

A CRITICAL REVIEW: INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

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Abstract

Now having completed a 'Rolls Royce' training programme (Schofield, 1999) the time has come to critically review the product of this new probation training. Have I become the 'paragon' of reflective practice that probation trainers dream of? Or rather the Frankenstein creation of a trainee production line, a Home Office automaton, as the most cynical of service colleagues would dare to suggest? The new probation training has been described by some as, 'too good, too thorough, too complex and too expensive' (ibid), but its innovation has been its approach to the integration of learning and working. The training combines a degree with a Level 4 National Vocational Qualification and has sought to encapsulate the skills, knowledge and values of probation officers, as defined by both employers and employees, over a two-year period of work-based learning. The following review of my experiences as a student, trainee and employee over the last two years will attempt to provide an account of my professional development located within the framework of the training programme. Furthermore, this review will explore my experience of a programme that has sought to combine the development of criticality, reflection and analysis with a competency-based approach. This dual aim in many ways replicates dilemmas inherent in current probation practice where practitioners are similarly faced with the constant balancing of conflicting priorities.

Article

It has been useful to locate the process of my development as three themes: competency in the core tasks of practice; a mapping of personal and organisational values; and development of new knowledge and its application to future practice. This preferred structure traces my development over the 24 months of training, signposted by progress through the NVQ (the main vehicle for learning) completed in September 2001.

An immediate priority on commencing training was to gain understanding of the roles and tasks of a probation officer. Prior to probation training, I had little experience of probation work. My previous work experience had been in the areas of victim-offender mediation; my formal learning included a degree in law. Whilst I could claim a broad knowledge of the criminal justice system and some limited practice experience of case working, probation practice was still vague and ambiguous to me. In this respect the initial phase of training, *Foundation Practice*, identified key competencies and learning outcomes,

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setting out a structure for the translation of relevant past experience and the attainment of new knowledge and skills for application to current practice.

However, an overview of my practice would indicate that the situation described has changed significantly following my wide and varied experiences during the training. This is exhibited in the NVQ units completed, which demonstrate my development in the three key themes identified above. When reflecting on the process as a whole, it is evident that my approach to earlier units placed a much greater emphasis on the development of core competencies than later units, which concentrate more on the future development of practice. Far greater significance was placed on reflection and the tension between personal and organisational values as the learning process developed.

NVQ units CO2, DO7, EO1, and EO4² were the first submitted for formal accreditation and indicate that work undertaken was mostly concerned with gaining knowledge of practice methods and the assimilation of general skills, as opposed to the development of criticality and reflection. In retrospect these units and the work experiences to which they refer clearly indicate how my learning at the time focused on developing an understanding of the legal, policy and organisational framework of probation practice and establishing the extent to which existing skills would apply to the work.

For example, Unit CO2³, based mainly on three cases, referred to utilising skills used from previous experience in mediation. This was clearly a dominant point of reference at the time. The opportunity to contrast the different approaches (e.g. concepts of restorative justice, issues of confidentiality, risk, interviewing skills and anti-discriminatory practice) allowed me to recognise the differing priorities of my respective roles. It was encouraging to identify the apparent comfort I felt in this new environment, in spite of my lack of technical knowledge at the time. This provided early reassurance that my personal values supported a belief in the capacity for change in people.

However, this may also be indicative of an initial naivety. My preceding role as a mediator had created internal tensions in reconciling my own beliefs in the empowerment of offenders with the ethical underpinnings of victim-offender mediation, its emphasis being the empowerment of victims. The comfort I have described demonstrates my limited awareness at the time of the tensions inherent within probation practice and its lack of a clear value base in balancing a social control function with empowering practices. The values and beliefs held at the outset of training and that continue to inform my probation practice involve recognising that the individuals with whom I work have rights as well as responsibilities. This includes recognition that an individual has made choices, considering the individual as a 'whole person' and not just the offence he or she has committed. This approach has facilitated the acceptance of uniqueness and diversity and the building on individual strengths.

I am more aware now of the implications of my role as mediator between the state and the individual and have set out to surpass the requirement to 'correct' offending behaviour. I have worked towards applying a framework that sensitively encompasses both care and

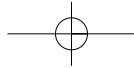
control, treating clients with dignity and respect. It is a personal belief that to engage effectively with service users it is necessary to move beyond the offence label and make some contact with the person. This has involved considerable learning, both from myself and from others, in recognising the need to acknowledge the professional and personal power I hold in interactions.

I have therefore spent much time developing the skills that help me to engage offenders in positive relationships, giving offenders as much power as possible without transgressing professional boundaries or organisational expectations. This translates in practice into a sharing of responsibility for problem-solving and positive change. I have learnt that I can give power away by identifying the offender as the expert in his or her own situation.

My initial preoccupation with standards and protocols may also indicate a natural response to service culture. Pressures upon the National Probation Service to demonstrate its 'effectiveness' and attention to public safety has arguably led to a focus demanding observance of accountability, resource management and a managerialist ethos (Raynor, Smith and Vanstone, 1994). Discursive analysis could place this development as being referential to many different discourses at different levels of debate, which draw on different epistemological foundations: academic discourse, from Martinson's (1974) micro analysis that 'nothing works' to Giddens' (1997) macro analysis of 'late modernity' and the 'risk society'; political discourse, from new right to New Labour which has promoted ideologically driven change throughout the public sector and the criminal justice system; social and cultural discourse, which promotes dominating views on offenders, offending and the way society should respond to them and so on. Home Office guidance suggests that services' failure to recognise the need for 'effectiveness' will result in an 'inability to justify their public funding and ultimately their existence' (Chapman and Hough, 1998: 6).

It may be significant that many point to developments in probation training as evidence of this shift to managerialism (Pollit, 1990; Garland, 2001; Gorman, 2001). Thus the competency driven NVQ, for example, can be placed in the context of more fundamental changes in practice which places an emphasis on the completion of routine tasks measured against uniform (non-qualitative) measures, at the expense of autonomous, qualitative practice drawing from a wide knowledge base. The government has sought to erase resulting tensions by severely reducing the range of ideas and theories that may be operationalised, interventions now being directed by research and professional practices prescribed by the Home Office (Goldson, 1999).

This form of limitation and standardisation suggests a disregard for diversity, which continues to create discomfort with my role and personal values. Gorman (2001) offers a further criticism of this standardisation, which seems to confirm an approach that treats offenders not as individuals, but rather as a homogenous group with identical needs. He questions the seemingly exclusive use of cognitive-behavioural methods to address an infinite range of types of offending and offender. The early challenge therefore, was to find



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ways of working that could accommodate organisational expectations and alongside my sense of personal integrity.

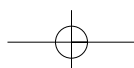
However, before training I had achieved a degree in law and would have claimed both a reasonable knowledge of theories to inform practice and a predisposition to applying theory in my work. I would also have identified that critical, analytical and reflective skills were areas of strength. Additionally, work from a previous academic module identified an individual weakness with regard to 'pragmatist/activist' learning styles and strong preferences for 'reflective/theoretical' learning (Honey and Mumford 1986). It is therefore surprising that NVQ units might suggest that I had regressed in these areas of work, even despite the organisational expectations.

A search for an alternative explanation for this might be found in a more positivist interpretation. When viewing the learning process as a whole, practice at this stage might be viewed as the first 'formative' stage of a continuing learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). This first stage involves the 'testing of implications in new situations' and the acquirement of 'concrete experiences,' with less emphasis on the other two stages of the learning cycle; 'reflective observation' and the 'use of abstract concepts and generalisations'.

Furthermore, Honey and Mumford (1986) identify that learning is best achieved if preferences are balanced and they provide strategies for their improvement. With regard to the 'pragmatic/activist' styles, this includes 'collecting techniques and practical ways of doing things' and the need to 'make opportunities to experiment with some of these new found techniques.' This suggests that these needs were, in fact, learning priorities and it could be said that the structure of this learning experience has encouraged the development of a more balanced learning style.

Work experiences evidenced in units CO3, CO5, D13 and DO4⁴ covered a range of reports, supervised cases⁵ and groupwork. However, whereas the first units could be categorised as being task centred, I would identify that work at this time placed greater emphasis on reflective, theoretical and critical knowledge and its application in practice. With reference to work around risk assessment, for example, I was able to identify a range of different knowledge bases that informed practice and analyse my own practice against a range of different contexts shaping it.

The nature of these cases necessitated my first thorough examination of risk. Reflection at this time drew from the work of Kemshall (1996) who suggests 'risk assessment and effective risk management are likely to become one of the main pre-occupations of the probation service' and the 'cornerstone of good practice'. Unit D13 in particular, concentrated on this element of probation practice. It drew from a wide range of casework to evidence an apparent ethical shift in probation practice from the promotion of 'a welfare ethic, concerned with the humanitarian rehabilitation of offenders' to the position of contemporary probation practice in which public protection is of paramount importance. However it may be argued, that even an understanding of the origins of



particular narratives around 'risk' influencing probation practice, and the range of different narratives that may lead to a different approach, is of limited importance.

Work produced at this stage of training clearly progressed in terms of applying knowledge to practice both reflectively and critically. For example, NVQ reflections identified how the development of actuarial assessment tools indicate a shift away from clinical assessment. This again mirrors tensions between organisational priorities (which promote the former knowledge base) and 'professional values' (which might suggest the need for a wider knowledge base reflecting the complexity of working with risk).

An example of how I responded to this was a search to balance actuarial and clinical assessments in a way that acknowledged the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches, including issues of anti-discriminatory practice. The limitations of actuarial methods in predicting risk⁶ are well documented (Kemshall, 1998; Moore, 1996), while clinical assessments are subject to individual values, prejudice and professional discretion. My own practice has faced just such tensions for varied reasons but most particularly where an individual's cultural difference has been a factor.

Observations by Singh Bhui (1999) have drawn my attention to how the influence of stereotypes and entrenched racism contribute to the misinterpretation of culturally appropriate behaviour. An area of learning in my own practice has been risk assessment for black⁷ and ethnic minority groups where tensions have arisen in the application of measures for one set of cultural norms to another. Implications for my own practice have indicated a continuing need to address deficits in awareness and training, as imbalanced and inappropriate assessment have the worrying consequences of potentially over or under-estimating the risk of harm. The emphasis on individual accountability for risk assessments has perhaps encouraged this tendency to err on the side of caution (Kemshall, 1998). As Singh Bhui (1999: 176) argues, 'nothing predicts the *interpretation* of future behaviour like the *interpretation* of past behaviour'. For black offenders who are already more likely to experience discrimination an approach that discourages complacency about the reliability of such measures is vital.

Furthermore, as Milner and O'Byrne (1998) identify, current assessment practices often result in a risk focus as opposed to a needs focus, while current prescriptive and stylised formats risk failing 'to meet the complexities, uncertainties and ambiguities of current practice'⁸. Tuddenham (2000) also argues that the organisational context has become largely defensive rather than constructive in terms of harm minimisation. Distinguishing types of risk is not always made explicit and I have subsequently experienced confusion as to how risk of harm is assessed, though it would appear that there are very clear organisational statements about what exactly assessment should consist of⁹. This has often created anxieties for me when I have felt assessment has failed a client in overriding their needs with a risk preoccupation. Ultimately this narrow focus has the dehumanising effect of disregarding an individual's identity.

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However, Tuddenham (2000) advocates the concept of 'reflexivity', which acknowledges the effect the assessor has upon assessment. I have personally approached assessment as a dynamic, self-questioning process that explicitly accepts that 'knowledge' is subject to perpetual revision, seeking to engage in the context of assessment, its limits and constraints. This approach is careful not to treat knowledge as immutable, and is realistic about its ability to minimise uncertainty, which increases as time passes. Tuddenham (2000) proposes that service practices must be ethically defensible and intellectually coherent and 'resist insidious and obvious pressures' to formulate practice shaped by political imperatives, explicitly asserting the primacy of professional judgement. This perspective has been helpful in shaping my responses to the tensions mentioned and has resulted in a more creative approach to planning interventions.

I would argue that by this stage of the training I had developed a more integrated approach to practice that could be said to have been the overall aim of development. I was reasonably confident of my competence in terms of knowing the routine tasks of probation work and the legal and policy framework to which they were referential. I can also recognise that by this stage of practice I was applying knowledge gained from academic learning directly to practice, demonstrating a synthesis between practice experience and academic/theoretically based learning.

Units DO2, AO1 and D14 refer to an eclectic range of work experiences during the final phase of practice. This included case management and project work with a local Community Safety Partnership. Again I can identify general themes and common elements from each of these areas of work indicative of my general learning development at this time. To crudely categorise the stages of learning, the first phase had been the primary tasks and the legal and policy framework in which they operated, drawing mostly on concrete experience and applying knowledge to new tasks. The second stage related to why I practised in the way I did, attempting to develop reflective thinking into practice, drawing on theoretical knowledge and its application. The third stage involved looking beyond the training period to where practice was ultimately directed. I began to consider the learning process as whole, identifying much more explicitly how my own values and those of the organisation affected my work, and beginning to identify possible future developments in my practice.

My preferred learning style generated a personal interest in post-modern theory. This led me to question the apparent hegemonic position of cognitive behaviourism in probation practice and to consider associated criticisms. Firstly, it is argued that evidence indicating this approach 'works' is 'manufactured' to suit dominating social, political and cultural narratives¹⁰. Secondly, it has been suggested that this approach is too mechanical and problem focused and thirdly, that it ignores the external influences that help determine individual experience. While current practices strive to improve and make good deficits in thinking and behaviour, seeking to instil a new capacity for self-regulation, Pitts (2000: 10) argues that such practices' unequivocal incorporation into policy is more motivated by their suitable matching with ideological imperatives rather than a demonstrable efficacy.

The general adoption of dominant assessment models in current practice might assume the application of interventions that draw on cognitive behavioural methods. Furthermore, Home Office guidance places cognitive-behavioural approaches foremost in the category of 'what works' with offenders, (Chapman and Hough, 1998; Goldblatt and Lewis, 1998). Official government publications have concentrated on the results of meta-analyses, which distinguish 'effective and ineffective approaches to working with adjudicated offenders', (McGuire, 1995)¹¹. The influence of such an approach is evident in the variety of intervention programmes with a cognitive-behavioural underpinning currently being implemented nationwide.

My personal outlook has led me to feel that such an intervention ignores the wider social context of crime and offending. Alternatively, solution-focused and narrative therapies (de Shazer, 1994; Monk et al, 1997), allow for an intervention that seeks to understand the wider social context in terms of personal and social constructions. This aims to draw on the positive strengths of an individual, enabling them to achieve a greater level of reflexivity. Narrative therapy in particular is open-ended and discovery-oriented in that it enables individuals to view a different story about themselves (Todd and Bohart, 1999: 528). De Shazer (1994) suggests it is a process by which the 'therapist' moves from 'problem dominated talk' to 'solution dominated talk'. Narrative therapists argue that by presenting the individual's thoughts and perspectives as stories one can facilitate an individual in 're-authoring' this story.

I was struck by an approach that seeks to understand how the relation a person has to a set of resources for making sense of their situation can position people 'in' problems. It is an approach defined by a belief system rather than by techniques. Mainstream modern practices, cognitive-behaviourism being but one, can be criticised for inducing individuals to scrutinize themselves indeterminably until they find or fabricate certain problems or tendencies (Fox and Prilleltensky, 1997). Foucault (1980) describes that these 'dubious sciences' aim at truth but instead deceptively classify and manage people in line with the current regime. An alternative advocated by postmodernists is resistance to such totalising discourses and instead, they infer from the lack of any fixed or universal human nature a practical programme of creating and recreating the 'self' as a 'work of art' (Burr, 1995; Schrag, 1997). The approach seeks to unmask damaging modern pretensions to exaggerate autonomy, certainty and control (Fox and Prilleltensky, 1997).

My learning around such approaches provoked such questions as who determines what is right and what is wrong? What effect does it have for someone to be told to submit to the expertise of another? By what means does one person have the right to have their knowledge taken more seriously than someone else's? And furthermore 'does language act in concert with scientific method so as to bring us closer into contact with the genuine facts of nature? Or, does language act in more constructive ways, and create and sustain some problems by itself?' (Botella, 2000).

A further influence on my approach has been the view that welfare professionals tend to impose a model of mental health on the client that reflects an implicit white male view of

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what constitutes healthy functioning, reflecting Western cultural values and emphasising an individualistic perspective (Todd and Bohart, 1999: 514). In seeking to develop my professionalism, a fundamental aspect has been developing awareness of cultural difference in working with such a diverse client group. In response to diversity, my practice has sought to incorporate the idea that there is no one universal 'truth'. In view of this I have learned that individuals must be understood in their own terms, rather than compared to a dominant group's 'objective' standards.

For instance, inherent within the context of my role in working with MA, amongst other clients, was my position of power. MA, a twenty-four year old Asian male, made subject to a two-year Probation Order in January 2001 for the offence of assault, a domestic violence incident involving his partner in the presence of his two young children. The transcultural setting complicated this position because of the discrepancy that exists between cultures. As an individual from a majority culture I held both professional and cultural power (D'Ardenne and Mahtani, 1999). The influence of this dynamic needed to be acknowledged throughout my intervention with MA and such factors as my own cultural status, gender, age, social and economic status and how my professional role is perceived by MA's culture were some of the considerations in this case.

I have also recognised that working with a western model of intervention carries with it dangers of judging another culture only from one's own standpoint. I felt it important to listen to the client's cultural norms and try to work with the dilemmas faced. I have also found that simple things such as ensuring familiarity with the naming culture of clients, learning spelling and pronunciation, being aware of greetings and boundaries have been important in establishing roles at the outset. In recognition of the importance of the client's cultural context I have also sought to view the working relationship as including family and community, and to identify resources within the individual's context including social networks, family relationships and religious resources.

Reflective logs and studies completed for academic modules describe the tensions in pursuing alternative interventions within the organisational context of probation work.

The pursuit of efficiency and economy arising out of 'managerialism' may be seen as an increasing concern for resource management (Vanstone, 1996). These priorities have major implications for the assessment and intervention features of the probation service, providing a framework centred on risk, resource, consistency and generalisation rather than need, equality and uniqueness (Milner and O'Byrne, 1998)¹².

Though social-constructivist methods have been subject to evaluation research (White, 1998 cited in Kazi, 2000), their focus on the needs of stakeholders and their perceptions fail to capture the 'effectiveness' required to fit the current demands of the contemporary 'effectiveness' agenda.

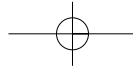
However, my choice of intervention was based on the belief in 'client friendliness'. I would take the view that certain approaches to intervention allow the client's own story to develop, while others tend to impose the values of the worker or organisation. This could be said of some cognitive-behavioural approaches that are didactic in style, concentrating on the development of skills passed down from 'expert' to 'learner'. Although, in some ways fundamentally different, narrative therapy and cognitive-behavioural methods share some distinct similarities and this makes it easier to move between the two in practice.

The implications of employing alternative methods are that I am left with a sense of unease about working for this organisation. The service could be seen as one of the mechanisms through which individuals are categorised by the powerful, as part of a process of knowledge production that shapes and defines the way individuals are perceived and subsequently treated. As illustrated, I am also uncomfortable with the way the probation service currently promotes cognitive behavioural approaches as the (only) way to work with offenders.

However, I also note that there are some aspects of current practice developments that do fit my own way of thinking. For example, it may be argued that the service has moved increasingly towards an approach drawing on individual and psychological explanations for offending and human behaviour, rather than sociological and structural perspectives. To an extent, this is compatible with a post-modern perspective. Whilst cognitive-behaviourism may encompass particular problematic features, there is some common ground. In broad terms both would acknowledge the different ways individuals will see, hear, understand and interact with everyday life, emphasising the importance of cognitive-reflexive processes.

Having now experimented with narrative and solution-focused therapies I have had a taste of something quite different and creative. Having now adopted these new techniques in a number of different cases, it would appear that they are most effective in particular 'higher risk' cases where life stories are entrenched. I have found it particularly useful in two cases that have involved difficult family relationships and child protection issues. However, I am also aware that in the current organisational climate championing the cause of other interventions will be difficult. The main potential for deviation from service expectations comes with a recognition that such an approach may not necessarily be offence-focused. The key to the legitimising of this type of intervention is then the need to demonstrate an evidenced reduction in the risk of re-offending and serious harm.

One area of interest is to develop a comprehensive evaluative framework that would meet the challenge of service scrutiny. Though I have applied a range of evaluation methods¹³ to practice significant difficulties have arisen from attempting to draw meaningful conclusions from projects of such scale and little can be established to indicate the effectiveness of these interventions as a generative mechanism of change. Any advocate of this approach will have to be well grounded in techniques and arguments supporting their



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application. My view is that, while modernist approaches should not be rejected outright, there is room for the development of alternatives.

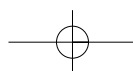
This interest in the integration of evaluation methods with practice has been in part driven by a belief in clients' rights to empirically supported interventions (Thyer, 1996) and has been extended to community work for AO1 (an evaluation of community reporting centres for incidents of racial harassment operational in the Bradford district¹⁴). Practitioner evaluation may provide a way of critically responding to the demands made by legislation and a general movement towards greater accountability to communities and service users (Fuller, 1998) or as Everitt et al. (1992) state, be a means of reclaiming professionalism, asserting value and values of the profession over and against the limiting features of the current bureaucratic and ideological setting.

By way of conclusion, I have sought to categorise my learning and development over the training programme into three distinct periods. Set against a learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) these stages could be said to have followed a process of moving from an emphasis on concrete experience, to the introduction of more reflective practice and the eventual integration of theory, reflection and practice knowledge to the point where the learning has now reached full circle. I am now at a stage of identifying new ways to develop practice.

In spite of this, suggesting that my learning exactly followed such a clear path of continual development could be accused of being a crude over simplification of a complicated process. For example, I would identify that from an early stage of practice many pieces of my work reflected the application of reflective, critical and theoretical knowledge, drawn from a range of previous experiences. This was particularly the case, I would argue, with regard to issues of values and anti-discriminatory practice, although this is perhaps more clearly identifiable in early academic work on this course.

Another view of the learning process that I have very clearly identified in later work has been the development of practice and the influence of opposing (ideological) forces. From this perspective, practice was about identifying ways to overcome difference. This is illustrated by the reconciling of my own values with the values espoused by the service, and by balancing the competency approach of the NVQ against the critical, analytic and reflective approach of academia.

However, this in many ways is a further restrictive representation. For me, recognition of uncertainty and difference is the key to a successful practitioner. Though I might claim to have learnt the necessary tasks to merit the step to probation officer, this is perhaps the only definite thing I can say. My experience of the programme has been a stark realisation that gaining knowledge means knowing less. My abilities as a reflective practitioner remain to be proven and could only be demonstrated by a continuous awareness of the dynamic and transitional nature of knowledge and skills, the need for development, and acknowledgement that there are perspectives other than my own.



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- ² Information gathering, case working, partnerships and court work respectively.
- ³ Process information relating to individuals' offending behaviour.
- ⁴ Preparation of pre-sentence reports, case management, risk assessment and management and group work, respectively.
- ⁵ Four cases involving issues of domestic violence, child protection and public protection prominently featured.
- ⁶ Illustrated by predictive tools which assess risk based on the 'seriousness' of past offences, would ignore the fact that many offenders who commit serious crime could validly be assessed as at low risk to the public, or that records of convictions are only partial indicators of previous behaviour. Research underpinning such tools is drawn from predominantly young North American males. Such documents as the Home Office evidence based practice guide acknowledge such difficulties but do not appear to believe they warrant amending current practice. One could also identify that such a system might also promote institutional racism - based on evidence that individuals from certain ethnic minorities are more likely to be charged with more serious offences and more likely to be convicted by the court.
- ⁷ The term 'black' is used in a political sense to denote people of African, Asian and Afro-Caribbean origin.
- ⁸ Home Office expectations of the assessment process are summarised by Chapman and Hough, (1998: 15): 'Assessment is a continuous and dynamic process which involves gathering and analysing information in order to ascertain the level and type of risk posed by, and the criminogenic needs of, an individual offender [...] The prevention of harm to the public should always take precedence over the needs of the individual in any planned intervention.' This clearly places assessment within the context of Gorman's (2001: 3) analysis.
- ⁹ That (identified) risk to the public should be a priority, followed by assessment of re-offending risk and (arguably, to a lesser extent) criminogenic need. Kemshall (1996) identifies tensions between narratives around effective risk assessment which acknowledge 'the complex nature of risk and the variability of public perceptions of it' (the questioning model) and those narratives which have influenced the development of static predictive techniques, 'of questionable validity' based on offence categorisation (the procedural model). As Everitt et al (1992: 6) suggest, the significance of the Exchange approach to assessment for service users should not be underestimated. Assessment should not be viewed as a 'diagnosis' but rather as a 'building of a more helpful set of meanings' encouraging practitioners to be 'concerned with developing knowledge in ways which will enable service users [...] to become knowers.' (Everitt, Hardicker, Littlewood and Mullender, 1992).
- ¹⁰ Garland (1995: 38) outlines; 'Rehabilitation was never killed off because the professional groups that supported it were never purged from the system [...] this policy reversal came about in response to conclusive evidence that rehabilitation doesn't work. But the 'evidence' was not the decisive factor [...] in the decline of rehabilitation. The negative findings presented by Martinson and Brody and others could have been subjected to methodological critique and to more positive re-interpretation, as they subsequently were. They could have been read as meaning that greater effort would have been put in to the development of rehabilitative measures, and that greater resources would have to be devoted to this end. Instead, the research findings legitimated a return to more traditional ideologies of punishment. These policy developments occurred not because of evidence, and of evidence alone, but because interest groups and professional associations were able to persuade politicians and policy-makers that their proposed approach was preferable to existing arrangements and fitted better with the political, economic and cultural agendas of the day'.
- ¹¹ These suggest interventions based on the following are effective: theoretical frameworks; risk assessment and allocation; criminogenic need; responsivity; community base; structured and directive approach; cognitive-behavioural methods; programme integrity. Mair (1997b) indicates there are a number of problems with the validity of this evidence regarding the subjectivity and methodology of meta-analysis. The use of conviction rates and most studies being outcome based has also been the subject of challenge (ibid). The majority of research has been in North America, concentrating on male, predominantly western young offenders, leading to criticism that the research is 'gender biased' and fails to account for ethnicity and regional variation. There is further difficulty in establishing comparative rates of effectiveness between custodial and non-custodial disposals (HMSO, 1978: 87).
- ¹² Extract from 'Developing Effective Practice' assignment, completed July 2001.
- ¹³ Including empirical, interpretivist and scientific realist approaches (Kazi, 2000).
- ¹⁴ A key priority identified in Bradford Council's Action Plan 1999-2001, as part of its crime reduction strategy to tackling racial crime and racial harassment' under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.

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