

Supplementary written evidence from Weston College

- **Are there currently differences in the provision of education services offered in women's and men's prisons. If there is, should there be?**

The provision in the female estate is currently very similar to the male estate apart from some specific vocational courses such as nail art, hair dressing and beauty related courses. It must also be recognised that the goals and career aspirations will differ for each learner. E.g. a female learner's key priority goal may be to be reunited with their children upon release and not specifically employment related at that stage. There has been an increase in vocational and construction based courses, but this is an area for development within female prisons. Trauma informed courses are often delivered to female learners but this should essentially be offered to all learners, as clearly it isn't just women who are subjected to trauma. The curriculum should be based on learner and employer needs and not specific to gender.

- **We have heard that qualifications at level 3 or above are scarce. What are you doing to address this?**

Higher level learning up to degree level is facilitated by PEF providers. Although level 3 delivery does occur, most is at level 2 and below, which is largely due to English and Maths levels of learners and funding mechanisms. The current PEF funding methodology makes it difficult to deliver large volumes of higher level learning due to the funding per learner delivery method. We have successfully delivered level 3 courses and units across vocational subjects including the Award in Education and Training. Changes in the funding methodology and flexibility with blended learning/tutorials would support level 3 learning opportunities.

- **In its written evidence, Weston College suggested making education provision part of the Offender Management Unit's sentence planning to incentivise education amongst prisoners. Can you expand on this comment?**

We believe that educational requirements should be part of the Offender Management sentence plan and the same as prison-delivered Offender Behaviour Programmes. e.g. if a learner does not hold level 2 in Maths and English it should be included in their Sentence Plan, as well as other specific courses that support learner progressing into employment/education and resettlement.

- **How can the Government ensure that the educational achievements of offenders are recorded as they move across the prison estate, and that they are recognised once released?**

Learner achievement is recorded on the Curious Learning Record System and Digital Learning Plans. Curious is used to across the prison estate and details learner attainment including assessment levels. The Learner Record System records the same information and is available in the community, but there is sometimes a data lag due to the Awarding body uploading the achievement data. The digital Learning Plan is currently being rolled out across all prisons and is stored on the Virtual Campus. This will be used to record attainment and review individual targets and goals.

- **How would better data collection on prisoner destination help improve your services.**

It would allow us to further analyse employment, further learning and progression outcomes that are achieved by those on release, ensuring that we target those specific employment sectors and shape effective curriculums.

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