

All accredited programmes must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrating evidence that the approach will work with the offenders selected.
- Identifying the characteristics of each person, including the offences being tackled, risk, motivation, learning style, gender and race.
- Targeting the dynamic (ie capable of being changed) risk factors.
- Demonstrating how risks are interlinked and how the programme will bring about change.
- Using methods which have been proved to work.
- Teaching skills for offence-free living, for example literacy, numeracy, how to find work, making and keeping relationships, problem-solving.
- Matching frequency and number of programme sessions to participants' learning styles and abilities, and risk.
- Aiming to assess and build motivation.
- Combining with other services identified in the treatment plan, maintaining continuity between prison and community supervision.
- Continually monitoring to ensure that staff are properly selected, trained and supervised, and that the programme is being run as intended.
- Continually evaluating for improvements in the targeted risk areas and for reduction in reconviction.

Wording that should be included on an order to attend:

“The accused shall during the Probation period and in accordance with the instructions given by the Probation Officer responsible for their supervision, participate in the General Offending Behaviour Programmes at the Probation Office, for not more than 60 days, which may include the completion of a Booster Programme for up to twelve sessions, as directed by their supervising officer, and while participating, comply with instructions given by or under the authority of the person in charge of the activities.”

General Offending Behaviour Programmes

Think First

One-to-One

Cognitive Skills Booster

Information for sentencers

The General Offending Behaviour Programme Portfolio

Suitable for many offenders where there is a medium/high likelihood of re-offending; where poor thinking and problem-solving skills are linked to impulsivity and criminal activity.

Teaching Offenders:

- to improve problem-solving, thinking skills and decision-making.
- to develop strategies for recognising problems and analysing them.
- to learn ways of coping which are effective alternatives to criminal behaviour.
- to calculate the consequences of their behaviour, and stop and think before acting.
- to think logically, objectively and rationally
- to formulate plans
- not to blame others
- to learn to manage their own behaviour, and to take responsibility
- to go beyond an egocentric view of the world and to comprehend the thoughts and feelings of other people.
- **that their own thinking and behaviour controls what happens in their life.**

Programmes to suit individual requirements

The General Offending Behaviour Programme Portfolio contains a core group of accredited programmes using techniques which have been proved effective in reducing reconviction.

Available for both employed and unemployed offenders, they will deal with problems linked to rigid thinking, impulsiveness and egocentricity - all of which have a negative influence on behaviour.

Most suitable offenders will initially attend the **Think First** programme, which is a 22-session course for up to 12 offenders. It will take 3 months to complete the groupwork sessions.

There will be a small number of offenders who, due to either specific individual needs, or for practical reasons, are unable to attend the groupwork arrangements.

These people can be offered the **One-to-One** programme, which consists of 20 individual sessions.

The offender can be required to attend twice a week for the first 5 sessions, reducing to once a week as the programme progresses. It usually takes about 5 months to complete.

Selection for either **One-to-One** or **Think First** will be determined at a three-way meeting (Case Manager, Programme Tutor and offender) following sentence.

The **Cognitive Skills Booster** programme is designed to rehearse and apply the learning from the General Offending Behaviour Programmes. Offenders who complete a programme can expect to attend this Booster about 3 months later. The programme is up to 12 sessions, lasting 2 - 3 hours. Each participant is required to undertake a "personal challenge", applying the new skills they have learned.