

## Learning for a Better Future

### Scottish Prison Service Development and Learning Strategy for People in Custody Guidance Document

The development and learning strategy (Learning for a Better Future) for people in custody acts as the foundation for creating the opportunities, culture and environment that enable people in our care to have a better life beyond custody and increase their likelihood of desistance.

To support the strategy, this guidance document has been created to showcase the evidence gathered, provide further clarity and direction, to support informed decision making and provide wider rationale and reasoning that support the Principals of the strategy itself.

'Learning for a Better Future' is founded upon the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) values and strategic priorities and contributes directly to each of the SPS aims. It supports national policies in justice, adult learning and education, including Scotland's National Performance Framework, Scotland's Vision for Justice, The Adult Learning Strategy 2022, UNESCO Vision and HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland Standards. It is compliant with national and international human rights standards relating to imprisonment. The strategy also provides a vehicle to ensure that the relevant obligations under the 2010 Equality Act and the Public Service Equality Duty are met.

This guidance seeks to provide alignment and synergy, fostering a unified approach to delivering the strategy across the service. It provides the clarity, focus, and adaptability necessary to navigate the complexities of delivering development and learning opportunities across the custodial environment. By establishing a well-defined framework, we can ensure efforts are consistently aligned with our long-term vision, ultimately maximising chances of success for the people in our care.

## Contents

<b>Part 1: Evidence</b> .....	3
Literature Review.....	3
The voice of people in our care & staff.....	3
Engagement.....	4
Neurodiversity.....	4
Summary of evidence.....	4
<b>Part 2: Whole System Approach</b> .....	5
Social Practice.....	5
Community Learning and Development (CLD) & Adult Learning approaches.....	6
Youth Work.....	6
Personal Skills & Development.....	7
Integration and coordination of internal strategies, policies, and practice.....	8
Aligning Strategies.....	8
Trauma Informed Practice (TIP).....	8
Integrated Learning.....	10
Dynamic assessment of needs and planning integrated with case management.....	10
Establishing a PD&L baseline, assessing and addressing additional support needs.....	11
On-going staff development.....	12
Effective partnership working internally and externally.....	13
<b>Part 3 How do we make this work?</b> .....	14
<b>Culture and supporting structures</b> .....	14
Curriculum - Establishment Level.....	15
Engagement and learning considered as continuums.....	15
Flexible delivery models and methods.....	16
The ‘what’ – curriculum.....	17
Establishment Annual Learning Plan.....	18
Personal Development & Learning Plans.....	18
Recording and monitoring individual learner progress.....	19
Personal development and life skills.....	19
Developing essential literacies.....	20
Vocational & Employability Skills and Qualifications.....	21
Academic & interest.....	21
Adaptive Skills (Meta Skills).....	22
Reintegration.....	22
<b>Part 4: Measuring Success &amp; Quality Assurance</b> .....	24
Data and evidence informed improvement planning to ensure best use of resources.....	24
Quality Assurance.....	26

## Part 1: Evidence

### Literature Review

The strategy sought to understand the wider evidence base to support an enhanced delivery of learning services and what ‘best practice’ is, across both justice and education landscapes. A literature review was commissioned and supported by academics with experience of both disciplines. This literature review considered over 100 sources of local & international research.

The literature review developed 12 principles to support this strategy and an individual’s development & learning journey. These should be **rights based**, **relational**, have **choice**, be **inclusive** and **trauma informed**. They should include **staff development**, be **diverse** and **incentivise** learning. They should also include **community connection** and promote **desistance**, while offering **enrichment** and **life-wide & learner-centred** development and learning opportunities.

The review emphasizes the importance of **positive relationships** between teachers, staff, and learners in all educational settings, reflecting that the best provision recognises **everyone has the ability to learn (Bain, 2004)**. All staff are key to developing these relationships, as such investing in continuing professional development to support staff within their roles develops understanding on how their role impacts learning opportunities.

Education can be a tool for rehabilitation, it can help those in our care develop self-confidence, manage emotions, and build positive identities. Effective education should be inclusive and cater to individual needs and interests. These opportunities should be comprehensive, ranging from basic life skills to higher education, and be delivered through blended learning that combines in-person, supported, and self-directed instruction.

Digital improvements can also address the challenges of overcrowding, lack of resources, digital literacies, and engagement levels. This is crucial for the successful delivery of supported prison education.

Overall, the review highlights the power that an enhanced education provision can offer the people in our care. It can equip people with the skills and knowledge required to reintegrate into and positively contribute to society.

### The voice of people in our care & staff

In addition to the literature review, this strategy sought to understand the voice of its users, and as such, Diffley Partnership were commissioned to carry out interviews with those in our care and staff. Interviews conducted were carried out across 5 representative prisons. Key staff from both SPS and the existing contracted learning provider were also interviewed. The report by Diffley Partnership recommends a 3-pronged approach to improve personal development and learning opportunities.

**Cultivating a Culture of Learning:** This involves creating a supportive environment where individuals feel safe to learn. The report suggests recognising educational achievements, integrating learning into daily activities, and promoting a positive attitude towards education.

**Improving Communication Channels:** Clear communication is key to informing people in custody about educational opportunities and support services. The report recommends improved communication, peer-to-peer learning initiatives, and transparent information sharing about courses and enrolment processes.

*“It was mainly word of mouth...The induction isn’t great, doesn’t go into what’s available. It’s not highlighted, it’s not something that’s promoted.” (Individual comment, Protection)*

**Strengthening Educational Provision:** The report calls for a curriculum that caters to individual needs and interests, with a variety of academic, vocational, and enrichment courses. Flexible learning models that consider different learning styles and schedules are also recommended. Finally, the report emphasises the importance of resource allocation, and exploration of external partnerships to support these initiatives. They also recommend ongoing evaluation and improvement of educational programs.

## Engagement

We know from management information data submitted by the current contracted learning provider that approximately 30% of the population engage in formal learning opportunities across the service (Apr 24). As such, there are far more people in custody that we know very little about in terms of literacy, numeracy, communication, and development levels.

In addition, the majority of referrals for Do-It screening, come from our contracted learning provider. Do-It profiling tool is not a diagnostic tool, however, it allows us to offer support to potential neurodivergent conditions, again, the data suggests that approximately 50% of people invited, do not participate.

This guidance and accompanied strategy offer pathways to improve those levels of engagement, by creating development and learning opportunities that people in custody are more aware of and more inclined to participate in.

## Neurodiversity

'Neurodiversity' as a definition is widely misunderstood and misapplied, as everyone is neurodiverse in that we all process information differently. In the UK, Neurodevelopmental Disorders (NDDs) and the related term Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDDs) are a group of common conditions that include Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD, also known as Dyspraxia), Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), Dyscalculia, Dyslexia, Intellectual Disability (ID) and Tic Disorders (Kirkby et al. 2020). There is also growing interest in Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). It is important to recognise that even when someone has a diagnosed disorder, it can exhibit in a wide variety of ways.

It is reported that 10-15% of the population in Scotland have a neurodevelopmental condition (Scottish Government, 2023a). Up to 70% of people with neurodevelopmental conditions seek mental health support and they make up a significant number of people in the criminal justice system. People with learning difficulties can also have poor mental health. It is reported that adults with ADHD are five times more likely to develop a mood disorder, four times more likely to develop an anxiety disorder, and three times more likely to develop a substance misuse disorder than the general population (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). The research highlights that the number of people diagnosed are likely to be vastly under-estimated, with a lot of people misdiagnosed or missing a diagnosis (Kirby et al. 2020).

Screening (Do-IT profiler as an example) for and diagnosing NDDs is imperative, and technology can be used effectively to do this. Prison staff also need to be trained and have adequate resources to be able to provide appropriate support for people with NDDs.

## Summary of evidence

The importance of communication and culture are identified as areas for development. Understanding the environments in which learning can be delivered and the many ways it can be facilitated, supported through open collaborative communication with partners, contracted services and those in our care is key to greater engagement and better opportunities, and should be the cornerstone of a successful strategy.

Key themes are presented across both pieces of research. In particular, the importance of relationships when engaging with people in our care and that this does not need to be in the context of formal learning environments highlights the importance of understanding the regime in each establishment and where

formal and informal opportunities exist, then building these opportunities into Annual Learning Plans (ALP) and local Annual Delivery Plans (ADP).

Finally, research highlights the part development and learning plays in an individual's feelings of self-worth and the benefit this can have in respect of their knowledge, skills, and behaviours to support their lives beyond their time in custody. Additionally, the evidence highlights the lasting impact which development and learning can have on wider family life, lessening the impact on intergenerational trauma. Development and learning journeys should be captured through robust screening and assessment mechanisms and be continually evidenced and reviewed in line with individual learning plans and portfolios of achievements and be embedded within case management processes.

## Part 2: Whole System Approach

The strategy is based around a blend of the following approaches to learning which have been proven to support the (re)engagement of individuals in personal development and learning, including those who have previous negative experiences of education. These approaches are explained below:

### Social Practice

The strategy is informed by Social Practice, an approach which promotes participation by building on a person's strengths, interests, and aspirations, and is therefore the most likely approach to engage adult learners. Social practice helps to tackle the root causes of disadvantage and inequity by encouraging adults to re-engage with personal development and learning.

“Adults who participate in learning are more likely to engage in their children's education, improving outcomes. Intergenerational effects are particularly strong where levels of inequality are high and may accentuate the effects of inequality and exclusions” ( [OECD Education At A Glance](#)).

In line with social practice, the strategy recognises that people in custody come from a wide variety of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds and that life events and life triggers shape learning needs in all areas of life, such as, personal, family, community, and work life. Social practice therefore acknowledges a learner's background, their existing skills, experiences, and assets. This means that individuals may begin their learning journey from different entry points and are likely to follow widely different learner pathways. For complex communities within the prison service, learning provision must therefore be, to an extent, fluid, diverse and informed by the people who engage with it, i.e., tailoring the learning opportunities to individual learners, or groups of learners, needs and aspirations. It can, therefore, be expected that learning provision will vary across the prison estate. There are, however, key features that should be evident in any provision. Although the features may appear to be sequential the offer should really be considered a spectrum that learners can access any part of at any time as wellbeing and learning needs can change or develop over time. For example, it could be expected that learning needs may change as an individual gets closer to release.

- People who participate in learning are more likely to be involved in their children's education, leading to better educational outcomes for the next generation.
- Social practice acknowledges the varied backgrounds of people in custody and that their needs are shaped by life events.
- Social practice not only recognises a learner's background, existing skills, experiences, and strengths, but develops capabilities in making decisions, solving problems, and expressing ideas and critical opinions, allowing for personalised learning journeys.

Social practice is strongly linked to the principles that underpin community, learning and development (CLD) and adult learning practice.

## Community Learning and Development (CLD) & Adult Learning approaches.

CLD is a professional practice that promotes lifelong learning, with a focus on removing barriers to learning for anyone who is marginalised, and particularly for those who:

- have few or no qualifications.
- require help to engage in learning opportunities.
- face personal, social, or systemic barriers to learning.

In line with a CLD approach the strategy aims to bring about systemic change to how learners can engage in personal development and learning by:

- removing barriers that prevent people participating in learning or adversely affect their levels of participation (i.e. reducing disincentives)
- specifically supporting those who are not engaging in personal development or learning and creating clear accessible first steps that enable the most marginalised to begin their learning journey.
- clarifying and simplifying how individuals who have taken their first steps into or back into learning can progress.
- ensuring that all personal development and learning, informal and formal, is recognised.
- ensuring that those furthest from formal education have parity of learning opportunities.

If a CLD approach is all about removing barriers and improving access to learning then adult learning is all about developing better-skilled, educated, confident and motivated people ([Adult Learning Strategy, 2022](#)). To inspire the prison population in this way the strategy must create the conditions that ensure:

- personal development and learning is valued and the impact of learning is understood.
- people in custody are involved and engaged in the planning and delivery of their own learning.
- personal development and learning is available, accessible, and meaningful.
- personal development and learning is connected across informal and formal settings.
- people in custody have more opportunities to access work opportunities or connect with employability services.
- the learning journey can continue beyond custody by ensuring individuals have access to the appropriate level of information, advice, and guidance from sentencing to release.
- local and national partnerships are more effective.

## Youth Work

Young people in the prison system (up to the age of 25) should also have access to youth work opportunities to support them in their learning journey. Youth work is part of the Scottish education system and is one strand of the professional practice of Community Learning and Development (CLD).

Youth work is a versatile education practice that can offer young people non-formal support to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes and reach their full potential. Youth work can complement and enhance a formal learning curriculum, and contribute to improving young people's wellbeing, readiness to learn and educational outcomes. Youth work is based on the values of inclusion, mutual respect, equality and participation.

The National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework helps young people understand their progress and development. <https://www.youthlink.scot/education-skills/youthwork-outcomes-skills>

## Personal Skills & Development

This approach is a valuable tool throughout life, particularly for those resistant to traditional education. It requires individuals to assess strengths and skills, consider their aims, and set goals. Such as:

- personal life, relationships, wellbeing, or family.
- interests or hobbies -- including sport.
- informal or formal learning.
- career or professional life.

Personal development and skills-based learning does not have to be discrete but is more often interdependent and interconnected. Skills are necessary in all aspects of life: personal, family, social, and work. A lack of skills can negatively impact any or all areas of life.

For complex communities, learning provision must be fluid, diverse and informed by the people who engage with it, i.e., tailoring the learning opportunities to individual learners, or groups of learners, needs and aspirations. This approach integrates skill development into daily activities as well as formal education and is a collaborative effort between people in custody, staff, partners, and the wider community.

*“Learning is not just a psychological process that happens in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives, but that it is intimately related to that world as affected by it “(Jarvis, 1995*

## Integration and coordination of internal strategies, policies, and practice

The PD&L strategy must accommodate the complex needs of everyone in the service. Ranging from learning difficulties or disabilities to complex neurodiverse individuals who require bespoke packages of support. This strategy also recognises the significance of childhood trauma and brain injuries on an individual's perception and engagement in development and learning opportunities. To meet these needs holistically, in a personal development and learning context, requires co-ordinated action to ensure operational practice, purposeful activity, case management, and other strategies, such as mental health, alcohol & drug recovery and digital, work together supportively to avoid duplication of effort or conflicts of interest.

## Aligning Strategies

This strategy will be interconnected with, but interdependent of the Mental Health and Alcohol & Drug Recovery Strategies. For example, the Alcohol & Drug Recovery Strategy helps to support the development of its key elements: Connectedness, Hope & Optimism, Identity, Meaning and Empowerment; and to build 'recovery capital'. PD&L can also help alleviate risks linked to substance use such as emotional regulation, self-management, problem solving skills, unhelpful thinking patterns and attitudes, relationships, and interpersonal skills. The two strategies also share outcomes, such as:

- People learn and develop the skills to help them maintain their well-being including when they leave prison.
- People develop or improve their skills and confidence to help them to participate in education and (fair) employment opportunities when they are released.
- Training, educational or volunteering opportunities available to increase skills, knowledge and qualifications and build personal capital.

In the Mental Health strategy communication and problem-solving skills, educational achievement, and employment are identified as protective factors that support better mental health. A focus of the MH strategy is prevention and early intervention through promotion of general health and wellbeing, building relationships, and active participation and engagement in activities that promote and support recovery, such as, purposeful activity and, personal development and learning programmes.

## Trauma Informed Practice (TIP)

Trauma-informed practice acknowledges that some people in custody may have experienced trauma in their lives, and it seeks to create a safe and supportive environment for all learners. TIP recognises that trauma can significantly impact an individual's ability to learn, focus, and regulate emotions. It considers how trauma can affect memory, attention span, and behaviour.

To create a truly trauma informed organisation requires multi-agency commitment from staff at all levels. SPS plan to become a Trauma informed organisation consistent with the NES framework.

### Trauma Informed Principles

There are 5 key principles which underline Trauma Informed Practice which are listed below (SG Trauma Informed toolkit)

#### Safety

Efforts are made by an organisation to ensure the physical and emotional safety of clients and staff. This includes reasonable freedom from threat or harm and attempts to prevent further re-traumatisation.

#### Trustworthiness

Transparency exists in an organisation's policies and procedures, with the objective of building trust among staff, clients, and the wider community.

### Collaboration

The organisation recognises the value of staff and clients' experience in overcoming challenges and improving the system as a whole. This is often operationalised through the formal or informal use of peer support and mutual self-help.

### Choice

Clients and staff have meaningful choice and a voice in the decision-making process of the organisation and its services.

### Empowerment

Efforts are made by the organisation to share power and give clients and staff a strong voice in decision-making, at both individual and organisational levels.

### SPS specific principles

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) are committed to working towards trauma informing our organisation. A trauma informed organisation:

- Acknowledges that working in the SPS can be challenging and that staff might be exposed to trauma whilst at work (or in their own lives). It aims to support staff to look after themselves and values the well-being of everyone who works in the SPS.
- Realises that the majority of people in our care have experienced multiple traumatic events.
- Recognises that experiencing trauma can have a significant impact on a person's physical and mental health. It acknowledges that for many people in our care the impact of trauma has affected their psychological and social development and their life chances.
- Educates and supports staff to identify how experiences of trauma might be playing a role in people in our care's current difficulties and their offending.
- Aims to respond by providing people in our care access to appropriate support and interventions aimed at helping them to recover from trauma.
- Understands that experiencing trusting relationships is important. It aims to support all staff to offer consistent, empathic and safe interactions with those in our care.
- Accepts that those in our care might experience trauma whilst in prison and whilst some of this might be inevitable, takes every effort to create an environment which reduces the possibilities for traumatisation of people in our care and staff.
- Respects the resilience of all those in our care and staff and aims to foster this whenever possible.

### Benefits of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) within a learning culture:

- Reduced anxiety and improved focus for people in custody.
- Increased feelings of safety and security in traditional learning settings and beyond, such as work areas, gymnasias, visit rooms etc.
- More positive learner-staff relationships.
- Improved opportunities and participation.
- Enhanced capacity for learners to develop healthy coping mechanisms.

By adopting trauma-informed practices, staff can create a learning environment where all learners feel supported and empowered to reach their full potential.

## Integrated Learning.

Negative behaviours, such as, substance use have been described as a response to the monotony of prison/life/culture and mental and physical challenges experienced by people in custody. ([Prison population: substance use and wider support needs - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)). Engaging in positive activities, whether in-cell, prison or community based, alleviates the risk of boredom, and increases coping strategies. Where staff are involved in purposeful activities like education or recovery cafes, these provide an opportunity to increase and develop positive relationships with individuals in a relaxed, informal environment. The challenge for each prison is how to organise and capture this work as part of an individual personal development and learning plan, highlighting the need for PD&L plans to be embedded within case management processes.

*“I’ve done construction, I’ve done education, I’ve done a lot of stuff and this is where the communication part of it never [happens]...I’ve done whole courses, I’ve done woodwork, but...I’ve had a social worker sitting in front of me saying ‘you’re still high risk for education and employment’. There’s a lot of guys getting involved in education and recovery and getting involved in courses and the communication is not getting through to the social workers. There’s a lot more communication needed between the people making decisions and education because there are boys trying their best in here...and they’re just tarring them with the same brush.” (Learner comment)*

Improved planning processes will enable better coordination and integration of activities to achieve both economies of scale and stronger collaboration. The drafting of Annual Learning Plans for each establishment, with Quarterly Planning Reviews, will enable more effective planning and delivery of services at a local level.

## Dynamic assessment of needs and planning integrated with case management

PD&L plans (outcomes based) must be informed by a robust assessment of needs, have integrated mechanisms of recording progress made, and appropriate communication channels to ensure information about progress and engagement is passed on to relevant support networks. Factors for consideration include:

- wellbeing and learning needs.
- risk factors.
- where the individual is, in terms of their sentence & readiness to engage,
- progress made will be embedded within case management. ([Integrated Case Management Guidance Manual](#))

Due to the clinical, contractual, or professional provision requirements within some areas, not all fall within the scope of this strategy:

In Scope		Out of Scope
Coordinated action between		
<u>Personal Development &amp; Learning Partners</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning assessment</li> <li>• Learning/Skills/Employment planning</li> <li>• Learning includes understanding addiction and MH issues</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substance misuse treatment &amp; support</li> <li>• Mental Health treatment &amp; support</li> <li>• Resettlement issues</li> <li>• Violent &amp; inappropriate sexual conduct</li> <li>• Other offending behaviour programmes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic wellbeing and risk assessment</li> <li>• Strength and aspirations assessment</li> <li>• Planning as sentence progresses</li> <li>• (Social care and resettlement planning)</li> </ul>	

## Establishing a PD&L baseline, assessing and addressing additional support needs

There is currently a lack of information on basic literacy, numeracy levels, prior educational experience, additional support needs and achievement of individuals in custody. This is difficult information to gather, particularly for those who are not, or are reluctant to engage in learning activities. It may be possible to address this issue when screening individuals as they come into custody through the screening and induction processes, however, there is a place for a wide variety of staff and partners to contribute to the holistic assessment of an individual's needs, initially when they come into custody and as an on-going process throughout their sentence. These staff and partners may include, as examples:

- Case Managers
- Heads of Offender Outcomes
- Allied health professionals from other strategy areas
- Personal Officers
- Learning Partners

By incorporating a whole person assessment, staff development and improved partner communication and collaboration, we will ensure a more inclusive learning environment for all.

## On-going staff development

The strategy recognises the important part all staff play in the success of delivering PD&L opportunities to the people in our care. Staff are our biggest asset; therefore, it is critical we support them to achieve their own development and learning. All staff including contract providers, partners, and SPS staff should be provided with development in line with the new approaches, this will be facilitated through existing mechanisms at HQ, SPSC and local levels. This would support an in-depth understanding of the ethos, aims and role of the new personal development and learning strategy, creating a collaborative approach between the education contract provider and SPS. Staff working directly with case management, such as Personal Officers, would benefit from more detailed development around the practical requirements of embedding a development and learning journey within the case management process. It would also be beneficial for all staff, and First Line Managers to be provided with development to increase general awareness around personal development and learning. From the education contract provider's perspective, an increased understanding in areas such as case management, risk, desistance, and issues that directly affect those in custody (such as recovery, mental health, and wellbeing) would furnish staff with a wider understanding of life in and beyond custody and the mechanisms of support their roles can provide. Further discussion and research are required to align development with job roles; however, the following provides an overview of development areas:

<p><b>Relational:</b> Staff who develop strong relational skills can build a trusting rapport with colleagues and people in our care. This improves self-development, aiding initial engagement and ongoing motivation.</p> <p><b>Motivational skills:</b> Historic negative experiences of learning can impact self-belief in ability to achieve. Ongoing engagement can also be a back-and-forth process, however; developing staff motivational skills provides the tools to support those in our care.</p> <p><b>Trauma &amp; Developmental needs:</b> emerging research presents insight into the role development needs and neurodiversity play in a person's ability to engage. Training for staff in this subject area would bring increased understanding and better arm staff for the learning process required to support individual needs. Training subjects in this area could include understanding trauma, attachment, neurodiversity, child development, nurture, early learning, mental health, impact of health issues on cognition.</p> <p><b>Recovery and desistance journey:</b> Development in these areas allow staff to better perform in their respective roles, how they support a person to move away from the profile of 'addict' or 'prisoner/offender'. Understanding how these processes interlink benefits both staff and learners, particularly within the case management process.</p>	<p><b>Method &amp; Practice:</b> this will help staff support learners to engage with their development pathway(s) in an evaluative manner, i.e. what learning they'd like to do? What skills they want to develop? How could this link to possible future study or employment?</p> <p><b>SVQ:</b> SPS staff currently support SVQs, focusing on further development in this area benefits staff and others to understand the structure and role of SVQs in the learning process. It could also assist in early development of some teaching skills.</p> <p><b>Communication:</b> While those in custody can develop core skills, these subjects can happen in isolation, without the wider staff group being aware. Improved communication will develop greater understanding by staff of their role in the learning process.</p> <p><b>Contextualised Opportunities:</b> Staff to broaden learning beyond the Education Unit and the Work Parties. As we move to utilise more in-cell technology for learning and generally provide wider and more flexible learning opportunities throughout prisons, staff will develop greater understanding on how learning can occur anywhere at any time.</p> <p><b>Recognising Success:</b> Development in this area would focus on the importance and methods of recognising achievement for learners in both an accredited and non-accredited manner.</p>
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*"Hall staff don't know anything about the education and Fife college don't come down." (Learner comment)*

## Effective partnership working internally and externally.

It is important for the SPS to foster and improve upon internal and external partnerships. Utilising the specific skills of partner organisations both statutory and third sector, allows us to combine our strengths, knowledge, and resources, providing a PD&L provision that is greater than what can be achieved in isolation. We will do this by:

### Establishing a Collaborative Foundation

- **Shared Vision and Strategic Alignment:** Sharing a vision that outlines the partnership's purpose, objectives, and desired outcomes. Ensuring this vision aligns with the strategic goals of both internal teams and external partners, fostering a sense of shared commitment.
- **Mutual Value:** Clearly define the value proposition for each party involved. How will this partnership benefit the internal teams, external partners, and ultimately, the stakeholders you serve? Highlighting these benefits strengthens buy-in and commitment.

### Building Trust and Effective Communication Channels

- **Open and Transparent Communication:** Establish clear and consistent communication channels that facilitate a free flow of information, feedback, and ideas. Regular communication fosters trust and a collaborative problem-solving environment.
- **Respectful Interactions and Cultural Awareness:** Promote an environment of mutual respect, appreciating the unique strengths, expertise, and cultural perspectives each partner brings to the table. This fosters trust and strengthens rapport.
- **Investment in Relationships:** Take the time to understand individual working & learning styles, communication preferences, and decision-making processes. Building strong personal connections strengthens the partnership and enhances collaboration.

### Structuring the Partnership for Success

- **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities:** Outline a formal agreement (existing partnership packs) that clearly defines the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of each internal team and external partner. This promotes transparency and avoids confusion or duplication of efforts.
- **Outcome-Based Performance Measurement:** Establish a framework for measuring success that focuses on achieving mutually agreed outcomes. This framework should include key performance indicators (KPIs) tailored to the specific partnership goals.
- **Regular Review and Adjustments:** Schedule regular progress reviews to assess effectiveness, address challenges, celebrate successes, and collaboratively identify areas for improvement.

### Maintaining Momentum

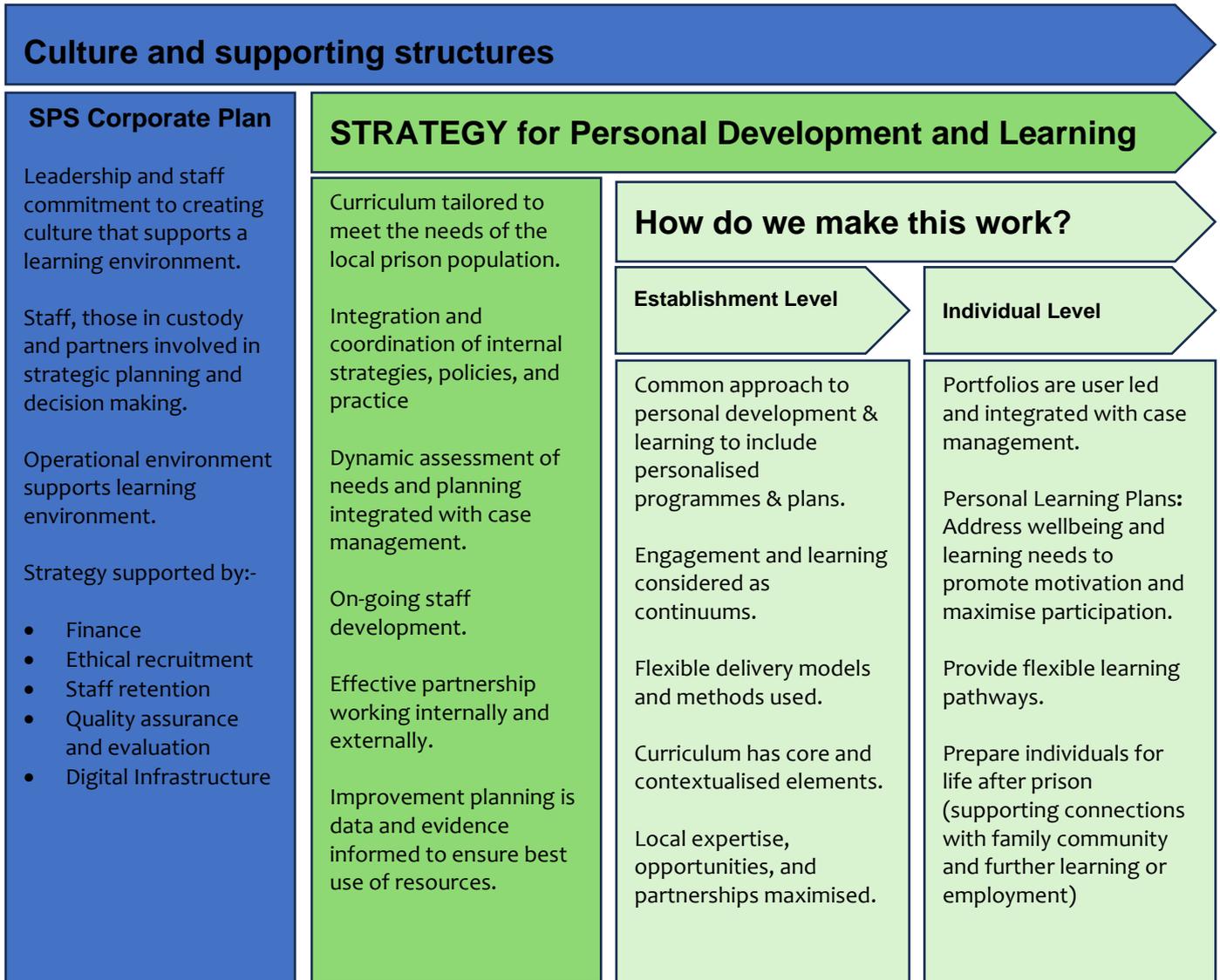
- **Embrace Agility and Flexibility:** Acknowledge that circumstances and priorities may evolve. Be prepared to adapt the partnership approach as needed while maintaining the core vision and goals.
- **Recognition and Appreciation:** Recognise and celebrate joint accomplishments and success to maintain morale, reinforce the value of the partnership, and motivate ongoing collaboration.
- **Continuous Improvement Culture:** Foster a culture of continuous improvement by regularly evaluating the partnership's effectiveness and identifying areas for further development and optimisation.

This approach equips all parties to leverage their strengths, achieve better results, and deliver improved PD&L opportunities for the people in our care. By adhering to these principles, we can cultivate a strong foundation for successful internal and external partnerships.

*“When in prison, you don’t ask, don’t get. You have to learn that. But I genuinely think a lot of the time you don’t know what to ask for. So, if I don’t know what to ask for, how can I ask for it? ...eventually, [education staff member] did come and speak to me but it’s because I said I’m looking to go to education. If you’re a new prisoner and you don’t know, then how do you know how to ask for that?” (Individual comment, Protection)*

## Part 3 How do we make this work?

Engaging with development & learning has the potential to change lives and improve life chances. This transformational potential must happen in an environment that is physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe. Safe learning environments create conditions where opportunities to promote motivation and wellbeing, encourage participation and collaborate on delivery are not lost. The diagram below outlines the conditions needed to establish a safe learning environment.



## Curriculum - Establishment Level

### Common approach to personal development & learning

Implementation of the strategy aims to encourage individuals to make positive changes in their lives, through personal development and learning from the time they enter custody to their release.

Flexibility will be key to implementing the approaches to meet both the needs of complex individuals and varied regimes across the estate. This will require a range of delivery models even within individual establishments.

Implementing these approaches and developing a range of delivery models will require initial, and on-going staff development and effective partnership working both internally and externally.

The following are examples of effective approaches:

- Financial incentives for educational participation, i.e. completing learning modules.
- Explicitly linking education with employability.
- Using spaces in halls for educational activities, having 'drop-ins' allowing interested individuals to discuss enrolling in education.
- Flexible access to resources. i.e. IT rooms and materials to aid with learning and skills activities.
- Implementation of peer mentorship and highlighting this as a route during induction.
- Supportive education staff facilitating additional support and communication with external tutors.
- Offering jobs for individuals on remand, promoting engagement and productivity

*"You don't get the same buy-in. We should be getting more buy-in from other areas of the establishment to increase footfall up here, if it carried the same weight. It's critical that we get people to the learning centre, it's not seen as that." (Staff comment)*

### Engagement and learning considered as continuums.

People in our care come from various backgrounds and from a position of requiring age, stage and support appropriate opportunities to engage with development and learning. Additionally, individuals participate in different ways, everything from disengagement to active or self-directed learning, resulting in individuals requiring different access points into personal development and learning at different stages of their life and sentence, we call this the learning continuum:



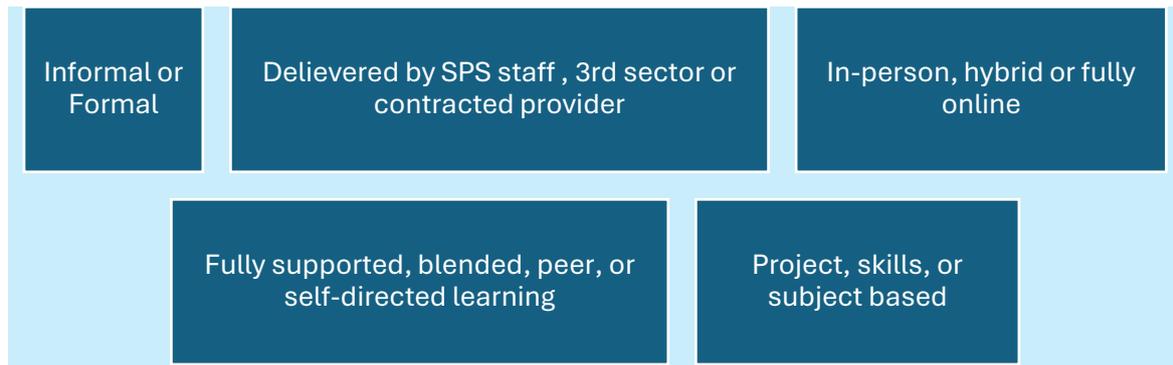
Describing engagement and learning as a continuum recognises that individuals will move along these in either direction, as things change for them. Where an individual is on the continuum will be influenced by factors like; their wellbeing, relationships with staff, their interests, the suitability of the delivery approaches, learning environment, previous knowledge & experience, and where they are in their sentence.

Implementation of the strategy requires establishments to offer individuals opportunities to engage in personal development and learning regardless of where they are on the continuum. For example, for a disengaged individual, a hobby, or a therapeutic intervention, such as art, may be the catalyst to motivate them to engage in more structured learning programmes. An individual who wants to pro-actively use their time in custody to retrain or upskill themselves for a particular trade or profession will enter the learning continuum at a very different place and will potentially follow a very different learning pathway.

## Flexible delivery models and methods

Establishments should implement flexible learning environments that promote and enable wider access to, and better support for a wide range of learning activities. This should include clear communication beyond the learning environment to maximise awareness and engagement.

In this instance, 'delivery' refers to the various ways in which learning takes place. Throughout an individuals' personal development and learning journey, and as they progress through their sentence, their needs will change. These changes can be tracked through case management and the learning plan adapted to suit changing needs and circumstances. The model used therefore needs to accommodate different ways of delivering learning and to accommodate different learning styles and stages of learning.



Choosing the appropriate delivery method will depend on various factors such as learner needs, experience, desired outcomes, and resources. As such, the delivery model should be user informed, individualised, and based on a robust needs assessment that is integrated into case management, reflecting both the risks and needs of the individual.

Establishing positive working relationships with other prison departments to explore all options for learning out with the traditional classroom and embed education activities into the routine, e.g. into all aspects of purposeful activities, work parties, and even the wellness hub offering additional workshops and activities to support education.

*“There are some students who would really struggle with independent learning and not having that face-to-face support in the classroom. A lot of people take their work back to the cell and can work independently but for students particularly at lower levels that’s not a possibility.” (Staff comment)*

# The ‘what’ – curriculum

For people in custody, learning and personal and social development may serve a wide range of purposes. The spread of types of learning available should recognise and reflect these purposes. All that we know about desistance, mental health and wellbeing and the things that can improve life chances has brought us to the four strands of development and learning set out in the table below.

## LEARNING FOR A BETTER FUTURE Strands for development and learning

### LEARNING FOR A BETTER FUTURE - Strands for development and learning

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning for health and wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building mental, emotional, and social health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Addressing separation, loss, and trauma</li> <li>• Sustaining and building positive family relationships.</li> <li>• Addressing needs such as alcohol and substance misuse, relationships, and attitudes.</li> <li>• Addressing barriers to learning</li> <li>• Ability to read, tell the time, use a calendar and plan.</li> <li>• Building physical health and fitness, and knowledge of how to maintain health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Developing the skills and knowledge needed to live independently.</li> <li>• Building resilience and motivation.</li> <li>• Participating in sports and the arts.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning for empathy and citizenship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in issues-based work such as anti-violence programmes.</li> <li>• Understanding consequences; empathy, victim awareness.</li> <li>• Developing skills to change and applying these to make positive choices.</li> <li>• Building understanding of human experiences and perspectives through literature and the arts.</li> <li>• Learning to express thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>• Learning about and addressing ethical, social, and environmental matters.</li> <li>• Participating in decision making and self-evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning for life and work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oracy, literacy, numeracy.</li> <li>• Digital competence.</li> <li>• Critical thinking and problem solving.</li> <li>• Extending knowledge and carrying out research.</li> <li>• Experiencing a workplace and gaining skills and qualifications for employment e.g. barista, fork-lift driving.</li> <li>• Being an effective member of a team.</li> <li>• Developing skills and knowledge for self-employment.</li> <li>• Gaining qualifications and building a CV.</li> <li>• Increasing motivation and capacity for further learning.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning for the benefit of others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting programmes.</li> <li>• Family learning.</li> <li>• Peer mentoring and/or teaching.</li> <li>• Using personal skills in projects that will bring enjoyment or benefits to others e.g. through the arts.</li> <li>• Engaging in restorative practices</li> <li>• Volunteering.</li> <li>• Fundraising.</li> <li>• Caring for animals.</li> <li>• Renovating, repairing, upcycling.</li> <li>• Supporting others to achieve a goal in partnership and in teams.</li> </ul>

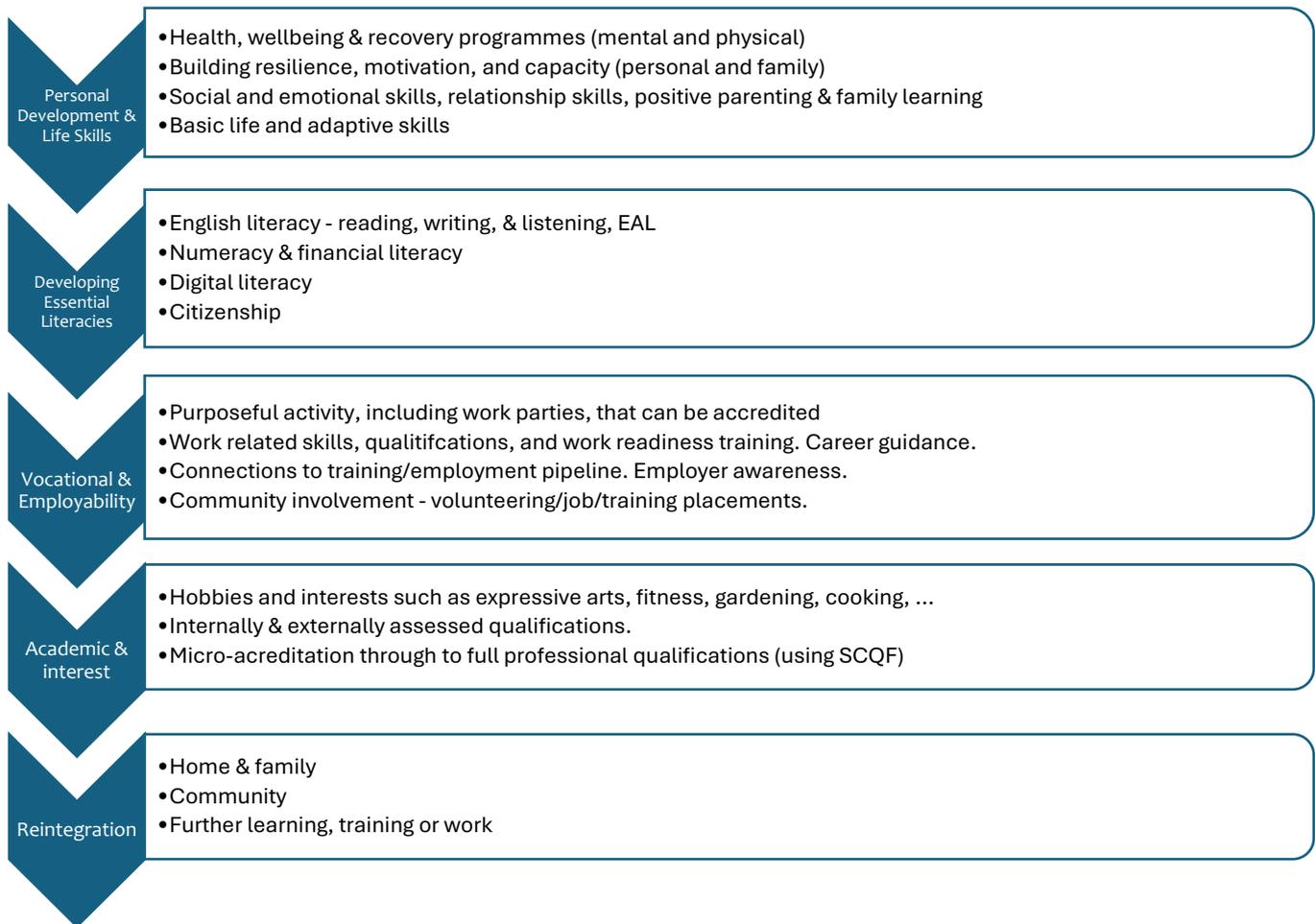
The four strands form a basis for planning both an individual’s development pathway and evaluating the overall spread of provision within an establishment. The examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

These four strands will form the basis of each establishments Annual Learning Plan, which will be further defined below.

## Establishment Annual Learning Plan

Every establishment should support a curriculum that is needs based and recorded within the establishments annual learning plan (ALP), which includes the four purpose strands above and each of the elements below. The extent to which each curricular element is offered, how it is delivered, and who delivers it, will be determined by the needs of the populations in each establishment, and the skills and availability of staff and delivery partners.

A comprehensive introduction to education, allowing individuals to explore available options, including those outside the structures of formal education provision should be offered. The curriculum needs to cover a broad suite of skills development, these will include life, social & transferable skills, recognising that these skills can be as important as academic achievements.



## Personal Development & Learning Plans or ePortfolios

Personal development and learning plans should:

- be user led and integrated with case management.
- address wellbeing and learning needs to promote motivation and maximise participation.
- provide flexible learning pathways.
- prepare individuals for life after prison (supporting connections with family community and further learning or employment).
- Lead to or be included in a portfolio of achievements (digital or hard copy)

Personal learning plans should therefore reflect the needs, risks, and aspirations of the individual. They should highlight areas of support and identify pathways to engage in development and learning opportunities that improve their lives and life chances and be reviewed at key stages of their time in custody.

Addressing challenges and making programmes accessible to all, personal plans can encourage individuals to achieve self-sufficiency and build brighter futures.

## Recording and monitoring individual learner progress

Individual progress should not be simply evaluated in terms of qualifications but should map the learner's journey and the distance they have travelled.

This can be achieved by using personal learning records, or an individual learning portfolio or account. This individual portfolio or account could also be used as a financial motivation tool for lifelong learning that both promotes an individuals' conscious self-care through personal and skills development and contributes to the relevance of their learning pathways.

This portfolio could record and monitor:

- personal progress (distance travelled), achievement & attainment and profile of skills.

Longer term it would be beneficial to develop a digital version of the portfolio which aligns with proposed national plans (Hayward Review, 2023) for all learners to have a standardised digital profile (to record achievements) that is fully digitally accessible and owned by the learner and transferable from educational setting to HE/FE or work settings.

## Personal development and life skills

Many individuals will struggle to engage in other areas of the curriculum without first addressing their wellbeing needs. Equally individuals who are motivated, and able, to participate in purposeful activity, work parties, vocational training or academic learning may need to dip back into this area to address emerging wellbeing concerns, enhance their relationship skills to reconnect with families or communities, or to refresh their basic skills in preparation for release.

Examples of personal development programmes could include Healthy body and mind, Food, nutrition and diet, Emotional intelligence, Relaxation, Stress management, and Managing anger or anxiety. These programmes could potentially be developed/delivered through Wellbeing Hubs, Recovery Cafes, or Gymnasia.

Basic life skills represent the broad set of skills (personal and practical) that may help individuals to cope with everyday life including cooking, housekeeping, finance, & budgeting, time management, parenting skills, developing a work ethic, and other adaptive skills.

Personal development and skills-based learning does not have to be discrete but is more often interdependent and interconnected. Personal development and skills can be effectively developed through project-themed learning or through creative approaches to learning that harness the interests and aspirations of learners.

Focussing initially on areas such as, personal life or hobbies and interests, has the potential to improve wellbeing and motivation. The intention is that this provides a springboard, or hook, for further participation in learning. Gradualism, small amounts of progress, and a holistic approach, increases confidence and resilience, and supports sustained personal development.

Innovative initiatives, such as, mentoring programmes, [Outside In](#), [Paws for Progress](#), [Citizen's Theatre](#), and [STIR Magazine](#) encourage participation and personal development through interest areas. Creative approaches such as these are also opportunities to develop literacy skills, improve self-esteem, increase employability prospects and cultivate better relationships with family, peers and ultimately, with communities on release.

Evidence shows that developing adaptive skills can improve an individual's self-management, social intelligence, and innovation. Adaptive skills include: learning agility, critical thinking, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, communication, collaboration, self-management, creativity and innovation, and curiosity.

The development of these transferable skills has the capacity to motivate individuals to learn and apply themselves effectively. They are fundamental and exchangeable, from academics to personal growth and social interactions.

By developing these adaptive skills, people in our care can become a more versatile and adaptable learner, capable of thriving in an ever-changing world. These skills are valuable assets in any field and contribute significantly to personal and career success.

Through effective programme planning both basic and adaptive skills could form part of wider personal development and learning programmes that are accredited.

Developing a bespoke whole service **Skills Framework**, similar to the [Skills Development Scotland Meta-Skills Framework](#) provides a common approach to skills development across all establishments and could form part of a learning portfolio used to measure progress. A learning portfolio based on a common skills framework has the advantage of being portable should an individual transfer across the prison estate. Regardless of how skills development is promoted and delivered it can have the potential to help participants on multiple levels: as individuals; as parents, as family or community members; or as employees/employers.

Aligned to this, to promote motivation and sustain progress, it may also be beneficial to develop a framework for accreditation of small volumes of learning (micro-accreditation). For example, recognising the successful completion of individual modules of personal or skills development linked to SCQF. This would equally apply to developing essential literacies and vocational/academic learning.

## Developing essential literacies

18/17% of the prison population report difficulties with literacy and numeracy, respectively and 24% have difficulties in using a computer ([Scottish Prison Survey 17th Prisoner Survey 2019](#)). Literacy and numeracy screening should support wider assessments.

**Literacy skills** are a gateway to other competencies. Literacy skills are necessary for accessing written and verbal information, understanding advice and instructions, and communicating clearly with others. As such literacy skills are essential for life, learning and employment and, where literacy skills are low this should be a priority area in an individual personal development and learning programme. Programmes such as [Citizen Literacy](#) have proved popular and successful with adult learners.

**Numeracy skills** allow us to undertake any activity involving numbers, such as tasks related to time, measure, or money. Confidence and ability with numbers impacts us financially, socially, and professionally. There is a lot of evidence linking low numeracy skills with poor outcomes, even wellbeing outcomes. Numeracy skills are often perceived as less relevant than literacy skills. Negative attitudes and anxiety around numeracy skills often act as a barrier to individuals pursuing learning in this area. Integrating numeracy skills into other areas of learning develops these skills through contexts relevant to learners. Family learning, developing numeracy skills alongside a visiting child, may be one creative way to motivate individuals to develop their numeracy skills.

**Oracy Skills** are about being effective at spoken communication. It involves the ability to express yourself clearly and articulately through spoken language. It allows individuals to effectively communicate and engage with others through speaking and listening, by developing skills such as; fluency and clarity, structuring and presenting information in a logical way, listening and responding, adapting to an audience and non-verbal communication. Overall, the development of strong oracy skills allows individuals to share ideas and opinions persuasively, effectively participate in discussions and debates, give clear instructions and explanations, and build stronger relationships through communication. Oracy skills are valuable in all walks of life, from education and employment to personal relationships.

**Digital skills** are now core life skills as we increasingly move into an online environment for communication, information, and work. Adult learning practitioners have told us that to provide digital learning for learners

and to become digitally agile they need to develop new skills ([Adult Learning Strategy, 2022](#)). This requires a coordinated approach to digital skills development for both individuals and the staff that support them.

Embedding these essential 'Gateway Skills' within the fabric of all personal development and learning programmes ensures they are perceived as relevant, promotes 'sneaky' learning, and negates the need to differentiate between embedded and stand-alone learning.

## Vocational & Employability Skills and Qualifications.

These include the specific skills and knowledge needed to perform particular jobs or trades. Rapid changes in society, the labour market, and technology mean that the skills individuals have on entering custody may be unsuitable, or insufficient, for re-entering the labour market on their release. This area of the curriculum therefore provides opportunities for individuals to enhance existing skills and knowledge, or learn new skills, in preparation for entering, or re-entering, the workforce.

These skills can be developed through:

- Purposeful activity, including work parties.
- Learning centre programmes

All activities should be accredited and related to the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#).

Programmes should include:

- Work related skills, qualifications, and work readiness training.
- Connections to the training/employment pipeline, post release, through work experience, job/training placements, or volunteering

All programmes should have elements of:

- Career guidance
- Employer awareness

Good practice noted in the literature review includes; employing tutors with relevant trade experience and facilitating access to industry certifications like CSCS cards; utilising the interests and skill sets of prison staff to expand the programme offer through purposeful activity; and explicitly linking, or integrating, these programmes to wider personal and skills development programmes and essential literacies.

Contextual learning that complements vocational training reinforces the relevance of essential literacies and skills for future employment prospects and enables individuals to gain recognition for their progress.

## Academic & interest

Where relevant individuals should be supported and encouraged to pursue academic study either for personal or professional interests. Attainment of additional qualifications will support individuals, who want to re-engage with further or higher education post release. Expanding their academic portfolio and/or improving their SCQF level will allow individuals to enter/re-enter academic studies at a higher level or meet qualification requirements for specific courses.

Most academic courses will be supported, wholly or partially, by the learning centre and/or college providers. However as digital infrastructure improves many academic courses provided online could become part of self-directed study for individuals with the capacity to be independent learners.

Qualifications offered will be determined by the needs and interests of individuals and groups within each establishment.

"Digital education would allow you to get education every day and would allow you to finish things in-cell that you started in education." (*Learner comment*)

## Adaptive Skills (Meta Skills)

Evidence shows that developing adaptive skills can improve an individual's self-management, social intelligence, and innovation. The development of these transferable skills has the capacity to empower individuals to learn and apply themselves effectively. They are fundamental and exchangeable, from academics to personal growth and social interactions.

Examples are.

**Learning Agility:** The ability to acquire new knowledge and skills quickly and efficiently. It involves being open to new experiences, adapting to changing situations, and constantly seeking ways to improve.

**Critical Thinking:** Involves the ability to analyse information objectively, evaluate evidence, identify assumptions, and draw sound conclusions. It allows individuals to solve problems effectively, make informed decisions, and avoid cognitive biases.

**Problem-Solving:** This skill encompasses the ability to identify problems, develop creative solutions, and implement them effectively. It requires critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to adapt to unexpected challenges.

**Emotional intelligence:** Focusing on empathy and emotional regulation, individuals become more adept at reading emotions in themselves and others, navigating social situations effectively, and building stronger relationships.

**Communication:** Effective communication goes beyond simply conveying information. It involves actively listening to others, expressing yourself clearly, tailoring messages to the audience appropriately, and fostering understanding.

**Collaboration:** Focuses on an individual's ability to work effectively with others towards a common goal. It involves teamwork, negotiation, conflict resolution, and fostering a positive team environment.

**Self-Management:** Encompasses an individual's ability to manage their time effectively, prioritise tasks, set realistic goals, and maintain focus and motivation. It also involves emotional intelligence, stress management, and resilience.

**Creativity and Innovation:** Focuses on an individual's ability to think outside the box, generate new ideas, and develop innovative solutions to problems. It involves imagination and experimentation.

**Curiosity:** Curiosity ignites a desire to understand the world. It motivates to ask questions, seek out new information, and explore unfamiliar territory. A curious mind is receptive to new ideas and perspectives, allowing individuals to learn from diverse viewpoints and challenge their assumptions, fostering intellectual growth and adaptability.

## Reintegration

The strategy recognises the impact improved development and learning can have beyond time in custody therefore a core component of all PD&L planning should be 'release readiness'. Release readiness will differ for every individual due to their unique circumstances but is likely to require preparations for reconnection with: home & family; community; and further learning, training or work.

Preparation for release requires coordinated planning primarily between the individual, their case manager, and relevant learning leads, however input from personal/residential officers and Head of Offender Outcomes is also likely to be required. Depending on sentence length, risk, or the individual needs and circumstances preparation for release may need to be begin at different stages for different individuals. For some preparation may need to begin at the point of sentencing.

Two examples of activities that support release readiness include:

**Connection with children & families** – PD&L plans can support family connection, e.g. reading programmes for individuals specifically designed to aid their children with their reading. Organisations such as [Families Outside](#), or programmes such as Positive Parenting, could support successful transitions for some individuals in preparation for their release.

*“When I was outside, I didn’t read a lot. I’ve got kids, he’s getting to school age. When I get out, I can help my son.” (Learner comment)*

**Housing & homelessness** – PD&L plays a crucial role in overcoming homelessness by equipping individuals with the skills needed for independent living and employment. PD &L improves confidence and self-esteem and creates a sense of accomplishment, motivating individuals to pursue positive change.

*“Guys are getting outside and getting 46 quid and then they’re telling you you’ve not got a house, there’s nothing there for you, but if you’ve got a trade in here like painting or decorating, something productive, you could even fix a washing machine, you could make a lot of money.” (Learner comment)*

### Local expertise, opportunities, and partnerships maximised.

Each establishment will have further local expertise, opportunities, and partnerships that should be fully explored and maximised. For example, providing opportunities to connect with supporting community-based services including learning networks, local authorities, third sector organisations, and employers. Examples of localised programmes include:

- START programme
- Bike shed
- Radio Station
- Therapets
- Wellbeing garden
- Hairdressing
- Trades programmes
- Solihull training
- Tool shed
- Street Soccer
- Recovery
- Manual handling
- Open University courses
- Supported labour reintegration

Locally based arrangements will be embedded in Annual Delivery Plans, Annual Learning Plans and Personal Development & Learning Plans.

## Part 4: Measuring Success & Quality Assurance

### Data and evidence informed improvement planning to ensure best use of resources.

Improvement planning is crucial to ensure the success of the strategy and the goals of the SPS. Using evidence and data driven decision making allows us to make informed choices rather than assumptions. It allows us to identify, track and respond to improvements over time.

The PD&L strategy can connect data and evidence to actionable improvements by incorporating several key elements, such as;

- **Alignment.** Development and learning outcomes should be embedded within local delivery plans and implemented through local Annual Learning Plans.
- **Track participation rates:** Monitor how many people participate in different learning programmes.
- **Evaluation:** Use surveys, post-training assessments, or focus groups to gauge knowledge gain & skill development.
- **Analyse feedback:** Gather feedback from participants on programme content, delivery methods, and overall satisfaction.
- **Track skill gaps:** Identify areas where development & learning opportunities can be enhanced; through focus groups, skills assessments, or evaluations.
- **Impact:** How are development and learning outcomes impacting on contract assurance and delivery.
- **Trends:** Analyse data to identify areas where learning programmes are most needed, what types of programs or delivery style are most effective.
- **Refine:** Use data and feedback to continuously improve the effectiveness of learning programmes and delivery methods.

By implementing these practices, the PD&L strategy will ensure development and learning is data-driven, leading to measurable improvements and enhanced skills, knowledge, and ultimately, organisational performance. They should incorporate Quality Indicators (QIs) to objectively measure success, which can be categorised into two main areas:

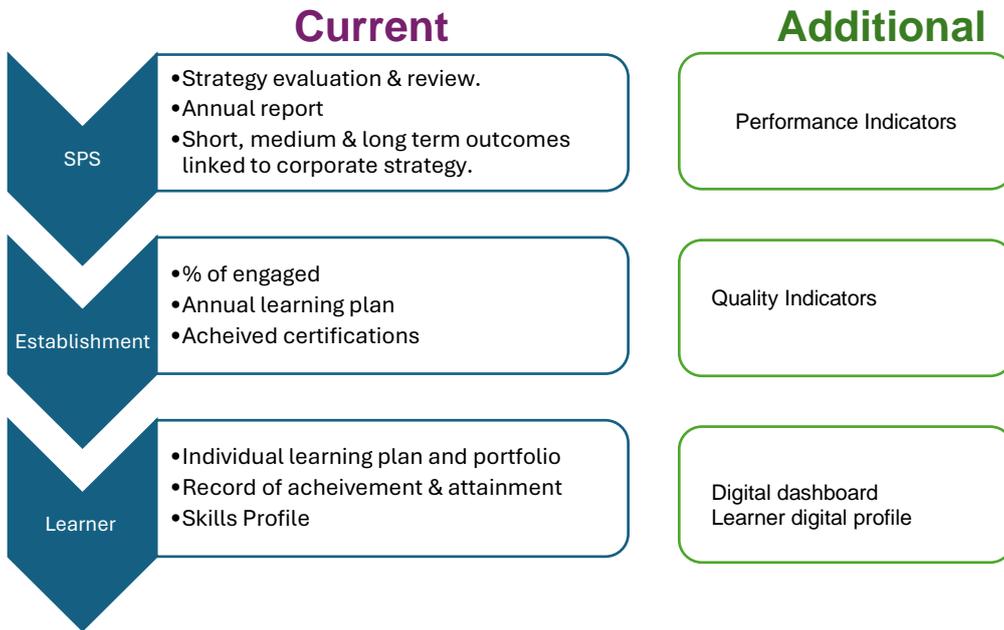
#### 1. Contract Management Effectiveness

2.

- **On-Time Delivery of Services:** This metric tracks the contractor's adherence to the contractually obligated timeline for service delivery (e.g., tutor training completion, curriculum implementation).
- **Budget Adherence:** This monitors adherence to the agreed financial parameters of the contract, ensuring cost-effectiveness.
- **Communication & Responsiveness:** This measure assesses the quality and timeliness of communication between the contractor, the local and national governance structure. It may encompass response rates to inquiries, frequency and effectiveness of progress reports, and overall transparency.

#### 2. PD&L Strategy Effectiveness

- **Learner Achievement:** This metric can encompass a range of standardised test scores, grade point averages, or progress on specific learning objectives outlined in the contract. Consider disaggregated data to identify subgroups requiring additional support, i.e. Neurodiverse.
- **Attendance & Engagement:** Track learner participation through metrics like attendance rates vs local capacity, completion of assignments, and active participation in class discussions (not to suggest the class is predetermined to be in the learning centre). This provides insight into student motivation and learning environment effectiveness.
- **Staff & User Satisfaction:** Conduct surveys or utilise feedback forms to gauge satisfaction with the development & learning services and their perception of the overall educational experience.



At present, success in the current Learning and Skills Strategy (2016) is primarily based on measures related to the Learning and Development contract with the contracted learning provider and measures are mostly quantitative data, such as, the number of:

- hours-of-service delivery
- dedicated literacy/numeracy classes
- literacies screenings undertaken.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)
- ILP reviews

While there is value in measuring output quantities to determine input resources, there is convincing evidence to suggest that quantitative values that focus solely on targets may influence behaviours negatively.

This new PD&L strategy encompasses much more than what is delivered through contracted services and therefore the criteria used to measure its success must reflect its expanded remit.

From the previous strategy we know that the concentration on annual increases in individual certificates does not provide a full picture of improved outcomes, or the utility of those qualifications as a basis for further learning. Increasing cumulative numbers of low-level qualifications are not in and of themselves indicators of educational progression.

We therefore propose a more rounded approach to gathering and analysing evidence that supports progress in terms of creating the conditions to realise the strategy, demonstrates individual's learner progress, and provides more evidence on the wider benefits of engagement in learning.

The success measures for the PD&L strategy will therefore be directly related to strategy outcomes and their associated Performance Indicators. Quality indicators will be developed in line with PD&L Operational Plans at both national and establishment level once the Development and Learning contract has been finalised.

## Quality Assurance

Quality assurance (QA) of the strategy is required to ensure **consistency of implementation across the entire prison estate**. QA ensures that all services are aligned to the strategy vision, principles, and objectives to ensure the outcomes are realised over the term of the strategy. QA also provides clear organisational standards and best practices. QA will occur through:

- Quality Indicators to evaluate, record, and review learner progression and how well a local establishment is meeting the needs of learners.
- Annual quality and standards report.
- Annual audit, evaluation, and assurance process for staff development.
- Embedding self-evaluation into the review processes.
- Annual review of PDL Strategy.