



HM Inspectorate of Probation

AUDIT OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

Welsh Areas of the
National Probation Service for
England and Wales

*Report on:
North Wales Probation Area –
Enhanced Thinking Skills*

November 2002

Acknowledgements:

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

The audit team comprised:

Rosanna Heal

Peter Carter

Jackie McAvoy

Inspection and Audit Officers

Andy Bonny

Deputy Audit Manager

Alan MacDonald

Assistant Chief Inspector of Probation

Glossary

ACE	Assessment, Case Recording and Evaluation System
ACO	Assistant chief officer
CO	Chief officer
CPRO	Community punishment and rehabilitation order
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRO	Community rehabilitation order
DTTO	Drug testing and treatment order
ETS	Enhanced Thinking Skills
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
NPD	National Probation Directorate
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OGRS	Offender Group Reconviction Scale
OHP	Overhead projector
PSO	Probation service officer
PSR	Pre-sentence report
TPO	Trainee probation officer

Contents

	Page
Context:	3
Scoring Approach:	3
Overview:	4
Findings and recommendations:	5
SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP	7
SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES	9
SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY	19
SECTION D: CASE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES	22
Next Steps:	25
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 Correctional Services 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:

- The audit visit was carried out in September 2002.
- This report relates to one accredited general offending behaviour group work programme: ETS.
- North Wales was running the programme from three delivery sites: Colwyn Bay, Wrexham and Bangor, all of which were visited and resources and facilities assessed.
- The audit comprised four main elements: assessment of advance information; observation of randomly selected videotaped programme sessions; a case file reading exercise; and interviews with staff and offenders.
- Interviews were held with senior managers and both the programme and treatment managers. An administrator with responsibility for inputting IAPS data was also interviewed, as were representatives of the following staff groups: programme tutors, case managers and PSR writers. Six offenders were interviewed.
- One audit criterion was not assessed – D1.8. This decision was taken because plans were awaited nationally for the accreditation of the Cognitive Skills Booster Programme to reinforce offender learning.
- HMIP monitored nine ETS videos, randomly selected from all three delivery sites.

Findings:

The audit of North Wales took place after a year of growth in which the area had accommodated an increase in staffing of 40%, mostly at PSO grade. While senior managers had undoubtedly given considerable thought to the What Works agenda, and accredited programmes in particular, there had been a slower response to problems of resourcing, low referrals and high attrition in the first year of implementation. Senior managers had sought to minimise disruption and accommodate change by adopting an incremental approach to dealing with these difficulties. However, this had left many staff confused about current policies and guidelines and delivery staff feeling overstretched. There had been insufficient guidance to staff about their respective roles in supporting programme delivery; and the role of case managers was not clearly defined or integrated. Although some work had been carried out with sentencers, this had not been systematic or evaluated.

Assessment staff were unclear about targeting and suitability issues. The low number of referrals and attrition between sentence and programme start contributed to an unreliable programme schedule which, in turn, led to longer delays for offenders and a loss of confidence on the part of staff. Programme and treatment management had been inadequately resourced, creating problems both in the development of systematic monitoring systems, and of straightforward referral routes, neither of which were facilitated by the limitations of IAPS.

The area had recently decided to move to an allocation system where eligible cases were highlighted pre-sentence. Team targets for programme completions had been in place since April 2002 and middle managers were responsible for ensuring that these were met. Tutors were now deployed across the area and work was underway to prepare pre-group work sessions for use by case managers. These commendable developments indicated that the area was now giving high priority to structures and systems which would yield better results in terms of completions.

There were other reasons for optimism: tutors were delivering ETS to a good standard and were well supported by their treatment manager. Programme adherence by tutors was particularly strong and there were encouraging signs that their treatment style and group work skills were improving through practice and supervision.

Recommendations

The CO should ensure that the area:

- *reviews and updates the What Works strategy to bring together current initiatives and maximise programme completions (A1.1);*
- *resources programme and treatment management provision to maintain and enhance delivery quality (A1.2);*
- *develops and implements a rolling programme of context setting events for all staff, with senior management participation to model commitment to accredited programmes and foster ownership across the area (A1.1, A1.3);*
- *implements and evaluates a strategy for ongoing liaison with sentencers and other stakeholders to maximise suitable programme orders (A1.4);*
- *improves its ETS delivery sites, paying particular attention to the provision of waiting areas and 'break out' rooms and adequate equipment (B1.1);*
- *rewrites its ETS information leaflets to make them more comprehensive and responsive to the requirements of race equality and wider diversity issues (B1.2);*
- *implements a strategy to maximise referral of eligible offenders, addresses attrition, enhances completion rates, and minimises delays to timely programme commencement (B2.1, B2.4, B6.1);*
- *draws up guidelines in relation to recording of catch-ups so as to address inconsistencies and improve enforcement practice (B2.3);*

- *improves the information given to potential tutor candidates, records details of assessment centre outcomes and puts in place a tutor deselection policy (B3.1);*
- *produces competency-based job descriptions for all roles involved in programme delivery and clarifies the distinction between those of programme manager and treatment manager (B3.2);*
- *monitors time spent by tutors in preparing for sessions and implements a strategy to streamline tasks (B3.3);*
- *disseminates information about the theoretical and evidence basis of ETS, with specific reference to recent UK-based research, so as to increase practitioner knowledge and promote the effectiveness of the programme to offenders (B4.5);*
- *reviews and improves arrangements to identify training needs of programme staff through appraisal and supervision (B4.6, B5.2);*
- *institutes systematic checks to ensure the proper application of exclusion criteria (B6.1);*
- *draws up practice guidelines for singleton placements to enhance the accessibility of the programme (B6.4);*
- *implements a clear monitoring and evaluation policy for the programme, taking account of the information needs of different staff groups (B7.1, B7.2);*
- *develops a more comprehensive range of strategies for dealing with race equality and wider diversity issues in order to develop staff awareness in programme delivery (C1.4);*
- *improves the quality of supervision planning and review, especially the integration of programme work within the supervision process and the writing of SMART objectives (D1.1, D1.7);*
- *sets out expectations of case managers and undertakes training to address the critical role they play in the preparation and motivation of offenders and in reinforcing the learning of ETS during and after the end of the programme (D1.2, D1.3, D1.4);*
- *clarifies the respective roles of case managers and tutors in enforcing ETS orders (D1.5).*

The NPD should ensure that:

- *a review of LAPS is undertaken, so that a viable monitoring and evaluation system can be made available to promote the collection and dissemination of accurate programme data (B7.1);*
- *a revised end of programme report template is issued, covering risk assessment and relapse scenarios (C1.6).*

SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

A1.1 Committed leadership

0

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.*

Strengths:

- The area Business Plan 2002/2003 clearly set out programme related objectives and completion targets for the year.
- Discussion about the implementation and performance of ETS had featured regularly in senior management meetings.
- A briefing for new Board members on accredited programmes formed part of their induction.

Areas for improvement:

- In the first year of implementation two of the eight tutors had left the area and there had been a large influx of new staff, all of which had affected the area's ability to meet the demands of roll-out. Recent developments designed to alleviate this situation had not yet taken effect.
- The area's What Works strategy dated from 2000 and was only now being reviewed.
- Although senior managers had attended context setting events in the early stages of roll-out, this had pre-dated the arrival of the current ACO with responsibility for What Works. Since then, senior managers had played a lesser role in awareness raising events.
- The staff development training plan did not indicate which of the programme related training priorities were likely to be met in the current year. Discussion with the ACO with programmes responsibility suggested that a number of key areas for development would be unlikely to be met from the current year's training budget.

A1.2 Management structures

0

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:

- Management structures had been reviewed and new arrangements had recently been put in place in order to facilitate the integration of case management with delivery of the programme. This had included the disbanding of the old programmes team and the deployment of tutors across a number of sites. Middle managers had had responsibilities in relation to meeting team targets for programme completion since April 2002.

Areas for improvement:

- Although competency-based job descriptions existed for the various grades of staff involved in ETS, these did not specifically relate to programme delivery nor were they linked to those set out in the national management manual.
 - There had been inadequate resourcing of programme management in the first year of delivery. This was evidenced in the wide range of responsibilities undertaken by the treatment manager to support the tutor group and programme manager.
-

- Briefings from service management group meetings were used to communicate accredited programmes issues across the area. Comments made by staff at a number of meetings suggested that these were not always achieving their aim and there was still some confusion about policy and procedures.

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:

- The area was about to institute a system whereby offenders within the ETS OGRS 2 banding were identified as such by clerical staff at the PSR stage. The presumption was that these offenders would be allocated to a programme provided they met suitability criteria. This represented a positive change from a referral to an allocation culture.
- Case managers and tutors expressed enthusiasm for the programme and the latter had remained committed to delivering it in the face of low referrals and high attrition.

Areas for improvement:

- Uneven referral rates across the area suggested that not all staff were equally convinced of the value of ETS. Use of the programme for DTTOs was limited.
- Case manager attendance at review meetings was inconsistent.
- Not all case managers had attended context setting events, although there had been some attempt to rectify gaps in knowledge with workshops run by tutors and the programme manager.

A1.4 Effective communication with sentencers

0

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

Strengths:

- A sentencer information leaflet set out the main aims and objectives of the programme, the methods used and targeting and suitability criteria. Additional information was in the process of being drawn up.

Areas for improvement:

- There had been a significant gap in the delivery of workshops for sentencers between June 2001 and the present due, in part, to pressure on magistrates' training schedules. Insufficient attention had been given to alternative ways of ensuring that sentencers had up-to-date knowledge of accredited programmes or to including other stakeholders in information giving events.
- Sentencers had expressed concern about the lack of information on programmes and this was confirmed by the experience of some staff.
- The area was not able to separate out concordance rates for programme proposals from those for other CRO and CPRO conditions and therefore had no reliable means of checking the effectiveness of PSRs in seeking a condition to attend the programme.
- No monitoring of the effectiveness of sentencer liaison in relation to the programme had been carried out.

SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

B1.1 Resources and facilities

1

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

Strengths:

- All group rooms were of a size sufficient to accommodate 12 offenders and were light and well ventilated.
- Flip charts were available and there were secure video storage facilities at each site.

Areas for improvement:

- There was no 'break out' room where sub-group work could take place at Bangor, and although the Wrexham site had sufficient group rooms, these were in demand by other programmes.
- Some chairs at Bangor were broken and the skylight at this site created problems with glare on the videoed sessions.
- OHPs were in limited supply and only one screen existed at the Wrexham site, which was used for other programmes.
- Accessibility for wheelchair users was impossible at the Colwyn Bay site.

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.*

Strengths:

- Sentencer leaflets were provided in English and Welsh setting out the aims of ETS and information about targeting and suitability.
- Offender leaflets gave a helpful description of psychometric testing.

Areas for improvement:

- There were no leaflets specifically for staff.
- Offender leaflets contained no reference to the needs of women, minority ethnic offenders or other groups, nor was any mention made of a complaints procedure.
- The consequences of failure to attend were not outlined in the information leaflet for offenders.

B2.1 Managing attendance

0

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:

- Staff were able to give examples of ways in which the attendance of individual offenders had been managed to achieve completion.
 - Plans were in place to arrange for the automatic scheduling of psychometric testing at all delivery sites so as to minimise delay and attrition at the early stages of the order/licence.
-

- Registers suggested that attendance conformed to the requirements of ETS, and that group members were not permitted more than the maximum number of catch-ups.

Areas for improvement:

- The area had no detailed plans to show how completion rates could be improved and only limited information about reasons for attrition which would help them address this.
- Area enforcement procedural guidelines made no reference to attendance at the programme.
- Case managers said that they did not always receive information about changes to the schedule in time, and that this created problems in maintaining the motivation of offenders who had a longer wait than anticipated. It was suggested that this had an effect upon completion rates which were low.

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.*

Strengths:

- There was a published calendar for each ETS programme for the current year. This was supplemented, where possible, by more up-to-date information if the scheduling of the programme had to change because of the low number for any particular group.
- The frequency of session delivery, at twice a week, conformed to the ETS programme manual.
- Tutors and the treatment manager had shown great commitment to running sessions despite workload pressures brought about by loss of staff in the previous year.
- Tutors had ensured that offenders did not disrupt the session as a result of personal crises, by using the time before session starts to discuss any problems of an immediate nature, and contacting the case manager about issues to be dealt with less urgently.

Areas for improvement:

- The programme calendar was not circulated to courts thus limiting its usefulness.

B2.3 Catch-up sessions/Attendance

1

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.*

Strengths:

- Catch-ups were being scheduled regularly and generally took place before the next session of the programme.
- No difficulties had arisen in identifying staff to deliver catch-ups.
- Arrangements were in place to monitor the integrity of catch-up sessions.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records did not always clearly show whether or not catch-up sessions had been attended. In only 14 of 25 relevant cases (56%) was it possible to see whether the offender had attended the catch-up as required. Tutors were not reliably recording catch-ups on attendance registers.
- Although the treatment manager had produced some helpful guidelines summarising the requirements for catch-up, it was not clear what the status of this document was nor whether it was distributed to case managers.
- The scheduling of catch-ups for evening groups was problematic, with some offenders unable to come in early before the following session.

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.*

Strengths:

- There were plans to increase the number of psychometric testing sessions at each site which would have a positive impact on timeliness.

Areas for improvement:

- Area policy in relation to timeliness did not take account of the requirements of audit, and there was no monitoring of the promptness of commencements.
- The file read showed that in only 10 of 32 cases (31%) did offenders start the programme within the required time boundaries. This included cases where commencement had been delayed for legitimate offender related reasons.
- Case managers and tutors expressed frustration at the number of groups which had had to be delayed because of low numbers. A number of offenders had had lengthy waits before starting the group. In the case of some licencees this had affected their ability to complete the programme. In other instances, psychometric tests had had to be re-administered.

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:

- Assessment procedures existed and had been followed. All current tutors had passed both assessment centre and ETS training.

Areas for improvement:

- Most tutors said they had felt ill-prepared for the ETS training. This was particularly true of external recruits to the service who had received minimal information (verbal or written) about what it entailed. This may have contributed to what had been a negative training experience for a number of tutors.
- There was no record of dates and outcomes of assessment centre procedures.
- No comprehensive policy existed on the deselection of tutors who were performing poorly, although the programme and treatment managers were both aware of national guidelines. (The

NPD would shortly be providing guidelines on this in the forthcoming revised national management manual.)

B3.2 Staff roles and competencies

0

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:

- Differences in grades were clearly reflected in job descriptions, which were competency-based.
- The ETS practice manual set out the roles of different staff involved in the ETS programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Core competencies did not describe the postholder's role in relation to ETS. There was therefore no cross-referencing for the roles of programme manager, treatment manager or tutor.
- Some evidence existed of role overlap between the tasks of the programme manager and that of the treatment manager and there was confusion amongst case managers about referral arrangements as a result.

B3.3 Preparation and debriefing time for tutors

1

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

Strengths:

- The programme and treatment managers allocated 2-2½ hours for preparation and debriefing, to allow for travel and other commitments.

Areas for improvement:

- Tutors said that they did not always have time to prepare for sessions and some were completing this work outside their normal working hours.
- Time taken to prepare and debrief was not being routinely recorded.

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:

- Three or four tutors were assigned to each programme, thus ensuring continuity throughout the programme. Participants were introduced to all tutors in the first session.
- Offenders confirmed that they were taught by not more than three or four tutors and could recall their names.
- TPOs had been successfully integrated into these arrangements.

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 new tutors received training prior to running their first programme of ETS.
- Supervision and appraisal notes demonstrated that attention was being given to staff development.

Areas for improvement:

- No record existed of relevant training and developmental work undertaken by programme staff or of assessment centre dates.

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:

- Despite shortages of experienced tutors in the first year, inexperienced tutors had generally been paired with experienced staff. Where this had not been possible, an experienced member of staff acted as 'back up' and mentor.
- The treatment manager had undertaken tutoring where there was a need for an experienced tutor to be involved.
- New tutors said that they felt the arrangements had worked well and had found their experienced colleagues to be supportive and helpful.

Areas for improvement:

- Independent treatment management of sessions had not been possible when the treatment manager tutored, as he had been the only ETS treatment manager in the area.

B4.3 Training arrangements for experienced staff

2

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.]*

Strengths:

- Four experienced tutors had been nominated for booster training.
- Tutors understood the pathway to this developmental milestone.

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:

- Case managers, PSR authors, tutors and the programme and treatment managers were all able to define clearly the aims and objectives of the ETS programme and the methods used.
- Programme and treatment managers had supplemented context setting events with briefing workshops around the area to raise awareness of the programme and these were referred to by case managers and PSR authors.

Areas for improvement:

- PSR authors said they referred to an outline of sessions when discussing the programme with offenders and this was generally felt to be satisfactory. However, some sessions were described as 'a bit of a mystery'. This indicated that case managers would benefit from refresher training on programme content.
- There was limited reference material for staff who wished to refresh their understanding of ETS.

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

0

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

Strengths:

- Programme and treatment managers were able to trace the origins of ETS both in this country and in North America.

Areas for improvement:

- Most staff interviewed had limited knowledge of the evidential and theoretical basis of ETS. Even tutors could not recall having seen the theory manual.
- The area had not provided staff with easily assimilable information about recent research findings which would have helped them promote the programme more effectively to offenders. A number of staff expressed uncertainty as to the applicability of ETS in the community.

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:

- The area had a well-established rolling induction programme for PSOs which included basic group work training.
- Some staff had had training in motivational interviewing and presentation skills and further training in group work skills was planned.
- The North Wales staff development plan showed that consideration had been given to the training needs of staff involved in programme delivery.

- Tutors felt that they had benefited from treatment manager supervision and from working with more experienced colleagues, and they were confident that their skills were sufficient for the effective delivery of the programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Supervision notes and tutor comments indicated that training needs were rarely a feature of treatment manager supervision. The relative responsibilities of line managers, the programme manager and the treatment manager in identifying delivery related training needs were not sufficiently clear.

B5.1 Staff supervision and quality of practice

2

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:

- All tutors received practice supervision once a fortnight and line management supervision at a frequency determined by their level of experience. Tutors said they found practice supervision very helpful and that they were able to discuss practice issues easily outside supervision sessions if necessary.
- Practice supervision included discussion of video monitoring which had been carried out by the treatment manager and which, more recently, was also being undertaken by tutors themselves.
- Supervision notes were prepared after each session and distributed to the tutors concerned.
- Supervision notes and interviews with tutors attested to the fact that attention was given to areas for development as well as strengths.
- Practice supervision had been supplemented by tutor meetings with the programme and treatment managers. This arrangement was changing to cluster meetings because of the redeployment of tutors.

B5.2 Staff appraisal

1

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:

- Appraisals for all relevant staff included an assessment of their ability to carry out their roles in relation to ETS.
- Video monitoring forms identified strengths and areas for improvement by tutors.

Areas for improvement:

- Tutor practice supervision notes were not being routinely forwarded to line managers. This would hamper their ability to assess tutor competence for the purposes of appraisal.

B6.1 Offender selection and assessment

0

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:

- In recognition of the need for improved targeting of offenders, the area was moving to pre-sentence identification of eligible offenders.
- A recent area briefing (July 2002) clearly set out selection criteria for ETS.
- Discussion with case managers suggested that liaison with tutors over suitability was common and there were plans to improve oversight of this process using link PSOs.

Areas for improvement:

- Staff interviewed voiced confusion about the policy on targeting and this was borne out in comments by tutors about the unsuitability of some offenders referred to the programme.
- Case records showed that 13 of 32 offenders (41%) were within the correct OGRS 2 banding for ETS, with a further 12 (38%) within the LSI-R banding. This left 21% outside both bands.
- There had been a long-standing problem in ensuring that OGRS 2 scores were available on all offenders prior to allocation to a programme. In some cases these were unavailable because no CPS papers had been provided; in others, PSR authors or case managers had not made the information available to their colleagues running ETS.
- Records of high risk of harm cases referred to the programme showed little evidence of this issue having been addressed in planning programme attendance.
- Programme and treatment managers said they did not have the time to routinely monitor suitability or exclusions.

B6.2 Offender knowledge and understanding of the programme requirements

1

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:

- Offenders interviewed had a good understanding of the requirements of ETS and were able to articulate these.
- Case managers said that they sometimes invited tutors to early meetings with offenders so as to give them a real flavour of the programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Case records showed that the requirements of the programme had been communicated to the offenders at least twice in writing and verbally in only 19% of cases.
- Signed copies of the offender contract were not always available on file.

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:

- Groups were not starting with fewer than four or more than 12 offenders.
- Consideration had been given to 'bus stopping' offenders when the number fell below four, but geographical factors had made this difficult to sustain.

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:

- The treatment manager and tutors were aware of the principles governing singleton placements and had thought about tutor make-up and the nature of the offender group when assessing offender support needs.

Areas for improvement:

- Limited consideration had been given to strategies for the support of singleton women or minority ethnic offenders beyond what tutors themselves could do. For example, use of mentors had not been explored.
- There was no written policy on singleton placements.
- No efforts had been made to gauge the extent to which ETS proposals were being made on women and minority ethnic offenders.

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.*

Strengths:

- The area had guidelines for the completion of psychometric data and staff were following these.
- Programme integrity checklists were being completed by tutors at the end of each session, as were session evaluation forms.
- Staff said they received regular feedback of performance data on a monthly basis.

Areas for improvement:

- There was no area policy which outlined the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation, or set out staff responsibilities in this respect.
- Although arrangements now existed for the inputting of data on IAPS, limited performance information was being collected beyond what was required by the NPD.
- Staff were not always reading or absorbing the performance data which were circulated. The area needed to find ways of engaging the interest of those less intimately involved with the programme.

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:

- The area had developed a new system to identify eligible offenders at the PSR stage and team targets had been set in response to the low number starting the programme.
- The programme and treatment manager had drawn up pre-programme sessions for case managers to maximise attendance and ensure offenders starting the programme were suitable.

Areas for improvement:

- There was little or no knowledge amongst staff interviewed of performance data from other areas running ETS.
- Insufficient information was available on reasons for drop-out to enable this problem to be tackled.
- No monitoring or evaluation was being carried out in relation to the experience of women or minority ethnic offenders on ETS to inform practice.

SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY

C1.1 Adherence to programme manual

2

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:

- Video monitoring demonstrated that adherence to the programme manual was strong overall and treatment manager supervision notes showed that this was given attention in each supervision session.
- Session material was covered in the correct order.
- Extraneous additional material was not added to the programme.
- Exercises were generally set up correctly and explained properly.
- The aims and objectives of sessions were mostly met.

Areas for improvement:

- Exercises were not always run to time, with some taking too long and others being rushed. This affected the pace of some sessions which were assessed as too slow.
- Tutors did not always check out how far group members' learning related to the session aims and objectives.

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:

- Tutors listened to participants' comments and allowed them time to answer questions.
- Group members were encouraged to make links between exercises and the session.

Areas for improvement:

- Anti-social views were dealt with inconsistently. Sometimes they were challenged forcefully, at other times ignored. The effect of tutors laughing at some offender comments was one of collusion, albeit inadvertent.
- Use of Socratic questioning was uneven, with some tutors doing this very well and others tending to lapse into telling, thus limiting participants' learning opportunities.
- Participants were not always encouraged to validate ideas for themselves or to elicit self-motivating statements.

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.*

Strengths:

- Group members were fully involved in sessions and generally well engaged.
- Groups were well managed and co-working arrangements supportive.
- Tutors were clearly spoken and avoided jargon.

Areas for improvement:

- Insufficient attention had been given to the use of praise as a way of motivating and encouraging group participants.
- Introductions and endings of exercises needed work, with some endings in particular being too abrupt.

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:

- Some clear examples were seen in programme sessions of tutors challenging sexist comments by group members.
- Treatment manager supervision notes showed that race equality and wider diversity issues were a standing item for discussion and that some good practice had been developed as a result.
- In the absence of a Welsh version of ETS, tutors had ensured that at least one tutor could translate material into Welsh for the benefit of those for whom English was a second language.
- Tutors were able to give instances where literacy or dyslexia difficulties were well managed by considerate use of material.

Areas for improvement:

- Discussion with staff suggested that they had little experience of dealing with visible minority ethnic offenders. Strategies for ensuring that the programme was delivered addressing a range of race equality issues were limited.
- The area had not produced policy or practice documents promoting wider diversity issues in the delivery of accredited programmes. Staff practice tended to be reactive rather than proactive in this respect.

C1.5 Programme integrity checklist

2

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

Strengths:

- Tutors were using debriefing time to complete programme integrity checklists for each session of the programme.

- Levels of offender understanding and engagement were being recorded and tutor comments showed appropriate discrimination between participants' performances.

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.*

Strengths:

- Reports addressed participation and progress against the range of cognitive deficits identified.
- Remaining treatment needs were identified in each of the reports seen for future supervision.
- Tutors gave priority to ensuring that reports were completed in a timely fashion.

Areas for improvement:

- Reports followed a standard format, which did not easily permit the identification of risk factors or likely scenarios for relapse.
- Although recommendations for future supervision were required to be SMART, they were rarely so and could not therefore easily be translated into supervision plan review objectives.
- The treatment manager said he rarely had time to quality assure reports.

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.*

Areas for improvement:

- There was little evidence of ETS being integrated in the supervision plan for the offender, with only 22% of records achieving this.
- No supervision plan objectives were completely SMART.
- In 50% of cases there was some evidence of the use of OGRS 2 or LSI-R to inform assessment. However, often this was limited to a reference to the score rather than explicitly influencing the plan of work for the offender.

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

1

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:

- Case records demonstrated that good liaison arrangements between case managers and tutors existed in 41% of cases and some level of liaison in a further 28%.
- Case managers understood the importance of making close links with programme staff and discussion suggested that it happened more frequently than the records showed, particularly where they were on the same site.

Areas for improvement:

- In only 63% of relevant cases did the record show that case managers attended three-way meetings with tutors and offenders.
- Most communication was initiated by tutors rather than case managers.

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

0

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:

- Case managers were keen to improve their practice and looked forward to receiving more specific guidance on what they were required to do pre-programme to prepare offenders for ETS.

Areas for improvement:

- Area expectations of the level of contact between case managers and offenders in the course of the programme were unclear, even though some individual practice was good.

- In only 31% of cases were case managers clearly carrying out preparatory work with offenders prior to the commencement of the group work element of the programme. The experience of tutors was that offenders often reached the first session with little idea of what to expect.
- There was almost no evidence on record of any reinforcement of learning by case managers taking place.
- At Wrexham, some offenders were attending a 'Core Offending Behaviour Group' prior to ETS. This was a legacy programme and it was not clear how far its objectives and aims were congruent with those of ETS.

D1.4 Understanding and knowledge of programme methods

0

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:

- In discussion, case managers demonstrated that they had a reasonable grasp of programme aims, objectives and methods.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all case managers interviewed had attended case manager training for ETS, or the briefing sessions run by the programme and treatment managers. The area record of attendance at context setting events did not indicate what proportion of staff had taken part, nor had any skills audit been carried out to determine the extent of unmet training needs.
- Case managers expressed a lack of confidence in being able to deliver pre-programme work effectively.
- Area documentation on ETS (the practice manual) was available but needed updating and appeared not to be being used by case managers for reference.

D1.5 Monitoring of attendance and enforcement

1

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:

- Enforcement of programme attendance was being undertaken within national standards timescales in 68% of cases.
- Area guidance on enforcement conformed to the requirements of national standards.

Areas for improvement:

- Some confusion existed over the relative responsibilities of tutors and case managers following non-attendance at a programme session.
- Absence of a consistent system for the recording of attendance at catch-up threatened to undermine monitoring of attendance by case managers.

D1.6 Documentation

0

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

Areas for improvement:

- Only 16% of records contained all the required documentation. The most frequently missing documents were offender contracts, supervision plan reviews and end of programme reviews.

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.*

Strengths:

- Attention to community reintegration issues was demonstrated in 64% of records.

Areas for improvement:

- There was little evidence of end of programme reviews having influenced subsequent supervision planning (7%).
- SMART objectives were missing from supervision plan reviews.

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 due to the non-availability of the Cognitive Skills Booster Programme at this stage.

Next Steps

In this the second year of the audit cycle, HMIP have moved to a revised follow-up process depending on a probation area's performance rating.

HMIP advised COs in June 2002 that areas scoring less than a 50% IQR would be subject to a fresh audit within six months of the audit report being received by the probation area.

Areas which have now met or exceeded a 50% IQR will not be subject to any follow-up process but will next be audited within HMIP's normal inspection/audit cycle.

IQR score

The North Wales Probation Area achieved an IQR of **40%**.

This audit report and the IQR will be received by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel in March 2003.