessions result in the production of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which sets out short, medium and long-term goals for the learner. Where MIAP is in place, the offender will receive a Unique Learner Number (ULN) and an OLASS Learner Plan which summarises learning goals. As indicated in Section 3, this is the process delivered by LSC *nextstep* or other CIA providers which starts the offender's progression pathway into OLASS and towards employment. CIA providers also offer screening for Skills for Life, Hidden Disabilities or employability. Screening provides indications of where there may be a need and at what level. The Skills Health Check within IES will also form part of this process.
- **Assessment:** learning providers will perform detailed assessments to identify the level at which learning leading to appropriate qualifications should be undertaken.
- **Curriculum:** access to an appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of the individual offender. The ILP should indicate the type of learning to be undertaken and the CIA provider makes a referral to the provider or providers who can offer this.
- **Skills for Life** provision; this includes improving literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Literacy and numeracy can also be offered as part of an activity-based course, e.g. as part of a construction course. Evidence suggests that low level learners who have been unsuccessful and lack motivation to return to learning are more likely to respond to this type of learning than to being enrolled in discrete Skills for Life courses.
- **Arts and enrichment activities** can be a useful way of encouraging offenders into learning. It may not be realistic for some offenders to access employment immediately e.g. female offenders, and these courses can form a bridge into further learning.
- **ICT:** can be a useful tool for delivering learning but is also vital for employment and an increasingly important element in daily life

ANNEX 4

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AACS	Adult Advancement and Careers Service
ACO	Assistant Chief Officer (Probation)
CIAS	Careers Information and Advice Service
DTO	Detention Training Order
DOM	Director of Offender Management
ESOL	English for Speakers of other Languages
ETE	Education, Training and Employment
HDQ	Hidden Disabilities Questionnaire
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IES	Integrated Employment and Skills
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MOG	Machinery of Government
MIAP	Managing Information Across Partners
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NQF	The National Qualifications Framework
OIC	Offenders in the Community
OLASS	Offenders' Learning and Skills Service
OLJ	Offender's Learning Journey
OSCAR	Offender Skills Curriculum Area Reviews
PSA	Public Service Agreement
QCF	The Qualifications and Credit Framework
REACT	Raising Expectations Action Programme
SAR	Self Assessment Report
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
TtG	Train to Gain
ULN	Unique Learner Number
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YPLA	Young People's Learning Agency