

# Does prison work?



## About this free course

This free course provides a sample of Level 3 study in Sociology

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# Introduction

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The material presented here focuses on a key question for criminologists, criminal justice policy-makers and politicians: 'Does prison work?' The material is an audio file, originally 28 minutes in length, and examines the issues around this apparently simple criminological question. It was recorded in 1995.

This OpenLearn course provides a sample of Level 2 study in [Sociology](#).

# Learning Outcomes

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After studying this course, you should be able to:

- identify criteria to evaluate whether prison works.

# 1 The purpose, efficacy and regulation of prisons

Richard Sparks presents a series of views about the purpose, efficacy and regulation of prisons. The audio programme was recorded in 2001.

Participants in the audio programme were:

- **Richard Sparks** Professor of Criminology at the University of Keele and is now Professor of Criminology at the University of Edinburgh;
- **Rod Morgan** Professor of Criminal Justice at Bristol University;
- **Larry Viner** a London magistrate;
- **Alison Liebling** an academic at the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge;
- **Tim Newell** Governor of Grendon Open prison;
- **Eric Cullen** head of Psychology at Grendon Prison;
- **David Wilson** head of operational training for the Prison Service.

## Activity 1

After listening to the audio programme bear in mind the following questions:

- How has the programme added to your knowledge of the prison system?
- What do you now think the purpose of imprisonment should be?
- Why do you think Grendon 'works'?

Does prison work? part 1 (11 minutes 7 MB)

Audio content is not available in this format.

[Does prison work?](#)

Does prison work? part 2 (6 minutes 4 MB)

Audio content is not available in this format.

[Does prison work? part 2](#)

Does prison work? part 3 (13 minutes 8 MB)

Audio content is not available in this format.

[Does prison work? part 3](#)

## Conclusion

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This free course provided an introduction to studying sociology. It took you through a series of exercises designed to develop your approach to study and learning at a distance and helped to improve your confidence as an independent learner.

## Keep on learning

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