



Valuing prison educators – Shannon Trust, an example of peer mentors as educators.

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Aims

- Provide brief overview of Shannon Trust.
- Share our experience of how Shannon Trust involve mentors.
- Discuss benefits of this approach for mentors/learners.
- Discuss ongoing support and progression for mentors.



Who we are

Our Purpose – why our organisation exists

We support people in the criminal justice system to learn to read and improve other basic skills, so they can pursue wider opportunities and thrive in the community

Our Vision – the future we want to see

A future where everyone can experience the positive impact of learning

Our Mission – how we do what we do

To connect the power of volunteers, mentors and partners to offer a range of effective, accessible and flexible learning opportunities in prisons and the community





We enhance existing
education provision

We work with the support
of HMPPS

We work with people that
mainstream services
struggle to reach

Our approach

- We train people in prison to become mentors and help others 1 to 1 improve their reading using our resources..... And now more recently maths.
- Learning is confidential and short, regular sessions can take place at any time in any location – wings, workplaces, gym.
- Focus on learner choice – how long, how often
- Participation is voluntary – learners and mentors choose to take part.



Discussion?

- What are the benefits of this approach for learners?
- What are the benefits of taking part for mentors?





The experience of
being a mentor

Training and support

- Blended approach to training – some self study and group work delivered by our volunteers.
- Training flexible to meet needs of prison population.
- Bolt on training can be delivered in mentor meetings to support ongoing development.
- Support provided by prison facilitator, volunteer, mentor coordinator and mentor meetings where possible. Encourage team approach.



Discussion?

- How else can mentors be supported and recognized in their role?
- Ongoing opportunities post release?
- Any examples from other peer mentor roles.
- What might be constraining mentors from doing more?



Thank you – final questions/thoughts?

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