



Ministry  
of Justice

# **Education and Employment Strategy**

May 2018

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of Justice

## **Education and Employment Strategy**

Presented to Parliament  
by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice  
by Command of Her Majesty

May 2018



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## Foreword

I have seen the power of work to transform lives. It's not just the financial security of having a pay packet, but everything else that comes with being in work: purpose, structure, networks, having a stake in something.

As a government, we have made sure it always pays to work. As a result, we've seen record-breaking levels of employment and millions more people move into work over the last few years. This has pulled people out of poverty and opened up new prospects and possibilities for them and their families.

The benefits of work should touch and transform the lives of everyone in the country. In particular, I want ex-offenders to share in this country's remarkable jobs story.

A prison sentence rightly serves as a punishment, depriving someone of their liberty. However, for those offenders who are committed to change and who want to turn their backs on crime, prison should also serve as an impetus to help set them on a path to a better life.

Following that path is good for them. It is also good for society as a whole: moving ex-offenders off benefits and into work reduces the financial burden on taxpayers and the welfare state, reduces reoffending and, therefore, reduces the number of future victims of crime.

Although prison cannot help those who are not willing to help themselves, for those offenders who are, this education and employment strategy aims to ensure prison can prove to be a pivotal, positive and permanent turning-point in their lives.

Underpinning that turning-point is work. We know that when an offender is released from prison, they are much less likely to continue committing crime if they have a job. Yet only 17% of ex-offenders are in PAYE work a year after coming out of prison and only half of employers say they would even consider employing an ex-offender.

The vision at the heart of this strategy is to put offenders on a path to employment as soon as they step foot in prison. That involves focusing efforts both inside and outside of prison.

Within the prison walls, it starts with education. We must ensure that more offenders leave prison with the basic skills that are essential to entering the workplace and with the skills employers need. That's why we are putting governors in full control of the education provided in their prisons so they can tailor it to their specific prison populations and for the local jobs market. We will also continue to look at how in-cell technology could support prisoner learning.

Alongside education work experience is also important. A third of prisoners have some kind of job in prison. Whether that is cooking in the kitchens, cleaning on the wings or cutting hair in the barbers, prison work delivers purposeful activity for thousands of prisoners and helps prisons run effectively.

However, prison jobs are not currently geared towards properly preparing prisoners for the workplace or providing a route into a real job with an employer. The evidence shows

release on temporary licence – or workplace ROTL – is an effective rehabilitation tool. However, it is currently not being used to its potential to help prisoners along the path to employment.

That's why this strategy expands the use of workplace ROTL to get prisoners who have earned it, and who have been properly risk-assessed, out of their cells and into real workplaces. This will allow prisoners to build trust and prove themselves with an employer.

It is also a powerful incentive to promote good behaviour in prison. If you do not cause trouble, if you take the right path and play by the rules, that behaviour will be recognised and you will be rewarded with a more liberal prison regime. Incentives like workplace ROTL can play an important role alongside the other measures we are taking to reduce the levels of violence and disorder in prisons.

Beyond the prison walls, we need to change the mind-set of many employers and highlight the benefits of recruiting ex-offenders and of working more closely with prisons.

When an employer sees an ex-offender, I want them to see future potential, not just a former prisoner. The New Futures Network will be an important new force in persuading employers to take on ex-prisoners, as well acting as a broker between prisons and employers to create opportunities for prisoners.

We also recognise the argument in favour of financial incentives and will balance this against wider government objectives. We will consider how to take forward a national insurance contributions holiday alongside wider work on employer obligations and incentives.

The fact is, prisons have the potential to provide many loyal and hard-working recruits. Some employers see that, but others still need to change their thinking. The dynamics of the labour market should focus the minds of employers. We have a thriving jobs market and demand for workers in some sectors is very high. Leaving the European Union is also likely to have an impact on the workforce in sectors such as catering, construction and agriculture.

These are among the first-priority sectors for the New Futures Network. By forging closer relationships between employers and prisons and by expanding the use of workplace ROTL, prisoners will get a foot through the door to sectors like these and employers will be able to fill short-term skills gaps whilst developing potential permanent employees for the longer term.

For those prisoners who want to work and are prepared to change, this strategy will help to break down the barriers and prejudices offenders often face in trying to find a job.

I want prisons to be places of hope and aspiration that can propel prisoners into employment when they are released. In doing so, they will be able to start a new chapter in their lives, contribute to society and become part of this country's extraordinary jobs story.

**Rt. Hon David Gauke MP**  
**Secretary of State for Justice**

## Introduction

### Our vision

1. Reoffending by those released from custody costs society around £15 billion per year – and the overwhelming majority of prisoners will be released from custody at some stage in their lives. Through effective rehabilitation we can reduce the number of victims of crime in the future.
2. Many ex-offenders have multiple problems in their lives, including troubled family relationships, drug and mental health problems, lack of suitable accommodation, low educational achievement and poor employment records. These different problems can compound one another and require a comprehensive response.
3. This strategy focuses on work, which we know is central to prisoners turning their lives around. People leaving prison who find a job are between 6 and 9 percentage points less likely to reoffend than those who do not, even when a range of other factors are taken into account. Work can provide a foundation for a different kind of life.
4. This must start with offenders themselves. Effective rehabilitation needs prisoners to engage with the opportunities in front of them, to build a different kind of life. They must be willing to commit to change, take advice, learn new skills and take opportunities to work – both during their sentence and after. Prisons cannot help people who are not willing to help themselves – but they can sharpen the incentives to help set prisoners on the right path. This means:
  - a. A sentencing plan for each prisoner that sets direction and provides something positive to aim for.
  - b. An Offender Management system that gives each prisoner a key worker to encourage and hold them to account.
  - c. Tough enforcement when prisoners engage in violence and disruption, affecting their own futures and those of others.
  - d. Proportionate rewards and opportunities for those making choices that will prepare them to lead crime-free lives on release, from positive engagement in prison education to prison work.
5. For those willing to engage, the system must deliver. Our vision is that when an offender enters prison they should be put, immediately, on the path to employment on release. This means:
  - a. Rigorous assessment of each prisoner's education level at the beginning of – and at key points during – their sentence, to understand each individual's starting point and measure progress.
  - b. Education and training which is responsive to individuals' needs, is properly integrated into prison regimes and delivers what employers are looking for.
  - c. Prison work, provided by employers with easy access to prisons, and work placements on day release which help prisoners build towards employment opportunities on release.



- d. Links with local and national employers ready to offer ex-prisoners jobs on release.
- e. Effective supervision and support when ex-offenders leave prison, so that they make the most of job opportunities.

### Progress to date

- 6. Progress has been made in some important aspects of this. The number of prisoners working in prison industries (prison jobs provided by private sector employers or government departments) at any one time has increased significantly, from 7,500 in 2010/11 to over 11,000 in 2016. This has boosted the number of prisoners engaged in purposeful activity and helped many more acquire key skills to prepare them for employment on release. In addition to this, there are over 13,000 prisoners working to provide prison services at any one time, such as cleaning prison wings or cooking in the kitchens.
- 7. Meanwhile, prison education has been improving, with an increase in the number of prisons in England rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted. In Wales ESTYN, the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, inspect prison education and the majority of prisons are rated as good. It is our ambition to see the number of prisons rated as good or outstanding for education continue to grow until that level of quality is embedded across the system.

### Challenges ahead

- 8. The proportion of offenders in P45 employment one year after release is just 17%. The evidence indicates that there are not large differences in employment rates for male and female ex-offenders. This low employment rate contributes to higher levels of reoffending and comes at a direct cost to the welfare system.
- 9. Too many prisoners are still engaged in violence and disruption, rather than turning their own lives around. There were 28,000 violent incidents recorded in our prisons last year alone. Rates of violence are lower in the female estate than the male estate but are still unacceptable. We have not made sufficient use of all the tools available – to map out a path to a better future for each prisoner, bear down on bad behaviour and reward the good. A fresh look is needed at all the tools available for this.
- 10. Nor has the system delivered everything it should for those prisoners who do engage. Prisons have not been sufficiently geared towards getting prisoners into work on release. In particular:
  - a. Prison education has delivered qualifications but not been tailored closely enough to the requirements of employers or the needs of different cohorts of prisoners. With large-scale contracts, governors in England have lacked the levers to manage performance and integrate education properly into prison regimes. At times in the past, training for female prisoners has been driven by stereotypes about 'suitable' employment rather than market intelligence about employment opportunities.
  - b. Prison work has delivered purposeful activity and helped prisons function efficiently, but has not been linked sufficiently to employment opportunities on release. Workplace on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) has also been under-used for both men and women

- c. On release, ex-prisoners have benefited from initiatives like Ban the Box, but many employers remain sceptical about employing ex-offenders. Employers need further encouragement and easy access to prisons to change this. Meanwhile, the supervision of, and support for, ex-prisoners on release has often been piecemeal and insufficiently coordinated.

## Our approach

11. In the coming months we will set out, in more detail, how we intend to sharpen the incentives and punishments for all prisoners in custody, so that many more choose cooperation and rehabilitation over violence and disruption. We will consider:
  - a. How we categorise prisoners, including how we separate the ringleaders of trouble and violence from others.
  - b. The punishment of unacceptable and illegal behaviour in prisons, including the best use of the new protocol between the Ministry of Justice and the Crown Prosecution Service.
  - c. The role of the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system in punishing bad behaviour and rewarding the good – including positive engagement in education and training.
  - d. The ability of prisoners to earn income in the later part of their sentences, including through Release on Temporary Licence.
  - e. The role of the key worker in the new Offender Management system in supporting prisoners and holding them to account.
12. We will also set out our approach to managing and rehabilitating female offenders, including how best to support women into employment when they leave custody. For example, this will include how women can manage childcare responsibilities alongside rehabilitation programmes and working commitments.
13. The following chapters of this document focus on how we will match these measures with a prison and probation system geared towards employment on release.
14. Chapter 1 sets out our approach to prison education. In Wales, this is the responsibility of the Welsh Government and this paper includes developments in Welsh prisons where relevant. In England we will:
  - a. Establish consistency and minimum standards in a few key areas across the prison estate.
  - b. Empower governors in England to commission the education provision most likely to meet employers' requirements and prisoners' needs.
  - c. Provide the right tools and support to governors to make the best use of these powers.
  - d. Establish a new vocational training route for governors to make use of in England and Wales called the Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway.
  - e. Couple greater powers for governors with greater accountability for performance.

15. Chapter 2 concerns work in prison and workplace ROTL. It sets out how we will:
  - a. Develop a new approach, through a partnership with The Clink, to tie work already being done by prisoners in prison services, such as cooking in prison kitchens, with employment on release.
  - b. Consult governors and employers on proposals to increase the opportunities available to prisoners to gain experience in real workplaces through ROTL.
16. Chapter 3 focuses on employment on release. It sets out how we will:
  - a. Launch the New Futures Network (NFN) to engage and persuade employers to take on ex-prisoners, with experts placed in every geographical prison group in a phased roll-out across England and Wales.
  - b. Consider how to take forward a National Insurance Contributions (NIC) holiday alongside wider work on employer obligations and incentives.
  - c. Recruit ex-prisoners directly into the civil service, providing jobs and acting as a role model for other employers.
  - d. Work with DWP to explore ways to deliver enhancements to the current benefit claim process so that ex-prisoners have easier access to financial support on the day of release where needed.
  - e. Ensure that prisons and NPS/CRCs work together more seamlessly, by sharpening and aligning accountability for ex-prisoners' employment on release.
17. Together, these measures are designed to produce a system in which each prisoner is set on a path to employment, with prison education and work geared towards employment on release. To deliver this, governors will be given the levers to make a difference and the support to make the most of new powers. They will then be accountable for delivering results.

## Chapter 1: Education and training in prison

### Chapter Summary

The first step on a prisoner's path to employment on release is acquiring the right skills. Many prisoners enter prison educated only to a low level. Over half were assessed on reception as having the English and maths abilities expected of an 11-year-old. This makes effective and relevant training in prison vital.

In England, we have taken steps to raise the standard and consistency of education and training across the prison estate. These include introducing maths and English assessments on entry into and release from prison. In Wales improvements include piloting the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit. We have also appointed common awarding organisations for each of the seven most popular (by volume of learners) subjects in prison education in England. These reforms are designed to prevent education being disrupted when a prisoner moves from one prison to another, whilst allowing new data to be collected to track performance.

Thanks to ongoing reform and the hard work of those working in the system, education in prisons has improved year on year. But too many prisoners are reaching the end of their sentence without securing basic skills in English and maths. Often, prison education has not been properly integrated into prison regimes. In addition, education has not been closely tailored to the requirements of employers or the needs of different cohorts of prisoners, with governors lacking the levers to manage performance.

Consistency across the prison estate is necessary in some areas so that prisoners can move from one prison to another without disrupting their education. There is also a role for the centre in setting minimum standards and expectations. However, governors know their own prisoners best and, given the right tools, are in the best position to ensure that training is relevant to the requirements of employers. In Wales HMPPS delivers education on behalf of the Welsh Government and governors have responsibility for arrangements in their prison.

We want to see prison education that complements prison work, is oriented towards employment on release and is integrated both into prisoners' sentence plans and prison regimes. To deliver this in England we will:

- a. Establish consistency and minimum standards in a few key areas across the prison estate.
- b. Empower governors to commission the education provision most likely to meet employers' requirements and prisoners' needs.
- c. Provide the right tools and support to governors to make best use of these powers.
- d. Establish the Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway as a new vocational route for governors to make use of.
- e. Couple greater powers for governors with greater accountability for performance.

## Prison education

18. For a prisoner, the first step on the path to employment on release is acquiring the right skills during their sentence. We know that, for the population as a whole, skills have a clear link with employment. For example, in July to September 2017, the employment rate for those educated to A\* to C grade GCSE standard was 72% compared with 43% for those with no qualifications.
19. Many prisoners enter prison with low skills. Over half of prisoners were assessed on reception as having the English and maths abilities of a primary school pupil. A survey of prisoners sentenced in 2005/06 found that only 53% had any qualifications at all, compared with 85% of the general population and 42% have been permanently excluded from school-age education. Meanwhile, more recent estimates show that one third self-identify as having a learning difficulty.
20. This makes effective and relevant training vital for prisoner rehabilitation. The evidence shows that prison learners were significantly more likely to be in P45 employment than non-learners one year from release. Evidence suggests that engaging in education in prison may reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Ipsos MORI research commissioned by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Department for Education (DfE) in 2015 showed that offenders who participate in education are significantly less likely to reoffend within 12 months of release – 7.5 percentage points less likely.
21. In Wales, prison education is a devolved matter, delivered by HMPPS Wales on behalf of the Welsh government. This chapter therefore focuses principally on England.

## Progress to date

22. In England, we have taken steps to raise the standard and consistency of education and training across the prison estate.
23. Since 2014 there have been mandatory reception assessments in maths and English for all prisoners, providing a baseline for their literacy and numeracy levels.
24. In May 2016, Dame Sally Coates published an important review of prison education in England, commissioned by the Ministry of Justice. Since then we have made significant progress in taking forward her recommendations including implementing basic skills assessments of every prisoner at the beginning and end of their sentence to measure the progress they make, a common curriculum and awarding bodies for the most popular subjects across the whole prison estate and a commitment to devolve education budgets to local governors from April 2019, with the procurement process to deliver this now launched. The review did not cover prison education in Wales but the findings have informed developments.
25. In August 2017, these assessments were also introduced for prisoners when transferring between prisons and when released from prison. The data resulting from these assessments will be considered when developing performance indicators that will demonstrate the progress made by prisoners in these key subject areas and help to drive improvements in prisons' education strategies.

26. To further prevent disruption to prisoners' education following prison transfers, we have also appointed common awarding organisations for each of the seven most popular subjects in prison education. These subjects include the core curriculum areas of maths, English, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) as well as catering and hospitality, construction, planning and the built environment, and cleaning and facilities management. This means a prisoner who starts a qualification in one prison will be able to complete it at another rather than starting again as they move across the prison estate.
27. Individual prisons have also built some highly effective partnerships with employers to deliver vocational training. The Halfords employment academies at Drake Hall and Onley are great examples of offenders being trained in skills that can lead to full-time employment on release.
28. To enable prison governors to innovate further, they were given the chance to spend up to 10% of their education budget to commission provision locally in July 2017 and this has proved a successful precursor to greater governor empowerment.
29. Digital delivery and support for education can reap dividends in prison. For example, digitally delivered in-cell learning can help engage and educate hard-to-reach and vulnerable prisoners. Remote access to education and training material from the wings of a prison could help all prisoners continue to learn during difficult regime periods, when it might prove hard to get them to education spaces.
30. In the future we want to see all prisoners have the chance to access increased education opportunities through digital technology. Dame Sally Coates stated, as part of her prison education review recommendations;  
*'There should... be work carried out to accelerate the testing and use of 'in-cell' or tablet learning technology (including the capability to provide teaching via video links).'*
31. Pursuing greater availability and use of technology in-cell and on wings is also of benefit to wider areas of prison life. Lord Farmer's review on *'The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties'* recommended that virtual visits (using video calling technology) should be available for the small percentage of families or individual family members who cannot visit frequently or at all due to infirmity, distance or other factors. Technology introduced to support education could be used to deliver against this recommendation and other important areas such as allowing prisoners greater access to pastoral resources and support from their cells and such like.
32. We will continue to support projects that are testing the use of laptop and tablet technology, as we look forward to a system which takes full advantage of digital technology and uses it to improve not just a prisoner's rehabilitation journey but also their wider wellbeing whilst in custody.
33. We are also encouraging greater digital innovation from new education suppliers in how they deliver their services, and each has been specifically asked to detail their plans as part of the new education framework procurement.
34. All digital technology development and innovation in prisons will need to adhere to strict security standards and testing, but we will not let this be a barrier to progress.

35. Thanks to ongoing reform and the hard work of those in the system, education in prisons has improved year on year. Based on inspection reports published in the year, Ofsted's judgement on the quality of education delivered by OLASS providers has improved from 51% good or outstanding in [FY] 2014–15 to 70% in 2017–18.
36. The Ofsted Chief Inspector's annual report for [AY] 2016/17 reported the overall effectiveness of learning and skills and work activities (i.e. a broader judgement incorporating the effectiveness of the prison's leadership and management) at 56% good or outstanding, 16 percentage points higher than the previous year.
37. In Wales initial assessments are delivered by the providers of education and we are piloting the Welsh Government's Wales Essential Skills Toolkit at HMP Cardiff which assesses literacy, numeracy and digital literacy and provides resources to improve skills. We will consider the roll out of the online system to other prisons in Wales which will reduce the need to duplicate assessments when offenders transfer between prisons in Wales. Further developments include a strategic review to improve provision and links with employers working with the Regional Skills Partnerships in Wales.

### **Challenges ahead**

38. However, whilst provision is improving, education in custody remains by far the lowest performer in the Further Education sector. Ofsted rated 44% of prisons as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' in 2016/17.
39. Too many prisoners are reaching the end of their sentence without securing basic skills in English and maths that are so vital in securing lasting employment on release. Importantly, education has also not been closely tailored to the requirements of employers or the needs of different cohorts of prisoners. As a consequence, there are too many low-level qualifications being delivered that reap little to no reward for ex-offenders when trying to secure a job. We need a prison education system that puts people on the path to employment on release, rather than one producing qualifications that lack currency in the labour market. There is more we can do to make sure education and training in prison lives up to this vision.

### **Our approach**

40. To reform prison education in England we will:
  - a. Establish consistency and minimum standards in a few key areas across the prison estate.
  - b. Empower governors to commission the education provision most likely to meet employers' requirements and prisoners' needs.
  - c. Provide the right tools and support to governors to make the best use of these powers.
  - d. Establish a new vocational training route – the Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway – for governors to make use of.
  - e. Couple greater powers for governors with greater accountability for performance.

***Consistency and minimum standards***

41. Consistency across the prison estate is necessary in some areas, such as assessment/awarding bodies, so that prisoners can move from one prison to another without disrupting their education.
42. There is also a role for the centre in setting minimum standards and expectations. That is why we will be rolling out new mandated personal learning plans, offering a consistent digital format across the prison estate from which data can be collected and monitored to understand prisoners' progress. Learning plans should be integrated where possible with other prisoner plans – notably sentence plans – to ensure that this is part of a coherent overall approach to the way they are managed in custody.
43. Our vision is that learning plans will act as the link between aspirations, training, work in prisons and a job on release. They will also contribute to smooth transitions for prisoners between prisons, so that prisoners are not asked the same questions repeatedly.
44. But there is only so much that can and should be coordinated from Whitehall. Governors know their own prisoners best and, given the right tools, are in the best position to ensure that training is relevant to the needs of employers. Giving governors control over education contracts also provides an opportunity to integrate prison education more effectively into prison regimes.

***Governor empowerment***

45. Governors in England will be fully in charge of their education provision from April 2019. They will set the strategy, commission the providers and manage its delivery. Devolution of education budgets to governors will be supported by a reviewed funding formula which will take into account the number, type and needs of different prison populations.
46. To deliver this, we launched the procurement for the new Prison Education Framework in England in February 2018. Once in place, groups of governors will choose the provider that best meets their needs and expectations in providing the core curriculum and those other elements of their education requirement that benefit from consistent delivery over a number of years. In doing so, we will ensure a tailored approach in each area whilst securing quality and consistent provision for their shared prisoners, and achieving value for money for the taxpayer.
47. To complement the Prison Education Framework, we are developing a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) in England. This will enable governors to commission bespoke education in their own establishments quickly and with minimal bureaucracy. The DPS is a more flexible system, meaning it is highly suited to smaller suppliers, local and third sector organisations. This will enhance governors' ability to find the training most responsive to employers' requirements and most appropriate for prisoners' learning needs.
48. A governor will not always have to use the DPS for their specialist provision needs. If their main education provider can supply the required service, then they can secure it through them if they wish, but there will be no obligation to do so.



49. We will also significantly reduce the regulation from the centre regarding how and where education budgets are spent. We are in the process of reviewing the five education-related Prison Service Instructions (PSIs). We will strip out the proliferation of orders and instructions that have built up over the years. There will be a policy framework that replaces the PSIs for England and a separate one for Wales. They will be brief and state clearly the elements of service delivery that governors are duty bound to follow. All other suggestions and further non-mandatory requirements will either be deleted entirely or placed in guidance. This will give governors further freedom to deliver education that is focused not on compliance with rules and processes, but rather on getting prisoners into employment on release.
50. The Coates Review acknowledged that the National Careers Service in England was delivering its services in a crowded environment, with multiple employment advice and support services operating in our prisons and Through the Gate. This has led to duplication and wasted resource.
51. That is why we have taken the decision not to extend the current National Careers Service contract. By extending the National Careers Service contract further, we would have incurred significant costs and continued the duplication of effort in this area.
52. In partnership with front line staff, we are developing a new approach which will allow individual governors to commission the right information, advice and guidance for their establishment. They will be able to consider the particular needs of their cohorts, the services already delivered and areas where gaps exist, and to commission support that plugs those gaps and joins up elements of support into a coherent whole.

### ***Tools and support***

53. We understand that governors in England will need the right tools and support to make the most of these new powers over education, information, advice and guidance.
54. We will build the capability and capacity of governors and their teams to design their curriculums, navigate provider markets and manage quality services in their prisons.
55. This will be a new way of working for governors and in a specialist area with which many may not be familiar. We will make sure they have the support and training they need to make the most of this new empowered approach, focusing especially on giving access to the expertise needed to guide them through the commissioning process. Expert commercial advice will be available centrally to enable governors to assess options and then decide which commissioning model best suits their needs. This means governors will be supported as they plan and then commission their education provision.
56. We will also do more to help governors understand what employers are looking for from prison education.
57. The New Futures Network (NFN), described in Chapter 3, will be a key source of intelligence for governors about the requirements of employers in different sectors. NFN experts, placed in every geographical prison group across England and Wales, will be responsible for engaging employers and brokering partnerships with prisons.

They will feed back key messages about the skills and qualifications that particular employers are looking for.

58. NFN will also make use of EMSI, a labour market data tool. EMSI draws together a range of government data sets to produce labour market information and trends which can be broken down by sector and geographical area. For example, it can identify which sectors provide the most employment in a particular area, how employment in those sectors breaks down by occupational code and what the typical wages and qualifications for those jobs are. All this will help governors develop a clear picture of employers' requirements, ensuring that they commission the training best suited to meeting those needs.

### ***Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway***

59. A further tool available to governors in England and Wales, to help them link training with employment opportunities, will be the Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway (PAP). The PAP will be an alternative means of getting a qualification and work experience while in custody. The formal 12-month apprenticeship on release will give the prisoner the chance to have a long period of resettlement in the community with a guaranteed job and a guaranteed income.
60. The Pathway will be targeted at specific sectors, where there are staff and skills shortages, such as the construction industry. The greater powers being devolved to prison governors will help ensure that training is sufficiently tailored to the requirements of employers in these sectors.
61. In Wales governors are required to work with the Regional Skills Partnerships who have employer links and develop annual partnership plans with labour market information which can inform the curriculum and employment on release.
62. The development of the Pathway has been met with enthusiasm and support from prisoners, governors, employers, industry bodies and third sector organisations. We are also working with HMPPS Wales to build on the opportunities presented by the Welsh Government's wider strategy for Apprenticeships in Wales.
63. The first Pathway began at HMP Feltham in July 2017. Pathways in Wales based on construction and logistics are being developed where the nature of the funding regime provides different opportunities.
64. The Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway will be another option available to empowered governors to offer opportunities to prisoners and employers to have high-quality jobs and high-quality employees.

### **Case study: Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway at Feltham**

The Prisoner Apprenticeship Pathway at Feltham was previously run by Carillion and has since been adopted by Gov Facility Services Limited (GFSL), the new government-owned facilities management company. The Pathway is based on progression from vocational training into work placements with the facilities management team at Feltham. This allows prisoners to apply the skills that they are learning at the same time as contributing to decent, well-functioning prisons – for example by playing a role in maintenance and repair work in the prison. As a result, the Pathway is already delivering a number of benefits, including:

- a. Improving decency in prisons with better decorated and cleaner living environments with potential to reduce levels of vandalism.
- b. Increasing purposeful activity and time out of cell with prisoners engaged within a real working environment.
- c. Supporting prisoners' rehabilitation through enhancing their employability and self-esteem.

### **Accountability**

65. To match the greater powers and support being provided to governors in England, there will be greater accountability.
66. We are working on a system to intervene if education in individual prisons is not meeting expected standards.
67. The triggers for intervention will be performance data and indicators (both national and contractual), and external scrutiny by the inspectorates. The new system will offer different interventions based upon local intelligence and the severity of the issue. This approach will differentiate between long-term problems and shorter-term performance dips.
68. We expect intervention to range from simple conversations to understand local issues, (such as governors who are new in post inheriting poorly performing provision) to requiring and monitoring formal improvement and rectification plans or more hands-on approaches such as embedding temporary educational support staff in prisons.
69. Performance management of individual prisons will be supplemented by national leadership, coordination and guidance. This will manage risk, recognise and respond swiftly to any developing national trends, and make links between patterns in different prisons.
70. We will set out more detail on this approach in due course.

## **Conclusion**

71. This chapter has set out our approach to ensuring that prison education reflects the requirements of employers and the needs of prisoners, so that it can best contribute to employment outcomes on release.
72. The next chapter addresses the role of work during prisoners' sentences in setting them on a pathway to employment on release.

## Chapter 2: Prison work

### Chapter summary

Work is a key part of a successful prison. It provides purposeful activity, giving structure and meaning to prisoners' days, which contributes to more stable prison environments. The work done by prisoners also helps prisons function efficiently.

At best, work done by prisoners during their sentences also helps develop many of the skills and attributes needed on release, from a work ethic to vocational skills.

Work within the prison walls can and should be complimented by placements in real workplaces, including through Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) where appropriate. Workplace ROTL gives prisoners a chance to prove they are skilled, hardworking and trustworthy.

New research just published by the Ministry of Justice strongly suggests that there is a beneficial impact from prisoners going out to work on ROTL and supports what previous evidence had long suggested about the benefits of temporary release in terms of reducing reoffending and improving employment outcomes.

We have taken steps to increase the number of prisoners working during their sentences. In 2016, over 11,000 prisoners at one time worked in 'prison industries' within the walls of prisons. They deliver on contracts for commercial companies and other government departments. A further 13,000 worked to provide 'prison services', such as cleaning prison wings or cooking in prison kitchens.

This work has provided purposeful activity and helped prisons run efficiently. However, more needs to be done to ensure that work done in prison contributes directly to employment on release. Prisoners need to gain the kind of experience that employers are looking for. This requires a clear link between prison work and employment opportunities on release.

Meanwhile, the number of ROTL placements has fallen in recent years, limiting the ability of prisoners – when properly risk assessed – to gain experience in real workplaces during their sentence. Our vision is that when an offender enters prison they are immediately put on a path to employment on release.

To ensure prison work contributes as effectively as possible to this we will:

- a. Develop a new approach, through a partnership with The Clink, to link work done in prison services, such as cooking in prison kitchens, with employment on release.
- b. Consult governors and employers on proposals to increase the opportunities available to prisoners to gain experience in real workplaces through ROTL.

### Prison work

73. Work is a key part of a successful prison, serving a number of important functions. At the most basic level, work provides prisoners with purposeful activity. Whether it is work in 'prison industries' (delivering contracts for commercial companies or

government departments) or 'prison services' (helping prisons themselves function), it gives structure and meaning to prisoners' days.

74. Getting prisoners out of their cells to work in prison is therefore an important element of our drive to improve prisoners' mental and physical health, reduce drug use and cut violence in prisons.
75. The work done by prisoners also helps prisons function efficiently. In providing prison services, prisoners have roles in everything from cleaning wings and fixing windows to cooking meals and working as prison barbers.
76. This work in prison services limits the cost of prison to the taxpayer. It also allows funding to be spent on other priorities in individual prisons, such as security measures or offender behaviour programmes, which tackle the root causes of offending.
77. The most important role of prison work is to prepare prisoners for employment on release. Around two thirds of prisoners were unemployed before entering custody and therefore may not have good employment records to recommend them to employers on release.
78. As a result, prison has an important role to play in developing the skills and work ethic that employers are looking for. Employers expect people to be reliable, cooperative and disciplined in a workplace setting, as well as equipped with the vocational skills required in their industry. Work in prison, either through prison industries or prison services, can help prisoners build these capabilities.
79. Work placements with employers outside the prison walls, through ROTL, take this a stage further. Workplace ROTL – subject to proper risk assessment – gives prisoners the chance to apply their skills and prove they are hardworking and trustworthy.
80. In some instances, workplace ROTL can encourage employers to recruit ex-prisoners on release, having got to know them during their sentences. In other instances, they help prisoners without much experience acquire essential references to take to other employers.
81. Research just published by the Ministry of Justice indicates that, for prisoners given at least one ROTL, additional releases were associated with small but significant reductions in rates of reoffending and frequency of re-offences. This research is the first large scale study of the impact of temporary release in England and Wales. The analysis included data on over 1.5 million temporary releases involving over 23,000 offenders.
82. These findings strongly suggest that there is a beneficial impact from workplace ROTL. They support what previous evidence had suggested about the benefits of temporary release in reducing reoffending and improving employment outcomes.

## Progress to date

83. Over the last two parliaments there has been a renewed emphasis on getting prisoners working during their sentence.
84. In 2012, ONE3ONE Solutions was created as a part of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), to increase the commercial work done by prisoners in prison industries. It has made important strides – in 2010/11 just 7,500 prisoners were employed in workshops, compared with over 11,000 employed in workshops today. These prisoners work for businesses in a range of industries, from call centres to manufacturing workshops.
85. In addition to the work done nationally by ONE3ONE solutions, prisons also build their own links with local employers, providing work for prison industries in their establishments or workplace ROTL. In total, a third of prisoners now work in either prison industries or prison services.
86. Many prisons also now run peer support schemes where designated prisoners deliver activity-based support either part-time or full-time to their peers, for example to support education and learning. We recognise the potential value of this work and so have equipped prison staff with a practical toolkit to help them make the most of this approach. The toolkit highlights the need for thorough peer worker training and details how staff can better link schemes, and any skills acquired, to work on release.
87. We also recognise that getting prisoners working requires a well-functioning prison regime, with prisoners moved safely between cells and workshops – and being properly supervised while they are there. This process places demands on governors' resources.
88. The recruitment of 2,500 new prison staff across England and Wales will provide governors with greater capacity to deliver this. We are now nine months ahead of target on appointing those prison officers. The new officers will help deliver prison regimes that get prisoners working during their sentences.

## Challenges ahead

89. Work in prisons has played an important role both in providing purposeful activity and in helping prisons function efficiently, but much more can be done to link work done during prison sentences with employment opportunities on release.
90. For example, around 300 businesses already work with prisons to provide work in prison industries through ONE3ONE Solutions. However, ONE3ONE was established primarily to get prisoners working in prison, rather than to focus on employment on release. The work brought into prisons needs to be linked with a strategy to get prisoners into sustained employment at the end of custodial sentences.
91. In particular, there is untapped potential in the work that thousands of prisoners do to deliver prison services. These prisoners are gaining daily experience, doing work like cooking, cleaning or working as prison barbers, but not enough has been done to supplement this with the specific training that employers in those industries are looking for. Nor have prisoners working in these roles been steered towards workplace ROTL that broaden their experience and enhance their CVs in those industries.

92. ROTL numbers have fallen by over a third between 2013 and 2017, producing nearly 200,000 fewer releases involving 4,000 fewer prisoners, preventing prisoners from gaining vital work experience with employers beyond the prison walls. We need to make sure that, where the risk to the public is low, more prisoners are gaining work experience through workplace ROTL.
93. Women remain almost twice as likely to be allowed ROTL than men but have also found it difficult to access ROTL recently. We want to see more women taking ROTL to the workplace and to maintain family ties.

### **Our approach**

94. To ensure prison work contributes as effectively as possible to this we will:
  - a. Develop a new approach, through a partnership with The Clink, to link work done in prison services, such as cooking in prison kitchens, with employment on release.
  - b. Consult governors and employers on proposals to increase the opportunities available to prisoners to gain experience in real workplaces through ROTL.

### ***The Clink partnership***

95. Linking the work that prisoners do in prison services to employment opportunities on release will require experimentation and learning. To support this process of innovation, we are adopting a new approach at HMP Bristol, HMP Styal and HMP Risley, in partnership with The Clink.
96. The Clink is a charity which supports prisoners into employment on release by training them in catering whilst in custody. Four public Clink restaurants already operate in prisons across the UK at HMP High Down, HMP Styal, HMP Brixton and HMP Cardiff. Prisoners staff the restaurants, including working in the kitchens and serving paying customers. Each prisoner works and trains for 40 hours per week. In February 2018 The Clink restaurant at Brixton was rated as the twelfth best restaurant in London on Trip Advisor and the Clink is rated as the number one restaurant in Cardiff.
97. The Clink trains up to 160 offenders a day, with more than 800 offenders having gone through its programme. It operates a five-step rehabilitation model:
  - a. Training, verified by the Clink.
  - b. Work experience, facilitated in the prison kitchen.
  - c. A workplace ROTL placement at one of the 300 Clink partners in the catering industry.
  - d. Employment on release, brokered by the Clink.
  - e. Mentoring support, delivered by the Clink and supported financially by the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC).

Analysis suggests its model reduces the likelihood of reoffending by between 3 and 15 percentage points.

98. The partnership at HMP Bristol, HMP Styal and HMP Risley seeks to apply key elements of this approach to the work that prisoners do working in prison kitchens.



99. These prisons have applied the Clink model within prison kitchens (the biggest employment area in prisons – 2,000 people a day in work) to provide a direct route into the contract catering industry for ex-prisoners on release.
100. In the partnership, instructors are placed in prison kitchens. The instructors train prisoners while they work, adding supplementary training at the end of the day and then accrediting learning. The Clink then arrange for a workplace ROTL placement in the catering industry and, where possible, employment on release. Prisoners will be supported through this process by a mentor.
101. If successful, this model may be replicable for other roles and sectors. In particular, there is an opportunity for many more prisoners to receive training while they work in prison services, coupled with proper accreditation and opportunities to gain further experience through workplace ROTL. The model has the potential to build clear pathways from the work that prisoners are doing during custodial sentences to opportunities in the job market on release.

### **Work on ROTL**

102. The Clink partnership exemplifies the value of workplace ROTL, as do some of the individual stories below. We have considered the impact of the changes made to ROTL since 2013 and concluded that some of the unintended consequences they produced must be addressed in order to make the most of the benefits ROTL brings.

#### **ROTL Case studies**

Yasmin used workplace ROTL to start work at an Engineering firm in the West Midlands and since release has successfully applied for an apprenticeship and started full time work. She is currently studying for a BTEC level 3 in Engineering and hoping to study for a degree. Yasmin feels that finding work on release has given her a positive attitude, leading to positive outcomes.

Mikey works for Balfour Beatty and started out on workplace ROTL meaning he had three months under his belt before being released, so could hit the ground running. His advice to others given the opportunity to work on ROTL is to “Grab it with both hands”.

Lauren started working with Greggs on ROTL and, following release is now aiming to become a senior manager and start to save for herself and her daughter. She said that without this opportunity, she would have struggled to find a job. As well as the skills Greggs gave her in food preparation, baking, stock management and cash handling, she gained confidence to interact positively with the public.

103. Alongside this strategy we are consulting governors and employers on making changes to ROTL practice. We are clear that no changes will be made to operational policy that undermine the quality of risk assessment and suitability processes that protect the public. Instead, the aim of the proposals is to enhance governors’ discretion – in line with the rest of this strategy – and to improve access to ROTL within a robust risk assessment framework.

### **Opportunities in priority sectors**

Workplace ROTL will be an important tool for building 'win-win' partnerships with employers in priority sectors such as catering, construction and agriculture/horticulture. For prisoners, workplace ROTL is a chance to develop their skills, boost their CV and make an impression on potential employers. As such, it is a key tool for prisoner rehabilitation. For employers, these placements provide an opportunity to evaluate the skills and work ethic of the prisoners involved. When successful, this can help fill skills gaps, or labour shortages in the short-term, while developing potential employees in the longer term.

The benefits of workplace ROTL are magnified when they are linked to work and training already being done by prisoners within prison walls. For example, there are already around 2,000 prisoners working daily in prison kitchens. A number of prisons are also investing in equipment to train prisoners as baristas. Many of the prisoners involved have skills that could be put to use and developed further through workplace ROTL placements in the catering industry. ROTL placements then have the potential to develop into job opportunities where individuals can demonstrate they have the skills and aptitudes that employers are looking for.

Similarly, the prison estate retains commercial horticulture work in over 30 prisons across the country, so many prisoners already have skills useful for horticultural work. The core work for commercial horticulture in the estate is the production of salad crops using polythene tunnels or greenhouses, vegetables in open ground, annual bedding plants or nursery stock production. This also provides scope for win-win partnerships with employers in the sector, starting with ROTL placements, which may contribute to filling skills gaps for employers, whilst contributing to prisoners' rehabilitation into society.

The proposed reforms to ROTL, outlined in this chapter, would be of benefit to this initiative, once implemented, as will the greater flexibility for governors to tailor education provision in their establishments.

### **Conclusion**

104. This chapter has focused on work done by prisoners during their sentences. It has set out how we will ensure that work in prisons does not just help prisons function efficiently, or provide prisoners with purposeful activity, but actively contribute towards employment on release.
105. The next chapter turns to how we create those opportunities on release and ensure that ex-prisoners are in the best position possible to take them.

## Chapter 3: Employment on release

### Chapter summary

At the heart of this strategy is the recognition that employment on release is a key component of a prisoner's rehabilitation. We also recognise that the job of delivering this does not stop at the prison gate. Ex-prisoners need supervision and support that is coherent and effective, particularly when they face multiple problems in their lives. Working with ex-prisoners is also only half the job. Employers in all sectors are also key partners – and must be persuaded that employing ex-prisoners will benefit their businesses.

We have taken important steps to engage businesses and ensure that ex-prisoners receive the right supervision on release.

We already work closely with business-led organisations such as the Employers Forum for Reducing Reoffending (EFFRR), which supports businesses considering employing offenders. We have also supported the Ban the Box initiative, including adopting it across the civil service.

Alongside our efforts to engage and persuade businesses to employ ex-offenders, we have also reformed the way we manage prisoners when they are released from custody. This includes mandating a minimum of 12 months supervision for all ex-prisoners on their release and establishing the Through the Gate model of resettlement support, provided by Community Rehabilitation Companies during the last 12 weeks of a custodial sentence.

However, many employers are still sceptical, at best, about recruiting ex-prisoners to work for them at the end of their sentences. There are also challenges in the way we support and supervise ex-offenders themselves on release, which affect the chances of an individual desisting from crime and holding down a job. Despite the recent focus on Through the Gate provision, there is still too much fragmentation between prisons, probation services and other services.

This strategy marks a step change in our engagement with employers and a renewed focus on effective, coherent supervision of prisoners on release. We will:

- a. Recruit ex-prisoners directly into the civil service, providing jobs and leading by example to other employers.
- b. Consider how to take forward a NICs holiday alongside wider work on employer obligations and incentives.
- c. Launch the New Futures Network (NFN) to engage and persuade employers to take on ex-prisoners, with experts placed in every geographical prison group in a phased roll-out across England and Wales.
- d. Work with DWP to explore ways to deliver enhancements to the current benefit claim process so that ex-prisoners have easier access to financial support on the day of release where needed.
- e. Provide incentives for prisons and NPS/CRCs to work together more effectively in the future on employment on release.

## Employment on release

106. At the heart of this strategy is the recognition that employment on release is a key component of a prisoner's rehabilitation. Work provides people with an income, but it reaps more benefit than just that. It also establishes a daily routine, boosts self-esteem, and gives people a stake in society. It is no surprise that those ex-prisoners who find work on release are less likely to reoffend than those who do not.
107. We also recognise that the job of delivering this does not stop at the prison gate. Ex-prisoners need supervision and support that is coherent and effective, particularly when they face multiple problems in their lives. Finding and keeping hold of a job is far easier if probation services and others can help ex-prisoners stay off drugs, manage mental health problems or find suitable accommodation.
108. Working with ex-prisoners is only half the job. Employers in all sectors are also key partners, and must be persuaded that employing prisoners will make a contribution not just to society but to their own bottom line. This requires advocacy and persuasion in some cases, as well as the infrastructure to make sure that prisoners leave prison with the skills that employers are looking for. The NFN lead for Wales will be able to use the Regional Skills Partnerships to support engagement with employers.

## Progress to date

### *Business-to-business advice*

109. Businesses say that advice from other businesses is vital in helping them understand both the challenges and opportunities that come with employing ex-offenders. These business-to-business relationships can be a key source of impartial advice, allowing organisations to learn from the experiences of others. They can help put perceived risks in context and provide reassurance where necessary.
110. To reflect this, MoJ and HMPPS have long-standing relationships with non-statutory partners, including the Employers Forum for Reducing Reoffending (EFFRR) and Business in the Community (BITC).
111. As an independent, business-led organisation, EFFRR pairs businesses considering employing ex-offenders with those who already do so. Its members include DHL, Halfords, Sodexo, Marks & Spencer and Greggs. BITC also provides a peer support structure for businesses, through its Reducing Reoffending Network.

### *Ban the Box*

112. BITC has also led the national campaign to Ban the Box. This campaign, supported by the Government, encourages employers to remove the tick box from application forms which ask about criminal convictions, instead addressing this later in the recruitment process. This approach gives ex-offenders the chance to demonstrate relevant skills and experience ahead of formally disclosing any convictions.
113. The Government recognises the importance of leading by example in this area. The Ban the Box campaign was formally launched across the Civil Service on the 17th October 2016, with 380,000 roles (97%) identified as suitable for the removal of the

'box' that asks about criminal convictions at the initial stages of the recruitment process. The MoJ has already banned the box.

114. The Civil Service Jobs system, which is used for approximately 70% of recruitment in the Civil Service, has been designed to remove the box asking about criminal convictions from application forms as standard. The Civil Service is now implementing this initiative to ensure its roles attract the widest possible range of applicants.
115. We are also seeing progress on Ban the Box with local authorities. Bristol City Council has recently decided to Ban the Box. We will work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to encourage all local authorities to do the same.
116. In addition, Cabinet Office will launch a Call for Evidence about employing people with a criminal record. The Call for Evidence will invite other employers, organisations and individuals to detail how they support people with a criminal conviction to find work. The purpose of the Call for Evidence will be to map the range of initiatives already undertaken by employers and identify those having evidence of a significant impact.
117. In total, more than 90 employers across the public and private sectors, covering more than 720,000 roles, have committed to creating fair employment opportunities for ex-offenders. This includes Boots, Interserve and Ricoh.
118. Signing up to Ban the Box has given many employers access to diverse, untapped talent that they may not have considered previously. Over 10 million people in the UK have a criminal record and the Lammy Review of the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) Individuals, argued that criminal records checks may provide additional stigma for that cohort.

### ***Managing ex-offenders***

119. Alongside our efforts to engage and persuade businesses to employ ex-offenders, we have also reformed the way we manage prisoners when they are released from custody.
120. Until 2014, probation services in England and Wales were delivered by local Probation Trusts. Under this system, although prisoners serving sentences of a year or more received supervision from probation officers on release, those serving sentences of less than a year did not.
121. Given the high reoffending rates of ex-prisoners serving short sentences, the 2014 Offender Rehabilitation Act altered the Government's approach. It mandated a minimum of 12 months supervision for all ex-prisoners on release from prison, no matter the length of their sentence. The reform reflected the fact that many ex-prisoners who have served short sentences also face multiple problems in their lives, which need to be managed closely with the right supervision and support.
122. At the same time, prison and probation services were reorganised. 89 prisons were designated resettlement prisons, with a target that 80% of prisoners would spend the final three months of their prison sentences in them. CRCs are now expected to

provide resettlement services to these prisoners in the final 12 weeks of their sentences, as part of a Through the Gate model.

123. For example, Kent, Surrey and Sussex have secured a number of partnerships with employers willing to provide opportunities to ex-offenders. To support these partnerships, the Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC has agreed to support a job club, running for 10 sessions. This Through the Gate service will be facilitated by Education, Training and Employment Coaches, provided by the CRC. At the job club, prisoners will benefit from supervised e-access to job sites, space for CV writing, disclosure advice, interview preparation and training in skills for work such as communication, time-keeping and relationship management.
124. The Through the Gate model includes working with ex-offenders to develop a resettlement plan which seeks to address accommodation, education, training and employment, as well as finance, debt and benefits. On release, the NPS supervises high risk ex-offenders, while CRCs manage those classified as lower risk.
125. Finding and keeping a job is far easier if an ex-prisoner is in suitable accommodation. The Government has committed to ending rough sleeping by 2027 and will be publishing a strategy in July 2018 setting out how it will achieve this ambitious target. As part of the strategy we will also be working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government to explore how best to support ex-offenders with their accommodation needs as they are released from prison.

## Challenges ahead

126. However, despite these efforts we recognise that significant challenges remain. Many employers are still sceptical, at best, about recruiting ex-prisoners to work for them at the end of their sentences. A YouGov study revealed that 50% of employers would not even consider employing an ex-offender.
127. The YouGov study found that employers were concerned about ex-offenders' social skills, their work and capability skills and the reputational risk to their businesses. Yet, we know from employers such as Timpson that the ex-offenders they have employed are some of their most loyal and committed employees. There is more we must do to promote ex-offenders as a reliable workforce and make the process of hiring ex-offenders more straightforward.
128. There are also challenges in the way we support and supervise ex-offenders themselves on release, which affect the chances of an individual desisting from crime and holding down a job. Despite the recent focus on Through the Gate provision, there is still too much fragmentation between prisons, probation services and other services. In some cases, CRCs themselves need to improve, with Through-the-Gate services not meeting our expectations.
129. This strategy marks a step change in our engagement with employers – and a renewed focus on effective, coherent supervision of ex-prisoners on release. We will:
  - a. Recruit ex-prisoners directly into the civil service, providing jobs and acting as a role model for other employers.
  - b. We will consider how to take forward a NICs holiday alongside wider work on employer obligations and incentives.

- c. Use the national infrastructure of the New Futures Network (NFN) to engage and persuade employers to take on ex-prisoners across England and Wales.
- d. Work with DWP to explore ways to deliver enhancements to the current benefit claim process so that ex-prisoners have easier access to financial support on the day of release where needed.
- e. Ensure that prisons and NPS/CRCs work together more seamlessly, by sharpening and aligning accountability for ex-prisoners' employment on release.

## **Our approach**

### ***Civil service recruitment***

130. The Civil Service has led by example on Ban the Box and will continue to do so through 'Going Forward Into Employment', an ex-offender recruitment pilot. Under this pilot scheme, which was introduced this year, government departments will place ex-offenders into fixed-term office-based roles. Ex-offenders will be matched to jobs by prison staff, Civil Service local and the Going Forward Into Employment board. The job matches will be based on the skills and experience of the ex-offenders for each available role.
131. Where ex-offenders are brought into the Civil Service under a specific exception to the standard approach of fair and open recruitment, it is proposed that temporary roles could be converted to permanent positions 12 months after the original appointment. This would need to be done on the basis of a fair and merit-based process, approved in advance by the Civil Service Commission.
132. The pilot is being launched on a small scale in the North West, before the model is rolled out to other regions throughout 2018. We will formally review the pilot and, if it is successful and the decision is taken to proceed, we propose to take a staggered approach to this initiative – starting relatively small and building up in the same manner as the government apprenticeship scheme which posted 100 apprentices across the civil service in its first year, before increasing to larger numbers in subsequent years.
133. Ten Government departments or agencies have agreed to support the pilot initiative including MoJ, Cabinet Office and HMRC.
134. During the pilot, ex-offenders will be placed into jobs at a variety of grades, dependent on their skills and experience. A variety of roles have been proposed by departments. We will also examine what more can be done to encourage similar practice in government supply chains.

### ***Financial incentives***

135. One approach used in other countries to encourage more ex-offenders into employment is to offer financial incentives to employers. In the United States (US) for example, The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a Federal tax credit available to employers who hire individuals from particular groups that face significant barriers to employment, including ex-felons. Evidence from the US indicates that this kind of financial incentive can have positive effects on the probability of individuals finding jobs, the length of employment once in work and the wages.

136. Also in the US, there are state-backed insurance policies designed to promote the employment of key groups, including ex-offenders. The Federal Bonding Program, sponsored by the Department for Labor, issues fidelity bonds. These bonds provide insurance to protect employers against theft, forgery, larceny, or embezzlement by an employee covered by the bond. The insurance is designed to mitigate the perceived risk of employing people from the target groups. The bonds are free of charge to both the applicant and the employer for 6 months. They can be issued for jobs in all states.
137. In the UK, the Work and Pensions select committee has recommended that the government should pilot incentives, using the tax system and public procurement for employers to take on ex-prisoners. This is a proposal that has been supported by leading employers. Meanwhile, the 2017 Conservative manifesto proposed a one-year holiday on Employer National Insurance Contributions for firms employing people who have committed a crime but repaid their debt to society.
138. We recognise the argument in favour of financial incentives and will balance this against wider government objectives. We will consider how to take forward a NICs holiday alongside wider work on employer obligations and incentives.

### ***New Futures Network***

139. ONE3ONE Solutions was established in 2012 with 'a mission to increase the productive, commercial work of prisoners.' The New Futures Network (NFN) will replace ONE3ONE Solutions. It will have a broader remit, a new approach and different structure.
140. NFN will have an explicit remit to broker partnerships between prisons and employers that create opportunities for ex-prisoners on release, in addition to delivering purposeful activity in prison. As such, it will be judged not just on whether more commercial companies provide work through prison industries, or whether more prisoners are engaged in a full working week – vital though those things are. In addition, it will be judged on the proportion of ex-prisoners entering employment on release and then staying in work.
141. This change in remit will mean that partnerships with private sector employers, or other government departments, will now also be judged through the prism of whether they are doing something useful for ex-prisoners in the long-term.
142. To support this approach, NFN will identify priority sectors to engage with. Priority sectors will be selected annually based on three factors:
- a. Labour market information, including the number of jobs in different sectors and the education level, or qualifications required, in those sectors.
  - b. An analysis of prison infrastructure, focusing on the capacity of the prison estate to provide prison work and high-quality training in those same sectors.
  - c. Consideration of the sectors likely to present the fewest legal or bureaucratic barriers to ex-prisoners' employment, including those related to criminal record checks and safeguarding.



143. NFN's priority sectors will be reviewed annually as the labour market changes and the prison estate and prison population evolve. In NFN's first year, the five priority sectors will be:
- a. Retail
  - b. Catering/hospitality
  - c. Construction
  - d. Manufacturing
  - e. Agriculture/horticulture.
144. We believe these sectors present 'win-win' opportunities to fill skills gaps and labour shortages for employers, whilst finding sustainable employment for ex-prisoners (see box below). NFN will be open to working with employers of all sizes and from all sectors but the focus on a few key sectors will ensure that employer outreach is targeted at those most likely to be disposed towards partnerships with prisons. This sector-driven approach will also provide a guide as to which workers guilds and trade unions to prioritise building relationships with.
145. A key difference in the NFN approach is that it will seek to link employers with the work prisoners do to deliver prison services. For example, where prisoners are already spending a working week cooking or cleaning to keep the prison functioning – as is the case in virtually every adult prison – NFN will engage employers in the catering and cleaning industries. It will explore how the thousands of prisoners doing daily work in prison services could be supplemented with training, or work placements on ROTL in relevant industries. Where ONE3ONE focused specifically on securing commercial contracts from prison industries, NFN will build on all the work done within the prison walls, covering both prison industries and prison services.
146. The way in which NFN will be structured will be vital in engaging and persuading enough employers to enter into those partnerships.
147. To provide a credible voice within its five priority sectors, a champion will be appointed to act as an advisor and ambassador to the network. These champions will be drawn from leading employers in each of the five sectors. They will help spread NFN's key messages and support the NFN to network effectively within the sector.
148. NFN will be established as an England and Wales network rather than one commissioned by individual governors. This reflects the 'network effect' of the service it is providing – the wider the network, the more useful it is to individual prisons. For example, a prison in Norfolk releasing prisoners into Portsmouth will now be connected to employers in that area through the national network.
149. To provide geographical reach, NFN will operate a 'hub and spoke' model. The hub will be a team operating nationally, contacting large employers and coordinating the work of the network as a whole.
150. The spokes in the network will be placed in each of the new geographical prison groups, in a phased roll-out across England and Wales, beginning in three areas. Their role will be to contact local/regional employers and follow up on contacts generated by the national hub. They will broker partnerships between prisons and employers, having engaged employers and fully understood their requirements. In

Wales the lead will be able to use the Regional Skills Partnerships to support engagement with employers.

151. NFN will make the case to employers that they should consider employing ex-prisoners on release. It will then work through the details of what a partnership with one or more prison could look like, based on the requirements of employers and the capacity of prisons to meet those requirements.
152. NFN will make use of EMSI, a labour market data tool procured by HMPPS. EMSI draws together data from a range of government data sets to produce labour market information and trends which can be broken down by sector and geographical area. For example, it can identify which sectors provide the most employment in an area, how employment in those sectors breaks down by occupational code and what typical wages and qualifications required for those jobs are. The tool also identifies leading employers in each sector, broken down by geography. This data tool will provide key intelligence for both the national hub and regional spokes.
153. Given the place-based role of the spokes – building relationships with employers in their areas – they will serve all adult prisons in those areas, including the long-term/high security estate and the female estate.
154. NFN will focus specifically on brokering partnerships between prisons and employers, but it will coordinate closely with other services. For example, it will provide feedback to prisons and training providers about the specific training that employers are looking for. It will ensure that DWP work coaches in prisons are aware of the opportunities likely to be available to prisoners so that they can link advice to likely opportunities and it will also work to ensure that CRCs and probation services are aware of job placements for ex-prisoners on release, so that they can best supervise and support the individuals involved.

## **Welfare**

155. A key source of support for job seekers is the welfare system. A fundamental principle is that it must always pay to work – and Universal Credit (UC) is at the heart of the Government's approach to this. UC marks a complete shift in the whole nature of Welfare by providing incentive and support to people to secure a better future for themselves and their families.
156. UC enables people to lift themselves and their children out of poverty. UC claimants spend more time looking for work, move into work quicker, are more likely to be in work, spend more time in work and earn more than their counterparts on Jobseekers Allowance.
157. At present DWP Prison Work Coaches provide support to prisoners prior to their release to make their claim to benefits. This includes support in gathering all the details and documentation needed to make their Universal Credit claim and booking an appointment at the local jobcentre on the day of release so they can complete their claim and access financial support immediately through advance payments. Recent changes to Universal Credit means all claimants, including prison leavers can apply for an advance payment of up to 100% of their expected monthly entitlement from day one of their claim.

158. Given prisoners cannot typically access the internet and as Universal Credit Full Service is a digital benefit, they currently cannot make an advance claim on the Universal Credit system prior to their release from prison.
159. We are working closely with colleagues in DWP to explore ways to deliver enhancements to the current benefit claim service with the aim of ensuring prison leavers have easier access to financial support on the day of release where needed. This work sits within the context of a wider national partnership agreement that we will establish with the DWP, which sets out clear roles and responsibilities for the various bodies involved in getting more ex-prisoners into employment in the future across England and Wales.

### ***Probation***

160. Prison and probation services must work together effectively if they are to provide effective supervision of prisoners on release, particularly when those prisoners face multiple problems in their lives.
161. Our aim is to ensure that prison and probation services, both NPS and CRCs, are more integrated in providing education and employment services to ex-offenders. Accountability for prisoners' employment on release is an important aspect of this.
162. We will collect data to track prisoners' employment on release and consider how to use it to measure the performance of both prisons and probation services to provide incentives for them to work together more effectively in the future.

### **Conclusion**

163. Despite the training and work experience that many prisoners benefit from in prison, only 17% of ex-prisoners find themselves in P45 employment a year after release. Progress depends on the willingness of employers to give opportunities to prisoners at the end of their sentences. Ex-offenders must also be able to take the opportunities available to them. This depends, in part, on having the right supervision and support structures around people when they leave prison. This chapter has set out how we intend to address these challenges as part of our overall vision to set each prisoner on a path to employment from the moment they enter a prison.

## Conclusion

164. Ensuring that more ex-prisoners find work is a key aspect of reducing reoffending. Many have multiple and complex problems, but finding and keeping a job can be the foundation for a different kind of life. Work provides not just an income but also structure, direction and self-worth.
165. We have made important progress in recent years, with improving standards in prison education and greater numbers of prisoners working in prison industries. Our objective is deliver more of this activity, not less in the future – but this document marks a step change in our efforts to link it to employment on release. Educational achievement and purposeful activity in prison are vital, but to capture their full value they must help ex-prisoners find and keep work.
166. Our vision is that when an offender enters prison they should be put, immediately, on the path to employment. This starts with prisoners themselves, who must be willing to engage positively with learning and work during their sentences. Our reforms will create the conditions that encourage this, from key workers holding individual prisoners to account under the Offender Management system, to the use of mechanisms like IEP to reinforce positive behaviour. Our proposed ROTL reforms are also a key part of this picture, providing well-behaved prisoners – properly risk assessed – with opportunities to build credible work experience.
167. Alongside prisoners willing to engage, we need a system set up to deliver. This must begin with rigorous, early assessment of each prisoner's education level, so that they have a learning plan that reflects their needs and is properly integrated with their sentence plan. This path to employment should continue with work and learning in prison that equips prisoners with the skills employers are looking for. To deliver this, prisons will have better connections with employers, through the New Futures Network, alongside more flexibility to commission the training they need.
168. The New Futures Network will also have a key role in opening up opportunities for ex-offenders when they are released from prison, though engaging and persuading sceptical employers that they can fill workforce gaps. Meanwhile, ex-offenders must be properly supervised and supported, so that they keep jobs when they find them. This requires better integration of prison and probation services.
169. Taken together, this amounts to a much sharper focus not just on purposeful activity during prison sentences, but on sustained employment on release. We know this can make a difference not just to ex-prisoners themselves but to society as a whole. The prize is lower reoffending rates, savings to the tax payer and enhanced public safety.

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