

Funding assists roll out of HMP Academies in prisons

2 years ago



Soft services provider [SBFM](#) has launched its new HMP Academies to support the rehabilitation of prison leavers, after being awarded funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has actively been seeking to develop its academy delivery model within prison work and learning environments. The funding will enable the company to offer cleaning jobs, addressing labour shortages while offering a clear pathway from prison to employment for ex-offenders.

It sits on the Government's Employment Advisory Board (EAB) as part of a programme that links prison leavers with local employers who can offer their expertise on skills, qualifications, and training. The funding will allow the company to provide training, advice, and guidance services to an additional 19 prisons, complementing its existing partnerships.

The academy is designed to help prisoners gain vital vocational experience, soft skills, sector specific training and qualifications in cleaning while serving their sentences.

Prisoners will receive training in BICSc modules, alongside soft skills like CV writing and mock interviews, supporting their return to the workforce.

Through its Evolve programme, an initiative dedicated to providing sustainable employment to people from disadvantaged groups, the company reported it has successfully placed ex-offenders and care leavers in cleaning roles at PureGym. These individuals receive free training to become personal trainers, providing them with stability and improved prospects.

The company is hoping this new funding will enable it to introduce a dedicated PureGym training area and academy in prisons where it already has a presence.

The success of the Evolve initiative recently led to a presentation to Damian Hinds, the Minister of State for Prisons, Parole, and Probation. Mr Hinds was inspired to visit HMP Wealstun after hearing about its remarkable achievements in action.

Company founder Colin Shute said: “We are absolutely delighted with this appointment as it solidifies our position as a trusted source which links ex-offenders with full-time employment. We already work closely with prisons and ex-offenders, and we can see that they need a stable place to transition to.

“It’s crucial that we build trust inside prisons prior to the release of ex-offenders so they know that programmes like this aren’t just a pipedream. They are real and they are waiting for them on the outside to help them build a new life. These individuals require a sense of security and stability to aid their rehabilitation, and this is precisely what the HMP Academies in prisons offer, and we are proud and delighted to be part of it.

