

Education, learning and skills in prisons

An overview

by **Tanvir Hynes**, Head of Learning & Skills at HMP Bronzefield

I used to be a teacher, so I've seen how learning works on both sides of the gates. I'm proud to say that we've got the same ambition, the same standards and the same focus on results.

At HMP Bronzefield, prison life revolves around learning. Within days of arriving, there's a personal development plan in place which includes a careers goal-setting conversation and people are off on their learning journey. There's academic awards and job-focused training, with more than 40 City & Guilds qualifications and the chance to study for GCSEs, A Levels and Open University degrees.

Tanvir's top five surprises about prison learning

- 1 It's the real deal.** The salon for our Level 2 NVQ in hairdressing or beauty therapy would grace any high street. Same products, same training, same paying customers, with an opportunity to gain market entry qualifications
- 2 It's hugely varied.** There's classroom-based learning, on-the-job training and sometimes a mix of the two, like teachers coming to coffee shops to deliver top-up English lessons.
- 3 It's market-ready.** Our baristas can't just make great coffee, they understand food safety, customer service and the latest card payment machines: all the skills we know employers are crying out for.
- 4 It's externally assessed.** If a course delivered outside of the prison has external assessors, then we have them too. We're OFSTED-inspected as well.
- 5 It's paid.** Work pays the bills and ensures you can buy the things you need, and that's no different here. Prisoners can apply for jobs and earn more as they learn more. That's real life in a nutshell.

“Employers are often shocked by how good our set-up is.”

Curriculum we offer

Academic:

English and Maths skills plus distance learning for GCSEs, A Levels and Degrees

General:

Digital literacy and IT skills, including letter writing and using MS Office

Job-focused:

City & Guilds awards in hospitality, catering, construction, horticulture, retail, textiles and more...

Learning in numbers

- 40+ City & Guilds courses
- 1 wing dedicated to learning & development
- 8 classrooms
- 4 workshops
- 92% of residents learning and working