

**NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
HAMPSHIRE AREA**

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Function/Policy Name: Approach to the Delivery of Essential Skills Provision for Offenders in Hampshire

2. Aims and Approach of Function/Policy

The delivery of essential skills provision for offenders in Hampshire is undertaken in partnership with 10 local college providers who undertake assessments and design appropriate programmes of intervention for offenders with identified needs, in Probation Office sites. All offenders undertake an essential skills "Fast Track" exercise at PSR stage and are referred on for full assessment if screening identifies need. Once initial mandatory assessment has been undertaken, participation in any interventions is voluntary, and is done on the basis of in-house group provision, delivered by external college providers but co-ordinated through Probation dedicated staff.

Essential skills has a race equality strategy which outlines how it aims to ensure the integration of diversity at every stage of the process.

3. What data is Available & Does it Suggest Differential Impact Between Racial/Ethnic groups?

Monitoring figures from April – Aug 2004 showed that 7% of those that started on an intervention programme were from BME groups. During this time frame there were 4 Awards given to BME offenders. Although not discrete data, i.e. awards don't directly relate to 30 starts, this figure suggests 13% of BME offenders who start gain an award, compared to

17% of white offenders (66 out of 400 starts). Small comparison group size also warrants caution in data results)

Diversity Report for January 2004 – June 2004 showed that 6% of commencements for an intervention programme were from BME groups (a higher proportion than commenced CRO's which was 4.5%) and 8% of successful Awards were from BME groups. On these findings there is no clear disproportionality and in fact BME groups have fared slightly better.

4. What changes are needed to remove any adverse impact (either approach or implementation considerations) ?

5. What consultation has been undertaken and what are the results of this?

The Panel convened to consider the approach to the assessment of offenders' essential skills needs and Service provision. Keith Waldman, Essential Skills Manager, presented to the Panel an outline of Hampshire's approach, highlighting the way in which race equality issues were addressed.

Much discussion took place as this provided the Panel with the opportunity to learn in general terms about this area of the Service's work, however, key points around equality raised by the Panel were as follows:

- Concerns were raised about how some minority ethnic groups, who have been particularly disadvantaged within the education system and who will have a high degree of scepticism about any form of "classroom" provision, are then being expected to participate in similar group situations where they are the only minority.

- One-to-one provision was considered to be far more appropriate for young Black people who fail in school - by not recognising this institutional failure and providing an alternative in a Probation setting this failure could be repeated.
- It is important to have special provision for those who have English Language Needs.
- Where low morale and motivation is identified, a strategy of waiting longer and building this up through the relationship with the case manager would seem to be important and raise the success rate of all offenders, including those from minority ethnic groups
- Provision needs to be tailored to the real lives of those that it is targeted at, engaging with what are the issues for them and providing skills that will be of real value to them in the worlds that they inhabit. This was a point made from several members, including reference to those from travelling communities.
- Perception that one designated member of a Gypsy or Traveller family 'does' the reading and writing for all other family members was not supported. Specific programmes for Gypsy and Travellers in the North of the County have been well attended, indicating that if pitched properly, the interest is there.
- All providers need to be properly trained in Diversity issues.

6. Decisions taken on the basis of the impact assessment and measures to implement.

7. Monitoring arrangements and review process

8. How results will be published

Signature of Policy Lead

Position

Date