

Reshaping prisoner education



City & Guilds is working in partnership to reshape prisoner education and learning.

Re-offending costs the UK approximately £18 billion every year, and engagement with education and training has been shown to reduce re-offending considerably. However, there remains a gap in terms of high-quality in prison skills and education programmes. At a time when employers are facing critical skills shortages and prisons are over-crowded, the economic and moral imperative to effectively and systematically strengthen that link has never been more urgent.

One way in which City & Guilds has responded to this pressing challenge is through our specialist Technical Training provision, which together with HMP Highpoint, established a new model for prison education.

Recognising the significant skills shortages faced by the rail industry, the team secured funding to support the installation of a track facility within the prison grounds and facilitate the delivery of high quality, intensive skills bootcamps. This enabled learners to gain the industry-standard, practical skills mandatory to secure employment. Backed by leading employers from across the rail sector, every successful participant is guaranteed a job on release.

“When the inmates know they are getting employment on the outside, they take it more seriously. It gives them a sense of pride - they’re proud they’ve done the course, they’re going out to work and they are providing for their family.”

Lisa Wheeler, a land-based Activities Manager at HMP Highpoint who interviews the inmates for the programme.



**Stay on
Track
to
Train
your mind**



HM Prison &
Probation Service

This innovative use of DfE bootcamps funding was the first of its kind in prisons and has been successful in supporting the rehabilitation of offenders, while also addressing skills shortages. Since August 2022, 144 prisoners started the training. Of those who completed the training and have been released, 81% were in employment after six months (the national average is 30%).

The initiative has now expanded to a Rail Centre of Excellence, with state-of-the-art facilities and bootcamps offered in a number of core sectors across Building Services Engineering and Construction. City & Guilds teams work closely with prisons to identify prisoners across the prison estate that can be transferred to Highpoint to access the high quality training that will set them up for success after their sentence has been served.



“In 14 years of imprisonment, this is perhaps the most fruitful opportunity that I have witnessed be rolled out within the prison system.”

Programme participant

“When you live a certain lifestyle for so long it’s hard to break the cycle. This course offered me a different route away from that.”

Ryan Hull, previous HMP Highpoint learner, Labour Manager at Vital and member of the City & Guilds Young Learner Advisory Team

In partnership with:

