

Learning Together Network Newsletter 2019

Welcome!

It is enormously exciting to write this introduction to our first Learning Together Network newsletter—a celebration of the hard work and enthusiasm of our diverse, collaborative learning community. The emergence of the Learning Together Network over the last four years has been organic; grounded in a shared vision of ‘education as the practice of freedom’ and a commitment to collaboration in pursuit of progress and excellence in evidence led educational partnership working between higher education and criminal justice organisations. Through our HMPPS grant, Jenny has been working alongside us to support the development of the network along with Ingrid enhancing our research. This Newsletter marks another important step forward in our collaborative community building—a way of us keeping in touch with each other and celebrating some of the many ways in which our learning together is making a difference. The depth and breadth of Learning Together partnership activity is inspiring and it is a joy and privilege to work as part of such an engaged, committed and energizing community. We are really enjoying the collaboration with you all as we forge forward towards best practice together.



Ruth + Amy



Map of partnerships
2018-2019

Network Developments

The Learning Together Network (LTN) is developing further this year as a result of an Innovation Grant awarded by HMPPS. This funding supports the development of the LTN against 11 key milestones. Members of LTN are working collaboratively to achieve these goals. In this Newsletter, you'll find a review of different partnerships, updates related to our LTN administrator, our new website, a range of outreach events we are supporting, the development of toolkits and a common evaluation framework to support best practice in partnership working.



Just is:
Learning Together

Inside this issue:

What's been happening in the Network?	2
Network contributions.....	2-14
Peer review updates	4
Common evaluation framework updates.....	7
Website developments.....	8
LT Conference 2019	9
Running for LT	10
10 Stories for 10 Miles	11
Toolkit updates	11
Legal resources by LT students	12
Alumni event	13
Technology developments.....	14

Special points of interest:

- Save the date for upcoming Learning Together Conference: Thursday 27th June to Friday 28th June
- Our latest blog posts: <https://learningtogethercambridge.wordpress.com/>



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Latest Blogs

You can read more about Learning Together related news and events on our Learning Together blog. Here are some recent blog posts:

Reflecting on Learning Together: Roehampton & HMP Belmarsh. Dr Alison Lamont from the University of Roehampton talks about her experiences coordinating a partnership with HMP Belmarsh.

<https://learningtogethcambridge.wordpress.com/2019/03/14/reflecting-on-learning-together-roehampton-hmp-belmarsh/>

Visiting Learning Together. Esther Montero Pérez de Tudela from the University Loyola Andalucía reflects on her time visiting the Institute of Criminology in Cambridge last November.

<https://learningtogethcambridge.wordpress.com/2019/02/15/visiting-learning-together-by-esther-montero-perez-de-tudela/>

Learning Together in Leicester. Ross Little, Senior Lecturer from the De Montfort University talks about his experiences developing Learning Together projects in two prisons, and the benefits and challenges of this work.

<https://learningtogethcambridge.wordpress.com/2019/03/29/learning-together-in-leicester/>

What's been happening in the Network?

Our Network is buzzing with activity. Here are a few highlights from the last six months.

Learning Together Info Day: Sharing Best Practice

On Friday 8th March the Learning Together Network hosted an information and sharing best practice day at the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge for new and existing partners to find out more about Learning Together.

The day set out to explore several key topics:

- What is Learning Together's mission and vision and what are our common values and principles as a Network?
- How are mission, vision and values translated into practice in designing Learning Together courses? How have colleagues across the Network approached the design of their course and what lessons have been learned about good practice?
- How do we approach safety and security issues in our partnership working? What are the key building blocks and strategies for secure educational community building?

As part of the day current students and alumni had the opportunity to talk about their experiences of being part of Learning Together. It was a great opportunity for existing partners to talk about good practice and especially for those interested in starting their own Learning Together partnership to get advice

and knowledge from the Learning Together community.

We received a lot of positive feedback from the day:

'It was really interesting being able to get feedback and hearing about Learning Together from such a large and varied group of people.'

'As a past student I have enjoyed getting to hear about others experiences and the network more. Thank you, today was amazing!'

'Warm and informal yet professional crafting of sessions to fruitful conversation. Thanks!'



'Warm and informal yet professional crafting of sessions to fruitful conversation.'

— Feedback from LT information day

Learning Together in the Community at LJMU

On Monday 4th February, Dr Helena Gosling and Professor Lol Burke hosted a Learning Together Network event at Liverpool John Moores University.

Since 2015, Dr Helena Gosling and Professor Lol Burke have developed a Learning Together 'community of learners' at Liverpool John Moores University with students from university studying at LJMU alongside students currently under criminal justice supervision. As the initiative continues to grow within and beyond the local academic community, given that they are the

only community-based LT programme within the network, they are keen to share their experiences and insights with colleagues who may be looking to establish a community-based LT initiative.

The event was a great opportunity for the Network community to come together and to learn more about community-based initiatives. Thank you Helena Gosling and Lol Burke for an interesting and informative day!



Jenny Fogarty
@JennyFog

Follow

Thanks to @LJMU colleagues for a great day & opportunity for @JustisTogether Network friends to come together to learn more about LT in the community ❤️

Building International Relationships

In November 2018 the Learning Together team in Cambridge hosted colleagues from Romania, Spain and South Africa who were interested to learn more about Learning Together. Their visit culminated in a roundtable event where colleagues shared their reflections on the visit, discussed comparisons and the potential for collaboration and growth of the International Learning Together Network as well as sharing insights from their context.

Esther Montero Pérez de Tudela of at the University Loyola Andalucía, Professor Ioan Durnescu of the University of Bucharest and Dr Mary Nel of the University of Stellenbosch gave reflections on the theoretical, policy and practical realities of partnership working in their jurisdictions and their week of Learning Together.

Esther Montero Pérez de Tudela wrote a blog piece on her visit to Cambridge.

You can read it here: <https://learningtogethercambridge.wordpress.com/2019/02/15/visiting-learning-together-by-esther-montero-perez-de-tudela/>



'The Learning Together Network has grown considerably already. I am excited to see how it works in another cultural environment.'

— Esther Montero Pérez de Tudela in her latest blog post

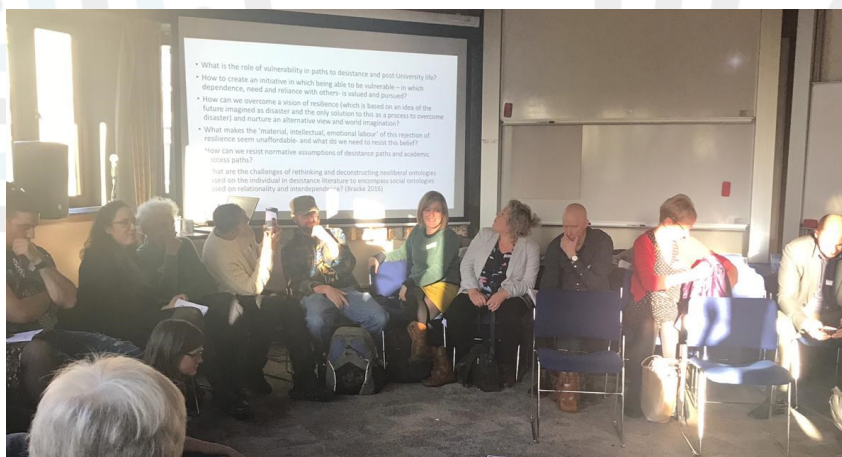
Understanding transitions after LT Courses

Our Transitions event was held at St John's College, Cambridge on 2nd November, hosted by Dr Victoria Pereyra Iraola, Learning Together Researcher.

The Transitions event gave the opportunity for Victoria to present the key findings from the first phase of the Learning Together transitions study. The objective of the event was to think collectively about different themes that we found in the data, to have the opportunity to share what we have learnt and to think together about different ways in which we share these findings. We also had Dr Patrick McKearney (Depart of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge), Jo Bailey (Head of Psychology, HMPPS),

Paula Harriot (Prison Reform Trust) and Professor Fergus McNeil (Criminology and Social Work, University of Glasgow) contributing to the discussion panel. The event included inspiring contributions from LT alumni. Overall this event gave the opportunity for Network colleagues, students and alumni to come to together and understand the role of Learning Together beyond the courses. Thank you all that attended.

The second phase of the transition research has now begun with Learning Together alumnus Simon Larmour working with Ruth and Amy to lead on this.



Guests gathered around during a workshop at the Transitions Event, St John's College, Cambridge

Network Events

There have been a wide range of events and conferences with representation from across the Network this academic year. Many thanks to all Network members who have shared their experiences.

These include:

- What is Learning Together?' hosted at the University of Cambridge
- 'Learning Together in the Community' event hosted by Liverpool John Moores University
- British Society of Criminology Teaching and Learning Symposium hosted by the University of Leeds
- British Educational Research Association annual conference at University of Newcastle.
- International roundtable hosting visitors from South Africa, Spain and Romania hosted by the University of Cambridge
- Sharing the Learning Together model with governors of the open estate hosted by the University of Cambridge
- London South Bank University's 'Education Across the Divide' annual conference

Latest Blogs Continued

The University Legal Centre at the University of Buenos Aires
Alejandro shares the work that is happening at the University Legal Centre in Devoto Prison, Buenos Aires.

<https://learningtogethertcambridge.wordpress.com/2019/03/01/the-university-legal-centre-at-the-university-of-buenos-aires-by-alejandro/>

Peer Review

Following the successful pilot of the Learning Together peer review scheme in 2017-2018, we are continuing to roll it out for this year.

Our peer review scheme involves colleagues being paired up across the Network, visiting each other whilst delivering Learning Together courses and sharing good practice this way.

This is an excellent way to reflect on your own approach, learn from others and share good practice. We have funding available to support the development and further piloting from the HMPPS grant.

Please get in touch with Claire (LTNetworkAdmin@crim.cam.ac.uk) if you would like to be paired up to take part in a peer review process or have a colleague working with you who would benefit from this opportunity.

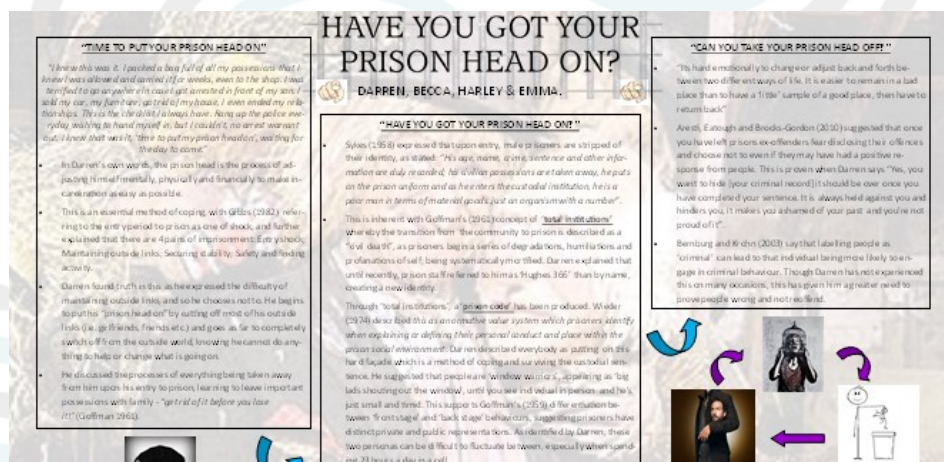
University of Cumbria & HMP Haverigg

Conveners: Dr Alison Spurgeon-Dickson, Ged McElhone

Course title: Learning Together

Summary: This year we are offering LT at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7. Level 4 is not accredited and offers an introduction to LT over a short course of 4 weeks. We are exploring links with people who contribute to our courses, such as guest speakers who are able to work with us to develop ideas such as LT diaries which will act as a potential platform to wider prison diaries. This is at the discussion stage and needs to be explored

further with colleagues in Haverigg. We are also hoping to partner with third sector organisations to offer LT (not accredited) to students in prison with more limited previous educational experience and psychology university students. Following on from the LT Network event at Liverpool John Moores, we are exploring the idea of community LT provision and how we can progress this in Cumbria.



Example Level 5 LT academic poster submission

Edge Hill University & HMP/YOI Thorn Cross

Conveners: Alana Barton, Howard Davis, and Anita Hobson

Course: Learning Together: The Sociological Imagination

Summary: This accredited module was validated in 2017 and we were advised by the University that, in order to align with widening participation principles, the Thorn Cross learners should be assessed at Level 3 (access level), with Edge Hill students taking the module at Level 6. The LOs reflected these levels but the subject content was the same for both groups of students. Due to the high level of achievement from the first Thorn Cross cohort, this year we were able to

revalidate the module so that both Edge Hill and Thorn Cross students were assessed at Level 6. We were very pleased with the performance of all students on the module in both pieces of assessment.

On another positive note, two students from the first Thorn Cross cohort (2017-18) have taken places at University, and three students from this year's cohort (2018-19) are in the process of applying for University courses. There have been some significant personnel changes at Thorn Cross and while we recognise that this can sometimes create challenges, we are pleased that so far the course has remained unaffected by these.



Edge Hill University students on the 'The Sociological Imagination' course at HMP/YOI Thorn Cross

Lancaster University & HMP Lancaster Farms

Conveners: Dr Charlotte Barlow

Course: Learning Together: Studying Criminology 'Inside'

Summary: The Learning Together module is now in its second year. It is an accredited module (all students receive 15 credits for successfully passing the course assessment) and has received excellent feedback from both groups of students. This includes:

University student:

"This is the best module I have taken at university. It gave me a practical insight that I haven't gained from any other module. It completely changed my view of prison and prisoners. I didn't want the course to end!"

Lancaster Farms student:

'I am so glad that I chose this course. It is making me think differently about my own life and offending. It's completely opened my eyes to what I am capable of and what I can achieve. For the first time in a long time, I am looking forward to the future.'

Next steps: We are currently looking to apply for university Widening Participation funds to set up an annual Learning Together Scholarship so that at least one prison-based student could receive a fee waiver to study at Lancaster University when released (Lancaster Farms is a resettlement prison). This is in its early stages of development and we are hoping that if successful, this will commence from 2020.

'It's completely opened my eyes to what I am capable of and what I can achieve.'

— Student on the Studying Criminology 'Inside' course

London South Bank University & HMP Brixton

Conveners: Zoë Leadley-Meade, Jenny Fogarty

Course: What is learning for? Exploring alternative learning theories

Summary: February has been a busy month for the LSBU, LSHTM and HMP Brixton partnership team.

It began with an opportunity for myself and Jenny to present on creative partnerships between universities and prisons at LSBU Education Across the Divide Conference. The session was so well attended we had to get extra chairs to squeeze in more people.

We spoke to students, academics and education practitioners about the opportunities and challenges involved in setting up a learning together programme, as well as our motivations for joining the network. The attendees left with lots to think about and many wanted to find out more about the work of the Learning Together Network.

Just a few days later, we visited HMP Brixton to meet with staff and men on the wings to get a sense of interest and need for the Learning Together course we were proposing to start. The level of interest and support was high from all present, so we were able to finalise recruitment activities with a view to starting a

pilot course 'Learning Together Summer School' in May 2019.

It has taken much work to get to this point, and as a new member to the network, having Jenny's guidance and support has been invaluable. I look forward to beginning the next stage of our partnership with HMP Brixton, and sharing our reflections on the pilot course at the Learning Together annual conference.



Jenny Fogarty (left) and Zoë Leadley-Meade, (right) presenting at the LSBU Education Across the Divide Conference

'Glad I attended this workshop. Learnt a lot about the importance of partnership and collaboration. The importance of education in prisons is definitely necessary to promote growth and reduce re-offending.'

— Twitter feedback from an attendee of Jenny's and Zoë's session

Welcome Claire!



Claire Bonner has been employed by the Learning Together Network as our administrator particularly coordinating activities by Network members which require logistical arrangements. She leads on our event co-ordination, the development of this Newsletter and is working closely with our website team amongst many other things!

Claire has completed her masters in psychology and is considering a PhD but is enjoying this more practically oriented work while she contemplates her next steps in life. She is based in Cambridge and works with us 2.5 days a week. It is great to have her as part of the team!

You can contact Claire with anything Network related at LTNetworkAdmin@crim.cam.ac.uk

Congratulations to Adam Calverley!

Congratulations to our network colleague Adam Calverley, (University of Hull). Adam was awarded the Excellence in Teaching award for his Learning Together partnership work from the University of Hull's Employee Excellence Awards 2018. What a great achievement!



Congratulations to Helena Gosling!

Congratulations to our network colleague Helena Gosling, (Liverpool John Moores University), on the birth of her son Daniel in March this year. We wish you all the best on your maternity leave.

University of Manchester & HMP Risley, HMP Wymott

Conveners: Rose Broad, Caroline Miles and Emily Turner

Course: From Imprisonment to Rehabilitation (UG), Understanding Violence (PGT)

Summary: 2018-2019 has been an exciting and busy year for our Learning Criminology Inside programme. Our second undergraduate unit ran at HMP Risley during the first semester. It was very different from the first with both groups of students contrasting for a variety of reasons with those from the previous year. However, the same supportive relationships, positive learning experience and the ability of all students to work together in a prison environment emerged. The challenges of learning in a prison environment were again brought to the fore as the prison students negotiated negative decisions preventing moves to a Category D prison or bad news relating to family circumstances in addition to the everyday pressures of prison life. The addition of PGR Teaching Assistants this year brought an added and very valuable dimension to the programme. Unfortunately, we are

having to take a break from teaching in Risley although hopefully can return in the future and will be running our UG course next year in HMP Wymott.

Our first post-graduate course is underway in HMP Wymott where we were fortunate to develop the partnership after our Learning Together seminar in October 2018 looking at extending our provision to other departments. The Understanding Violence course is being taught exclusively in the prison to 10 PGT students and 10 prison-based students, with a number of guest lecturers.

We are looking forward to hosting a North-West LT workshop in the coming months and please do get in touch if you are in the North-West and are interested in coming along.

Lastly, we are delighted that the Learning Criminology Inside programme has been nominated for a University of Manchester Making a Difference Award. The final awards will be announced in May so we will keep LTN colleagues updated.



University of Manchester students on the 'From Imprisonment to Rehabilitation' course at HMP Risley

Middlesex University & HMP Wandsworth

Conveners: Prof Kevin McDonald and Dr Jenni Ward

Course: Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice

Summary: It was very exciting for Middlesex University to be able to deliver the module 'Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice' for a second time between October 2018 and January 2019 in collaboration with HMP Wandsworth. The Middlesex module was first delivered in January to May 2017. The implementation on this second occasion cements in place an ongoing working partnership with Wandsworth Prison. These longer term institutional connections are crucial for demonstrating consistency and building reputation for the high standard of educational provision we are creating.

Twenty four students completed the module (10 Middlesex and 14 Wandsworth students) attending

the classes every week with one student travelling from Reading to Wandsworth prison in a 2.5 hour trip to arrive every week by 8am. This meant leaving home more or less in the middle of the night at 4.30am and demonstrates extraordinary commitment and dedication to this Learning Together experience. There are many joys to report from the module, but one that remains is the site of all the students sitting for 2 hours in the prison classroom under invigilated exam conditions writing essays. There had been anxiety about the exam and a risk some might not turn up, but they did and the essays were excellent.

The week before one man was telling me how much he had loved the course – saying he'd 'bunked formal education' from 13 and now at 41 years 'I've learned how to learn'.

Nottingham Trent University & HMP Lowdham Grange, HMP Whatton, HMP Sudbury

Conveners: Dr Eric Baumgartner, Paul Bermingham, Dr Paul Hamilton, Dr Jane Moore, Dr Anne O'Grady, Kirsty Teague

Course: Learning Together

Summary: The partnerships between Nottingham Trent University and our HMP partners– Lowdham Grange and Whatton - are now strongly established. Our Learning Together programmes are now in repeat years of delivery. We have facilitated this programme for more than 40 HE students and 30 HMP students. We have coordinated multiple celebration events, bringing together partners and stakeholders from academia, the prison service, community organisations and media organisations to share the story of Learning Together thus far.

Further, as a team from NTU, we have disseminated our research outputs, through presentation at a range of conferences (for example, European Prison Education Association conference, Vienna; North South Irish Criminology Conference, Dublin). We have also drafted academic articles that are currently under peer review with academic journals. We have facilitated a range of focus groups and think tanks at

the respective institutions to inform the development of the Learning Together offer.

A particular highlight for us this academic year is the addition of our new partnership with HMP Sudbury. This partnership has provided for both growth and depth of our commitment to facilitating Learning Together opportunities – and the consequent benefits and value of such partnerships – both institutionally and individually. By being able to utilise Release on Temporary License (ROTL) opportunities, we have been able to host the Learning Together partnership at our university.

The story of this partnership will be shared as a chapter in our forthcoming co-edited (O'Grady and Hamilton) research monograph on prison education, scheduled for publication by Routledge towards the end of this academic year. This publication will bring together a range of academic research projects from colleagues interested in the role, value and purpose of prison education. We are currently talking to new HMP partners to bring on board next academic year and look forward to sharing these developments going forward.

'A particular highlight for us this academic year is the addition of our new partnership with HMP Sudbury.'

— Dr Anne O'Grady (Nottingham Trent University)

University of Roehampton & HMP Belmarsh

Conveners: Dr Alison Lamont

Course: Understanding Justice

Summary: This was the second year of our partnership with HMP Belmarsh delivering the accredited 'Understanding Justice' module for 10 third year Roehampton undergraduates and 10 HMP Belmarsh-based students. HMP Belmarsh has seen a big change in staffing over the last year so we have been in a process of re-learning some of the ropes with new staff – the benefit of which, of course, is the spread of people knowing about the LT initiative

grows ever wider.

We are proud to have supported a second cohort through the module and can again boast a 100% pass-rate for all those who have attempted the coursework; the work has been both internally moderated and moderated by our external examiner, and the standard of submissions is acknowledged as high.

Read our PUPIL blog here: <https://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/case-studies/building-a-partnership-in-belmarsh>



@HMPBelmarsh
@hmpbelmarsh

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2nd time so far we have worked with the excellent @RoehamptonUni in a partnership on a Learning Together programme, 'Understanding Justice.' Well worth a read #changinglives

Common Evaluation Framework

The Common Evaluation Framework (CEF) working group includes Dr Adam Calverley (Hull), Dr Anne O'Grady (Nottingham Trent), Claire Bonner (LTN) Dr Daniel McCarthy (Surrey), Dr Ingrid Obsuth (Edinburgh) Dr Maria Adams (Surrey), Dr Ruth Armstrong (Cambridge), Dr Simon Larmour (Cambridge) Dr Serena Wright (Royal Holloway) and Prof Shadd Maruna (Belfast).

The group met together on Friday 18th of January to reflect on experiences of evaluation across the LTN, methods used and the findings gleaned, as well as understanding differences and commonalities between approaches, questions and outcomes. We reviewed examples of evaluations provided by partnerships in the LTN and discussed our core evaluation principles and values. We have now sent around a google form to all partners in the LTN asking for information on evaluations.

We will collate this evidence in our meeting at the LT annual conference on 27 and 28th June, and then prepare for a short retreat on the 10th and 11th of July when we will produce a first draft of the CEF to accompany the practice toolkits currently under development. We aim to have the CEF ready by September 2019 in line with the HMPPS grant expectations.

Radio 4 - Law in Action

In March this year Joshua Rozenberg from Radio 4 - Law in Action broadcast a piece on Learning Together and interviewed Ruth Armstrong, Amy Ludlow, Jack Merritt and students on the Butler Law Course at HMP Warren Hill. Law in Action is a long-running legal magazine programme, featuring reports and discussion.

You can listen to the programme here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00035vj>



Website Developments

The website is a much anticipated milestone for the Network and we are keen to share it with you. We have been working with a great team at Frost Digital who are supporting us to bring the vision for a website that represents the whole Network to life.

As the Network develops the website will be the hub for all our events, news, resources and alumni information. In the meantime, a number of Network members have contributed to our blog this academic year. Do check it out if you haven't already done so!

<https://learningtogethercambridge.wordpress.com/>

The University of Cambridge runs 8 courses across three sites: HMP's Grendon, Warren Hill and Whitemoor. Jack Merritt coordinates learning activities across all three sites.

University of Cambridge & HMP Grendon

Conveners: Max Harris and Connor Rochford

Course: Law Justice and Society

Summary: Cambridge's longest running Learning Together partnership, with HMP Grendon, is now in its fifth year. This year we have extended our partnership to include the University of Oxford and have piloted a new course, Law Justice and Society, led by two academics from Oxford. The Law, Justice, and Society course at Grendon comprises twelve two-and-a-half-hour workshops that cover distinct but interrelated law topics. All sessions include a short interactive lecture (usually given by a guest lecturer), lasting 40 minutes with time for Q+A; a tea-and-coffee break; and a structured discussion or activity that builds off the lecture, and is generally carried out in small study groups of 5-6 students.

As part of the course students will select in pairs one area of policy or law that they believe is in need of reform. They will work together on this area, throughout the course, and will write up a 1500 word submission by the end of the course, drawing on ideas that they have learned. Students access legal resources using the digital learning platform developed in partnership with coracle and accessed through non-networked Chromebooks assigned to students for the duration of the course.

Learning Together directors Drs Amy Ludlow and Ruth Armstrong are also running reading and study skills groups to give students an opportunity to explore the literature around connections between education and criminal justice, and develop their study skills.



Just back from a fantastic penultimate session of the Law, Justice & Society course in HMP Grendon. A fascinating lecture was delivered by one of the course's facilitators Rishika about law, race and affirmative action in India. A pleasure to be in the session.

#LearningTogether

University of Cambridge & HMP Warren Hill

Convener: Jack Merritt

Course: The Butler Law Course

Summary: Our partnership between the University of Cambridge and HMP Warren Hill is now in its second year. The Butler Law Course brings together students who are currently resident at HMP Warren Hill and students who are currently studying at the University of Cambridge, to explore legal issues and ideas together.

Students undertake research into legal issues that are important to people within the criminal justice system but about which there is currently too little accessible, intelligible, clear or predictable information, and therefore fall short of the central ambitions of the rule of law. Together they develop their legal research skills and in small groups to devise original research, advice and summary toolkits that others can use to understand the current legal and policy position in a given legal field.

We have recently opened a legal study centre and library within Warren Hill as a space for students to conduct their research, which has the potential to act as a hub for the Warren Hill community and beyond. Last year, 18 students participated in the course and this year we have 24 students taking the course, supported by six previous students who are volunteer mentors. Students access resources for the course using the digital learning platform developed in partnership with Coracle and delivered through non-networked Chromebook assigned to students for the duration of the course.

In March this year Joshua Rozenberg from Radio 4 Law in Action did a piece on Learning Together and interviewed, Ruth Armstrong, Amy Ludlow, Jack Merritt and students on the Butler Law Course.

You can listen to it here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00035vj>

University of Cambridge & HMP Whitemoor



Learning Together

@JustisTogether

Bumper day in HMP Whitemoor today. Final planning/inspiration session for Kate Kelly's LT mural, Good Life and Good Society course in full swing and an evening Big Ideas seminar with Sarah Colvin on 'Stories of Social Justice'. Covered in paint and full of ideas and inspiration!

Conveners: Ruth Armstrong, Emma Gilby, Alice levins, Ailsa Keating, Amy Ludlow, Beth Phillips, Preti Taneja

Courses: The Good Life and the Good Society, French Literature and Film, Writing Together, Hands on Probability, Education and Criminal Justice Reading Group, Study Skills, Big Ideas Seminar Series

Summary: The Learning Together partnership between the University of Cambridge and HMP Whitemoor is now in its third year. This year we have been working with colleagues across the university and prison to deliver a diverse range of courses. The Good Life and Good Society has now been running for three years, with our Creative Writing course running for a second year. This year we have been piloted five new courses in Whitemoor. Students have taken part in a new course on French Literature and Film convened by Dr Emma Gilby and Hands on Probability with Dr Ailsa Keating, which gave students the opportunity to explore mathematical puzzles. Learning Together directors Drs Amy Ludlow and Ruth Armstrong have started reading and study skills courses, which give students the opportunity to

explore some of the broader literature around the links between education and criminal justice and improve their core academic skills. Finally, since September 2018 we have been running a 'Big Ideas' seminar series which invites one guest speaker each month for a seminar and discussion group centred around a 'Big Idea', which have ranged from debates on climate catastrophe to a history of the Ancient Romans.

We are continuing to develop our digital learning platform with Coracle, and the Good Life and Good Society course has been taught using our Learning Together app for a second year, with students again assigned a non-networked Chromebook for the duration of the course. We have been working hard toward developing a Learning Together study space in Whitemoor, which will include an area for teaching and course delivery, a space for creative arts and a library. Using money raised through the Learning Together run we have commissioned a mural for the new space from artist Kate Kelly which is now finished and ready to be unveiled to our community.



HMP Whitemoor near March, Cambridgeshire

Annual Conference 2019

Our conference planning team came together this year to confirm dates for our next upcoming Annual Learning Together Conference and start to plan the event. We are excited to announce the dates for our next conference are:

Day 1: Thursday 27th June

Day 2: Friday 28th June



SAVE THE DATE

Look out for more information coming soon to book your place at this year's annual conference. It will be held at HMP Brixton on Day 1 and London South Bank University Day 2.

Hope to see you there!

Running for LT!

Last October the Learning Together team, colleagues, family, friends and supporters, took part in the Great South Run in Portsmouth and in sister runs in HMP Grendon and HMP Whitemoor to raise money for Learning Together. We raised an amazing £4,000 and are already using this to support students in engaging with the Learning Together community.

Read more about our run here:

<https://learningtogethercambridge.wordpress.com/2018/10/26/raising-money-for-learning-together/>



This year we are doing it all again! We will be taking part in the Cambridge Town and Gown 10K Run on Sunday 20th October.

To sign up, see:

<https://www.townandgown10k.com/cambridge/> and join the 'Learning Together' team.

To donate visit:

<https://uk.gofundme.com/LearningTogetherCambridge>

University of Central Lancashire & HMP Kirkham

Conveners: Dr Laura Kelly-Corless, Michelle Clinch (Librarian at HMP Kirkham)

Course: Debating Differences

Summary: Debating Differences is a Learning Together scheme which allows participants from HMP Kirkham and UCLan to come together to debate a variety of contemporary issues in society. Over the course of this year topics such as marriage, prostitution, social media, euthanasia and capital punishment have been tackled successfully, and participants have consistently demonstrated significant improvements in debating skills, confidence, critical thinking and self-esteem throughout.

In previous years the scheme has run annually. However, after receiving feedback from the prison which indicated that the high turn-over of men there meant that a significant number were missing out on the opportunity to apply to take part, we decided to run it bi-annually this year. Thus, the scheme expanded, running across two University semesters

and reaching a broader cohort of prison-based and University-based participants. It is intended that it will run this way going forwards.

At the end of each debate, two members of staff (one from the prison and one from the University) make a joint judgement on the winning team based on a number of criteria. While in the past the staff members appointed for this role have been fairly static, this year we had a different member of University staff act as guest judge in each session, including the Head of School for Lancashire Law School. This change was extremely popular with the prison-based participants who appreciated engaging with University staff on a broader level, and was also effective in terms of further developing connections between the University and the prison.

You can read UCLAN's participant blog here: <https://uclanlaw.co.uk/2018/12/13/debating-differences-blog-session-3-is-social-media-a-force-for-good-in-modern-society/>



University of Central Lancashire students on the 'Debating Differences' course at HMP Kirkham

De Montfort University & HMP Bronzefield

Conveners: Dr Natalie Booth

Course: An Introduction to Sociology and Criminology

Summary: The course started at the end of February and was a five day programme at HMP Bronzefield which introduced students to core concepts and debates in sociology and criminology. The course saw 7 DMU criminology students and 8 HMP Bronzefield residents work together over the five days on a course called 'An introduction to Sociology

and Criminology'. Given the nature of the 'intense' five day course, the teaching activities were most akin to that of a seminar; whereby the facilitator would deliver some material before asking the students to engage in group tasks. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive; with residents saying they felt 'human' again for the first time since being in prison, whilst DMU students saying the course was 'life-changing' and 'eye-opening'.

'The feedback was overwhelmingly positive; with residents saying they felt 'human' again for the first time since being in prison'

— Dr Natalie Booth (De Montfort University)

Liverpool John Moores University & UserVoice, Merseyside CRC

Conveners: Lol Burke, Helena Gosling, Sarah MacLennan

Course: Learning Together: an introduction to Criminal Justice

Summary: Since the inception of Learning Together at LJMU, Lol and I have discussed the need to engage, in a more meaningful way, with participants lived experience of Higher Education.

This academic year we were lucky enough to secure a small pot of funding from our institution to design and deliver a series of creative writing workshops (that run alongside taught Learning Together sessions) that provide an opportunity for students to work through issues and experiences that are of importance to them.

The 'creative response' sessions (led by Sarah MacLennan) utilise creative pedagogical methods, such as clustering, free-writing, prompts and place, to produce poetry, short stories, flash fiction and creative non-fiction, that explore themes and issues (typically neglected in conventional taught sessions) that are relevant to participants and their experiences (both positive and negative) of Higher Education.

Outputs from the 'creative response' sessions will be included in a book (alongside photography and imagery) that is due to be published at the end of 2019. We are currently evaluating the impact of multi-disciplinary working on Learning Together student's experience of Higher Education in an attempt to develop our local policies and practices.

Lol and I also facilitated a 'Learning Together: beyond the prison gates' masterclass this semester to bring together colleagues from LJMU and the Learning Together network more broadly to discuss our progress to date and support colleagues from other institutions interested in establishing community-based Learning Together initiatives.

This week marks the end of our fourth Learning Together programme at LJMU. Over the past three years over 50 students have participated. Our final Learning Together session is integrated into a longstanding 'practitioners forum' event – held in association with NAPO – to discuss the wider impact of criminal justice. In the spirit of Learning Together, the event will bring together local probation practitioners, academics and service users to discuss issues such as disclosure, desistance and 'moving on'.



A picture taken by one of our Learning Together students on Learning Together: an introduction to Criminal Justice course.

'This is the front cover of my reflective diary. As I was placing the letters together I realised that all the pieces were different sizes, colours and all with different backgrounds (...) They were also from different places (...) This represents some of the ideation of Learning Together.'

— Student on the 'An introduction to Criminal Justice' course

10 Stories for 10 Miles

With your help, last year's sponsored run raised £4,000. Over the next 6 months we will share 10 stories about what your fundraising efforts have helped us to achieve.

Follow the link below to read Story One in our 10 Stories for 10 Miles series:

[https://
learningtogethertocambridge.wordpress.com/2019/03/25/10-stories-for-10-miles-story-one/](https://learningtogethertocambridge.wordpress.com/2019/03/25/10-stories-for-10-miles-story-one/)



Toolkits

Establishing, maintaining and developing effective Learning Together partnerships requires a great deal of resources that many within the Network have developed collaboratively.

At our annual LT Conference in 2018 we agreed we would develop this into Toolkits, drawing on the range of experiences and utilizing our expertise across the Network.

List of example toolkits include:

- Student recruitment
- Course design
- Security and boundaries

Many thanks to colleagues who are taking this forward including those who met at Nottingham Trent University in December 2018. We hope to share a draft with you on Day 2 of our Annual Conference in June 2019.

Legal Resources

Students on last year's Butler Law Course, a Learning Together partnership between the University of Cambridge and HMP Warren Hill, have been working to increase access to, and understanding of, the law in prisons. Over the course, students have worked together to devise, research, design, draft and publish legal information resources, covering topics relevant to people within the criminal justice system.

The resources the students produced are:

- An advice guide for Category A prisoners
- A guide to License conditions for those subject to indeterminate sentences
- A guide to tariff reviews for people serving HMP sentences (sentenced to life under 18)
- A guide to self-representation in parole proceedings
- A guide to self-representation in civil proceedings
- A guide to self-representation in criminal proceedings

We want these resources to be available to anyone who might find them useful. If you would like a copy of any of the guides, free of charge, please write to:

Jack Merritt
Learning Together
Institute of Criminology,
Sidgwick Avenue
Cambridge
CB3 9DA

A new set of guides will be released in late 2019, covering: mental health in prisons, capacity and the law, MAPPA, restorative justice and release on temporary license.

University of Winchester & HMP Winchester

Conveners: Joe Garrihy, Paula Green, Natacha Harding and Angie Wiseman

Course: Breaking Walls: Debating Criminology

Summary: Breaking Walls: Debating Criminology finally launched at HMP Winchester on 13th February with 14 students participating. The session has been facilitation by Natacha, Paula and Joe from the University of Winchester and Angie Wiseman from HMP Winchester. The course will be running until the end of March with a celebration event planned for 28th March. Exploring topics such as labelling, punishment, sentencing and politics, each session has been a hive of activity with the students all being enthusiastic and involved.

Comments from the students so far include 'I didn't feel like a prisoner today' and 'I forgot I was in prison'. The sharing of experiences and perspectives has made each of the sessions a joy to be a part of. For myself, it has reminded me what I love about teaching – getting a group of people together to discuss a shared subject and watching the learning emerge.

Plans are emerging for future runs of this programme and all involved are hopeful for a productive partnership moving forward.

'For myself, it has reminded me what I love about teaching – getting a group of people together to discuss a shared subject and watching the learning emerge.'

— Natacha Harding (University of Winchester)

University of Hull & HMP Hull

Conveners: Dr Adam Calverley, Dr Josephine Metcalf, Graham Sainty, Gary Sword, Anthea Walker

Course: Learning Together – Desistance from Crime

Summary: January-2018 witnessed the successful launch of the university-prison partnership between University of Hull and HMP Hull inaugural course: 'Learning Together- Desistance from Crime'. This accredited module saw university students in their final year and students based at the prison learn about a new and exciting field of criminology – devoted to understanding how and why those who have been involved in offending eventually stop. Students learnt about the processes and factors, theories and variations associated with desistance, and considered what lessons this might have for criminal justice system. All enrolled students passed – with one alumni, Paul Growcoat, now released from prison having since published his final essay online on IRIS desistance blog.

In June 2018 – Hull hosted the National Learning Together conference where student alumni, from programmes across the network supported by funds from Ferens Education Trust, were able to attend and discuss lessons for how Learning Together programmes may best support aims of desistance. The achievement of the course has been officially recognised by the University and in November 2018, Dr. Adam Calverley won the 'Excellence in Teaching Award' at the University of Hull's Employee Excellence Awards. The course is now its second year with plans in place for new American Studies module in American Prison Culture in 20th and 21st century at HMP Hull in future.

Student Paul Growcoat writes about his experience of being on the Desistance from Crime course here: <https://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/2019/02/11/an-essay-on-identity-work-and-desistance>



University of Hull students on the 'Desistance from Crime' course at HMP Hull

University of York & HMP Buckley Hall

Conveners: Lindsay Coomer, Debbie Poles and Dr Rachel Vipond

Course: Social Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice

Summary: This year we launched the first University of York learning together based module, Social Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, in conjunction with HMP Buckley Hall. The module brought together third year undergraduate students studying a range of degree programmes including, Social Policy and Criminology together to learn alongside prison students about key aspects of social policy and how governmental decisions affect all our lives.

The module included lively discussions and debates around discrimination in education policy, challenges to accessing healthcare, the changing nature of

employment and brexit. The module concluded with 5 excellent group presentations being delivered by the students in a bid to win £50,000,000 from the inaugural Secretary of State for Social Justice for a new policy focused on one area discussed across the course. Whilst all 5 presentations were excellent in terms of their innovation and delivery, team Education's policy and pitch won the, albeit fictitious, money! Student feedback on the module has been overwhelming positive with comments such as: 'It has been the happiest and most enjoyable time at uni. I relaxed, and learnt so much more!'; 'I benefitted from learning a lot, gaining confidence and becoming a lot more concise in my writing, I loved the social benefits.' The module is now recruiting for its next cohort of students as well as devising plans to expand.



Created by a student to represent the learning together module Social Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice

Royal Holloway University of London, University of Westminster & HMP YOI Feltham

Conveners: Morwenna Bernallick, Rosie Reynolds and Serena Wright

Course: Contemporary Criminological and Sociological Issues

Summary: This year was the first year in which we collaborated between three institutions; the Universities of Westminster and Royal Holloway alongside HMYOI Feltham. We also worked with Rosie Reynolds, an independent Study Skills specialist to embed skills development throughout the module. The course ran for 8 weeks, bringing in guest lecturers from across the academic institutions to offer a broad curriculum across a breadth of

criminological and sociological issues affecting contemporary society. Students from these diverse institutions valued the breadth of the course and the range of perspectives offered from lecturers and students.

We embedded a range of pedagogical tool throughout the module. In the words of Byron, a student from HMYOI Feltham: 'I specifically liked the practical side of the lectures, because we were always able to express our own points and feelings. The good thing about us as humans is that we all look at things differently, so I really appreciate the fact that I could share this experience and learn from the university students.'

'I really appreciate the fact that I could share this experience and learn from the university students.'

— Byron (Student from HMYOI Feltham)

'Talking Technologies'

Alumni Event

In September last year we held our very first Alumni event hosted in Cambridge. The theme for the event was 'Talking Technology' and the day gave attendees exciting and varied opportunities to explore the impact of technology from debating, to painting, drama and even meditation!

It was an excellent opportunity for everyone who is part of Learning Together to celebrate our community's growth and progress.



This year we will be celebrating 5 years of Learning Together and would like to invite alumni from across the Network. To be involved in our alumni event in November 2019, please express your interest by email to:

learningtogether@crim.cam.ac.uk or in writing to Claire Bonher, Network Administrator, Institute of Criminology, Cambridge, CB3 9DA.



De Montfort University & HMP Gartree

Tech Developments

In academic year 2017-18 we piloted the introduction of a digital learning platform (DLP) for students in our three Cambridge Learning Together partnership sites— HMPs Grendon, Warren Hill and Whitemoor. Non-networked Chromebooks were issued to prison based students and university student accessed the DLP online. The DLP supports and enhances the delivery and evaluation of the courses

In June this year, the Cambridge team will host a roundtable at HMP Whitemoor to forge towards further progress with the digital learning platform and the chromebooks. In 2019-2020 we hope to pilot chromebooks across new partnerships in the network. A special session on the chromebooks is planned for our annual conference.

Wellcome and BBC Children in Need funding opportunity

Applications are now open for the Curiosity Round Two scheme, a funding opportunity offered by Wellcome and BBC Children in Need.

Curiosity aims to use the power of exciting and engaging science activities to create change for children and young people experiencing disadvantage in the UK. The deadline for applications is Friday 12th April. More info and how to apply here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/FHBGfSZRhxbpcWGY8RJ0xh/curiosity-round-two>

Convener: Ross Little, Dr Jason Warr

Course: Learning Together

Summary: The third iteration of our Learning Together course, in partnership with HMP Gartree, has taken place over eight weekly sessions from the end of January through to March 2019. Twelve male prison students serving life sentences studied together with ten female students from our Criminology courses at De Montfort University. The course comprised different content to previously but similar high levels of engagement and participation from both university and prison students. Two of the DMU students were paid interns who helped organise sessions.

during this final session was celebratory, but with people expressing a need for the course to comprise more sessions.

Despite some of the prison students refusing to engage with standard prison education provision prior to the course, levels of attendance and engagement with readings and discussion were once again high. The relatively informal nature of the sessions and the involvement of people from outside the prison environment, providing a 'slice of normality' were amongst the reasons given. Voluntary engagement and the sense of equality between learners was established early in the first session.

'Through Learning Together, I have gained new perspectives which I would not have had through the form of a textbook or a journal article.'
— De Montfort University Student

One of the Gartree students, who had participated in the course last year, acted as a 'learning mentor' who helped support the smooth running of the group particularly with regards to recruitment, distribution of readings, promoting discussion, being a point of contact and gathering feedback.

The core content comprised readings and discussions focused on questioning the nature of (criminological) knowledge, the production of ignorance (agnotology), media representations of prison life, the nature of punishment and issues of race, ethnicity and racism in the criminal justice system. These sessions were sandwiched by an introductory session and a session exploring feedback from participants. The final session included the award of a certificate delivered by a member of the senior management team, who appreciates the value of the project. Participants also received a notebook from the university signed by all participants. The mood

Overall, participants from the prison and the university expressed considerable from the learning environment created over the duration of the course. For example:

"What I've learnt during this experience is tolerance for other people's opinions. The fact that I might not agree with what is said but I am able to understand and be respectful of the person's perspective...I've learnt to listen more and argue my point more concisely..."

"Through learning together, I have gained new perspectives which I would not have had through the form of a textbook or a journal article."

Aspirations for the future include having the opportunity to deliver the course again and be able to help facilitate links between prisoners and learning opportunities, for those who want them. Our experiences so far suggest there is a variety of unmet need in the estate.



Dr Jason Warr alongside De Montfort University students on the 'Learning Together' course at HMP Gartree

Job Opportunity with Community Led Initiatives

Community Led Initiatives (CLI) have been delivering SAMAS (Support, Advice, Mentoring and Advocacy Service) across Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire since April 2016. They are looking for a Volunteer Coordinator to join their expanding SAMAS Team. CLI are passionate about supporting people who are facing challenges in their lives. Helping them to remove barriers, improve health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation by building stronger more inclusive communities.

For more information, application guidance, role description and person specification please contact: beverley.copestake@communityled.org.uk.

Please find more information about the role below:

- Role: Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Location: Central Bedfordshire
- Salary: £21,000 - £25,000 (depending on experience). Fixed term until September 2020
- Deadline: Monday 13th of May
- Interview dates: Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23rd May.

Thank You

Our Network represents an enormous number of people whose efforts, day to day and week to week go above and beyond the job they are paid to do. We are fortunate as a Network to work with colleagues who are committed to providing transformative learning opportunities to all our students and we would like to thank everyone who makes this possible.

Thank you to:

- All our Network members and the colleagues that work with them to make Learning Together happen
- All our partner universities
- All our colleagues in criminal justice organisations
- Our fantastic students who embrace the opportunities we provide
- The alumni who stay connected to our Learning Together family across the country and increasingly, across the world
- Our funders who generously support our work

Prisoners Education @PrisonersEd · 14h

"Prison-university partnerships like @justisttogether's break down barriers and help people not only see their own potential but also see their own privilege. That has the power not just to change individuals but to change worlds."

[@drjamiebennett](https://twitter.com/drjamiebennett) prisonerseducation.org.uk/pupil

Dr Jamie Bennett, the first Prison Governor to introduce Learning Together in his prison, and a Research Associate at the University of Oxford, during his talk on the power of prison education in March this year.



Funding Support

We are grateful for the funders who generously support our work.

With special mention to The Bromley Trust, The Schroder Foundation, Cairns Trust, HMPPS, British Academy and The Rank Foundation helping us provide higher education opportunities for people within and without criminal justice organisations to study together, and learn with and from each other through dialogue and the sharing of experience and evaluation.



Rank Foundation Memorial Award 2019

The Rank Foundation Memorial Award 2019 is now open. This opportunity is open to all members of RankNet. To find out more about the Memorial Award and how to apply please head to: <https://rankfoundation.com/rank-memorial-award-2019/>

Key dates:

- Learning Together Annual Conference: 27th June to 28th June 2019
- Cambridge Town and Gown 10K: Sunday 20th October

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@JustisTogether