



Summary

This analysis assessed the impact on re-offending of an employment programme co-ordinated by the organisation NOMS CFO (National Offender Management Service Co-Financing Organisation) in England. This follows an assessment by the Justice Data Lab in November and December 2013 of the first year of the programme, where the support was started in 2010 by individuals in custody and during community sentences. This analysis looks at the effectiveness of the Employment Programme received by individuals whilst in custody during 2011. Within this report there is a National assessment of the programme, and an assessment within each region of England.

The one year proven re-offending rate¹ for 3,291² offenders who began receiving support in 2011 through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme whilst in custody was 50.8%, compared with 50.3% for a matched control group of similar offenders. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the re-offending rates is not statistically significant³; suggesting that at this stage there is insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion about the impact on re-offending of starting an Employment Support programme co-ordinated by NOMS CFO whilst in custody. However, the results of the analysis do not mean that the Employment Programme co-ordinated by NOMS CFO to those individuals whilst in custody failed to impact on re-offending.

This finding was consistent across the majority of analyses within each region; with the exception of the South East and the South West where small statistically significant increases in the one year proven re-offending rate were observed for those who received support through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme, compared to a matched control group.

¹ The **one year proven re-offending rate** is defined as the proportion of offenders in a cohort who commit an offence in a one year follow-up period which was proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning during the one year follow-up or in a further six month waiting period. The one year follow-up period begins when offenders leave custody or start their probation sentence.

² 3,291 individuals were matched from a cohort of 6,211 individuals, whose details were sent to the Justice Data Lab, as described on page 4 of this report.

³ The p-value for this significance test was 0.54. Statistical significance testing is described on page 14 of this report.

What you can say: There is insufficient evidence at this stage to draw a conclusion about the impact of starting an Employment Support Programme through NOMS CFO in 2011 delivered by providers to individuals whilst in custody on re-offending.

What you cannot say: This analysis shows that starting an Employment Support Programme in custody through NOMS CFO in 2011 leads to an increase in re-offending by 1 percentage point, or by any other amount.

Introduction

NOMS CFO service providers work with offenders in prison and the community, to help them access mainstream services, with the aim of gaining skills and employment. This initiative is funded in partnership with the European Social Fund (ESF). The interventions are targeted at offenders considered to be 'hard to help', and who are typically unskilled, unqualified or de-motivated, and can often have drugs/alcohol, behavioural, debt or accommodation problems. This analysis relates to offenders who were involved in the programme during 2011. The programme is about helping to put offenders into employment, or making services provided by the Skills Funding Agency and Department for Work and Pensions more accessible, as it is recognised that offenders in employment are less likely to re-offend than those who are unemployed⁴. The programme uses a case management model which involves assessment, support in light of offenders' identified barriers to employment e.g. training; education; housing; finance; health; alcohol; drugs; relationships; attitude/life skills, and access to further learning or employment. The programme is voluntary and participants can self-refer or be targeted by the providers, with the only conditions being that participants must be unemployed or economically inactive, within the last three years of their sentence (for those individuals in custody), and eligible to work in the UK. Unsentenced offenders in prisons are also eligible for the programme.

Producing re-offending reports for Round 1 of the NOMS CFO programme

A single request was received from the organisation NOMS CFO to assess the impact on re-offending of this programme. The request included all individuals who participated in the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in 2011 in the nine regions of England. The programme in each region is delivered by a supplier who receives a contract from NOMS CFO, funding in partnership with ESF. The regions and providers are shown below:

⁴ Including a report published by Ministry of Justice in 2013 on the impact of employment on re-offending: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217412/impact-employment-reoffending.pdf

Region	Provider
East Midlands	Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Trust
East of England	Serco
London	London Probation
North East	Pertemps Recruitment
North West	Merseyside Probation
South East	Serco
South West ⁵	A4E
West Midlands	Manchester College
Yorkshire and the Humber	SOVA

In each region, the provider will aim to deliver similar interventions, but each provider will have different targets based on the characteristics of the population they deliver to.

In agreement with NOMS CFO, the Justice Data Lab has issued three reports looking at the effect on re-offending on the NOMS CFO Employment Programme for this request – one report for each of the three groups of offenders described below:

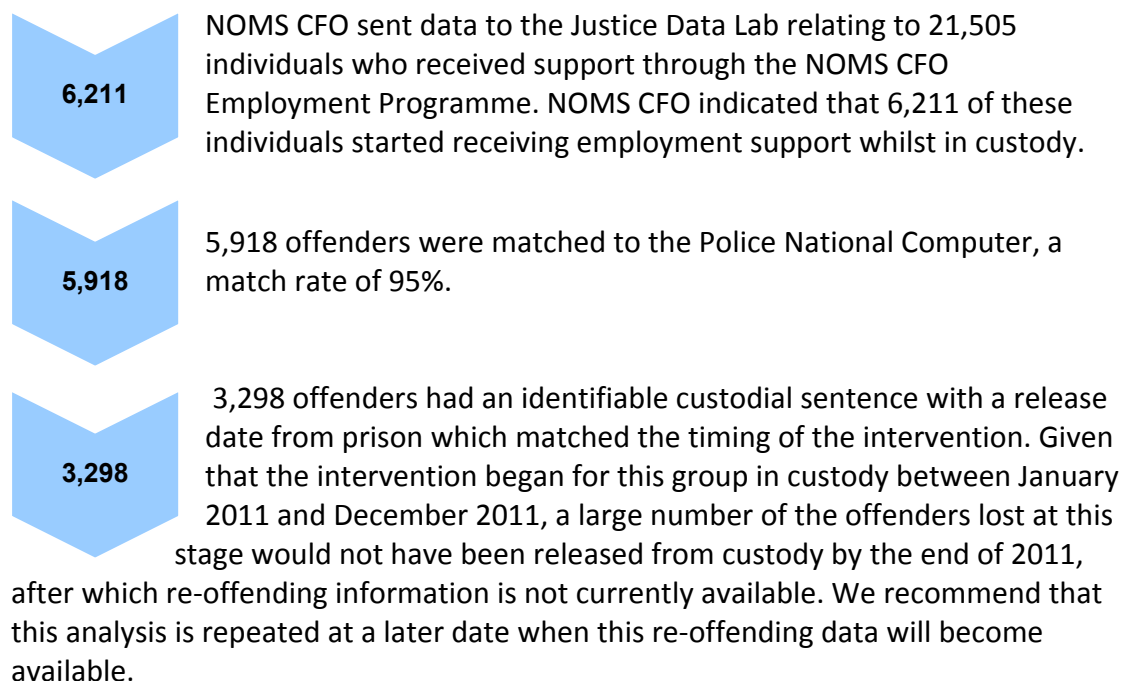
- Individuals receiving employment support whilst in custody
- Individuals receiving employment support in the community, following release from custody (this group was not included in the previous Justice Data Lab analysis due to small numbers)
- Individuals receiving employment support during a community sentence (either a Community Order, or Suspended Sentence Order)

Each report contains a national assessment of the programme, and an assessment of the programme in each region. The sections “Processing the Data”, “Creating a Matched Control Group”, “Results” (where a graphical display of the results are given, and an assessment of impact on the frequency of re-offending), and “Annex A” in each report reflect the national assessment of the programme. A new section “Assessment of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in each region” describes the regional results, giving the equivalent figures from the “Results” section for each region. “Annex A” figures for the regional analyses are released separately in an Excel file for ease of reference.

More information on wider aspects of the NOMS CFO project can be found here: co-financing.org/about_main.php

⁵ There are currently no prisons based in Cornwall.

Processing the Data

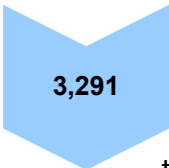


Analysis of the unmatched data revealed the following:

- There were 193 individuals who were released from a custodial sentence during 2011, however the given start date for the Employment Programme did not fall within the custodial sentence recorded administratively (i.e. this conflicts with information about the programme).
- There were 84 individuals who were not included in the analysis as their index offence appeared to be of a sexual nature.
- There were 70 individuals who were not included in the analysis as they had one or more previous sexual offences.
- There were 29 individuals who were not included in the analysis as they received indeterminate custodial sentences.
- There were 2 individuals who were not included in the analysis as they were juvenile offenders.
- There were 9 individuals who were not included in the analysis as their age at first contact with the Criminal Justice System was recorded as less than 10 (which is the minimum criteria for the Justice Data Lab).
- There were 3 individuals who could not be included in the analysis for modelling purposes.
- Alternative sentences (such as fines, absolute or conditional discharges, or other court sentences) could be identified for 574 individuals during 2011. However, it is also possible that these individuals also received a custodial sentence around the same time, and that they had not been released from that custodial sentence before the end of 2011, the period for which we currently have re-offending data.

- Custodial sentences could not be found on the administrative datasets for the 1,656 remaining individuals before the end of 2011. Some of these individuals may have been released from custody after 2011, a period for which re-offending data is not currently available. Unsentenced offenders in prisons were also eligible for support through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in 2011. It is not possible to measure the one year proven re-offending rate for these individuals, as they would not have received a conviction or subsequent sentence from which to follow up re-offending.

Creating a Matched Control Group

 3,291 of the 3,298 offender records for which re-offending data was available could be matched to offenders with similar characteristics but who were not on any NOMS CFO programme. In total the matched control group consisted of 47,419 offender records (none of the control group were NOMS CFO Participants from round 1 of the Employment Programme carried out in 2010 and 2011).

The Annex provides information on the similarity between the treatment and control groups. Further data on the matching process is available upon request.

Results

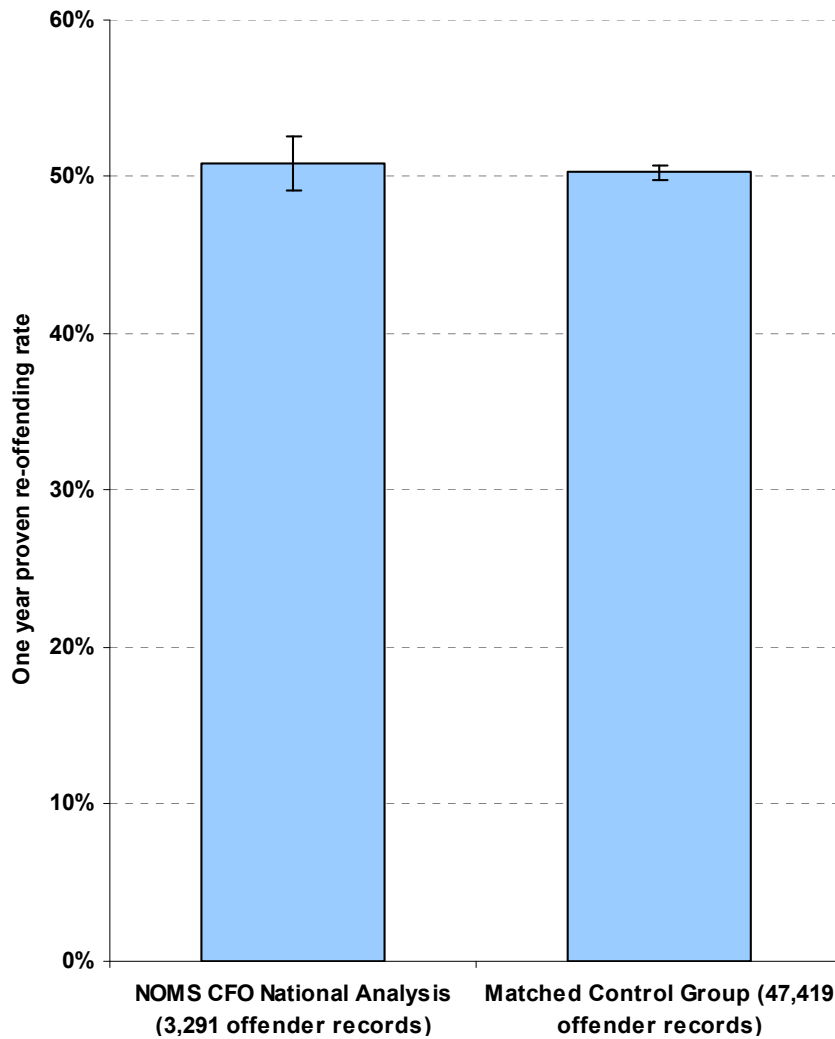
The one year proven re-offending rate for 3,291⁶ offenders who started receiving employment support in custody in 2011 through NOMS CFO, was 50.8%, compared with 50.3% for a matched control group of similar offenders. This information is displayed in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 below presents the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the re-offending rates of both groups, i.e. the range in which we can be 95 per cent sure that the true re-offending rates for the groups lie. For this analysis we can be confident that the true difference in proven re-offending between the groups is between a 2 percentage point reduction, and a 3 percentage point increase. However, because this difference crosses 0, we cannot be sure either way that participating in this programme led to a reduction or increase in re-offending, and thus cannot draw a firm conclusion about its impact. It is important to show confidence intervals because both the treatment and matched control groups are samples of larger populations; the re-offending rate is therefore an estimate for each population based on a sample, rather than the actual rate.

The precision of this estimate could be improved if further individuals from the NOMS CFO Employment Support programme were matched. It is recommended that the analysis is repeated at a later time, when further individuals may have been released from custody.

⁶ 3,291 individuals were matched from a cohort of 6,211 individuals, whose details were sent to the Justice Data Lab, as described on page 4 of this report.

Figure 1: The best estimates for the one year proven re-offending rate for offenders receiving support through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme whilst in custody, and a matched control group.



Additional proven re-offending measures

Frequency of re-offending

The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 3,291⁷ offenders who received employment support in 2011 through NOMS CFO, whilst in custody was 2.13 offences per individual, compared with 2.15 per individual in the matched control group. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the re-offending rates is not statistically significant⁸.

This result is in line with the findings around the indicator of one year proven re-offending; the subject of this report. The same caveats and limitations apply to these findings, which are described below.

⁷ 3,291 individuals were matched from a cohort of 6,211 individuals, whose details were sent to the Justice Data Lab, as described on page 3 of this report.

⁸ The p-value for this significance test was 0.76. Statistical significance testing is described on page 14 of this report.

Assessment of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in each region

The following page shows an assessment of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in each region. Two analyses are shown for each region; the first analysis is an assessment of the cohort who could be matched to our administrative databases, compared to individuals with similar characteristics from **England and Wales**. The second analysis is an assessment of the cohort who could be matched to our administrative databases compared to individuals with similar characteristics from that **region** only. In both cases the control group will exclude individuals who are known to have received support from round 1 of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme carried out in 2010 and 2011.

Table 1: Assessment of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme, where the programme was started in custody, in each region of England. Two analyses are shown for each region; the first shows an assessment of the programme against a control group drawn from England and Wales; the second analysis shows an assessment of the programme against a control group drawn from that region only.

	Size of cohort	Size of control group	Cohort re-offending rate	Control group re-offending rate	Statistically significant? P-value	Estimate of change in re-offending	Cohort frequency of re-offending	Control group frequency of re-offending	Statistically significant? P-value
National Analysis	3,291	47,419	51%	50%	No 0.54	Between 2 percentage point decrease and 3 percentage point increase	2.13	2.15	No 0.76
East of England									
National control group	292	43,456	52%	53%	No 0.73	Between 7 percentage point decrease and 5 percentage point increase	2.57	2.38	No 0.40
Regional control group	288	3,719	52%	53%	No 0.62	Between 9 percentage point decrease and 6 percentage point increase	2.57	2.54	No 0.90
East Midlands									
National control group	292	37,110	48%	50%	No 0.54	Between 8 percentage point decrease and 4 percentage point increase	2.02	2.08	No 0.78
Regional control group	292	3,775	48%	49%	No 0.85	Between 8 percentage point decrease and 7 percentage point increase	2.02	1.88	No 0.53
London									
National control group	288	30,613	57%	53%	No 0.27	Between 3 percentage point decrease and 10 percentage point increase	2.54	2.30	No 0.26
Regional control group	291	7,965	57%	56%	No 0.82	Between 6 percentage point decrease and 7 percentage point increase	2.57	2.44	No 0.53

	Size of cohort	Size of control group	Cohort re-offending rate	Control group re-offending rate	Statistically significant? P-value	Estimate of change in re-offending	Cohort frequency of re-offending	Control group frequency of re-offending	Statistically significant? P-value
North East									
National control group	252	34,116	60%	55%	No 0.075	Between 1 percentage point decrease and 12 percentage point increase	2.71	2.36	No 0.22
Regional control group	254	1,939	60%	57%	No 0.26	Between 5 percentage point decrease and 12 percentage point increase	2.72	2.67	No 0.88
North West									
National control group	576	37,654	45%	47%	No 0.35	Between 7 percentage point decrease and 3 percentage point increase	1.72	1.92	No 0.12
Regional control group	577	7,310	46%	48%	No 0.36	Between 7 percentage point decrease and 3 percentage point increase	1.73	1.96	No 0.083
South East									
National control group	289	44,986	54%	48%	Yes 0.046	Increase between 0.3 and 12 percentage points	2.09	1.96	No 0.54
Regional control group	285	2,944	55%	48%	Yes 0.038	Increase between 0.3 and 13 percentage points	2.12	2.01	No 0.61
South West									
National control group	282	42,503	56%	49%	Yes 0.027	Increase between 0.2 and 13 percentage points	2.12	2.05	No 0.71
Regional control group	280	2,860	55%	49%	Yes 0.035	Increase between 0.5 and 13 percentage points	2.07	2.09	No 0.90

	Size of cohort	Size of control group	Cohort re-offending rate	Control group re-offending rate	Statistically significant? P-value	Estimate of change in re-offending	Cohort frequency of re-offending	Control group frequency of re-offending	Statistically significant? P-value
West Midlands									
National control group	556	43,976	49%	53%	No 0.079	Between 8 percentage point decrease and 1 percentage point increase	2.06	2.23	No 0.24
Regional control group	556	4,996	49%	49%	No 0.90	Between 6 percentage point decrease and 5 percentage point increase	2.04	1.95	No 0.57
Yorkshire and the Humber									
National control group	452	43,874	46%	47%	No 0.89	Between 5 percentage point decrease and 5 percentage point increase	1.93	2.00	No 0.64
Regional control group	450	4,844	46%	47%	No 0.73	Between 7 percentage point decrease and 5 percentage point increase	1.93	1.97	No 0.82

Note 1: The size of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme cohort within each region may be different depending on whether the comparison is against a national or regional cohort. There may be a different number of individuals analysed depending on whether equivalent characteristics for an individual exist within the matched control group.

Note 2: The total number of individuals analysed within each region will not sum to the total analysed nationally. When analysing the regions together, the modelling at the overall level will be slightly different to the model built in each regional level; this can result in smaller categories being deleted, for example those with particular ethnicity groupings or Index Offence types. For example, at the regional level, there may be 4% of the cohort who have a particular Index Offence grouping. However, at the national level, the proportion is higher – for example 6%, and in this instance it may have become viable to carry these individuals through to the final analysis.

How do these results compare to last time

In November and December 2013, the Justice Data Lab released findings for the first year of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme, 2010. For both years of the programme where support was received during a custodial sentence, there is no statistically significant difference in re-offending behaviour between those individuals receiving support by NOMS CFO whilst in custody, and a matched control group when looking at the programme nationally. However, there are some differences in the effects seen regionally in the 2010 and 2011 data analyses.

For the 2010 analyses, each region was assessed against a national control group, with all analyses showing a non-statistically significant difference in re-offending behaviour between the two groups. For the 2011 analyses there were two regions, South East and South West, that showed statistically significant differences in re-offending behaviour between the treatment and matched control groups, (these differences were also found during analyses using a regional control group, analysis of which had not been done for the 2010 assessment).

Whilst the re-offending rates included in this analysis **should not** be compared directly against those from the previous analyses, it is helpful to describe possible reasons why the changes in impact may have been seen:

1. The characteristics of those receiving support from the NOMS CFO Employment Programme may have changed. Whilst the matching process takes into account information about an individual's demographics, offence, criminal history and employment and benefit history, there may have been genuine changes in the characteristics that this programme was aiming to address (employability, motivation, aptitude etc.), that cannot be statistically controlled for.
2. Compared with the equivalent *regional* results from the 2010 analyses, the majority of regions have a higher group re-offending rate in the 2011 analyses (for two regions, the opposite is true). Whilst the analyses should not be directly compared, it is likely that the 2011 cohorts exhibit more complex characteristics (such as a lengthier and more serious criminal history), perhaps suggesting that as a cohort they are "harder to help".
3. In 2011, DWP launched the Work Programme. This programme improves the employment support provision for individuals in the community receiving certain out of work benefits. It has not possible within these analyses to statistically control for support received through any other employment programme, including the Work Programme. It is likely that individuals in the control group will have received employment support after leaving prison through the Work Programme. This would mean that we are less confident that the control group are **not** receiving similar or equivalent employment support; so it is possible that the effect size of the NOMS programme is affected.
4. Generally in 2011 there was an increase in the employment level in England, and a reduction in the number of out of work benefit claimants. This could suggest that the control group generally were experiencing better employment outcomes, or that the competition for employment opportunities was stronger.

5. It is also possible that there has been a genuine change in the impact of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme on re-offending.

Caveats and Limitations

The statistical methods used in this analysis are based on data collected for administrative purposes. While these include details of each offender's previous criminal, benefit and employment history alongside more basic offender characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity, it is possible that other important contextual information that may help explain the results has not been accounted for. In particular, we are aware that the characteristics used for matching within these analyses will not mirror the selection process for those receiving support through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme.

It is possible that underlying characteristics about the individuals included in the analysis which were not captured by the data (e.g. further previous employment history; education history; whether the individual was actively looking for employment, employment and benefit status of the individual following release from custody etc) may have impacted participants' success in achieving the aims of the programme, and may also have a role in affecting their re-offending behaviour. It is also possible that there are additional underlying characteristics about the individuals included in the analysis which were not captured by the data, for example attendance at other interventions targeted at offenders, that may have impacted re-offending behaviour. Therefore, there remains a possibility that any difference in re-offending behaviour after matching reflects differences in underlying characteristics between the two groups which are not recorded in the data, rather than differences in re-offending behaviour associated with support through this employment programme.

Round 2 of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme began in 2011. Approximately 7,000 individuals received support through Round 2 of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme during 2011 and have not been included in this analysis. Round 2 of the programme was subject to different targets and aims specifically around harder to help individuals. It is therefore likely individuals from Round 2 of the programme may be in the control groups of these analyses.

Where the programme was started in custody, it is likely that the individual will have received the majority of their support within the community – following their release from custody. However, we cannot be sure for each individual the extent to which this happened. Furthermore, an individual may receive support from one provider during their time in custody; however on release they may receive support from another provider if they return home which may be in another region. It is not possible for us to statistically control for this.

In this analysis we have not been able to statistically control for employment outcomes in the control group, therefore this analysis cannot present a direct comparison with NOMS CFO Employment Programme and any other type of

employment, or NOMS CFO Employment Programme and no employment at all. This analysis presents a comparison between offenders with similar characteristics, where one group (the treatment group) was known to receive support through Round 1 of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme, and the comparison group did not.

Many organisations that work with offenders will look to target specific needs of individuals; for example improving housing, or employability. However, how the organisations select those individuals to work with could lead to selection bias, which can impact on the direction of the results. For example; individuals may self select into a service, because they are highly motivated to address one or more of their needs. This would result in a positive selection bias, meaning that for these persons we would generally expect a better re-offending outcome as they are more motivated. Alternatively, some organisations might specifically target persons who are known to have more complex needs and whose attitudes to addressing their needs are more challenging. This would result in a negative selection bias, meaning that for these persons we would generally expect a poorer re-offending outcome as they are not motivated. However, factors which would lead to selection bias in either direction are not represented in our underlying data, and cannot be reflected in our modelling. This means that all results should be interpreted with care, as selection bias cannot be accounted for in analyses.

Furthermore, only 3,291 of the 6,211 (53%) offenders on the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in 2011 whilst in custody were in the final treatment group. The section “Processing the Data” outlines key steps taken to obtain the final group used in the analysis. In many analyses, the creation of the matched control group will mean that some individuals, who will usually have particular characteristics – for example a particular ethnicity, or have committed a certain type of offence, will need to be removed to ensure that the modelling will work. Steps will always be taken at this stage to preserve as many individuals as possible, but due to the intricacies of statistical modelling some attrition at this stage will often result. In all analyses from the Justice Data Lab, persons who have ever been convicted of sex offences will be removed, as these individuals are known to have very different patterns of re-offending. As such, the final treatment group may not be representative of all offenders who have been on this programme; it is possible that the cohort as a whole experienced a different impact on their re-offending behaviour.

The re-offending rates included in this analysis **should not** be compared to the national average, nor any other reports or publications which include re-offending rates – including those assessing the impact of other interventions, such as the analysis of the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in 2010. The re-offending rates included in this report are specific to the characteristics of those who received support through the NOMS CFO Employment Programme in 2011 during a custodial sentence who could be matched. Any other comparison would not be comparing like for like.

For a full description of the methodology, including the matching process, see www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/justice-data-lab/justice-data-lab-methodology.pdf.

Assessing Statistical Significance

This analysis uses statistical testing to assess whether any differences in the observed re-offending rates are due to chance, or if the intervention is likely to have led to a real change in behaviour. The outcome of the statistical testing is a value between 0 and 1, called a 'p-value', indicating the certainty that a real difference in re-offending between the two groups has been observed. A value closer to 0 indicates that the difference in the observed re-offending rates is not merely due to chance. For example, a p-value of 0.01 suggests there is only a 1 per cent likelihood that any observed difference in re-offending has been caused by chance.

For the purposes of the analysis presented in this report, we have taken a p-value of up to 0.05 as indicative of a real difference in re-offending rates between the treatment and control groups.

The confidence intervals in the figure are helpful in judging whether something is significant at the 0.05 level. If the confidence intervals for the two groups do not overlap, this indicates that there is a real difference between the re-offending rates.

Annex

Table 1: Characteristics of offenders in the treatment and control groups for the National assessment of the NOMS CFO Employment Support Programme

	Treatment Group	Matched Control Group	Standardised Difference
Number in group	3,291	47,419	
Ethnicity			
White	85%	85%	0
Black	10%	10%	0
Asian and Other	5%	5%	0
Nationality			
UK Citizen	95%	95%	1
Foreign Nationality or Unknown Nationality	5%	5%	-1
Gender			
Proportion that were male	87%	87%	2
Age			
Mean age at Index Offence	29	29	-1
Mean age at first contact with CJS	17	17	-1
Index Offence¹			
Violent offences including Robbery	41%	40%	0
Burglary	15%	15%	0
Theft and Handling	17%	17%	0
Fraud and Forgery	4%	4%	-1
Motoring offences, including theft of and from vehicles	9%	9%	0
Drugs related ²	11%	10%	0
Other ³	4%	4%	-1
Length of Custodial Sentence			
6 months or less	31%	32%	-1
6 months to 12 months	11%	11%	0
12 months to 4 years	50%	49%	1
4 years to 10 years	8%	8%	1
Criminal History⁴			
Mean Copas Rate	-0.64	-0.64	0
Mean total previous offences	34	35	0
Mean previous criminal convictions	14	14	-1
Mean previous custodial sentences	4	4	-1
Mean previous court orders	5	5	0
Employment and Benefit History			
In P45 employment (year prior to conviction)	28%	28%	0
In P45 employment (month prior to conviction)	17%	17%	-1
Claiming Out of Work Benefits (year prior to conviction) ⁵	66%	66%	0
Claiming Job Seekers Allowance (year prior to conviction)	50%	50%	0
Claiming Incapacity Benefit and/or Income Support (year prior to conviction)	27%	27%	-1
Notes:			
1 Index Offence is based on OGRS categories. Further details on make-up of categories available upon request.			
2 Drug related offences including importation, exportation, possession, and supply of drugs.			
3 This category includes Criminal or Malicious damage and Other.			

4 All excluding Penalty Notices for Disorder. All prior to Index Offence.
5 Out of Work Benefits include people on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefits (IB) and Income Support (IS), but it does not count people whose primary benefit is Carer's Allowance (CA).

Standardised Difference Key

Green - the two groups were well matched on this variable (-5% to 5%)

Amber - the two groups were reasonably matched on this variable (6% to 10% or -6% to -10%)

Red - the two groups were poorly matched on this variable (greater than 10% or less than -10%)

We assess whether the treatment group and the matched control group are balanced and well matched through a comparison of the standardised differences generated for every variable included in the matching process. Table 1 shows that the two groups were well matched on all variables found to have associations with receiving treatment and/or re-offending. All of the standardised mean differences are highlighted green because they were between -5% and 5%, indicating close matches on these characteristics.

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