



HM Inspectorate of Probation

AUDIT OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

East Midlands Region of the
National Probation Service for
England and Wales

*Report on:
Lincolnshire Probation Area –
Reasoning and Rehabilitation*

November 2001

Acknowledgements:

We are grateful for the cooperation of staff from the Lincolnshire Probation Area in completing this audit.

The audit team comprised:

Rosanna Heal	Alan MacDonald
Breda Leyne	<i>Audit Manager</i>
<i>Inspection and Audit Officers</i>	Frances Flaxington
Andy Bonny	<i>HM Deputy Chief Inspector of Probation</i>
<i>Deputy Audit Manager</i>	

Glossary

ACE	Assessment, Case Recording and Evaluation System
ACO	Assistant chief officer
CO	Chief officer
CPRO	Community punishment and rehabilitation order
CRAMS	Case Record Administration and Management System
DTTO	Drug Treatment and Testing Order
HMIP	HM Inspectorate of Probation
IAPS	Interim Accredited Programmes Software
IQR	Implementation Quality Rating
LSI-R	Level of Service Inventory-Revised
N/A	Criteria not assessed
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OGRS	Offender Group Reconviction Scale
PO	Probation officer
PSO	Probation service officer
PSR	Pre-sentence report
R&R	Reasoning and Rehabilitation
SPO	Senior probation officer

Contents

	Page
Context:	4
Scoring Approach:	4
Overview:	5
Findings and recommendations:	6
<u>SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>SECTION D: CASE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES</u>	<u>23</u>
Next Steps:	26
Scoring summary sheet:	27

Context:

Programmes achieving accredited status have undergone a rigorous process of development and scrutiny to ensure they have maximum impact in terms of reducing reoffending. Selecting well-tested programmes is however only part of the picture – without effective implementation by probation areas much of the positive influence on offenders’ behaviour may be lost.

Establishing robust quality assurance systems and independent audit arrangements for accredited programmes is therefore crucial. HMIP is responsible for auditing accredited programmes on behalf of the Joint Accreditation Panel. Each probation area will be assessed against the delivery criteria given in the Performance Standards Manual June 2001, which also outlines how these criteria are to be met and evidenced.

Scoring Approach:

The criteria for the delivery of accredited programmes have been divided into four sections. These sections, and the overall weighting assigned for each section, are as follows:

Committed leadership and supportive management	20%
Programme management responsibilities	30%
Quality of programme delivery	30%
Case management responsibilities	20%

Each criterion is scored as **Fully Met** (2 marks), **Largely Met** (1 Mark) or **Not Met** (0 marks).

The scoring summary sheet at the end of this report shows the marks awarded for each criterion – for those criteria designated as Mandatory (see Performance Standards Manual) the mark given is doubled. This denotes the critical impact these criteria have on the effective delivery of programmes.

The marks awarded for each section are shown and then expressed as a % by dividing the total number of marks scored by the maximum available, and multiplying by 100. Section B has been divided into seven sub-sections for ease of scoring.

To determine an area’s IQR, the scores for each section are multiplied by the appropriate factor to take account of the relevant weightings given above. The % totals for each section are then added together to give the IQR.

Overview:

- Lincolnshire had been delivering the R&R programme on two sites since April 2001. Two pilot programmes had preceded the formal start of delivery.
- The audit consisted of four main elements: assessing the quality of advance information; interviews with staff and offenders; observation of videotaped programme sessions; and case file reading.
- A wide range of staff involved in the delivery or support of the programme were interviewed including a senior manager, operational managers, programme tutors, case managers and court personnel. Two middle managers were sharing the roles of programme manager and treatment manager, but tutors who had been acting in a 'lead' role had been identified as potential treatment managers. They had begun to carry out some of the treatment manager tasks while awaiting the roll-out of national training. All but one of the PSR writers interviewed were also case managers, some with specialist responsibilities such as DTTOs. The acting ACO with responsibility for accredited programmes was on leave during the site visit but had been involved in the pre-audit meeting.
- Three programme delivery sites were visited but only two were used at present for the delivery of programmes. In each location the accommodation and general facilities conformed to the Estates Standards Manual.
- A total of 12 randomly selected programme sessions from three separate groups were selected for video monitoring purposes, but three of these only had one group member and were therefore not scored.
- The case file read incorporated the records of all those starting the three programmes from which the videos were selected, as well as a number of those who were referred but did not start the programme. Thirty-four files in total were read.
- Two of the criteria were not assessed – B4.3 and D1.8. This decision was taken because the area was at an early stage of delivery of R&R and so national training for experienced tutors was awaited (B4.3); as was accreditation of the cognitive-behavioural booster programme to reinforce offender learning (D1.8).
- This audit report refers solely to the quality of delivery of the R&R programme in Lincolnshire.

Findings:

Lincolnshire had, despite upheaval and change in the senior management team, worked hard to establish an allocation culture. This had ensured steady rates of referral to the R&R programme and the file read indicated that offenders were being appropriately targeted. Organisational structures contributed to the integration of programmes within overall service delivery. Tutors were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the programme, and were well supported by the programme managers who, together with the ACO, had been proactive in anticipating and forestalling problems with implementation. In discussion with case managers, good examples of motivational work were highlighted. This showed that there was a solid base upon which the area could build in order to enhance the learning of offenders through the programme.

The area now needed to consider how information could be used to enhance performance and keep all staff abreast of developments both locally and nationally. The treatment manager function still had to be fully implemented so that areas for improvement in tutor performance could be addressed and strengths recognised. Tutors themselves could contribute to this through the regular self-assessment required in the completion of programme integrity checklists.

Recommendations

The CO should ensure that the area:

- *develops protocols which clearly set out roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in accredited programmes, especially in relation to collecting and collating monitoring and evaluation information;*
- *has competency-based job descriptions for all staff involved in programme delivery;*
- *makes available performance information to all staff on a regular basis to enhance understanding of and commitment to accredited programmes;*
- *considers how the knowledge of staff supporting the accredited programme can be maintained over time and puts systems in place to meet this need;*
- *sets out a strategy for enhancing completion rates and has explicit policies in relation to enforcement and compliance of offenders on accredited programmes;*
- *uses the video monitoring process to differentiate the strengths and areas for development of individual tutors so that these can form the basis of supervision and appraisal;*
- *develops guidance on length of catch-ups and monitors consistency and quality of their delivery;*
- *issues instructions to tutors to complete video monitoring checklists;*
- *has leaflets for sentencers and offenders which take account of the diversity needs of offenders;*
- *communicates information about accredited programmes with sentencers in the Crown Court;*
- *encourages staff to record clearly pre-group and catch-up sessions and to develop SMART objectives which fully integrate the programme in the overall supervision of the offender;*
- *has written guidance on singleton placements;*
- *develops a strategy for assisting underperforming tutors and has a deselection policy for those who do not improve;*
- *gives attention to the role of case managers in reinforcing learning through the programme.*

SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

A1.1 Committed leadership

2

Description: *The senior management of the area should be openly and explicitly committed to the proper running of the programme through policy and public statements.*

Lincolnshire had seen a number of changes in the senior management team since April 2001. Despite this, senior managers had successfully promoted the importance of the accredited programme to staff. A corporate services review would be making recommendations for the planning of human resources and this was expected to impact upon the research and evaluation function which had been under-resourced to date.

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire's Area Plan 2001/2004 and Business Plan 2001/2002 identified as a priority the establishment of R&R as its foundation offending behaviour programme. This was translated into clear local objectives to which staff were working to.
- A comprehensive training programme for all delivery and support staff had equipped them for their different roles.
- The establishment of a transport coordinator's post had facilitated the attendance of offenders on the programme.
- A senior manager had attended and introduced both context setting days.

Areas for improvement:

- There was no area protocol which clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all staff in relation to accredited programmes.

A1.2 Management structures

1

Description: *Effective line management structures exist for the proper operation of the programme integrating this within case management structures. Adequate time should be set aside for the effective management of the programme.*

Strengths:

- An effective practice group, chaired by the ACO with responsibility for accredited programmes and attended by middle managers across the county, ensured that programme issues were integrated within the case management function. Programme managers met regularly with divisional SPOs responsible for effective practice.
- Staff demonstrated that they understood their role in managing, delivering or supporting the programme.
- Minutes of area management team meetings, divisional team meetings and effective practice group meetings showed that factors relating to the implementation of R&R had been communicated across divisions and functions.

Areas for improvement:

- Competency-based job descriptions did not exist for most staff involved in programme delivery, case management and in support roles.

A1.3 Staff ownership of the accredited programme

1

Description: *There is full ownership of the programme by managers, programme tutors and other relevant staff, e.g. court personnel and case managers.*

Strengths:

- Relevant staff had attended context setting days and additional training where this had been provided (e.g. case managers).
- Tutors, case managers and court-based staff were able to articulate the programme's main aims and objectives.
- Case managers were attending the programme review meetings and had responded eagerly to a proposal that they join programme tutors for the first pre-group work session.

Areas for improvement:

- Data were being collected which showed referrals by division, but no evidence was seen of action taken by managers in response to this.
- Some case managers expressed scepticism about the suitability of R&R for offenders with substance misuse problems, limited intellectual functioning or poor basic skills. This appeared to have led to different interpretations of the amount of discretion they had not to refer to the programme. Clarification of such issues and attending to the kinds of concerns expressed by staff could improve staff ownership of the programme.

A1.4 Effective communication with sentencers

1

Description: *There is high quality, proactive communication with local sentencers and clerks to the justices about the programme, including written information.*

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire had found an imaginative and effective way of conveying information about the content and purpose of R&R by delivering parts of the R&R sessions to magistrates' court sentencers in each of the divisions. Sentencer satisfaction questionnaires showed that these had been well received.
- Information leaflets for sentencers gave a clear explanation of the programme and the expectations placed on offenders.

Areas for improvement:

- Information about the programme had not been communicated to sentencers at the Crown Court or to other stakeholders (such as defence solicitors).

SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

B1.1 Resources and facilities

2

Description: *Adequate accommodation consistent with the Estates Standards Manual is available for all sessions of the programme.*

Strengths:

- There was appropriate equipment in each group room with adequate light and ventilation.
- Video and sound equipment were of a high standard.
- 'Break out' rooms for small group discussions/exercises were available at all three sites.
- There was provision for wheelchair access at two of the three sites visited. In two instances disabled offenders had been taken to one of these sites in order to participate in the programme.
- Sessional drivers used by the programmes team remained in the building to provide back-up cover for tutors in case of health and safety incidents during the running of evening groups.

Areas for improvement:

- Secure video storage facilities were not available at two of the sites. Staff here were taking the videos home at the end of the day and delivering them to the other site for storage.

B1.2 Provision of information leaflets about the programme

0

Description: *There should be a set of leaflets for offenders, sentencers and staff clearly describing the programme and its requirements.*

Lincolnshire had expected leaflets for offenders to be issued nationally and had therefore not produced any. However, this gap was being remedied and leaflets were being printed at the time of the audit visit.

Strengths:

- The sentencer leaflet described the programme in straightforward language, setting out the conditions for attendance and the consequence of failing to comply with these.

Areas for improvement:

- The delay in producing offender leaflets meant that staff were giving them leaflets designed for sentencers. Offenders interviewed said that this information was not always provided at the pre-sentence stage.
- The complaints procedure was not referred to in the offender leaflet which had been prepared for printing.
- The sentencer leaflet made no reference to the needs of women or minority ethnic offenders, to how these would be met, or to wider diversity issues.

B2.1 Managing attendance

1

Description: *Offender attendance and absence are managed to achieve the required National Performance Management target for offender completions. Attendance is managed to achieve coherent delivery with full impact for all undertaking the programme. The maximum number of absences by any one offender is consistent with the requirements of the programme manual for the specific accredited programme.*

Strengths:

- Attention had been paid to national standards enforcement requirements and the case file read confirmed that enforcement practice was effective and that it received a high priority in the area.
- Case managers said they were advised by e-mail within 24 hours, using the Lotus Notes system, as to whether or not the offender had attended the programme.
- Interviews with case managers and tutors, and tutor supervision notes, suggested that concerns about offender attendance (including lateness in some cases) were being discussed.
- Attendance registers confirmed that practice in relation to the maximum number of absences permitted by any one offender was consistent with the requirements of the programme manual.

Areas for improvement:

- There was no evidence that the area had reviewed its implementation plan of September 2000 to show how increased completion rates were to be achieved.

B2.2 Avoidance of cancellation or disruption to sessions

2

Description: *Sessions are not cancelled or disrupted owing to offender crises, high workload or other pressures, and arrangements exist to deal with crises outside of the programme session. Sessions are delivered at the frequency defined in the programme manual.*

Lincolnshire had a schedule of planned programmes. Of these one had been cancelled due to staff shortages, although no referrals had been received for it and so no offenders were affected by this decision. The behaviour of some offenders had led to disruption to sessions. These had been properly managed.

Strengths:

- A calendar for each R&R programme had been produced and was available to PSR writers and case managers.
- The area was delivering three sessions a week, with evening and weekend sessions for employed offenders. This arrangement conformed to the requirements of the programme manual.
- The offenders interviewed understood the role of case managers in dealing with any potential crises which might occur. There was evidence of proactive work by some case managers to anticipate and prevent difficulties in attendance.

Areas for improvement:

- Courts were not provided with the schedule of programmes.
- Two sessions of the second R&R programme had been 'amalgamated' when a fire alarm had gone off, cutting the first one short. No guidelines existed for dealing with a group 'catch-up' situation.

B2.3 Catch-up sessions/Attendance

0

Description: Provision is made for catch-up sessions, or a 'bus stop' approach, to allow offenders who miss a session to continue with the programme. All offenders missing sessions, who are not excluded from the programme, should attend catch-up sessions, or in the case of a 'bus stop' approach be moved onto another programme within ten working days, to ensure full delivery of the programme. Treatment managers must specify arrangements for monitoring the integrity of catch-up sessions.

The scheduling of three R&R sessions per week placed particular demands upon tutors when it came to the arrangement of catch-up sessions in a county where many offenders relied on transport organised by the area, or had long distances to travel sometimes after work.

Strengths:

- Documentary evidence indicated that, where possible, catch-up sessions were delivered before the next scheduled group session. Tutors recognised the importance of delivering the first nine sessions in chronological order.
- In some cases tutors were travelling to offenders at their nearest probation office in order to deliver a catch-up session.

Areas for improvement

- In the absence of national guidance on the matter, the area had not produced instructions to staff on the length of catch-up sessions. Interviews with staff suggested a considerable variation in practice across the county in this respect.
- The area was not monitoring the quality of the catch-up sessions it delivered. Probation Circular 92/2001 offers further guidance on monitoring catch-up sessions.
- Case file reading results revealed that catch-up sessions were not always clearly recorded as such on CRAMS.

B2.4 Timeliness

0

Description: All offenders commence the programme, or specified pre-programme phase, within the first month of the order or within three months if other structured pre-programme work is undertaken. Occasionally, the timing may be different to permit other preliminary work to be completed, e.g. a programme of drug detoxification.

Lincolnshire was collecting data on the timeliness of commencements, but what had been measured was the gap between sentence date and the first group work session. This had resulted in a skewed picture which was now likely to show improvement once sentence date to the psychometric testing session was measured.

Strengths:

- Systems existed to ensure that pre-programme sessions were delivered by designated programme staff and the basic skills adviser.
- Local arrangements were in place to allow offenders undertaking CPROs to complete the R&R programme prior to commencing community punishment placements.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records did not consistently identify where preliminary work needed to be carried out with the offender prior to commencement of the programme. In interview some staff expressed uncertainty as to what legitimate reasons for delayed starts might be, especially in relation to

offenders with substance misuse problems. Programme staff confirmed that delays occurred between orders being made and their receipt of referrals.

- Of the 34 case records scrutinised, only 16 showed the offender starting within the first month of the order, or identified preliminary work to be carried out before the offender could start.
- Case records did not clearly record pre-group work sessions as such.

B3.1 Staff selection

1

Description: *A staff selection procedure meeting the requirements of the programme manual is in place and only staff meeting the defined criteria are selected to deliver the programme.*

Strengths:

- All potential tutors had been given information about tutor selection procedures (verbally and in writing) before attending the assessment centres. Recent recruits had also been able to observe delivery of some sessions of the programme.
- The advance information confirmed that staff selection procedures conformed to programme requirements.
- All staff delivering the programme had successfully completed an assessment centre procedure and attended the training.

Areas for improvement:

- The area had no written policy confirming that only those staff meeting the defined criteria could deliver the accredited programme, nor was there documentation to cover the support arrangements for those who might not be selected.

B3.2 Staff roles and competencies

1

Description: *Differences in role between grades or posts are clearly reflected in job descriptions. A defined set of competencies exist for each staff role involved in the programme, using those specified in the programme manuals and the national management manual.*

Strengths:

- Programme tutors and case managers were clear about their responsibilities and appreciated the inter-dependency of their roles.
- The core competencies of PSOs delivering programmes incorporated those set out in the national management manual.

Areas for improvement:

- Although job descriptions existed for most programme staff, not all were competency-based. There was no job description for treatment managers.

B3.3 Preparation and debriefing time for tutors

2

Description: *Tutors are allowed 1½ hours for preparation and debriefing for each session in addition to the programme delivery time.*

Strengths:

- Programme tutors indicated that they had time to prepare for their sessions thoroughly. Allowance had been made for additional preparation time during early programmes when they were less familiar with the material.

- Experienced tutors assisted new tutors with material they had developed to assist with preparation.

Areas for improvement:

- Tutors were not using debriefing sessions to complete programme integrity checklists.

B3.4 Staff continuity

2

Description: *Three leaders should normally be assigned to each accredited programme to allow for leave, sickness and other contingencies. All sessions of the programmes are delivered by at least two of the three assigned staff. Continuity is maintained by at least one of the staff members having run the previous session.*

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire allocated three tutors to each programme, ensuring that each session was delivered by a tutor who had attended the previous session. There was a register to show how these arrangements were set up.
- Session review records showed that continuity was maintained and this was corroborated by offenders in interview.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all tutors were equally clear as to the arrangements when unanticipated absences required a tutor outside the trio to be called in at short notice. One tutor said she thought it was her responsibility to find a replacement in these circumstances.
- Homework assignments were not routinely being followed-up from one session to the next. Video monitoring suggested that tutors were not always aware of what homework had been set at the previous session.

B4.1 Training arrangements for new staff

1

Description: *Training courses exist for all grades and roles involved in delivering the programme and all staff newly assigned to the programme receive training before running their first programme. The training delivered follows that defined in the programme training manual.*

Strengths:

- All staff involved in the delivery of R&R had received the required training.
- The area had given priority to setting up additional training when it was felt that national arrangements had been insufficient.

Areas for improvement:

- The development needs of individual staff in relation to the delivery of R&R were not being fully addressed in supervision.

B4.2 New staff paired with an experienced colleague when running their first programme

2

Description: *Staff newly trained in a programme should be paired with a more experienced colleague when running their first course.*

Strengths:

- The programmes team had adopted an informal system to ensure that newly trained staff delivered the R&R programme with more experienced staff.

- Less experienced staff were able to observe videos and live sessions prior to running their first programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Interviews with tutors suggested a tendency within the programmes team to view PO grade tutors by definition as more experienced than PSO grade tutors. This attitude risked creating some unhelpful dynamics within the team, and minimising the contribution made by PSOs.

B4.3 Training arrangements for experienced staff

N/A

Description: *Competency-based booster and developmental training arrangements exist for all staff experienced in delivering the programme. All programme delivery staff are required to attend such training when they have demonstrated their competence to do so. [This will include delivering a stipulated minimum number of courses.]*

This criterion has not been assessed as nationally ongoing training for experienced tutors/treatment managers is in the early stages of roll-out.

B4.4 Staff knowledge of the concepts and methods used in the programme

2

Description: *All relevant staff have a knowledge of the programme model, targeting, objectives and methods sufficient for effective delivery of the programme.*

Strengths:

- Staff displayed an impressive grasp of the main concepts and methods used in the R&R programme.
- Tutors delivering the programme had all passed the accredited training courses and the advance information showed that the standard of achievement had been high.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all case managers had yet received training.
- Ways of maintaining and enhancing programme knowledge amongst case managers had not yet been addressed.

B4.5 Staff knowledge of the theoretical and evidential basis of the programme

2

Description: *All relevant staff have a knowledge of the programme's theoretical base and evidence, sufficient for effective delivery of the programme.*

Strengths:

- All relevant staff had a reasonable knowledge of the theoretical and evidence base of R&R.
- The evidence base for using cognitive-behavioural approaches with offenders was accepted by most delivery and case management staff.

Areas for improvement:

- Regular distribution of information about relevant research findings, to inform staff involved in the assessment and referral of offenders to the programme, did not appear to have been considered (although a forthcoming information bulletin might serve this purpose).

B4.6 Supporting skills necessary to run programmes

1

Description: *From interview, observation, appraisal and training audits all relevant staff have supporting skills including core group work skills, presentation skills, case management, etc, sufficient for the effective delivery of the programme.*

Strengths:

- A number of initiatives had been taken to improve the supporting skills of delivery staff. For example, training in group work skills was planned for the month following this audit, presentation skills training had been arranged for PSOs and all staff had attended diversity training.
- Additional training for case managers had been devised following what was felt to be insufficiently thorough national training.
- Practice development meetings were a forum at which common training needs could be identified.
- Interviews with managers indicated that training needs, identified through the training audit process, were incorporated into the area training plan.

Areas for improvement:

- The video observation monitoring forms seen did not identify training and developmental needs for programme staff.

B5.1 Staff supervision and quality of practice

1

Description: *All staff involved in the programme receive support and supervision at a frequency specified in the national management manual. This will enable tutor skills to be developed and problems resolved within the lifetime of the current programme by supervisors familiar with effectiveness methods and the programme. The manager to have observed staff in the delivery of the programme either directly or through video prior to each supervision session.*

Strengths:

- Supervision of staff was being carried out regularly and individual appraisal supervision was distinguished from review meetings and practice development sessions.
- Programme managers had instituted regular practice development sessions which took place every six-eight weeks. These meetings were used to discuss common concerns regarding programme delivery and were topic based.
- Treatment managers were assessing videos at the frequency specified in the national management manual.

Areas for improvement:

- Video monitoring of sessions by treatment managers was not being used to differentiate between the developmental needs of individual tutors, or to identify learning objectives for each member of staff.
- Tutors were not routinely completing video monitoring forms on their own performance, thus reducing their contribution to the supervisory process.
- Session reviews were taking place every five sessions as required by the guidance in the national management manual, but were focused on the management of the group and other practical considerations, rather than on tutor performance.

B5.2 Staff appraisal

0

Description: All members of staff involved with the programme have their competence to perform their assigned role assessed annually through the appraisal process. Staff whose performance is assessed as below the acceptable standard but making progress should be given further training and other assistance to improve their performance and a date set for review. Staff who are not making progress in achieving the required standard of performance should not take any further part in running the programme.

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire's appraisal system provided the framework for ensuring that only competent staff were involved in delivering the programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Monitoring tutors' competence to deliver the programme was at an early stage and a strategy had yet to be developed to assist underperforming tutors.
- Tutor strengths and areas for improvement were not being systematically addressed, assessed or recorded. This was likely to affect the appraisal process.
- There was no policy document outlining the procedures for deselecting tutors who did not perform to the required standard after receiving additional support and training.

B6.1 Offender selection and assessment

2

Description: Routine monitoring results confirm the profile of those entering the programme are consistent with the criminogenic needs addressed by the programme, the level of risk of reoffending and the level of risk of harm/dangerousness.

Strengths:

- The area had produced written guidance on targeting offenders for R&R that had been made available to PSR writers and case managers. It was evident that an allocation culture had been established in Lincolnshire ensuring steady rates of referral to the programme. Despite initial resistance from some staff, a strategy of clear instructions for referral, followed by later briefings on the use of discretion, seemed to have been effective.
- The case file read showed that offenders were being appropriately targeted and area documentation indicated that very few referrals outside the appropriate OGRS banding were being referred.
- Literacy screening and support were an integral part of the pre-group work sessions with support provided at an early stage for offenders with literacy difficulties.
- Lead tutors had responsibility for monitoring the suitability of offenders at the pre-group work stage. Monitoring of behaviour continued throughout the programme, especially in the case of high-risk offenders.

Areas for improvement

- The case file read suggested that discussions regarding an offender's suitability were not always noted on the case record.
- Concerns were expressed by a number of staff as to the accuracy and consistency of OGRS scoring. This risked undermining the allocation policy.

B6.2 Offender knowledge and understanding of the programme requirements

2

Description: *The requirements of the programme are clearly communicated on at least two occasions to each participant verbally and in writing, and there is evidence from signed consent forms, observation and/or interview that offenders know and understand the requirements.*

Strengths:

- A statement of understanding clearly outlined the responsibilities and rights of programme participants. This was issued at the pre-group work stage of the programme.
- Interviews with offenders established that they understood the requirements of R&R.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records did not always show that offenders had been told about the programme requirements verbally and in writing.
- Interviews with offenders suggested that they were not routinely given any written information about R&R prior to sentence.

B6.3 Group size

2

Description: *For group programmes the maximum starting group size during the previous year did not exceed 12 and the minimum was not less than four.*

Strengths:

- The initial group size for programmes conformed to the guidance set out in the Performance Standards Manual.
- The programmes team kept an ongoing record of numbers referred to each programme.
- When group size fell below four, offenders were generally transferred to another programme (though this had not happened during the earlier programmes because the delay in reaching a similar stage in the next programme had been considered too long).

Areas for improvement:

- Although the programme managers stated that they received sufficient numbers of referrals for the groups they were running, attrition rates were problematic. Improved referral rates would go some way to meeting targets for completions.

B6.4 Accessibility of group work programmes

1

Description: *If female or minority ethnic offenders are placed in mixed groups there are no singleton placements unless agreed to by the offender. Appropriate support arrangements should be evidenced for these programme participants.*

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire had considered the needs of women offenders and had set up a women-only group following discussion with the R&R implementation group.
- Interviews with tutors indicated that they were aware of the needs of women and minority ethnic offenders and had made support arrangements where only mixed groups were available.
- The women offenders interviewed felt that their needs had been taken into consideration.
- Cross-border referrals had been considered in relation to minority ethnic offenders.

Areas for improvement:

- There was no written guidance on singleton placements.
- Case managers did not have sufficient information about possible support arrangements for minority ethnic offenders in particular.

B7.1 Implementation of monitoring and evaluation design

1

Description: *Interview and observation show that monitoring and evaluation arrangements are working as intended and are understood and supported by all staff involved. This should include both input and feedback of data to managers and practitioners at local level.*

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation were somewhat limited and uncoordinated. Delays in the roll-out of IAPS had contributed to the uncertain state of affairs and resources which could be devoted to making up the loss were stretched. However, the recent appointment of an information manager was a positive development.

Strengths:

- A number of key evaluation and monitoring documents were capable of being collated, which enabled managers to see what proposals were being made in PSRs for offenders within the R&R OGRS banding and what the concordance rates were in these cases. Quarterly summary reports on accredited programmes were also regularly prepared for the National Probation Directorate.
- Pending the arrival of IAPS, a Lotus Notes database had been created locally which tracked the progress of offenders through the programme. A summary report on each programme had also recently been devised (September 2001).

Areas for improvement:

- Protocols for evaluation and monitoring arrangements, including a clear account of the roles of relevant staff, had not been developed.
- Efforts to summarise data and identify trends were time-consuming as most of the data collected was in a paper form.

B7.2 Practice is informed by monitoring and evaluation evidence

1

Description: *Consistent use is made of evaluation information as it becomes available by those with most direct responsibility, e.g. managers giving regular consideration to attendance and completion information, practitioners to offender feedback and attitude/behaviour change scores. Awareness/knowledge about evaluation results from the same programme operating elsewhere will be relevant.*

Strengths:

- Practice issues arising from existing monitoring data were discussed at the effective practice group meetings.
- There was evidence of practice being informed by monitoring information. For example, a drop in community punishment proposals and a possible relationship with the referral policy for R&R was being explored. Prompt action had followed the making of an order in a case with no R&R proposal and a low OGRS score. Case manager involvement in pre-group work meetings was being sought in order to impact upon current attrition rates.

Areas for improvement:

- Few practitioners were able to refer to any R&R information received on a regular basis. They said they had little or no information about completion rates or reasons for drop-out. A specialist PSR writer would have liked more feedback on 'success' rates for the offenders he referred to the programme.

SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY

C1.1 Adherence to programme manual

1

Description: *All sessions of the programme should be delivered in line with the instructions of the programme manual and demonstrate close adherence to the aims and objectives. There should be evident commitment to follow the intention/purpose of the exercises used, including repetition/reinforcement, where these are designed parts of the programme.*

Strengths:

- The aims and objectives of the sessions observed were met.
- In most cases, inappropriate extras were not added.

Areas for improvement:

- Insufficient time was devoted to practice of skills or to exercises, especially those involving discussion.
- Offender learning was not being thoroughly checked out.
- Exercises were not always run in the correct order.

C1.2 Adherence to treatment style

1

Description: *From direct observation or video evidence, programme tutors make competent and appropriate use of the techniques specified. There will be evidence of effective communication of the material, offender understanding and engagement. Pro-social attitudes are skilfully modelled by workers and are predominant in the group. This includes challenging pro-criminal or anti-social attitudes and behaviour.*

Strengths:

- Excellent 'real life' examples were used by tutors to illustrate learning points.
- There were instances of tutors enthusiastically championing the R&R programme and giving examples of its effectiveness in their lives.
- Interviews with offenders showed that they could recall key skills learned on the programme so far.

Areas for improvement:

- Tutors did not ask enough open questions and tended to 'jump in' rather than wait for answers.
- Participants were not given enough opportunities to explain and come up with their own ideas.
- Some offence-supporting views went unchallenged.
- Tutors were not summarising points frequently enough.

C1.3 Group work skills

1

Description: *Programme tutors demonstrate effective management of the group, including effective co-working to facilitate learning by offenders and modelling pro-social behaviour. Disruption by participants is minimised.*

In most cases each session was run by one tutor, with the second tutor sitting out of sight of the camera, therefore it was rarely possible to assess co-working.

Strengths:

- Groups were generally well managed.
- There was good use of praise.

- Exercises were introduced and ended well.

Areas for improvement:

- There were instances of inappropriate language which could be collusive.
- More able/involved members occasionally received a disproportionate amount of tutor time during sessions.

C1.4 Programme delivered addressing race equality and diversity issues

1

Description: *From direct observation or video evidence, issues of racism and sexism are effectively addressed whether arising within programme delivery or offender response. Staff are alert to race equality and diversity issues, they always respond appropriately and show that they have considered and developed strategies for responding, e.g. relevant resources and arguments, clarity about boundaries, approaches that may promote perspective taking.*

Strengths:

- Interviews with tutors and programme managers indicated that race equality and diversity issues were regularly discussed in the practice development meetings. Tutors were able to give examples of adapting material in the programme to avoid creating situations where offensive language might be used.
- A practice development group diversity workshop had produced good guidelines for tutors.
- Some group rooms contained posters which challenged racist and sexist assumptions.
- An example of appropriate challenging of sexist language was observed on video.

Areas for improvement:

- No area documentation had been produced which specifically addressed the question of race equality and diversity in relation to accredited programmes.
- Staff outside the programmes team did not have a full picture of how issues of race equality and diversity were tackled on the R&R programme.

C1.5 Programme integrity checklist

0

Description: *The programme integrity checklist for each session is completed.*

Strengths:

- Tutors were noting preparation time and session length following each session.

Areas for improvement:

- Tutors were not completing treatment integrity checklists at the end of each session.
- The absence of treatment integrity checklists limited the benefits of treatment manager assessment of tutor performance.

C1.6 End of programme summary reports

1

Description: *The case record shows that at the end of the programme delivery staff prepare a summary for the case manager indicating:*

- *participation in the programme*
- *progress made*
- *an assessment of risk, including the identification of factors relevant to the individual concerned*
- *an assessment of the offender's coping skills*
- *likely scenarios for relapse, including immediate precursors and triggers which might give prior warning*
- *identification of remaining treatment needs.*

It was not possible to comment on the usefulness of the post-programme reports to case managers, as few of the case managers interviewed had had an offender reach this stage in the programme.

Strengths:

- Post-programme reports were being completed in respect of all offenders completing the group work programme.
- They conformed to a standard format (NPD PPR version1).

Areas for improvement:

- Post-programme reports were not always dated.
- Assessment of risk in these documents was sometimes insufficiently thorough.
- Objectives for subsequent supervision were not always specific. This limited their usefulness to case managers.
- Participants' comments were not always attached.

SECTION D: CASE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

D1.1 Initial supervision plan sets relevant objectives for the offender

0

Description: *The supervision plan integrates the programme into the overall plan of work for each offender. Specific objectives are set in a sequence appropriate for the offender and are recorded in the initial supervision plan and regularly reviewed. Assessments should be based on OASys when available, or ACE or LSI-R before then.*

Strengths:

- There was some evidence in case records of assessments based on OGRS.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records rarely integrated the R&R programme into the overall plan of work for the offender in a manner which suggested that case managers understood the contribution R&R could make to supervision.
- Although objectives were set, they were not SMART.
- There was little sign of evaluation and monitoring forms being used as an aid to supervision planning.

D1.2 Effective liaison arrangements between the case manager and programme staff

2

Description: *The case records show, and interviews with selected staff indicate, the existence of effective arrangements for liaison, handover and communication. This should include the three-way meetings between the case manager, programme staff and the offender at the end of the programme.*

Strengths:

- The area had given named tutors responsibility for liaising with the case manager of each offender.
- Interviews with offenders showed that they were aware of communication between their case manager and the tutors.
- Three-way meetings were taking place between case managers, offenders and tutors at the end of the group work programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records did not always reflect the communication which took place between case managers and programme staff.

D1.3 Supporting the offender through all phases of the programme

1

Description: *The case manager is responsible for preparing and motivating the offender prior to their participation on an accredited programme and for reinforcing learning during the programme.*

Strengths:

- Interviews with case managers revealed some heartening examples of motivational work carried out with offenders who could have particular difficulties in sustaining their commitment to the programme (e.g. young adults).

- Pre-group work sessions were being delivered by programme tutors in the group work rooms. This familiarised offenders with the setting and the content of the programme upon which they were about to embark.
- Plans were being drawn up to enable case managers to attend the first pre-group work session with the tutors who normally carried out this work. This would give a clear message to offenders about the integration of the programme in the overall supervisory process.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records were not an accurate gauge of the amount of preparatory and ongoing work that might be carried out with an offender.
- There was inconsistent practice amongst case managers in the extent to which proactive contact with offenders undergoing the programme was sought.
- No evidence was seen of any reinforcement of learning by case managers through the programme.

D1.4 Understanding and knowledge of programme methods

1

Description: *Interviews with case managers demonstrate they have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the programme and that they either have the requisite skills to undertake reinforcement, follow-up and/or relapse prevention work, or the ability to refer to staff possessing these skills.*

Strengths:

- Lincolnshire had recently adopted the Essex pre and post-programme package for use with the R&R programme and was planning case manager training in this.
- Case managers were able to describe the aims and objectives of the programme.

Areas for improvement:

- No evidence was seen of consideration being given to the promulgation of information about effectiveness nationally or locally of the programme, with categories of offenders regarded by some case managers as less suitable.

D1.5 Monitoring of attendance and enforcement

2

Description: *Responsibility for the monitoring of attendance and the enforcement of orders is clearly defined with appropriate systems in place. There is evidence of effective enforcement in all cases.*

Strengths:

- Case records clearly noted an offender's compliance with the order and any necessary enforcement action.
- Enforcement action was generally taking place within the nationally agreed timescale.
- Case managers understood their role with respect to enforcement of attendance on the programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Where case managers were not in a position to receive e-mail notice of an offender's failure to attend (because they worked part-time or on other sites), there were no clear back-up arrangements.

D1.6 Documentation

0

Description: *The case record shows that all relevant documentation is completed.*

Evaluation and monitoring forms had until recently been completed by the programmes team. They were now being completed by case managers.

Strengths:

- Attendance levels were clearly recorded on case files.

Areas for improvement:

- Arrangements to ensure that all relevant paperwork was in the case record, if necessary keeping copies of specific documents with the programmes team (e.g. statements of understanding) were inadequate.
- Pre-work conducted was not always clearly identified on the case record.
- A number of case records looked at did not contain the targeting matrix (now incorporated into form RA1).

D1.7 End of programme review

0

Description: *The supervision plan review for each offender shows that at the end of the programme appropriate individual objectives are identified to strengthen and build on the progress made, and to achieve successful community reintegration.*

The case records assessed contained very few instances of offenders who had completed the R&R programme. This criterion has therefore been assessed on the limited information available.

Strengths:

- In interview, case managers were able to give examples of the ways in which they were incorporating information from the post-programme review into supervision.

Areas for improvement:

- Supervision plan reviews did not contain SMART objectives.
- There was little evidence that work undertaken during the programme was finding its way into reviews while the offender was still on the programme.

D1.8 Reinforcement and relapse prevention work

N/A

Description: *There are specific arrangements in place to reinforce learning and for relapse prevention work, including booster programmes where required by the programme, delivered by appropriately trained and skilled staff.*

This criterion has not been assessed as the area is awaiting the national development of a Cognitive Skills Booster Programme designed to reinforce learning. In the meantime Lincolnshire will be using the Essex model of post-programme work, for which case managers will receive training.

Next Steps

HMIP will employ a three-tier follow-up process, depending on a probation area's performance rating:

Level 1 follow-up

A level 1 performing area will have met or exceeded the agreed IQR figure of 70%. (This figure rises to 75% for year 2 and 90% for year 3.) The follow-up will normally be conducted within one year of the audit report being received by the probation area, and will usually be limited to a desktop exercise, depending on the advance information received, focusing on the areas for improvement for criteria that were not fully met in the original audit.

Level 2 follow-up

A level 2 area will not have reached the 70% quality rating for programme delivery, but will have attained at least 40%. The follow-up will combine a request for written information and a one-two day visit to the probation area with HMIP auditing further videotapes and case files. This will normally take place within one year of the audit report being received by the probation area.

Level 3 follow-up

A level 3 area will have scored less than a 40% IQR. The follow-up will involve a fresh audit of the probation area and will normally be completed within 6 months of the audit report being received by the probation area.

Lincolnshire Probation Area achieved an IQR of 55% and is a **level 2 area**. A limited follow-up audit will be carried out in one year's time. The area should pay particular attention to mandatory items, which have not been fully met.

This audit report and the IQR will be received by the Joint Accreditation Panel in February 2002.