Initial and diagnostic assessment for functional skills HMP North Sea Camp



Context of work and development through the Support Programme

HMP North Sea Camp is currently an adult male open prison, categorised as 'D' (the lowest security rating). Prison education is managed by Lincoln College, and classes and work related learning activities take place in the education block and in classrooms within vocational workshops. Prisoners also work on a wide variety of jobs within the prison, including kitchen, farm and buildings maintenance. Roughly 25% of the 382 prisoners currently at HMP North Sea Camp work outside the prison in paid or voluntary work.

The changes in funding of qualifications for delivery of English, maths and ESOL will impact on the provision within the prison. The education team at HMP North Sea Camp have been

Supported provider

Lincoln College, HMP North Sea Camp:

 Rachel Poll, Education Manager

Improvement partner

Training Plus Merseyside:

 Claire Collins, English, ESOL and maths Specialist

delivering functional skills since 2010 and their experience highlighted some key issues connected to initial and diagnostic assessment. Functional skills qualifications assess learners' abilities to solve complex problems independently, using maths, English and ICT. Rachel Poll, HMP North Sea Camp's Education Manager, and her team felt that existing initial and diagnostic tools were inadequate for assessing learners' abilities to use maths, English and ICT 'functionally'. In addition, they were conscious of the amount of complex information prisoners are faced with when they enter a new prison and Rachel wanted to contextualise the assessments, wherever possible, to help induct new prisoners to prison life.

Review, revise and research

The team at HMP North Sea Camp are highly motivated and receptive to change. However, they are very small in number and wanted some external guidance to help them review their ideas and plan their development work. The support offered by Claire Collins, from Training Plus Merseyside, enabled them design a strategic plan for change, which included:

- identifying 'gaps' in existing assessment tools and approaches
- designing and critically reviewing the assessment materials
- developing learner-led Functional Skills tracking sheets
- embedding use of the new assessments and processes in prisoners' learner journeys

In order to critically review the assessments and processes being developed, the team wished to collaborate with colleagues working in prisons and in the wider further education

sector. Claire was able to support Rachel to make contact with colleagues inside and outside Offender Learning as part of Training Plus Merseyside's role as a improvement partner. In addition, Rachel and her team decided to take part in an LSIS-funded action research project to further evaluate the effectiveness of the tools and approaches they were designing.

Differentiating assessment

When designing the functional skills assessment tools and approaches, the team came to understand that a 'one size fits all' approach would not work. At Entry Level, for example, they decided to bring together maths and English into one assessment. This was partly because learners doing functional maths courses also need to be able to read and respond to text confidently to pass their end assessments. It was also because prisoners have to undertake a variety of tasks that require the use of maths and English. An example of this is ordering food, toiletries and other essential items from a complex 'canteen sheet'. The team recognised the difficulty that many Entry Level learners face when using this sheet to order their provisions. They therefore used it as the source material for the Entry Level assessment in order to support the men to be more independent when managing their life in prison as well as assess functional maths and English abilities. The complexity of the canteen sheet is demonstrated in an example below.

At Levels 1 and 2, the assessments were split into separate maths and English tasks. The team based the reading assessment on two documents relating to life at HMP North Sea Camp; an historical text about how the prison was built and a modern article about the prison's organic farm. The writing task requires learners to plan and write an 'e-mail' to the Education Manager explaining their previous experiences of education and what they hope to gain from it in the future. Rachel's team use marking sheets (incorporating elements such as logical sequencing, clarity and accuracy) to assess this writing. In addition, Rachel will be able to take account of key points raised in these 'e-mails', as a 'learner voice' element in her quality reviews and curriculum planning.

Maths at Levels 1 and 2 required a different approach to English. At first, the team designed a series of problem solving tasks. However, having piloted these with learners, they felt that the 'underpinning' maths elements were difficult to identify and set targets for. To address this issue, they added some more traditional 'sums' to the assessment and now have a model that combines the assessment of, for example, an ability to multiply two digit numbers, along with an ability to solve a problem - such as the amount and cost of fencing required to fence a garden of given dimensions.

Price E1.22	Item Lucozde Engy Orng 500ml(V)	IC Qty 112711	£2.29	Item Klgs Branflakes500g(V,K,H)	IC Qty 125433	Price	Item SUPPLEMENTS	IC
	the second s				067281	£1.25	Nurishment Choco 400g(V)	124108
0.71	Coca Cola Can (VE)	282574 282673	£2.35 £1.29	Klg FruitNFib 375g(VE,K,H) Sugar Puffs 320g	116482	£1.25	Nurishment Strawberry 400g	124108
0.71	Coke Diet Can (VE)				260061	£1.25	Nurishment Vanilla 400g(V)	124105
0.49	D&G Ginger Beer Can	964643	£1.49	Weetabix 12s(V,K)			The second s	-
0.71	Fanta Orange Can	282707	£0.75	Superfast Oats 500g(VE)	035730	£7.27	Elite Protin Pwd Banana(V)	094724
0.68	Irn Bru Can	408385	£1.99	Shredded Wheat 12's(V,H)	085063	£7.27	Elite Protin Pwd S/berr(V)	094725
0.71	Sprite Can(VE)	242339	£2.49	Suma Super Muesli 500g(VE)	095896	£6.75	Weight Gain Pwdr Bana (V)	094727
0.85	Highland Spring Still 1.5L	679084	£1.09	Granulated Sugar1kg(V,GF)	295642	£6.75	Weight Gain Pwdr Sberry(V)	094728
0.29	Economy Water 500ml	113123	£1.29	Hermesetas 300's	031773	10000	STATIONERY	
0.99	Yazoo Banana Milk(V)	074803	£1.39	Lyles Golden Syrup (VE,K)	832949	£0.15	Regency Manilla Envelope	090294
0.99	Yazoo Strawberry Milk(V)	074804	£1.49	Hartley Sberry Jam330g(VE)	111663	£0.70	Spreme 10 Wht DL Envelopes	105167
1.75	Nesquik Strawberry 300g	083198	£1.49	R/bers Orange Marmalade	109075	£1.01	Refill Pad A4 160 leaf	090254
8.194	CARDS	and a state of	£1.99	Econ Sqzy Honey(V)	102755	£1.19	A4 Plain Pad 100 leaf	125392
0.61	I Love You Card 1	103409	£1.85	Smth Peanut Butter 340g(V)	053079	£1.20	Coloured Pencils 12k	125373
0.61	Love You Card 2	103413	£0.14	Nutella 15g Portion	101417	£0.19	Eraser	093792
0.61	I Miss You Card 1	103415	£1.19	Tuna Chunks in Brine 185g	111694	£0.61	Writing Pad 30 LF	088772
0.61	I Miss You Card 2	103418	£0.75	Economy Tuna Flakes 185g	121144	£0.30	BIC Cristal Black Med Pen	041126
0.61	Thinking Of You Card 2	103425	£1.19	Econ Tuna Chunks Oil 185g	797770	352552	RELIGIOUS ITEMS	1000
0.61	and the second	103427	£1.55	Mackerel Fillet S/flower	142349	£1.42	Prayer Beads-Tasbeeh/Subha	094567
	Just To Say Card 1	103427	£1.55	Mackerel Fillet Spicy/Tom	101353	£5.16	Prayer Mat	094554
0.61	Blank Card				833830	£5.16 £1.11	Prayer Hat (Topi)	094554
0.61	Female Birthday Card	103449	£1.05	Sardines Oil 120g			Plain Tooth stick (Miswak)	098795
0.61	Mum Birthday Card	103478	£1.05	Sardines Tomato 120g	833822 835256	£0.56		000/00
20.61	Daughter Bday Card Child	103484	£1.19	Glenryck Pilchards Tomato		01.00	GENERAL ITEMS	10700
20.61	Daughter Bday Card Adult	103486	£2.45	Corned Beef 340g(H)	100668	£1.00	Non Bio Soap Powder	107394
20.61	Sister Birthday Card	103490	£1.15	Hot Dogs 400g	834432	£1.00	Economy Fab Conditioner	115999
20.61	Wife Birthday Card	103496	£1.49	Beef Hotdog 400g(H)	098884	£2.59	Ariel Handwash 960g	789990
20.61	Dad Birthday Card	103502	£1.09	Chicken Hotdog 400g(H)	103866	£1.05	Econ Toilet Tissue Twn Wht	114083
E0.61	Son Birthday Card Adult	103509	£1.35	Chick Luncheon 200g	092696	£2.03	Bio-D Nat Wash Up Lqd(VE)	095774
E0.61	Brother Birthday Card	103513	£1.89	Granovita Nut Luncheon(VE)	103657	£1.05	Glade Solid Lily Of Valley	080859
20.61	Open Anniversary	103529	£0.33	Inst N/dle Chick C/Mein	092653	£1.03	Craft Hobby Brush	094781
20.61	New Baby Boy Card	103537	£0.33	Instant Noodle Beef 85g	092652	£0.52	Craft Knife	125675
£0.61	New Baby Girl Card	103539	£0.33	Instant N/dle Curry 85g(V)	092655	£2.45	Safety Matchstick Cutter	093599
20.61	Grandson Bday Card	109194	£0.40	Kolee N/dle Chow Mein (V)	092669	£2.45	Plain H/less Model Matches	093624
£0.61	Granddaughter Bday Card	109192	£0.40	Go Crunch Noodles 85g(V)	092667	£0.32	Med Fine Sandpaper Sheet	093623
20.61	Sympathy Card	103543	£0.50	Noodle Pot Snack Chic&Mush	102336	£2.15	Wood Glue 110g	094506
£0.61	Congratulations Card	103545	£0.50	Nodle Pot Snack Curry 75g	102337	£1.15	Alarm Clock	114383
	EID Card 8 Pack	109436	£1.39	Kolee Egg Noodles 375g	104872	£12.59	Black Hygenic Trimmer	093683
£1.32		100400	£1.39 £2.29		092366	£7.39	Casio Mens Watch	096029
00.05	FRUIT & VEGETABLES	100700		Heinz Tomato Ketchup 460g	118375	£7.39 £2.59		118668
£0.25	Banana (HO)	100729	£0.69	Economy Ketchup 470g			Plastic Can Opener	
£0.30	Pear (HO)	098837	£1.99	HP BBQ Smoke Sauce(V)	118669	£2.54	Addis 3 piece seal tight	065556
£0.75	Apple Green 2's (HO)	111539	£0.99	Economy Mayonnaise 250ml	113296	£0.15	MWave/Storage Container	051688
£0.75	Apples Red 2's (HO)	111544	£0.99	Econom Salad Cream 445g(V)	095492	£1.99	Flip Flops Size 4-7	105165
£0.25	Orange Medium (HO)	124436	£0.99	Sqeezy Brown Sauce 470g(V)	095459	£1.99	Flip Flops Size 8-11	099046
The late	BISCUITS & BAKERY	Participa Conte	£0.99	Colmans Mustard Tubes 50g	447193	£1.32	Latte Mug 34cl	098069
£0.50	Economy Custard Crms 150g	121002	£0.99	Sarsons Malt Vinegar	141901	£2.03	Playing Cards	105545
£0.50	Economy Bourbon Creams	120918	£1.99	Encona Hot Pepper Sauce	073046	£13.99	Safety Duvet Cover	103048
£0.50	Economy Digestive 200g	120993	£1.75	Branston Pickle Sq 405g(V)	072503	£2.99	Safety Pillow Case	101123
£0.79	Economy Coconut Rings	121009	£1.99	Patak Bengal Pckl 355g(V)	109068	£7.99	Safety Flat Sheet	100755
£0.69	Economy Fruit Shortcake	121023	£1.99	Shrw Mango Chutney 375g(V)	109076	£22.99	Safety Sgl Quilt 9 Tog	123996
£0.79	Economy Ginger Nuts 300g	121007	£0.75	Cup a Pasta Chicken Sgl	113165	£9.99	Safety Single Pillow	124287
£0.79	Economy Rich Tea 300g	120994	£1.75	Cup A Soup Chicken 4s	125653	£2.95	Neoprene Wrist Support	096103
£1.00	Economy Milk Choc Dig 200g	120992	£1.75	Cup A Soup Golden Veg pk(V)	125083	100.00	SPECIAL OFFERS	Contraction of the second
£1.39	Cadbury's Fingers Box	115756	£1.75	Cup A Soup Tomato 4s(V)	125654	£0.61	Valentine Card 2012	105153
£0.59	Economy Choc Chip Cookies	104805	£0.95	HZ Bked Beans 415g(V,GF,K)	266581	£0.42	Valentine Card Various	093946
			£0.99	The second	836601		Offer 1	
20.99	Economy Jaffa Cake 300g	089294		Fruit Cocktail Syrup 420g	836569		Offer 2	
£0.69	Economy Fig Rolls 200g	108689	99.03	Peach Slices in Juice 415g			and the second sec	-
£0.75	C/fords Jam Rings 125g	124853	99.03	Pear Hivs in Juice415g	836528		Offer 3	-
£1.85	Milk Choc Hobnobs 300g	124829	£0.59	P/apple Slices Juice 227g	110887		Offer 4	
£1.19	Ritz Original 200g(V)	116476	£1.79	Carnation Condensd Milk(V,H)	525972		Offer 5	
£0.49	Economy Cream Crackers	116439	£0.62	Carnation Evapo Milk (V,H)	185031	_	Offer 6	
£0.95	Ryvita Crisp/B Dark Rye(V)	113208	£0.39	Economy Custard Powder	114008		Offer 7	
£1.49	Mcv Jamaica Ginger Cake	115673	£1.19	Ambrosia Crmd Rice 400g(V)	122265		Offer 8	
£1.00	Chocolate Chip Muffins x 3	109424	£0.89	Ambrosia Custard 400g(V)	123135		Offer 9	
£0.79	Plain Pitta Bread 6's	106424	£0.85	Angel Delight Str/berry(V)	016987			
£1.29	Fruit Flapjack(K)	093652	£0.85	Strawberry Jelly 135g	003004			
20.89	Soreen Malt Loaf(V)	107687	£0.69	Table Salt 750g	114023			
	GROCERIES		£1.49	Whitworths Raisins 375g	581355			
C1 45		975888	£1.49	Dried Fruit 375g	581462	-		
£1.45	Ready Brek 250g(V,K)		£1.49 £1.49		581402			
£2.75	Klg Cornflakes 500g(V,K,H)	086994		Sultanas 375g				
£2.55	Klgs CrnchyNut 375g(V,K,H)	086995	£0.99	Smash Original 88g(V)	677180	1		

This example of a 'canteen sheet' has been created only as a learning resource and is not a true reflection of prices or goods available.

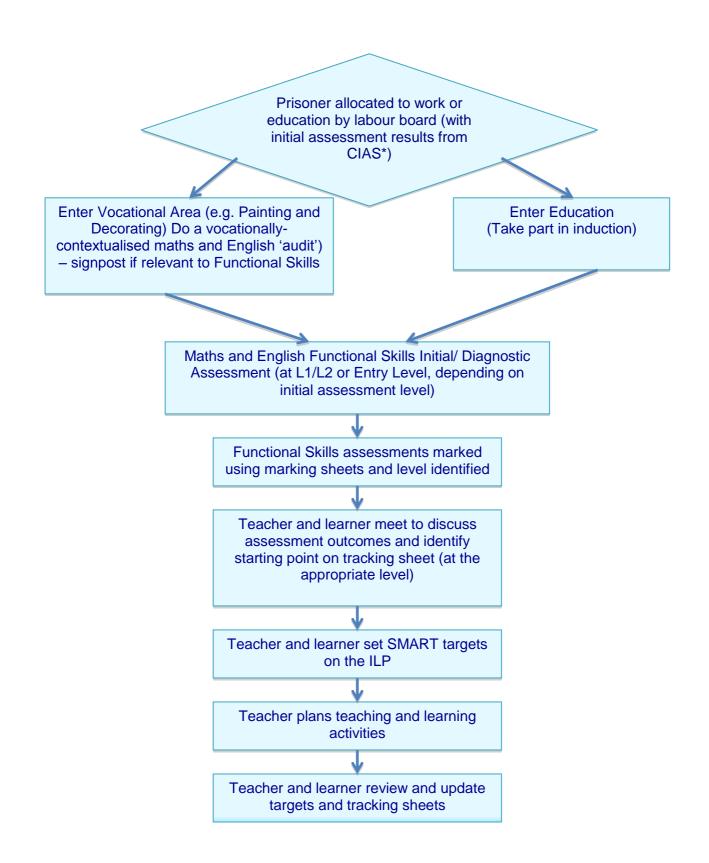
Supporting learners to recognise their progress

To enable teachers to use assessment outcomes as the basis for setting and monitoring SMART functional skills targets with learners, the team designed maths and English 'tracking sheets' from Entry 1 to Level 2. Learners have to identify on the tracking sheets where they feel they sit on a scale from 1–10 in terms of various functional maths and English abilities. These decisions are informed by the results of the functional skills assessment tasks because each of the criteria is linked to an assessment question/ questions (and these links are noted on the tracking sheet).

Maths	Entry L	evel 3	topics										
For each of the maths topics below, how confident do you feel? Mark from 1 – 10 (1 = not at all confident, 10 = very confident)													
Recognise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Understand problems from visuals (e.g. diagrams) and recognise the maths needed to solve them													
Understand problems in words and recognise the maths needed to solve them (Question4-14)													
Understand problems in numbers and recognise the maths needed to solve them													
Арріу	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Use whole numbers up to 1000													
Calculate with 2 digit numbers (Question 6-14)													
Add and subtract using 3 digit numbers (Questions 6,7,8,12,13 & 14)													
Multiply and divide using whole numbers (Questions 8,9,50 843)													
Know 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 timestables (Question 10)													
Round to the nearest 10 or 100 (Question 11)													
Use simple fractions (Question 9-10)													
Calculate using decimals up to 2 decimal places e.g. money and measurements (questions 6,7,8,11,12,13)													
Estimate, measure and compare length, capacity, weight and temperature													
Name and draw simple 2D and 3D shapes													

Next steps

The team are still in the process of carrying out their action research. To ensure that staff at HMP North Sea Camp and external reviewers can understand and critically examine the assessment process, Rachel designed a flow chart showing the new stages in the functional skills learner journey. Along with the assessment tools and tracking sheets, the flowchart will be modified in line with research findings.



All round impact

The development work has enabled the team to design functional skills assessment tools and approaches that they believe are fit for purpose. They have also been able to design activities that help prisoners undertake wider prison tasks.

As with all development work undertaken by supported providers, Training Plus Merseyside benefits by learning from the experiences of others and embedding this into working practices back at base. To this end, a working group, consisting of Training Plus Merseyside Functional Skills team members and a team from another local supported provider have reviewed the assessment tools developed by HMP North Sea Camp and will now work on a similar model for learners doing covering functional skills as part of their apprenticeship frameworks. Similarly, other supported providers who have been reviewing the tools will also work on their own models, using texts and source materials that are relevant to their local areas or contexts. This cascade effect that results from working in partnership is one of the key benefits of the LSIS Support Programme.