

# Executive Summary: PRISGRADS – Supporting Prison Officers For Impact

**Presenters:** Tessa Jennett

**Organization:** **Unlocked Graduates** - <https://unlockedgrads.org.uk/>

**Overview:** The presentation by Tessa Jennett and Liam Fenn focused on the **Unlocked Graduates Leadership Programme’s Mentoring Model**, a comprehensive support system for new prison officers. The model emphasizes continuous professional development through mentoring, training, and structured supervision. The session explored existing support models, identified barriers, and discussed opportunities to implement best practices in the field of corrections.

## Components of the Unlocked Graduates Mentoring Model

1. **Year 1 Support:**
  - **5 half-days in prisons:** Practical training on-site.
  - **1 full day online:** Virtual learning.
  - **1 full-day conference:** Networking and sharing insights.
2. **Year 2 Support:**
  - **2 half-days in prisons:** Advanced practical sessions.
  - **1 full day online:** Continued virtual learning.
3. **Ongoing Development:**
  - One-on-one mentoring (bi-weekly)
  - Group supervision sessions (bi-weekly)
  - Training workshops and observational learning.

## Interactive Discussions

- **Paired and Table Discussions:**
  - Explored why on-the-job support matters for new officers.
  - Examined barriers to the success of mentoring programs, including resource limitations and organizational challenges.
- **Activity:**
  - Participants brainstormed solutions to overcome barriers and improve mentorship.

## Key Takeaways

- **Mentoring:** A structured, two-year-long mentoring model ensures consistent support for officers, building their confidence and professional competence and increases their retention.

- **Collaboration:** Sharing best practices across correctional facilities strengthens program implementation and outcomes.
  - **Barriers to Success:** Addressing resource constraints, organizational culture, and leadership buy-in are critical for impactful mentoring.
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## Conclusion

The Unlocked Graduates model demonstrates the value of continuous mentorship and training in professionalizing the prison workforce. By adapting elements of this model, other institutions can improve their support systems, enhance officer retention, and ultimately contribute to better outcomes in corrections.

