



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Education training and employment young people case studies

Young people in the criminal justice system engaging with
education, training and employment



Information

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Education training and employment young people case studies

Audience

Organisations offering support to young people aged 16–18 involved in the criminal justice system who access and engage with education, training and employment opportunities.

Overview

This resource seeks to help professionals in their work to improve outcomes for young people involved in the criminal justice system by providing case studies following the experiences of young people engaging with education, training and employment. The resource was commissioned by the Welsh Government and developed with the support of Youth Offending Teams, work-based learning providers, secure accommodation, Careers Wales and the Youth Justice Board.

Action required

None – for information only.

Further information

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Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/communities/safety/youthjustice/?lang=en>

Related documents

Criminal justice system and education, training and employment (2016)

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1. Introduction

This resource contains four case studies. Each case study focuses on one young person who has been involved with the criminal justice system. It gives an account of the young person's engagement and progress within education, training and employment (ETE).

The resource was commissioned by the Welsh Government and developed by Cordis Bright, an independent research and consultancy organisation.

The young people who are the focus of the case studies were identified with the support of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and ETE providers. They accessed a range of opportunities, including work-based learning and further education. The young people kindly agreed to share their successful experiences of engaging with ETE.

The case studies illustrate:

- The type of ETE opportunities with which the young people engaged.
- The support the young people received from others to enable them to engage successfully with the ETE opportunities.
- The outcomes for the young people following their engagement with the ETE opportunities.

The case studies were developed through telephone interviews conducted by researchers at Cordis Bright with the young people themselves, as well as with YOT workers, Careers Wales advisors and ETE providers who supported them to engage and progress within ETE. Each case study is based on three interviews.

In the case studies, young people's names have been changed to protect their anonymity.

It is hoped that professionals supporting young people involved in the criminal justice system to engage and progress within ETE will be able to use these case studies to encourage:

- Young people to engage with ETE opportunities.
- ETE providers and employers, who may not traditionally work with young people involved in the criminal justice system, to offer opportunities to these young people.

2. Common themes

Some common themes emerged from the experiences of the four young people, who enjoyed their ETE opportunities and benefited from them. These are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1: common themes within the case studies

Common theme	Detailed description
Dealing with disclosure of offending behaviour	<p>In all four cases, workers in the criminal justice system worked with the young person to disclose their offending background to the ETE provider. Young people found this very beneficial because it enabled them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the legal requirements and processes of disclosure. • Shadow a professional dealing with their disclosure, to learn how to do it without help in the future (if necessary). • Reduce any anxiety associated with disclosure.
Choosing the right ETE pathway	<p>In these case studies, YOT workers, Careers Wales advisors based in the YOT and ETE providers worked alongside each young person to determine the most appropriate ETE pathway for them. They did this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-one work with young people to discuss available opportunities. • Assessing young people’s preferred learning style and existing skills. • Exploring young people’s interests and future goals with them. <p>This placed the young people in a stronger position to choose the right ETE opportunity for them. Receiving impartial and reliable careers advice and making an autonomous and informed choice is important for young people because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boosts their motivation to engage with their ETE opportunity. • Helps them to sustain their engagement to complete the course/training.
Intensive support to	The case studies provide examples of young people receiving intensive support to prepare for an ETE

Common theme	Detailed description
prepare for an ETE opportunity and engage with it	<p>opportunity. This is most often delivered by a specialist member of staff based in the YOT, who is either an ETE officer employed directly by the YOT or a Careers Wales advisor seconded to the YOT. Support includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical/financial support to access equipment or arrange travel. • Support with disclosure. • Advocacy on behalf of young people in their arrangements with ETE providers, including risk management planning if needed. • One-to-one work with young people to help them to be ready for an ETE opportunity, including discussing expectations and building soft skills. • Accompanying young people to interviews/initial meetings with ETE providers and/or on their first day at a placement.
Consistent, trusting relationships between young people and workers	<p>Young people who are on statutory orders have an allocated worker within the YOT. Young people who are working with a YOT but are not on a statutory order¹ also usually have an allocated worker within the YOT. ETE providers normally have a dedicated member of staff who is the main point of contact for a young person, and who liaises with professionals in the other organisations with which the young person is involved. This makes life easier for young people, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A young person develops a positive rapport with one individual, who can support them in their engagement with other workers and services. • This relationship often continues at the end of the ETE opportunity, which means a young person can be supported for as long as they need. • Communication and information sharing between organisations is easier if one professional in each organisation has access to all relevant information and can share appropriate details outside of the organisation.
Gaining qualifications and practical	<p>In all cases, it was apparent that the ETE opportunity helped the young person to acquire new practical skills or to develop their existing skills further. Often the ETE</p>

¹ This might include, for example, young people who are engaging with the YOT for preventative work, who have not yet been sentenced or who have completed their order but are receiving ongoing support from the YOT.

Common theme	Detailed description
skills	<p>opportunity enabled the young person to obtain a formal qualification. The practical skills developed by these young people included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy and literacy. • Financial management. • Information and Communications Technology (ICT). • Writing Curriculum Vitae (CVs) and application forms. • Construction skills.
Improving soft skills, life skills and behaviour	<p>Young people and the professionals working with them recognised improvements in young people's soft skills, life skills and behaviour as a result of their successful engagement with ETE opportunities. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to live independently. • Managing their own emotions. • Understanding the reasons behind their offending behaviour. • Lowered likelihood of reoffending. • Having a more positive attitude towards the future. • Improved self-esteem. • Improved confidence. • Improved inter-personal relationships. • Improved employability skills, such as interview skills and presentation.

3. Lowri's experience of Symud Ymlaen/Moving Forward

What ETE opportunity did Lowri access?

Lowri completed a placement at Symud Ymlaen/Moving Forward (SYMF)². This involved:

- **Four essential skills sessions.** These lasted two hours each and took place weekly for four weeks. Lowri successfully completed Agored Cymru units in English and maths.
- **A 26-week work placement at a supermarket.** This commenced two weeks into Lowri's SYMF placement. The placement was initially for three days per week and then increased to four days per week once she had completed the basic skills sessions.

What was Lowri's experience prior to attending SYMF?

At the time when Lowri applied to SYMF, she:

- Was NEET.
- Was claiming Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Had a history of offending behaviour. Lowri was on a referral order and being supported by the YOT.
- Had experience of being bullied.

Lowri was growing increasingly disheartened and was desperate to work. However, her experience of being bullied and lack of job prospects were reducing her levels of:

- Self-esteem.
- Motivation.
- Well-being.

How did Lowri become engaged at SYMF?

Lowri was referred to SYMF by her YOT worker. She was able to engage at SYMF due to the following key factors:

- **A supportive YOT worker.** Towards the end of her referral order, Lowri's YOT worker talked to her about the ETE options available. Lowri completed the application form for SYMF with her YOT worker.
- **Support in handling disclosure.** The YOT worker explained the legal requirements around disclosure to Lowri so that she understood that she did not need to disclose the offence once she had completed

² Symud Ymlaen/Moving Forward (SYMF) is a project for young people aged 16-18 who are or have been involved with a YOT or who are or have been in the care of the local authority. It includes support with essential skills and employability skills and a six-month paid work placement. SYMF is led by Llamau and run in partnership with Sova, Gisda, Construction Youth Trust and CBSA. For more information, please see: <http://www.symfwales.org.uk/>

the referral order. The YOT worker completed an initial risk assessment as part of the referral.

- **Knowing one of the workers at SYMF.** Lowri chose to try SYMF partly because she already knew one of the workers there.
- **Support from SYMF in a comfortable environment for Lowri.** Once Lowri's application had been accepted, a worker from SYMF got in touch with her and her YOT worker. She arranged to visit Lowri's home to do the initial assessment, discuss the programme in more depth and set targets.
- **Preparation for SYMF.** Lowri's YOT worker supported her to prepare for SYMF. They had a one-to-one session focusing on what the placement would entail and Lowri's expectations.
- **Lowri's previous experience with the YOT.** Lowri also reported that earlier work she did within the YOT meant that she was ready to attend SYMF. In particular, she mentioned one-to-one work she had done with her YOT worker to build her confidence and a group she attended with other young women working with the YOT, which focused on emotional well-being.

Why did SYMF work for Lowri?

Lowri had a very positive experience of attending SYMF. This was due to:

- **A robust initial assessment and plan.** She completed an initial assessment of her skills and qualifications, which identified that she would benefit from essential skills and pre-employability training.
- **Small group sessions and one-to-ones.** The essential skills sessions were in a small group, but she often had one-to-one sessions, because other young people did not attend. The sessions involved paper-based and computer-based work.
- **The chance to develop her CV and interview skills.** The pre-employability training gave Lowri an opportunity to work on her CV and interview skills.
- **The accessibility of training.** The sessions were informal and were held near to Lowri's house, which made them easily accessible for her.
- **Lowri engaging fully in training.** Lowri engaged fully in training, only missing one session due to illness.

SYMF provided support for Lowri in securing a work placement that suited her needs. Key factors for success included:

- **A choice of work placements.** Lowri was offered the choice of a range of work placements, and decided to try retail because she had past experience of this type of work. Lowri was referred to a work placement at a supermarket two weeks after starting SYMF.
- **Interview preparation and support.** Lowri had an interview with the supermarket. Her worker at SYMF supported her to prepare for this by offering her a mock interview. Lowri reported that this helped her to understand how to present herself at interview, to think about the kinds of questions to expect and to practice answering these questions.
- **Accompanying Lowri to the interview.** An SYMF worker accompanied Lowri to her interview, which made her feel less nervous about attending.

How was Lowri supported during SYMF?

Lowri started her work placement shortly after the interview. She did not have a taster or phased introduction, but went straight in, working three days per week. This increased to four days per week once Lowri had finished her essential skills training. Lowri was supported in the following ways:

- **A mentor for Lowri.** Whilst at SYMF, Lowri had a volunteer mentor from Sova³.
- **A key worker from SYMF.** Lowri's key worker from SYMF also visited the supermarket regularly to offer both Lowri and her employer the opportunity to discuss any difficulties.
- **A supportive YOT worker.** Her YOT worker also checked in with her on a weekly basis to find out whether she had any concerns.
- **Partnership working between SYMF and the YOT.** As well as communicating directly with Lowri, her YOT worker and SYMF contact also kept in close communication with each other. This enabled them to share information about Lowri's attendance and progress, and to work together to encourage her. Whilst at SYMF, Lowri's risk assessment was reviewed each month. Lowri was aware of this and of what information was being passed on at every stage.
- **Continued support after the placement.** Now that Lowri's placement has ended, she is still in touch with a worker at SYMF, who rings her

³ Sova is a charity which provides support to enable people (including young people involved in the criminal justice system) to engage with services and their communities, and also to avoid reoffending. This support most frequently takes the form of strength-based mentoring, which is normally delivered by volunteers. For more information, please see: <http://www.sova.org.uk/>

to check that everything is going well for her.

Lowri stated the following about her placement:

'I liked the placement straight away. I worked on the shop floor and enjoyed talking to the customers. I got on well with my colleagues.'

Lowri's worker from SYMF stated the following about Lowri's placement:

'She was fully integrated with the team. She talked to new people and had lunch with her colleagues in the canteen.'

What was the impact of SYMF?

Completing SYMF has had a positive impact for Lowri in the following ways:

- **A permanent job.** Since completing SYMF, Lowri now has a permanent job with the cleaning company that holds the cleaning contract at the supermarket. Finding this job is directly related to her work placement because Lowri met the cleaning manager whilst on placement at the supermarket. In addition, Lowri's YOT worker believes that SYMF played a crucial role in Lowri gaining employment:
'Without the tools she got from SYMF, she would not be working.'
- **Essential skills qualifications and increased employability skills.** As well as contributing to her gaining employment, SYMF also helped Lowri to gain essential skills qualifications and employability skills, such as CV preparation and interview skills.
- **Improved confidence, self-esteem and motivation.** Lowri reported that completing SYMF has had a very positive impact on her confidence, self-esteem and motivation. She explained that this was the result of working with a range of different people and realising that she was good at the job. This was seconded by a worker at SYMF, who said:
'She is more confident to try things. She knows she can do it and she is willing to do it.'
- **Improved relationships.** Lowri's personal relationships have been positively influenced by the placement. She feels happier now, and has made friends at work. Her relationships with her family have also improved, partly because of her financial independence. Lowri is one of the first people in her family to have a job.

Lowri says:

'I am much happier and more confident now. I can talk to

customers which is something I wouldn't have done before. [SYMF] is amazing and the staff have helped me loads. I am going to miss them so much and just wish that I could stay on the project for longer.'

4. Dylan's experience of an Itec traineeship

What ETE opportunity is Dylan accessing?

Dylan successfully completed the Engagement level traineeship at Itec⁴, which involved:

- Attendance for 21 hours per week for 12 weeks.
- Building basic skills, such as English and maths.
- Motivational work.
- Developing employability skills, such as timekeeping and interview preparation.
- Attending taster sessions for different subjects, to enable him to decide on the area of work he would most like to pursue at Level 1.

Dylan then progressed onto a Level 1 traineeship in construction, also at Itec. He completed this traineeship after attending for more than a year. The Level 1 traineeship included:

- Attendance for 30 hours per week over five days.
- Building skills in a range of areas of construction, such as bricklaying, carpentry, plastering, painting and decorating.
- Four days per week of practical and workshop-based activities.
- One day per week of classroom-based activities.
- Work placements with local employers.

What was Dylan's experience prior to the traineeship?

When Dylan applied for the traineeship, he:

- Was NEET.
- Had negative experiences of school. He had a history of disruptive behaviour and had been excluded on more than one occasion.
- Had a history of offending behaviour and involvement with the criminal justice system.

How did Dylan become engaged in the traineeship?

Dylan needed a lot of encouragement to attend training, partly because of his previous negative experiences of education. He was able to engage in the traineeship due to the following key elements of support:

- **Support from workers at the YOT to consider his ETE options.**
Dylan's YOT case manager and the YOT ETE officer spoke to him about his ETE options. Dylan and the ETE officer discussed his interests and aspirations and she encouraged him to meet with a Careers Wales advisor.

⁴ Itec is a skills and employment provider which offers a range of ETE services, including traineeships, apprenticeships and Jobs Growth Wales. For more information, please see: <http://www.itecskills.co.uk/>.

- **Specialist input from a Careers Wales advisor.** Dylan met with the Careers Wales advisor, who suggested a traineeship and referred Dylan to Itec. The traineeship suited Dylan's skill level and also had a practical focus, which Dylan had explained that he preferred to theoretical learning and classroom-based activities.
- **Support in handling disclosure.** The YOT ETE officer advised Dylan that he did not need to disclose the details of his offences to Careers Wales because neither the nature nor the severity of his offences represented a risk in his engagement with Careers Wales or Itec. Careers Wales made Itec aware of Dylan's involvement with the YOT at the point of referral.
- **Close collaboration between the YOT and the ETE provider.** The YOT ETE officer is in regular contact with the Itec manager and they were able to have an informal discussion about how best to support Dylan. This was further supported by a dedicated referral form, which included Dylan's likes, dislikes and known triggers that made him anxious.
- **Pre-engagement support provided by the YOT on the site of the traineeship.** Before starting the Engagement level traineeship, Dylan attended a course called Pit Stop three mornings a week for about six weeks. Pit Stop was run by the YOT but took place at Itec's centre. During these sessions, Dylan worked on his basic skills and CV and took part in work tasters. Some sessions also focused on social skills, through playing games such as bingo and cards. Other sessions consisted of group work on specific topics, such as domestic abuse, and gave an opportunity to the learners to talk about self-esteem. Pit Stop supported Dylan to make the transition from being NEET into the traineeship. Dylan found Pit Stop helpful to get used to a new routine of getting up in the morning and using public transport to travel to the training centre. He also met other young people who were going to be on the Engagement traineeship with him and others who used to attend school with him. This made Dylan feel more comfortable with the idea of attending a new course.

Why did the traineeship work for Dylan?

Dylan had a positive and enjoyable experience of attending the traineeship. He said:

'I enjoy it, I like different things. I like to be outside, instead of sitting in one room. I don't like to do same thing over and over again. I enjoy meeting new people.'

A number of factors contributed to Dylan's successful engagement and progression within the traineeship. These included:

- **Starting his participation at the right level.** In order to decide which

level of traineeship was most suitable, Dylan completed a basic skills assessment at Itec. Following this, Itec recommended that Dylan started on the Engagement level to give him an opportunity to build his soft skills and prepare for the Level 1 traineeship.

- **Focusing on practical activities and work-based learning.** Whilst Dylan was on the Engagement level traineeship, two days per week were classroom-based and one was in the workshop of a local business. On the Level 1 traineeship, the balance was four days of practical and/or workshop-based learning to every one day of classroom-based learning.
- **Using taster sessions to determine Dylan's interests and strengths.** Dylan used the taster sessions to get some practice in the retail field, and this experience made him realise he preferred to train in construction.
- **Developing Dylan's CV and providing help with job searches.** Dylan worked on his CV and job searches alongside the other aspects of his traineeship. This provided him with employability skills to enable him to find a job, and therefore progress within ETE after the traineeship.
- **Building soft skills and working on behaviour.** Whilst he was on the Engagement level traineeship, staff were able to support Dylan to build the soft skills he would need to be successful on the Level 1 traineeship. This work focused mainly on how Dylan could handle the length of the course and the situation of being in the centre. The training provider workers supported Dylan in dealing with the activities he was not fond of, such as classroom-based learning in a larger group, whilst still maintaining good behaviour.

How was Dylan supported during the traineeship?

Dylan's previous negative experiences of ETE had a long-lasting impact on him, and it took him time and effort to change his attitudes towards learning, with the support of the professionals around him. He received this support in a number of ways:

- **Consistent, one-to-one support from a variety of staff at Itec.** Dylan had a main point of contact at Itec, who was the centre manager. However, he also worked with a number of other staff there. He met with a counsellor once a week to discuss how he was feeling and any challenges he was facing. Dylan found these sessions helpful. In addition, he attended monthly sessions with a learner coach to develop his employability skills, such as job searching and CV building.

- **Ongoing support from the YOT ETE officer.** Dylan had regular conversations with the YOT ETE officer, sometimes on a daily basis. These focused on his behaviour and the changes he was trying to make to this. Both Dylan and the ETE officer found that regular talks about his feelings of anger, frustration and self-destruction helped him take control of his behaviour and understand what was appropriate and what was not.
- **Close partnership work between the ETE provider and the YOT.** This was beneficial to Dylan in supporting him to engage at Itec. For example, Itec spoke to the YOT ETE officer about Dylan's behaviour when he was challenging the rules of the centre (such as smoking in non-smoking areas). The ETE officer was able to step in to discuss this with Dylan, and reinforce the appropriate boundaries. This provided Dylan with a consistent message about the appropriate way to engage at the centre and helped him to focus on avoiding repeating past disruptive behaviours.
- **Professionals working flexibly with Dylan and supporting him to remain engaged.** Dylan experienced some difficulties in his relationship with individual staff members, and also in coping with staff changes. This could have led to him disengaging from the training. However, the support network of staff around him helped him to stick with the training. Itec also adapted their support to meet Dylan's needs by, for example, changing the way they communicated with him and giving him space when he was feeling angry or stressed.
- **Practical support to obtain equipment.** Itec provided Dylan with the protective equipment (i.e. clothing) that he needed for the traineeship.

What was the impact of the traineeship?

Attending the traineeship has had a positive impact for Dylan in the following ways:

- **Paid employment.** Since completing the traineeship Dylan has gained employment in a manufacturing role.
- **Qualifications.** Dylan achieved a Level 1 qualification in construction.
- **Increased practical skills.** Dylan has gained practical skills through his experience in a range of different types of construction work.
- **Improved soft skills.** Dylan is now more confident and has more self-esteem. For instance, one worker said:

'He gained more confidence from the beginning. Dylan is relaxed now and can speak to pretty much anybody.'

- **Positive changes in Dylan's behaviour.** The way Dylan speaks to others and approaches opportunities has changed for the better as a consequence of attending the traineeship. For example, one worker noted:

‘Respect has been a big thing that Dylan learnt. His language is far better. It was colourful at times, sometimes now as well but he apologises.’

- **Avoiding reoffending.** Both Dylan and staff who have worked with him believe that attending the traineeship has helped him to avoid reoffending. One worker said:

‘[The traineeship] has given Dylan the self-confidence and determination and feeling of self-worth to want a better future for himself. Prison is not an option in his life.’

5. Aidan's experience of college

What ETE opportunity is Aidan accessing?

Aidan is attending a college to complete his final year of A levels in Maths, English and Creative Writing. He is also working towards achieving his Welsh Baccaulaureate. Aidan attends college full-time for a total of 30 hours per week.

During his first year at college, Aidan received a six-month Detention and Training Order and served three months in custody in a secure training centre (STC)⁵. Close liaison between the college and the STC supported Aidan to complete the coursework and learning in order to successfully complete the first year of his A levels whilst in custody.

After his custodial sentence, Aidan was supported by the YOT and college in order to return to college to take up the second year of his A levels.

What was Aidan's experience prior to attending college?

Aidan had successfully completed school and had already made plans to continue on to A levels prior to becoming involved in the criminal justice system. However, following his arrest his bail conditions and subsequent sentence prevented him from attending a school setting.

How did Aidan become engaged at college?

The ETE officer at his YOT supported Aidan to make an application to the local college. He also received direct support from the college during the application stage. This support package included:

- **Support with disclosure.** The YOT ETE officer supported Aidan to complete the college application form and the disclosure form that accompanied this. Aidan stated that this help to reduce the anxiety associated with disclosure to the college:

'It was quite arduous because of my offence. It was not impossible, but it was stressful to have this on top of the A levels. I got a lot of assistance with this. My ETE officer explained how my offence would affect the application.'
- **Close partnership working between the YOT ETE officer and the college, particularly around risk management planning because of the nature of Aidan's offence.** The YOT ETE officer discussed Aidan's application directly with the college and they worked together to develop a plan to support Aidan to attend college whilst managing

⁵ There are no STCs in Wales so Aidan was placed in a STC in England. The YOT and college with which Aidan has worked are based in his area of residence in Wales.

any risk of reoffending and the risks that this might represent to others at the college.

- **Meeting with college student support staff at application stage.** Aidan met with the college student support services to discuss his attendance at college, his expectations, the support available to him and what would be required of him.
- **Regular and transparent communication between all parties.** Aidan was kept informed by the ETE officer at each application stage, including what information had been passed on to the college.
- **Developing a behavioural contract with Aidan and supporting Aidan to understand this.** Aidan's place at the college was contingent on him signing a behavioural contract with the college. The YOT ETE officer ran through the contract with Aidan to ensure that he understood it and was comfortable to sign it.

Aidan's existing qualifications and academic abilities meant that he was ready for the academic elements of the A levels. Aidan chose not to meet others who had previously attended the course he was going to start, although this option could have been made available to him.

Why does college work for Aidan?

At first Aidan was nervous about attending college. He did not know anyone else there and was worried that someone would find out about his offending background. He was also concerned that the courses were not going to be difficult enough, and that he was not going to get the same level of education as he would have done if he had stayed on at school. However, he now states that he is enjoying college more than he used to enjoy school. He attributes this to a number of aspects of college, such as:

- **Knowledgeable and helpful tutors.** Aidan feels that his tutors enable him to get the most out of the subjects he is studying.
- **Challenging studies.** Aidan finds his studies challenging and believes that they are preparing him well for university.
- **Flexible timetable and open approach.** Aidan enjoys the more flexible approach, based on more independent learning.
- **Confidence that his disclosure has been appropriately handled.** Aidan was initially concerned about whether the disclosure of his offending history would be well-managed by the college. He has now seen from experience that the disclosure was sensitively handled and the detail was kept confidential, only being shared on a need-to-know basis.

How has Aidan been supported whilst at college?

Aidan has received direct support from the college itself to enable him to engage and progress within ETE. This has been coupled with regular and consistent support from workers at the YOT. Important elements of this support include:

- **An allocated worker at the college.** Aidan can speak to this worker in confidence if he feels he needs any support.
- **Regular and consistent support from the YOT ETE officer.** The ETE officer has worked with Aidan throughout his engagement with the college, from the point of identifying college as an ETE option, to continued work with him to sustain his attendance.
- **Weekly therapeutic sessions at the YOT.** These support Aidan to address his past offending behaviour. His attendance is voluntary but forms part of his contract and risk management plan with the college. Aidan finds these sessions helpful in giving him insight into his behaviour and how to manage his own risks:

‘They are interesting; they teach me a lot about myself. They improve my awareness and lower my risk. I am less likely to offend again.’
- **Close partnership working between the YOT and the college.** The YOT ETE officer acts as a single point of contact for the college, working with senior college staff. They regularly review and update Aidan’s risk management plan to ensure that he is supported to engage at the college in a way that manages any risks to himself and others. The college and YOT ETE officer share relevant information about Aidan’s engagement and progression.

How was Aidan supported to continue his studies whilst in custody?

Aidan’s attendance at college was interrupted during the first year of his A levels, when he was sentenced to a six-month Detention and Training Order, serving three months in custody in a STC. Whilst at the STC, he attended full-time education and was supported to successfully complete the first year of his A levels. This included:

- **Close liaison between the college, the YOT and the STC.** The three partners liaised closely to share information about Aidan’s studies in the community and how he could be supported to continue these in custody. This was particularly important because the A levels fell outside of the STC’s usual curriculum. The college sent Aidan’s coursework to the STC so that he could complete it whilst in custody and the STC provided feedback to the college regarding his progress. The STC and YOT also liaised closely with the college regarding

Aidan's progress and resettlement plans.

- **Time allocated for Aidan to undertake independent learning.** A key part of Aidan's ETE plan whilst in custody was time allocated for him to study independently for his A levels. Education staff at the STC provided support and guidance with this independent learning.
- **Attendance at in-house ETE provision at the STC.** Aidan's study for his A levels was supplemented by attendance at a range of other courses in the STC. These mainly centred on more vocational skills, such as ICT, design and technology and painting and decorating.
- **Obtaining additional qualifications.** Aidan obtained a qualification in performing arts from the Open College Network.
- **Small class sizes.** Classes at the STC had a maximum of eight students. This enabled teaching staff to provide Aidan with individualised support and attention.
- **Regular support from a single worker.** Whilst in custody, Aidan met with his resettlement worker on a one-to-one basis twice a week to discuss his progress and needs. The resettlement case worker was his main point of contact for support and planning, although he was also able to approach other staff members with any queries. These included the unit manager, the head of education and learning support workers.

Aidan was released from custody at the beginning of the following academic year. Due to his success in completing the first year of the A levels and to his release coinciding with the start of the academic year, he was able to return to college for the second year of his A levels. As before, the support and risk management arrangements for his return to college were led by the YOT, in partnership with the college.

What is the impact of college so far?

Aidan was confident and motivated before he started college. His positive experience has made him even more motivated to keep going and achieve his goals. In particular, college has had a positive impact on:

- **Aidan's qualifications.** Aidan has successfully completed the first year of his A levels and is on track to achieve A levels in Maths, English and Creative Writing.
- **Aidan's approach to learning.** Aidan has become more open-minded in his approach to learning since attending college. He stated:
'College made me feel that education can be less linear and can have a looser structure and yet one can get a lot from it.'

- **Aidan's progress towards his long-term ETE goal.** Aidan wishes to study journalism at university. Attending college is helping him to achieve this long-term goal. It is enabling him to achieve the necessary qualifications and also to experience more independent learning than he might have experienced at school.
- **Aidan's social networks.** Aidan has made new friends whilst at college and said:

'This is a really good community.'

In addition, Aidan recognises benefits of participating in ETE provision at the STC. Primarily this enabled Aidan to avoid interrupting his A levels. However, the other courses he attended whilst in custody also built his practical skills and his life skills.

6. Adam's experience of the Prince's Trust

What ETE opportunity did Adam access?

Adam attended a Prince's Trust course. The course was meant to last for 12 weeks, but it was interrupted after five weeks due to low numbers of students attending. This was disappointing for Adam, but he was able to use the skills he had learnt on the course to engage with other training opportunities and successfully apply for a job as a cleaner.

The Prince's Trust course involved:

- Attendance for 21 hours per week.
- Practical, group-based activities intended to improve Adam's communication and team work skills.

What was Adam's experience prior to attending the Prince's Trust course?

Prior to attending the Prince's Trust course, Adam:

- Was NEET.
- Had negative experiences of school and college.
- Had a history of offending behaviour and involvement with the criminal justice system.
- Had low self-confidence and motivation.

How did Adam engage with the Prince's Trust course?

The Careers Wales advisor seconded to Adam's YOT offered him extensive support to identify and engage with the Prince's Trust course. This included:

- **Helping Adam to identify an ETE opportunity to match his learning style and goals.** The Careers Wales advisor at the YOT assessed Adam's learning style and found that he was a kinaesthetic learner⁶. The Careers Wales advisor was then able to recommend the Prince's Trust course because it centred on practical activities.
- **Completing the referral form with Adam.** The Careers Wales advisor completed the referral form alongside Adam.
- **Supporting Adam with disclosure.** The Careers Wales advisor and Adam met with the course provider in person and discussed Adam's offending background, as well as his health needs.
- **One-to-one support to get ready for the course.** The Careers

⁶ This means that Adam prefers learning through practical activities and experiences, rather than through visual, auditory or read/write activities, which are more closely associated with classroom-based learning.

Wales advisor worked with Adam during one-to-one sessions. The aim was to help him to know what to expect from the course and to build the soft skills he needed to be ready to engage. This included confidence building and goal setting. It also involved discussion about: the format of the course; areas where Adam may struggle and how he might approach any difficulties; appropriate behaviour in the workplace; the importance of regular attendance; and the importance of punctuality.

- **Advocating on Adam's behalf with the course provider.** The Careers Wales advisor helped Adam to negotiate with the course provider about his start time in the mornings. This is because Adam lives in a rural area with limited public transport, which dictated the times he could arrive at the course.
- **Accompanying Adam on his first day.** The Careers Wales advisor accompanied Adam on his first day at the course. This helped him to feel less nervous and more able to ask questions about the course.

Why did the Prince's Trust course work for Adam?

Adam settled in at the Prince's Trust course and felt comfortable there. A range of factors led to his positive experience, including:

- **Small class size.** The course involved five young people in total. This helped Adam to feel more confident in the group and to receive individual attention.
- **Engaging tutor.** Adam said that he thought the tutor was nice and made the activities fun.
- **Focus on team work.** Adam enjoyed the team-building and community activities.
- **Recognition of Adam's strengths.** The tutor acknowledged Adam's strengths and skills and provided him with opportunities to develop these during activities. This helped Adam to increase his skills but also to recognise his existing skills and therefore boost his self-esteem.
- **Opportunities to lead activities.** Adam appreciated being in charge of some activities and leading others.

Unfortunately, the course did not fully take off due to the small number of students and it was stopped. Adam was very disappointed by this.

How was Adam supported during the Prince's Trust course and after it?

Whilst on the Prince's Trust course, Adam continued to receive regular support from the Careers Wales advisor in his YOT. He identifies this

worker as his main source of support throughout his journey through ETE. The support included one-to-one support to address any emotional or practical challenges he experienced whilst on the course. It also involved ongoing advocacy with the course about any difficulties Adam was experiencing.

Importantly, the Careers Wales advisor's ongoing contact with Adam and the course provider meant that she was aware that the course was being suspended partway through. She could therefore support Adam to identify alternative ETE opportunities but also help him to remain engaged with her whilst he was awaiting other placements. This helped him to maintain interest and motivation he had built whilst on the Prince's Trust course.

What was the impact of the Prince's Trust course?

Attending the Prince's Trust had a positive impact for Adam in a variety of ways:

- **Adam's confidence, self-esteem and motivation have increased.** This is the result of the course enabling him to recognise his existing skills and build on these. Adam said:

'I learnt that I could work in a team pretty well and that I was a good leader. [...] I didn't see myself as a leader, but now I can work in a team, I can take control of a situation so quickly.'
- **Adam's opinion of ETE has become more positive and he is more willing to try new activities.** Adam said he would now consider the possibility of doing more training in the future and is motivated to make positive plans.
- **Adam's ongoing engagement with ETE has improved.** With the continued support of the Careers Wales advisor, Adam has built on his experience with the Prince's Trust course. He has taken up other ETE opportunities, including participating in an Engagement level traineeship (although he did not enjoy his experience on the traineeship).
- **Adam was employed for a period of time.** Adam attributes his success in finding employment to the course:

'I got a lot of confidence from Prince's Trust so when I went for interview for cleaning I felt confident and got the job.'
- **Adam's overall attitude and behaviour have improved, as has his ability to deal with challenging situations.** For example, he is now more respectful of others and has a better understanding of how to present himself to others. The Prince's Trust course may have contributed to these changes, alongside his work with the Careers Wales advisor and his engagement with subsequent ETE

opportunities. His Careers Wales advisor said:

‘Adam is a very responsible adult now; a confident young man. Adam will talk about emotions, although he didn’t used to be able to. He proved to be resilient. His whole body language is different.’