



HM Inspectorate of Probation

# AUDIT OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

South-East Region of the  
National Probation Service for  
England and Wales

*Level 3 Follow-up Report on:  
Sussex Probation Area –  
Think First*

December 2002

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## Acknowledgements:

We are grateful for the cooperation of staff from the Sussex Probation Area in completing this follow-up audit.

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## Glossary

ACE	Assessment, Case Recording and Evaluation System
ACO	Assistant chief officer
CO	Chief officer
EEM	European Excellence Model
HMIP	HM Inspectorate of Probation
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
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bounded.
PSR	Pre-sentence report
SPO	Senior probation officer

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## 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:

<b>Committed leadership and supportive management</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Programme management responsibilities</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Quality of programme delivery</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Case management responsibilities</b>	<b>20%</b>

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 follow-up 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.

For this follow-up audit, those criteria that were fully met on the original audit have not been re-assessed. The marks awarded then have therefore been carried over.

## Overview:

- The original audit of Think First in Sussex took place in March 2002.
- The follow-up audit comprised the following elements: video monitoring of nine recorded Think First sessions; a case file read; interviews with the ACO, programme and treatment managers, tutors, case managers and PSR writers. Two site visits and six offender interviews were also carried out.
- Only those criteria not fully met at the original audit have been re-assessed and new marks awarded.
- Progress in relation to NPD recommendations in the original report has been discussed with the Directorate's Head of Offending Behaviour Programmes.

## **Findings:**

Sussex Probation Area had engaged fully with the improvement process needed following the original audit of Think First in March 2002. Managers and staff had invested substantial time and energy in responding to the challenge of making key progress in six months. A detailed and challenging action plan was devised, focusing particularly on mandatory unmet criteria. The accredited programmes team action plan drew both on audit results and the area's EEM assessment in setting future objectives.

Senior management responsibility for the What Works agenda in general, and for accredited programmes in particular, had been broadened under the newly-established What Works strategic group. This group had achieved a great deal in a short time. They had worked to improve the integration of programme delivery and case management with some encouraging early signs of progress. Case managers were clearer about their roles but more work would be needed in this area. Targeting and assessment had been a major focus and the area had begun to move towards an allocation culture. Liaison with sentencers was more systematic. The group had also focused on the implementation issues essential for good programme delivery and now needed to take a longer-term strategic view in relation to future planning and capacity building.

It was pleasing that much had been achieved which had already directly enhanced the delivery of the programme in Sussex. Certain key resources had been put in place and training given to staff who were previously uncertain of their role. Video monitoring scores reflected a considerable improvement in the standard of delivery. There was indication that hard work on the part of tutors was beginning to combine well with the creative work of treatment managers whose role was beginning to have an impact.

Both programme and treatment managers had taken a lead in promoting quality of delivery issues, organising a thorough review by tutors of each Think First session in the light of the related areas for improvement identified in the audit. Moves had been made to tighten the programme timetable and courage was needed to make further progress towards a clear system of advance programme scheduling.

Progress would be further enhanced by a renewed attention to monitoring and evaluation, attrition rates and continued integration of the case management role. In the meantime Sussex had made good progress and raised the standard of delivery of Think First in many significant respects.

## ***Next Steps***

Sussex Probation Area achieved a revised IQR of **63%**.

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

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## SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

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Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

*The CO should ensure that the area:*

- *plans a programme of context setting events for new staff and the existing management team, with senior managers sharing responsibility for delivery of these events to model their commitment (A1.1);*
- *adopts an allocation culture in order to maximise Think First commencements across the area for both community supervision and licence cases (A1.3);*
- *produces and monitors a strategy of ongoing liaison with magistrates, judges, court clerks and advocates, to maximise the number of appropriate orders with programme conditions (A1.4).*

- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Context setting events had been arranged but senior managers had yet to take a full role in delivering them.
- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Progress had been made towards establishing an allocation culture, but commencements had not been maximised across the area particularly in relation to licence cases.
- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Liaison with sentencers on programme-related issues was planned systematically but was not monitored and evaluated for its effectiveness.

### A1.1 Committed leadership

1
---

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A new What Works strategic group, comprising four ACOs, had been instituted in May 2002. Under specific terms of reference the group had begun to share more broadly the senior management involvement in the implementation of accredited programmes.
- A new series of context setting events was being rolled out and the majority of senior managers had participated in these.
- The ACO with programmes responsibility remained the only senior manager taking a lead role in delivering the context setting events, and this important way of showing commitment had not yet been shared across the What Works strategic group.
- Some resourcing issues remained outstanding. The administrative support for programmes had not been fully established and there were gaps in the monitoring and evaluation operation.
- Senior managers had worked to improve their knowledge of programme-related issues and had modelled their commitment to Think First, e.g. the ACO responsible for performance and planning had attended a programmes' team meeting and the CO had observed a Think First group.

## 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A Think First manual for case managers had been drawn up in order better to align the programme delivery and case management functions.
- Whilst case management and programme delivery had been brought closer together, there remained a need for more cohesive integration as the role of case managers continued to develop.
- The role of treatment managers had been established and they were meeting together regularly to discuss management and practice issues.
- Managers of the courts' and case management teams were meeting regularly with the ACO, and included accredited programmes on their agenda.
- New organisational charts had been drawn up, outlining management lines and decision-making routes for programme activity.

## 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Much progress had been made in moving from an 'opt-in' referral culture to an 'opt-out' allocation culture.
- Programme managers had visited supervision team meetings and treatment managers each had an identified liaison link with a specific team.
- There remained a need to increase the overall number of offenders beginning Think First and to aim for consistent rates of allocation across all geographical and functional divisions.
- Staff were generally committed to Think First, although PSR writers reported a tension between the area's programme target and the need for accurate assessments of offender suitability.
- The area was unclear about the number of potential post-release Think First cases, although there had been recent efforts to ensure suitability assessments were made on licence cases.
- Whilst some staff felt encouraged by the anecdotal evidence of individual offenders completing the programme, others felt they needed more evidence showing that Think First was effective with a wide offender group.

## 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A strategy for the promotion of accredited programmes to sentencers was drawn up in August 2002 and would be reviewed in December 2003. This had led to more systematic communication.

- The effectiveness of the various forms of communication had yet to be tested, but plans had been formulated to undertake a sentencer survey between April and June 2003, which would include questions about accredited programmes issues.
- An external newsletter was being drafted and would include programme-related articles.

## SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

*The CO should ensure that the area:*

- *reviews and upgrades group work delivery rooms and equipment, and video records all Think First sessions to a satisfactory standard (B1.1);*
- *formulates a policy for minimising session cancellation and maximising staff continuity, in order to enhance the impact of programme delivery (B2.2, B3.4);*
- *monitors and improves the timeliness of programme commencement and actively considers weekend working (B2.4);*
- *compiles a standard information pack for potential tutor candidates explaining their role and giving details about the programme, in order to brief those considering tutor training (B3.1);*
- *undertakes an audit of supporting skills of tutors, with a view to providing training opportunities in motivational interviewing and addressing diversity issues in group work (B4.6);*
- *establishes a robust system for supervision and appraisal of programme staff, making active use of both the programme integrity/treatment manager role and of video monitoring (B5.1, B5.2);*
- *issues amended advice in relation to the 31-74% OGRS 2 band and monitors allocations to improve the accuracy of targeting (B6.1);*
- *advises all staff of the priority to be given to offender choice in relation to singleton placements, so that consistent access to group work is achieved (B6.4);*
- *devises a monitoring and evaluation policy in relation to programmes, with the aims of improving consistency of recording practice and feedback of relevant data to practitioners and benchmarking of data with other Think First areas (B7.1), (B7.2).*

- ▶▶ *Largely met.* Facilities had been improved and all sessions were being videoed, although some problems persisted with sound quality.
- ▶▶ *Largely met.* Staff had worked diligently to reduce instances of session cancellation and to promote tutor continuity.
- ▶▶ *Not met.* Some offenders still faced delays to programme start and weekend working had not been actively explored.
- ▶▶ *Fully met.* Information about Think First and the assessment centre process was more consistently available to potential tutor candidates.
- ▶▶ *Fully met.* Staff training needs had been assessed and training delivered in motivational interviewing and diversity issues.
- ▶▶ *Fully met.* A reliable system of staff supervision and appraisal had been put in place and video monitoring played a central part in this.
- ▶▶ *Largely met.* Amended targeting advice had been issued and much attention given to monitoring the suitability of offenders coming on to the programme, although complete accuracy had not yet been achieved.
- ▶▶ *Not met.* The area had drafted a policy about women accessing Think First, but this had yet to be implemented and there was still confusion amongst practitioners as to issues such as informed offender consent and singleton placements.

- **Not met:** A monitoring and evaluation strategy had been drawn up, but this had not resulted in increased benchmarking with other areas or an improved feedback loop to practitioners.

### **B1.1 Resources and facilities**

1

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

*Progress since the original audit:*

- There remained concerns that group rooms at some sites were not large enough to accommodate 12 offenders and that separate 'break out' facilities were not available at Eastbourne and Crawley.
- Whilst all sites now had video cameras fitted, HMIP's video monitoring had shown there were problems with the sound quality of some tapes.
- New and more suitable chairs had been provided and clipboards were available for offender use.

### **B1.2 Provision of information leaflets about the programme**

2

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

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A Think First information leaflet for staff had been produced in September 2002.
- Staff were now clear about the point at which the Think First information leaflet was issued to offenders and group members were reliably receiving this prior to sentence.

### **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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Information staff had made improvements to the spreadsheets being used to monitor programme attendance, making for a more consistent area-wide system of recording offender progress through Think First.
- The area had begun to monitor the delivery of pre- and post-group sessions.
- Detailed strategic and operational planning work on maximising completions, by reducing attrition at all key points, had yet to be completed; Think First completions fell short of the national performance management target set for Sussex.

## B2.2 Avoidance of cancellation or disruption to sessions

1

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.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Area-wide calendars outlining the schedule for Think First delivery had yet to be produced, although there were plans to make these accessible to staff in an electronic format based on Lotus Notes.
- Offenders were given written details outlining dates of sessions and other attendance requirements.
- Programme sessions were only cancelled exceptionally, usually because of unexpected staff sickness or training demands. Management sanction was always sought for cancellations and offenders informed in advance where possible.
- Case managers were responding well to offender crises, once alerted by tutors, and these were being addressed outside the programme setting rather than being allowed to disrupt Think First delivery.

## B2.3 Catch-up sessions/Attendance

2

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.*

**Criterion fully met at original audit.**

## 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.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Of 34 cases read in the file read, only 12 (35%) commenced the programme within one month.
- Of the remaining 65% of cases read, there were no examples of planned delays to programme start being fully assessed or recorded.
- Psychometric tests were now being delivered via regular time slots each week, with a target of administration within four weeks of sentence.
- The time-lapse before programme start had generally reduced but some women were facing lengthy delays.
- The area was not monitoring waiting times so as to check on delays.

**B3.1 Staff selection**

2

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Information given to potential tutor candidates was generally felt to be uniform and more consistently available.
- A tutor induction programme had been put in place.
- Both programme managers had received training in running assessment centres.

**B3.2 Staff roles and competencies**

2

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.*

***Criterion fully met at original audit.***

**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.*

***Criterion fully met at original audit.***

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- There was evidence from programme schedules that tutor continuity was being actively planned for and delivered by the allocation of three tutors to each programme.
- Tutors spoke of new arrangements for them to be grouped into trios, so as to promote tutor continuity, and of planning ahead to cover staff leave, training, etc.
- If four tutors were needed to cover a programme, it was ensured that all four were introduced to the group at the beginning.

**B4.1 Training arrangements for new staff**

2

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Sussex tutors were accessing assessment centres and initial training courses reliably.

- Think First training was being delivered to Sussex staff in the required form, without deviation from the fixed content of the course.
- Tutors had now been made aware of their accreditation requirements and treatment managers were monitoring individual tutor progress towards this.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- An appropriate emphasis was being given to the pairing of new tutors with experienced colleagues and this was being realised.
- Some tutors felt it would be helpful to define the term ‘experienced tutor’ so that the informal mentoring role of established staff could be clarified.

**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.]*

**Criterion not assessed at original audit.**

**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.*

**Criterion fully met at original audit.**

**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.*

**Criterion fully met at original audit.**

**B4.6 Supporting skills necessary to run programmes**

2

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- An accredited programmes team training and development plan had been drawn up for 2002/2003.
- Substantial progress had been made by providing training courses for tutors in motivational interviewing, basic group work skills and diversity issues.

- Treatment managers had been trained in supervision skills and video monitoring.
- Programme managers had received training in stress management and health and safety practice.
- Attendance by relevant managers at the national What Works conference and the regional attrition workshop had been facilitated.
- Individual training needs were now being identified through the supervision and appraisal process.
- SPOs supervising case managers had not received any training in Think First beyond attendance at context setting events.

### 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- The area had clarified its supervision policy in relation to programme staff and all parties were required to sign up to a supervision contract.
- Treatment managers were regularly supervising pairs/trios of tutors and focusing on video monitoring at a frequency in excess of the required minimum.
- The area had not yet begun to assess and score individual tutor performance by using separate monitoring forms for each tutor. This had led to some confusion and resentment amongst experienced tutors who were required to demonstrate a good level of individual performance over time in order to qualify for accreditation training.
- Programme managers had line management responsibility for tutors and were supervising them at least quarterly, focusing on staff development and appraisal.
- Treatment managers were well supported by programme managers, receiving individual supervision, and also meeting together regularly to share practice issues and benchmark their performance scores.
- The HMIP assessments of selected videoed sessions were compared with treatment managers' scores of the same sessions. There was found to be an encouraging correlation which evidenced accurate video monitoring on the part of Sussex treatment managers.
- Written records were being kept of tutor supervision sessions.

### 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Performance planning documents were being drawn up with specific programme-related objectives.

- Treatment managers fed back verbally to programme managers about tutor performance so that this assessment could be incorporated into the planning and appraisal process.
- There was only a brief and insufficiently detailed policy statement relating to tutor underperformance and deselection.
- Tutors were confused as to the timing of the appraisal cycle.

### **B6.1 Offender selection and assessment**

1

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- New offender referral had been operational since August 2002 and had undergone a first review in September 2002.
- Details of the correct OGRS 2 targeting band for Think First had been communicated in a number of ways to Sussex staff.
- Of the 34 cases scrutinised in the file read, 16 (47%) had been correctly targeted to Think First.
- Of those cases exceeding the OGRS 2 band, few had sufficiently well-recorded assessments of the additional work to be delivered and there was little attention to the sequencing of different elements of supervision.
- There were clear procedures in relation to both orders and licences, designed to maximise suitable referrals to the programme.
- Responsibility for monitoring non-referral of potentially suitable cases had been lodged with operational SPOs, treatment managers and the ACO (performance and planning).

### **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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- An information leaflet about Think First was distributed at the PSR stage.
- Offenders were being given a detailed programme schedule in advance, outlining the attendance requirements, session content and tutors' names.
- The case file read showed that in only ten of 34 cases (29%) were offenders informed about the programme both verbally and in writing following sentence. This would appear to be because induction sessions and verbal discussions about Think First were not always noted in case records.
- Case managers had been made more aware of their role requirements in terms of informing offenders about Think First.
- Offenders felt they had been well briefed about the requirements of Think First. Tutors reported improved levels of understanding on the part of offenders beginning the programme, reflecting increased input from PSR writers and case managers.

**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.*

**Criterion fully met at original audit.**

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- The area had recently drafted a policy in relation to women accessing Think First.
- As the above policy had not been implemented, there remained some confusion at practitioner level about how women accessed the programme. This centred on a renewed attempt to run a women-only group, and whether the automatic default was for women to have the programme delivered in this way.
- Some women had faced considerable delays to programme start as they awaited either an all-women group or for a second woman to be allocated to a mixed group so as to avoid singleton placements.
- Managers and staff were clear that the implementation of the Priestley 1:1 accredited programme had not changed the access which suitable women and minority ethnic offenders had to Think First.
- There were some difficulties running sufficient evening groups to cater for all employed offenders and there had been no move towards weekend work.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A monitoring and evaluation framework had been drawn up in June 2002.
- No distinction was being made in monitoring data between orders and licence cases.
- Work had not yet begun on scoring or analysing psychometric data.
- Whilst managers were being provided with useful headline information, practitioners still felt they were not fully integrated in to the feedback loop and were not always receiving the data they would like in the most accessible form. This reflected the acknowledgement by the area that insufficient attention had been given to evaluating and reporting on relevant data.
- Some improvements had been made to the database used to monitor Think First activity, making for more consistent arrangements across the area.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- The assessment and targeting process had been amended, with more scrutiny by managers as a result of low referral rates.
- Data relating to the delivery of Think First in other areas were not being communicated to staff.
- Some work had been done in considering reasons for attrition and possible courses of action to address this.

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## SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY

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Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

*The CO should ensure that the area:*

- *instigates a programme of improved tutor delivery, focusing on greater adherence to the programme manual, more appropriate treatment style and enhanced group work skills (C1.1, C1.2, C1.3);*
- *revises the end of programme report to include assessments of risk and of likely scenarios for relapse, to promote more thorough supervision planning in the post-programme phase (C1.6).*

- ▶▶ **Fully met.** Performance scores for programme delivery had improved in all three sections.
- ▶▶ **Not met.** A revised template prompted all the required elements, but the end of programme report was not being actively used for post-programme supervision planning.

### 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Programme material was covered in the correct order.
- Tutors maintained a helpful focus on the aims of the session throughout.
- Whilst problems with the timing of sessions had reduced, some sessions were still being completed in too short a time and breaks were being taken at inappropriate points.

### 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- There was good use of open questions and reflective listening.
- Tutors made effective linkage from session to session and between exercises and session aims.
- There were some missed opportunities when offence-supporting views were not challenged by tutors.
- Learning was not consistently being elicited from group members.

### 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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Tutors were clearly spoken and generally used appropriate language.

- There was some good use of praise.
- Tutors were not always able to include quieter group members or deal appropriately with potentially disruptive offenders.
- Co-working skills were not always refined, with some sessions being dominated by one tutor.

#### **C1.4 Programme delivered addressing race equality and diversity issues**

2

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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Programme staff had devised a manual of diversity exercises to assist in challenging racism or sexism.
- Tutors had also worked hard to review programme sessions in detail, with a view to customising them, within the boundaries of programme adherence, to make the material appropriate for individual offenders.
- Diversity training had been made available to staff and tutor confidence in managing these issues had improved significantly.
- A clear and succinct diversity statement, owned by programme delivery staff, was displayed at Think First delivery sites.

#### **C1.5 Programme integrity checklist**

2

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

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Think First tutors were now assessing their own performance using the correct form and five-point scoring scale.
- Staff were also assessing offender engagement at each session and communicating this to case managers.

#### **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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- The area had adopted a new template for end of programme summary reports, which prompted all the required elements.

- End of programme reports were now clearly labelled as such and were not being confused with supervision plan reviews.
- Case managers felt that the reports were not as user-friendly as they could be, and there were concerns that their length and level of detail rendered them inaccessible to offenders.

## SECTION D: CASE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

*The CO should ensure that the area:*

- *improves the quality and timeliness of supervision plan reviews, highlighting the need for SMART objectives and appropriate integration of material from the end of programme report (D1.1, D1.7);*
- *monitors the sequencing and delivery of psychometric tests and prescribed pre- and post-programme sessions, to guarantee reliable provision of these sessions for all Think First offenders (D1.3);*
- *considers the role of case managers in supporting offenders during the programme, to maximise offender learning and improve completion rates (D1.3);*
- *updates its enforcement policy in the light of problems relating to programme attendance. This should include a clarification of the respective enforcement roles of case managers and programme tutors (D1.5).*

- ▶▶ **Not met:** There had been little improvement to supervision plan reviews.
- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Psychometric tests and pre-group sessions were being delivered and recorded more reliably, though not always within the required timescales.
- ▶▶ **Not met:** The role of case managers in reinforcing offender learning had yet to be established.
- ▶▶ **Fully met:** The respective roles of staff in relation to monitoring attendance and compliance had been clarified and the timeliness of enforcement showed some improvement.

### 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.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Whilst standard programme-related objectives had been drawn up, these were not always being used and tailored to specific offenders.
- In only 12 of 34 cases (35%) was there sufficient integration of the programme into the overall plan of work.
- Fully SMART programme-related objectives were recorded in the initial supervision plan in 16 of 34 cases (47%).
- In only 13 of 31 applicable cases (42%) were programme-related objectives regularly reviewed.
- There remained insufficient attention to the sequencing of different elements of supervision.

**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.*

**Criterion fully met at original audit.**

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- A *Think First Case Managers' Manual* had been produced, highlighting the importance of pre- and post-group sessions, and clarifying the role of the case manager in supporting the offender.
- Greater priority was being given to the delivery of pre- and post-group sessions; in 13 of 34 cases (38%) these sessions were delivered fully as required, and in another ten cases (29%) the sessions were delivered but not within the required timescale.
- Recording by case managers had improved and a new set of contact codes had been developed for programme-related appointments.
- Although the scheduling of psychometric tests had improved, the lack of an area-wide published calendar of programme start dates continued to cause uncertainty on the part of some case managers about the point at which they were required to deliver pre-group sessions.
- Case managers were supporting offenders appropriately in response to crises or when alerted by Think First tutors to difficulties with attendance or engagement.
- The role of case managers in reinforcing offender learning was not established, with only one of 24 applicable cases (4%) evidencing this fully.
- There was no area-wide understanding about the workload allowance which Think First case managers should be given and no ring-fencing of this time in relation to specific tasks.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- Training had been given to case managers in April and May 2002, focusing on the delivery of pre- and post-group work.
- Whilst this had increased confidence amongst case managers in delivering pre-group work, they felt the training had not helped to clarify arrangements for post-group sessions.
- Case managers demonstrated an improved knowledge of the programme methods, aims and objectives.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- The respective roles of tutors and case managers in the enforcement process were more clearly understood.
- Fully appropriate and consistent enforcement action was taken in 20 of 34 cases (59%) examined in the file read exercise.
- In 18 of 31 applicable cases (58%) the enforcement action taken was carried out within the required national standard timescales.

**D1.6 Documentation**

1

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

*Progress since the original audit:*

- In 16 of 34 cases (47%) all relevant programme-related documents were completed and located on the case file.
- Evaluation and monitoring forms and supervision plan reviews were missing in some cases.

**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.*

*Progress since the original audit:*

- There was very little evidence that post-programme reports were directly influencing supervision plan reviews. In only one of seven applicable cases (14%) was there satisfactory linkage between the documents.
- In only two of seven applicable cases (29%) were satisfactory SMART objectives set in supervision plan reviews, structuring future work to build on Think First.

**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.*

**Criterion not assessed at original audit.**