

Getting the support of a mentor





Introduction

On the following pages you will find some useful information regarding mentors, including:

- what a mentor does
- how to find a mentor
- details of several mentoring schemes and organisations that provide some form of personal support, by way of example

What a mentor does

Mentoring is when one person (the mentor) supports another to enable them to make positive changes in their life. Examples in prison include Listeners, Shannon Trust mentors, Equality Reps, etc. On leaving prison, you may want someone to meet you at the gate and help you get to the hostel and sort out all that needs to be done in the first few weeks. Other kinds of support include help with getting a job or education, children and families, housing, drug or alcohol issues, managing your finances and debt, and helping to build confidence and self-esteem. Mentoring is sometimes also described as befriending or buddying and may include peer support/advice.

There is a wide range of mentoring services working with offenders and ex-offenders both in prison and in the community. If you are looking for a mentoring service you, or someone on your behalf, can visit: www.clinks.org/directory Type mentoring into the search box and click search. You will find information on a considerable number of organisations that provide mentoring. If one interests you, click on the organisation's name and a new screen will appear showing contact details.

Mentors are usually volunteers who are trained to offer support. Some mentoring services may have mentors who will meet you in prison before release or who will meet you at the gate, and in some cases the mentor is someone who has spent time in prison.

How can I get a mentor?

In the following pages you will find details of a number of schemes that provide mentoring and other forms of support. Many of the organisations listed in The Hardman Directory's *Getting into employment* also provide one-to-one support or mentoring to help people make the transition from prison to a job.

If you are still struggling to find a mentor, Pact provide through-the-gate mentoring programmes and may be able to help you. Perhaps a friend outside may be willing to research the details for you here: www.prisonadvice.org.uk/through-the-gate-mentoring

Getting the support of a mentor



Organisation

Aid & Abet

Website

www.aidnabet.org

Who can apply

Prisoners who will be resident in the Edinburgh/Lothian area on release.

How the scheme can assist you

Aid & Abet are a peer-led organisation offering a mentor support service to people on their release from prison. Our mentors have lived experience of offending and/or addiction, and understand the barriers faced in prison and integrating back into the community.

We offer the support that is crucial in the first 72 hours after release. Our aim is to make sure that each individual leaving prison has somewhere to stay and some money in their pocket on the first night after release, and to support them through the challenging first few days of freedom.

We visit people who are due to be released within 3 months and build up a trust-based relationship within this time. We then attend a gate pickup with the person on their release, supporting you with your housing presentations and benefit claims. The support that follows will be based on the person and the needs you have identified. Aid & Abet mentoring support is ongoing and does not have a timescale attached.

How to apply

Write, phone or email.

Key dates

Apply when you still have at least 3 months to serve before release.

Apply to

Aid & Abet

c/o Keegan Smith – Defence Lawyers
 Cairngorm House
 Almondvale Boulevard
 Livingston
 EH45 6QN

07444 125 380
admin@aidnabet.org



If it wasn't for Aid & Abet helping me upon release, I'd just be existing, committing crime again without a doubt, and no future. Now I see a future, a bright future where my mentor is helping me to achieve that future. My mentor helped save my life and showed me how to live without crime."



Organisation

Apex Scotland – All Cleaned Up

Website

www.apexscotland.org.uk

Who can apply

Main base is in Edinburgh but we have openings throughout Scotland.

How the scheme can assist you

The scheme helps you get into training or employment and is able to help you get qualifications like the CSCS card if you want to work on building sites or the UKCPAS or BICS if you want to work in the cleaning and facilities sector. These are sectors where there are large number of vacancies throughout Scotland. They can also help you explain to an employer about your record and past experiences. We have over 60 courses and we can assist you to get the funding for these courses. We have links to construction employers and can arrange interviews.

Essential to the whole process is the relationship with a mentor who will support and encourage progression, based on what the individual wishes to achieve for themselves.

Apex can also help you to become a peer mentor if you want so that you can help others in a similar situation to your own. This will also help you build up your CV and your skills.

All Cleaned Up is a social enterprise set up by Apex Scotland to offer a route into employment. It runs specialised cleaning services across Scotland and is based at Wester Hailes in Edinburgh. In addition to employment, it also provides work experience, qualifications and skills training, for a limited period.

How to apply

Within prison, you can speak to your personal officer or to one of the DWP work coaches who are located in all Scottish prisons. They all have details regarding Apex services. You can also ask the New Routes or Shine prison-based mentors, who again are all aware of Apex.

Upon release, the easiest way is to self-refer by looking at our website **www.apexscotland.org.uk** and contacting your local office, either by telephone or email. You can also ask your local work coach in the Job Centre who will contact Apex for you.

Notes

For more information about Apex Scotland, visit our website.

Apply to

admin@apexscotland.org.uk
Ask for the Steps service or ITA service.



I don't consider this to be about cleaning or whatever we happen to be doing. I feel that I am working for a social enterprise which not only does high quality work but also makes a difference to people. I am now a supervisor and doing great."
Sam



Organisation

The Clink Charity

Website

thelinkcharity.org

Number of prisoners/
prison leavers helped

2,500

Who can apply

All prisoners must be deemed by the prison to be eligible for working in a public area and have been screened and vetted by internal security. We also have our own criteria to ensure that the students are suitable and have volunteered to be trained. Our criteria states students must:



Thank you to the team in The Clink; I hope I never have to see you again, in a good way! I'm not planning on coming back to prison!"
Jason

- be in good health and able to undertake active work.
- be sentenced. If there are outstanding charges these will be considered on an individual basis. No remand prisoners will be considered.
- be cleared by security and categorised as B, C or D.
- have 6–18 months left to serve on their sentence.
- not be of any interest to immigration or have any active deportation cases.
- be motivated to train and work in the catering trade.
- be aged 20 and over.
- have no escape/abscond/security/illegal drug concerns for the past 3 months.
- have no violence or arson offences in the last 12 months.
- have no SRU (Security & Reintegration Unit) history in the past 4 months.
- have no history at all of kidnapping or hostage taking.

How the scheme can assist you

Students will be trained, depending on the project, towards gaining their City & Guilds NVQ Level 1 and 2 qualifications in Food Preparation, Professional Cookery, Horticulture and Barista Skills by our trained team of hospitality and horticulture industry professionals in a real-life kitchen and restaurant open to the general public. You will also have access to a Clink mentor upon your release.

Notes

We have 30+ projects located around England and Wales. Our various training projects include Clink Restaurants, Clink Kitchens, Clink Gardens and our central production kitchen for Clink Events.

Apply to

Apply via the Information Kiosk on your wing/house/block.

Getting the support of a mentor

ENGLAND & WALES



Organisation

DWRM

Website

www.dwrm.org.uk

Number of prisoners/
prison leavers helped

In our first year we supported 51 people in prison studying four different university courses, as well as 20 people leaving prison, who we assisted with finding training or employment.

In our second year we expect to have at least 100 people in prison studying with us. And a further 100 people who we support Through the Gate.

How the scheme can assist you

We partner with colleges and universities to offer courses and degree programmes to students in prison, with additional study support offered by our expert team while you are in prison and when you are released. We have a range of courses available, growing every year. A college or university application requires lots of detail. We can support with every stage of the process.



I am more than my offence and I want to use this course to show that."

Post release support is funded via a probation contract. Ask your DWP advisor or probation officer to make a referral for our support package.

We offer training in digital study skills, career development, college and university applications and coaching to support your transition from prison to campus based learning. We can also advise on disclosure processes and on funding options.

We are a social enterprise, led by people with convictions who have successfully negotiated all the barriers to success. We know what students are up against and we also know the great rewards available.

All of our peer mentors have spent time in prison.

How to apply

Please see details in our prospectus, available in your prison education department or we can post a copy to you.

For post-release support see our website www.dwrm.org.uk/access-to-higher-education/students-leaving-prison/ and ask your PO or DWP advisor to make a referral.

Key dates

Courses usually start in September/October or in January. But please contact us at any time as applications are ongoing.

Apply to

DWRM Consultants
PO Box 6741, Warwick
CV34 9SF
0800 987 5953
info@dwrm.org.uk



©AndyAitchison.uk

*Improving reading skills with the help of a mentor.
HMP Maidstone*



FINE CELL WORK

Organisation

Fine Cell Work – Open the Gate

Website

finecellwork.co.uk

Who can apply

Anyone who has served a custodial sentence and will be living in London or the South East. Previous textile experience is not necessary.

How the scheme can assist you

Our Battersea-based Textiles Hub provides a safe space for prison leavers to stabilise, socialise and learn new skills. This vocational yet supportive environment allows for the development of new and existing skills, building of confidence and up-to-date content for CVs.



Fine Cell Work breaks the barrier when you leave custody; it has been a real stepping stone back into life after prison. I feel part of a community when I'm here. It's given me purpose again.
Jon

At The Hub you can:

- achieve Open College Network accredited modules to put toward wider qualifications
- develop techniques in sewing, stitching, embroidery and design in textiles
- gain experience in a variety of roles such as Admin, Stock Management, Packing and Dispatch, Events, Sales (customer service), and Production
- be matched with an Employment Mentor to help identify and achieve long and short-term goals

Our dedicated Engagement and Support Officer provides tailored, practical support and advice on all issues surrounding resettlement; including but not limited to housing, benefits, personal development, mental health and wellbeing and disclosure of conviction(s). We can also access small pools of funding for costs associated with further learning or employment plans. We have links with a range of employers and training providers, so those who engage with us do not necessarily have to have a stitching background or a desire to work in the textiles industry to join the programme.

Places with us at our Battersea Hub are voluntary but all travel and lunch expenses are covered on the days of attendance.

How to apply

Seek a referral from the individual or professional involved in your care.

Apply to

Engagement and Support Officer

Fine Cell Work
PO Box 76275
London
SW8 9FF

020 7931 9998
info@finecellwork.co.uk



Organisation	Koestler Mentoring
Website	www.koestlerarts.org.uk/mentoring
Group helped	Around 30 people a year are supported through the Koestler Arts Mentoring Scheme
Who can apply	People who have experience of the criminal justice system and who have a keen interest in the arts.
How the scheme can assist you	You will be given up to ten mentoring sessions over a 12-month period. You will work with a mentor to identify the goals you would like to achieve, such as applying to college, creating a piece of work or accessing local arts resources. Koestler mentors will support you in developing your skills, e.g. building your portfolio or identifying other arts opportunities.
How to apply	Get in touch with us, either by post or over the internet, to get an application form. Alternatively, you can ask your probation officer or a member of your arts or education team to contact Koestler for you. When we have received your application, we will seek a reference to support your participation.
Key dates	We accept applications on a rolling basis.
Notes	A small number of Koestler Scholarships are awarded each year to a small number of mentees who show passion, talent and commitment to their work. The recipients of this mentoring are also awarded £150 in prize money and £150 of art materials. The work of Koestler Scholars is showcased at our exhibitions.

Apply to
Koestler Arts Centre
 168 Du Cane Road
 London
 W12 0TX
 0208 740 033



I have learnt so much from my mentor, not just skills and knowledge but to believe in myself. It might not happen straight away but keep going, practice and learn but mostly to enjoy it."



<i>Organisation</i>	Pact (The Prison Advice and Care Trust) – The Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Mentoring Service
<i>Website</i>	www.prisonadvice.org.uk
<i>Specific geographical area</i>	London, the North West of England, the West Midlands and Wales.
<i>Who can apply</i>	<p>You can apply if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are a man aged 18 or over ■ and are under supervision by the Probation Service (on licence) ■ and live in London, the North West of England, the West Midlands or Wales ■ and would like support with getting into education, training and/or employment
<i>How the scheme can assist you</i>	<p>Pact's Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Mentoring Service can provide you with support, guidance, training and opportunities to get into education, training or employment.</p> <p>This means we can help you with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improving your skills and confidence ■ looking for a job ■ taking on work placements, training, qualifications and employment ■ advice about disclosing your conviction ■ eligibility checks and paperwork <p>Through one-to-one mentoring and group work we will support you in exploring different routes into education and applying for courses and qualifications in areas such as construction and business administration. You will learn how to apply for jobs, prepare for interviews and adapt to the work environment. The Mentoring Service is usually available for 3 months but we can also refer you to other services (including Pact's services in London and the West Midlands) which offer longer-term support if you need it. The service can be delivered face-to-face or remotely.</p>
<i>How to apply</i>	<p>If you are interested in accessing Pact's Mentoring Service, please speak to your probation officer and ask them to make a referral for you. Please note – you may email info@prisonadvice.org.uk for general queries.</p>
<i>Notes</i>	<p>Pact also offer mentoring to people who are looking to get experience as a Peer Support Worker and help others. Peer Support Workers will be supported to get a recognised qualification and train to become a Mentor, all while running focus meetings and supporting job clubs. Your probation officer can refer you to be a Peer Support Worker.</p>

SWITCHBACK

Organisation

Switchback – Intensive Mentoring Programme

Website

www.switchback.org.uk

Who can apply

Men aged 18–30 who will be returning to London and do not have outstanding court cases or immigration issues.

How the scheme can assist you

If you are currently in a London prison and set for release within 3 months, a Switchback Mentor may be able to visit you regularly and together you prepare for release. The same Switchback Mentor meets you at probation on your day of release. If you are not in a London prison, we may be able to communicate through phone or letter and then meet you once you return to London. You can also get in touch and sign up, up to a month after your release.

Soon after you are released from prison, you will start training 2 days a week in a real-work training environment, with guidance and support from your Switchback Mentor. This stage is very important as it means experience to go on your CV, building up your skills and getting a good reference.

Switchback supports you to develop a stable routine and get yourself into training, education or paid work. When you first start a paid job, we will continue to support you through the difficulties that everyone experiences at the beginning. We are on your side for as long as it takes, and remain in touch when you have moved on.

How to apply

Get in touch, by post, phone or email. Alternatively, you can ask your probation officer or resettlement officer to contact Switchback for you.

Apply to

Switchback
 3rd Floor, Norvin House
 45–55 Commercial Street
 London
 E1 6BD

 0207 650 8989
 delivery@switchback.org.uk



From the moment I met my Mentor, I was able to connect with him. He went above and beyond for me. We worked on chasing up jobs, we did a taster run in a coffee shop, I got my training. But we also worked on more personal stuff, the emotional side of things. It's like talking to one of my friends."



Getting the support of a mentor



Organisation	Trailblazers Mentoring
Website	www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk
Number of prisoners/prison leavers helped	Since being established in 1998, Trailblazers has supported over 2,750 young men through our mentoring service.
Specific geographical area	London (HMP Brixton, HMP/YOI Isis, HMP Wandsworth), Buckinghamshire (HMYOI Aylesbury) and The West Midlands (HMP/YOI Brinsford, HMP Oakwood).
Who can apply	Anyone aged between 18 and 25 years old who is serving a sentence in one of the prisons Trailblazers work in and has up to 9 months left to serve before release.
<p>How the scheme can assist you</p> <p><i>If there's people out there that have got stuck up in the cycle, that have gone down a difficult path in their life, that have got no one that really helps them, I would say get a mentor; look into it, because they seriously can help you change your life, and they make you see things clearer."</i></p>	Trailblazers is a national mentoring charity that offers support to people in custody (aged 18–30) during the fragile time around their release from prison. Through weekly one-to-one mentoring sessions with a fully trained volunteer mentor – both in custody and ‘through the gate’ after release for an additional 12 months – we aim to empower, encourage and inspire our mentees to help them reach their potential and make a positive impact in their communities. Our support ranges from the practical (immediate support on your day of release, setting up a bank account, Universal Credit application, assistance in securing accommodation/housing, etc., supported by a community support worker) to the personal (building self-esteem or working to improve relationships) and is always guided by you and what you feel you need, supported by your mentor. Whether you want help with money management or with setting and achieving your goals, applying for a job or a course or even just someone to talk things through with, Trailblazers will be by your side to support you on every step of your journey.
How to apply	You can apply while in prison by using the biometric self-referral system or a general application form. Alternatively, speak to a member of staff about getting a mentor or write to us at the address below. We also take referrals from other organisations and services working both inside and outside prison.
Key dates	We accept applications on a rolling basis. We normally start working with mentees 3–6 months before they are released, but in some circumstances can commence work up to 9 months before release.
Notes	We cannot offer direct financial support to individuals. However, we can cover a range of smaller expenses such as for travel, food, essential items or a phone. We can also support individuals to access funding by connecting them with other grant providers and supporting their applications.
Apply to	<p>Trailblazers Mentoring Landgate Chambers Rye TN31 7LJ</p> <p>0800 193 4046 info@trailblazersmentoring.org.uk</p>



Having support from someone who truly understands where I'm coming from and who has the knowledge and network that can open doors and opportunities for me, has been invaluable. Without the support of my New Routes mentor, I'd probably have been back in custody within weeks.
Stevie M