



ACADEMY for
JUSTICE COMMISSIONING

Business Plan

2014 / 15

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Academy Objectives
3. Structure of the Academy
4. 2014/15 Objectives
5. Summary
6. Appendix 1 – Membership statistics

Business Plan

1. Introduction

The Academy for Justice Commissioning was formed in September 2007 and seeks to identify and promote excellence in justice commissioning. By setting standards and raising commissioner capability the Academy aims to support the transformation of justice services to deliver best value and enable improved effectiveness and increased public confidence in the justice system and wider public services.

The Academy continues to grow from strength to strength and our successes in the last year include:-

- **Growing our membership by a further 14%** from April 2013 to March 2014, increasing members from 1,578 to 1,810. Membership encompasses all sectors with 45% coming from the Ministry of Justice and its agencies (National Offender Management Service, Probation, Her Majesty's Prison Service, Youth Justice Board, Legal Aid Agency and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service), and the remainder derived from other public sector agencies, private providers, academics and voluntary, charity and social enterprise organisations. Our broad membership base encourages networking and sharing of best practice. See Appendix 1 for further details.
- The Academy has just developed a **new Introduction to Commissioning online learning tool** which replaces the A to Z of commissioning learning tool. The new course will be launched shortly and offers an introduction to commissioning public services at both national and local level.
- The Academy set up a further **learning group** during the last year **to explore the topic of Integrated Offender Management (IOM)** and led by Sally Lewis, Chief Probation Officer at Avon and Somerset Probation Trust. This topic proved so popular that an additional group was set up and was led by Chief Inspector Andy Williams, Head of Major Crimes at Avon and Somerset Constabulary. Academy learning groups are self directed, supported groups led by an expert facilitator, bringing members from all sectors together to explore a particular area of commissioning and learn and share from each other. A seminar was held in March 2014 to share the learnings from these two IOM groups and to highlight the key points for IOM moving forward.
- **Academy monthly evening seminars** continue to be at the forefront of our services, featuring expert speakers and focussing on topical commissioning themes. **Filmed highlights of seminars** have been introduced in the last year to offer members unable to attend a flavour of seminar content. Speakers in the last year have included: MP Nick Herbert; Alan Cave - Delivery Director, Department of Work and Pensions; Duncan Selbie - CEO Public Health England; Paul Kett - Director of Justice Reform at the Ministry of Justice and two Police and Crime Commissioners who reflected on their first year in office.
- We have successfully **established Academy regional services in Manchester** and evening seminars are now held on a bi-monthly basis at Manchester Metropolitan University. Topics covered to date include: personalisation in criminal justice; alliance contracting; integrated services for public reform and commissioning offender health.
- The **Academy website** offers members a multitude of useful information and publications on commissioning, signposting to learning and development training providers, filmed highlights of seminar talks and all the latest news and events from the Academy.
- Featuring **high profile guest editors in our Quarterly News Bulletins**, which offer the latest news and views on commissioning. Guest editors in the past year have included organisations such as West Mercia Probation Trust, NOMS Offender Health, Avon & Somerset Constabulary and the Cabinet Office.
- **Building strong alliances with other government departments** to promote the sharing of commissioning knowledge and best practice.

The 2014 / 15 business plan laid out in this document represents the direction of travel and key priorities of the Academy in the coming year.

2. The Academy's overall objectives are:

- **Strengthen the reputation of social justice commissioning** by driving up standards and increasing value for money
- **Identify and share good practice** in public service commissioning
- **Enable professional development** amongst justice commissioners and commissioners in the wider public sector through providing learning and development opportunities
- Seek to **provide a challenging learning environment** by actively encouraging networking and debate between public sector commissioners and providers from all sectors
- **Provide easy access to best practice** through effective commissioning knowledge management
- Sponsor and **stimulate relevant research**
- **Promote the accreditation of learning provision** in public services commissioning and related subjects, and the attainment of standards marks by learning providers.
- **Strengthening links** with other commissioning stakeholders through active networking, collaboration and partnership working.
- Link to the [Academy Charter](#)

Moving forward the Academy has a number of aspirations, including:-

- To be a key influencer and supporter of the development of justice commissioners capabilities and facilitate practical training to enable this
- To influence understanding of the value of commissioning across the whole of the public sector
- To be widely recognised as the central repository for all public sector commissioning information
- To expand the Academy's reach in order to offer further regional support to public sector commissioners and all sector providers nationally.

Structure of the Academy

The Academy has just undergone a restructure and is now led by the Academy Strategy Group, consisting of experts who all have a passion for developing the capabilities of justice commissioners.

The Chair is drawn from the MoJ and its agencies in recognition of its sponsors, with two Vice Chairs in support.

There are several functional groups within the Academy structure who are each led by a Strategy Group member who is accountable to the Academy Strategy Group.

The Academy draws largely on the donated time of experts to provide its services wherever possible, with the exception of the Business Manager who is currently the sole employee. Running costs are therefore minimal at just £70k which includes staffing and provision of all services, demonstrating excellent value for money whilst proactively supporting the development of justice commissioners.

Academy Membership

Membership of the Academy is free and is open to all who have an interest in developing their commissioning skills or in enhancing their commissioning knowledge as potential providers of public services. This approach encourages sharing of best practice and learning.

3. Academy Functions and 2014/15 Objectives

Overview

In the coming year the Academy will focus on consolidating its core services and seek to widen its reach to offer more regionalised support to public sector commissioners nationally. During the past year bi-monthly seminars have been established in Manchester and plans are in place to expand regional services in the South West. Filmed highlights of seminars are also offered on the Academy website to give those unable to attend events the opportunity to hear from expert speakers.

The Academy will shortly launch a new commissioning online learning tool – Introduction to Commissioning - which will be available on the Academy website and on Civil Service Learning. The course offers an introduction to commissioning public services at both national and local level and is designed to help promote a shared commissioning language between commissioners and providers to support delivery of the best possible outcomes for users of public services.

Following the success of last year's conference, the Academy are planning a further one day conference in the autumn which will feature expert speakers, round table discussions and networking opportunities. This conference is being designed to further support the development of public sector commissioners and will facilitate the sharing of best practice and learning

Each function the Academy undertakes is led by a Function Lead, who is also a member of the Academy Strategy Group. Key functions of the Academy are as follows:-

I. Learning and Development - led by Patsy Northern, Department of Health

This function is specifically focussed on commissioner learning and development and is responsible for product development, service development and quality assurance.

Key Objectives for 2014 / 15

- Through use of the commissioning cycle develop a road map for commissioners to access 'products' to improve commissioner capability. As part of this identifying:-
 - and signposting 'products' to improve capability and awareness; working and practitioner/expert levels
 - gaps in 'product' availability for further consideration by the Academy as part of its development portfolio; and
 - a focus on balancing different elements of the commissioning cycle, for example audit vs. relationship management
- To develop a proposal for the potential to develop a core curriculum for commissioners
- To further develop the 'Learning Groups' initiative to encourage cross sector debate and learning and ensure all key findings are shared with Academy members to advance development

II. Events – led by Kerry Wood, Legal Aid Agency

This function focuses on the development and delivery of Academy Events such as evening seminars, conferences, workshops, etc.

Key Objectives for 2014 / 15

- To organise a 1 day autumn conference themed around the identified core commissioning skills aimed at supporting the development of commissioners providing public services
- To run a number of different types of events – i.e. seminars, workshops, forums, panels, roundtable debates, etc. to support development and debate around commissioner / provider themes
- To support members understanding of wider reforms in the commissioning environment e.g. transforming rehabilitation, universal credit, etc.

III. Member Advisory Forum - led by Tessa Webb, BeNCH Community Rehabilitation Company

This function has been established by the Academy to ensure we listen to our members and act upon the views and assessed requirements of our members.

Key Objective for 2014 / 15

- To seek membership feedback via surveys, workshops and forums to ascertain views and suggestions on existing Academy offerings and future Academy services for the development of commissioners.

IV. Membership Development – led by Martin Blake, Ministry of Justice

This function is focussed on sustaining and increasing Academy membership to encourage the sharing of public sector commissioning knowledge and best practice for both commissioners and providers.

Key Objective for 2014 / 15

- To develop a promotion strategy to increase membership across all sectors, with a particular focus on recruiting additional MoJ commissioners and commissioners working in the newly formed Community Rehabilitation Companies

V. Communications

This function is responsible for all Academy communications, including all publicity, the website, the quarterly news bulletin and management of the Academy brand.

Key Objectives for 2014 / 15

- To effectively use the Academy brand as a platform to promote the work carried out within the MoJ and its agencies and other public services and to showcase best practice
- To ensure that the transition to the GOV.UK website is seamless and services are not affected
- To further develop the relationship with the Cabinet Office Commissioning Academy and explore mutual ways of utilising both parties resources to enhance services
- To build constructive relationships with relevant professional institutes and bodies to support the development of public services commissioning and provision.

VI. Regional Services

Regional services were established in Manchester last year and the Academy has set an objective to pilot services in the South West during 2014/15.

North West - led by Caroline Marsh, Caroline Marsh Management Solutions

- To further establish services in the North West and build on membership

South West – led by Sally Lewis, Avon and Somerset Probation Trust

- To pilot services in the South West with a view to offering a permanent service

Summary

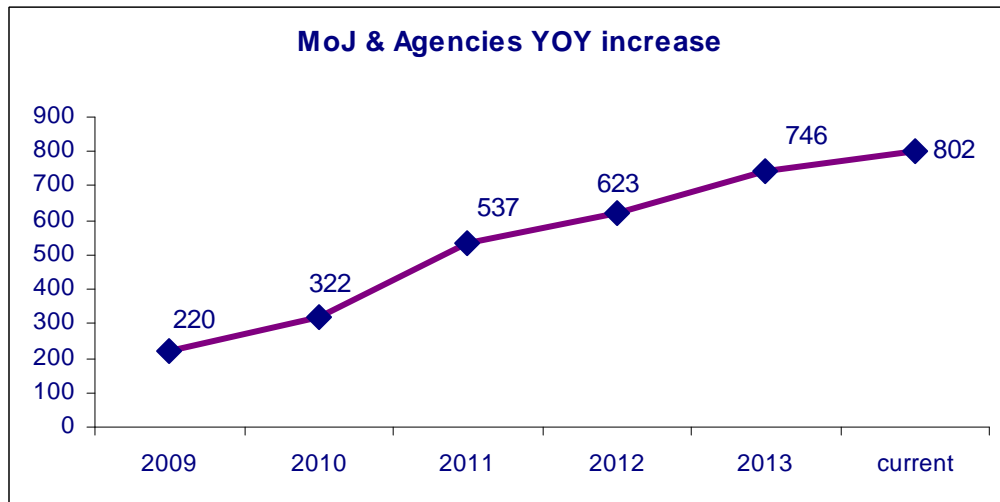
With the ongoing reform of public services it has been another tough year in the public sector and the Academy for Justice Commissioning is justly proud that it continues to offer valuable support to public sector commissioners and providers of public services.

The introduction of regional services and the expansion of other services demonstrates the Academy's commitment to supporting the improvement of commissioning capability, networking and sharing of best practice to an ever increasing audience, thus ensuring improved customer service across the public sector.

APPENDIX 1 – Membership statistics

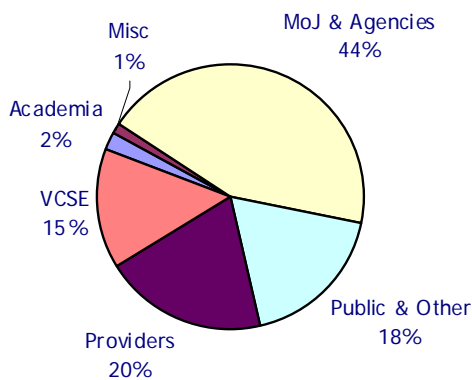
Academy Membership

- **1,810** members as at 31 March, 2014
- **15%** overall year on year membership growth
 - MoJ & Agencies membership has **grown by 8%** in the last year to **802**, as shown in the chart below:-

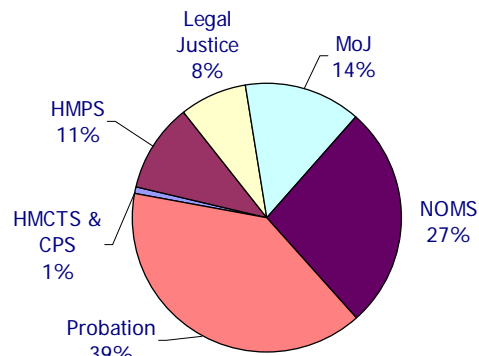


- Membership is split **48% MoJ** and its agencies and 52% other sectors (see chart below). Our broad membership encourages networking and sharing of best practice.

% Sector split



MoJ & Agencies % Split



- Total **public sector membership equates to 62%** of total membership

Academy Evening Seminars

- Average attendance for the 2012/13 programme of events was **60 delegates per seminar**
- **90%** of delegates would recommend our seminars to others, whilst the remainder probably would
- Members reasons for attending seminars:-
 - Increase knowledge – 44%
 - Interest in topic – 42%
 - Networking – 14%