Victim Awareness Workbook

Victim focussed material for use in offender management
**Supervision: Victim Awareness Workbook Monitoring Form**

| Name: .......................................................... | DOB: ............................................ |
| Date commenced: ................................ | Date completed: ................................ |
| Offender Manager / Supervisor: .......................... | OMU: ........................................... |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session/Exercises incl. page number</th>
<th>Date exercises completed</th>
<th>Signature of supervisee</th>
<th>OM/OS Signature</th>
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Introduction

This is the first in a series of offender workbooks to be produced by West Midlands Probation Area. The purpose is to bring together practical guidance and exercises to help staff in working directly with offenders. These exercises can be used on a one to one basis or in small informal groups at the discretion of staff.

The workbook itself should be retained in the case file, as evidence of work that has been completed. Staff members and/or offenders themselves should sign on the monitoring form at the front of the workbook to confirm that exercises have been completed. Entries on the electronic case file can therefore be minimised:

\[
\text{e.g. Date – Reported – completed Offence Ranking Exercise p20 Victim Awareness Workbook.}
\]

The idea of using workbooks like this was championed locally by Maggie Ditchburn and Pat Chatwin. It fits with many principles of the Solutions Programme:

- Taking the best ideas and applying them consistently across the area
- Giving staff the best tools for the job
- Working efficiently, making the best use of time
- Clearer recording but less time at the computer.

The bulk of the material here had been previously written and collated by Audrey Beckford and Barbara Tudor from the West Midlands Area Victim Liaison Unit. Please refer to this unit for advice on any aspect of the contents of this workbook. Additional materials and guidance notes are incorporated from a workbook created for Staffordshire Probation Area by Heather Sutton.

The victim perspective should be a strong part of the thinking of everyone working with an offender throughout the sentence. Along with Child Protection and Suicide / Self-Harm, the Protection of Victims has been identified as one of the top three points of focus for every member of staff, working with every offender, in every part of offender management or interventions.

Careful monitoring should be a central theme of all of our work, in terms of how an individual offender is able to understand the repercussions of his/her behaviour and begin to acknowledge and express the impact on others. Changes should be recorded through reviews of OASys.

Good quality victim awareness/victim empathy work is a critical part of offender management. It enables thorough assessment of the motivations for offending, the capacity for offenders to move into a non-offending lifestyle, and may also serve to indicate distorted thought process, disorientation and mental illness.

Victim focussed offence analysis should be conducted early in sentence, ideally at PSR stage to inform planning and the need for specialist interventions. Some of the material in this workbook explores the motivations to offend, and looks into triggers and the circumstances which encourage offending behaviour – the sessions are designed to enable insight and encourage personal responsibility. The monitoring chart should be kept under continual review on an agreed regular basis; it helps to keep the victim empathy work ‘alive’ throughout the sentence, underpin the motivation to change lifestyle and encourage a move away from offending.
Victim Focussed Material for use in Offender Management

Objectives of victim awareness and empathy work:

1. To enable offenders to consider and understand the effects and impact of their offending behaviour upon victims of crime.

2. To enable offenders and Offender Managers to explore the capacity for the individual’s empathy with those who suffer the consequences of offences.

3. To assist the offender and Offender Manager to identify the triggers for offending behaviour.

4. To assist the offender and Offender Manager to work strategically on techniques and methods of avoiding situations which might put the offender at risk of further offending.

5. To inform Offender Managers’ risk assessments and assist in the planning for risk management.

6. In the event of the offender showing a wish, or ability, to make amends directly to the victim of his/her specific offence; to enable this to occur in suitable and appropriate cases please contact your local Victim Liaison Unit, Audrey Beckford (SPO) or Barbara Tudor, Victim Offender Development Officer (VODO) Telephone No. 0121 248 6100.

Should the Offender Manager require further assistance, input or additional worksheets, wish to discuss methods of delivering the material, or any other related issues, please do not hesitate to contact us as above.

Cases shared with the Victim Liaison Unit (VLU)

Where cases fit into the Victim Contact criteria, it is essential to check that a referral has been received by the VLU post sentence. Ensure that files are updated with Victim Contact Reports, which may contain useful information in terms of victim empathy work. These reports will be supplied by the VLU on yellow paper and need to be stored in section 10 of the file. Although some of the information will be marked “not to be shared directly with the offender” the importance it carries in regard of modus operandi or potentially distorted thinking
should indicate strongly the issues which need to be dealt with in supervision, worked through and assessed. Reference does not have to be made to direct victims in order to undertake this work effectively.

Colleagues in the VLU will be more than happy to discuss with officers the information they collect and store, as well as sharing ideas about how it should be handled and utilized to best advantage.

Where licence conditions have been requested these need to be kept in mind through sentence including plans for any release on temporary licence (ROTL), work experience and final release. It is not unusual for plans for release to be made where there are likely to be exclusion zones in place, or for victims to report sightings of offenders in local areas whilst on work placements, etc. Such situations display poor case management and cause resentment in offenders which can counteract any good quality work that has been undertaken, undermining public confidence and the standing of the Probation Service in the community both with victims and offenders.

In cases where victim awareness work leads to the possibility of some reconciliation with direct victims, or where it may indicate that there is a residual danger of further offences being perpetrated against current victims – or potential others – please consult with colleagues in the VLU. Pooling information from both sources helps to inform realistic risk assessments and better rehabilitation of offenders and victims.

VLOs work with the results of offending on victims all the time. They are available to assist in individual cases, and generally, if consulted. There are also opportunities to undertake victim visits with a member of the Unit, or to work in conjunction with some officers in a link capacity which raises awareness and helps to enhance ‘victim dialogue’.

**Potential pitfalls**

Individual officers undertaking victim awareness work with offenders need to be aware of the impact of offending on all types on victims. Whilst it is impossible to know the direct effect of an offence on any one person unless their views are specifically sought, there are, of course, some common features. However, it is impossible to say that the impact of an offence will be of a minor nature simply because the offence is technically regarded as minor. Impact is a complex issue as is the commission of offences themselves.

It is a common and natural reaction for offenders to deny and minimize the ramifications their behaviour has caused and it can be difficult when working with them not to collude with their responses, whilst also being able to perceive and encourage awareness of the ripple effect of offending, which is likely to include the offender, their friends and family too.

Collusion is potentially dangerous. If we do not ensure that the victim perspective is thoroughly understood it may appear that professionals think it is all right to commit certain offences; or that there are excuses for offending behaviour (as opposed to reasons for it). Superficial victim work does offenders no favours,
rather a disservice, in that it does not help them to take responsibility for their actions and therefore understand how to change them.

Naturally there are offences which will cause particular concern because the damage inflicted upon victims is typically permanently life damaging and likely to cause severe trauma. Offences of a sexual nature, domestic violence, hate crime of any kind, and offences against children and the vulnerable raise a high level of anxiety. Everyone must be ever vigilant and sensitive to the reactions to victim awareness input to be able to discern indications of distorted thinking processes or mental illness, severe substance abuse, etc. An inability to empathise, or a heightened excitement in regard to the description or exploration of an offence, may illustrate severe risk issues. Some patterns of thinking or behaviour may require specialist support for offenders, or safety measures being put in place for direct victims or the community at large.

Some victims in these kinds of offences will have suffered a high level of offending, often for a number of years, before they report. This may be because of emotional commitment and the offender’s ability, whether consciously or not, to manipulate situations. Such behaviour needs to be analysed in depth if we are to effectively enable individuals to choose non-offending lifestyles and prevent further victimization.

**Notes on the use of Victim Awareness Materials**

The following exercises are offered as examples of victim awareness materials. They need to be used as a guide only, with caution, and adapted for individual use. There is a plethora of exercises and programmes which suggest methods of working in this arena. A great deal of information and exercises, etc, is available at the VLU. All are based on offence analysis of one type or another, either in a general sense, or very much related directly to the specific offence committed. They may be geared to group work, or to one-to-one interventions. Most can be modified for use in either eventuality as the Offender Manager thinks best fits the interactive style of the individual. They can easily be adapted for use with small groups. Many offenders have literacy difficulties which will require different methods of undertaking the exercises, for example, diagrammatic mapping, using socio-metric/drama techniques, sculpting, progressive picture work, etc., e.g., ‘Can you draw where that happened for me?’, ‘Where were you then?’, ‘Where were the others?’. These methods are used regularly with young people and in prisons. Any assistance with written work should be given when necessary, but alternative material may be used to guide the officer – exercises can be undertaken orally. This work should be challenging, but not in an aggressive way.

Some people will have the capacity to work through sessions quickly, others will take longer to benefit. In some cases it may be appropriate to ask that some work be done at home ready for the next session. The following guidance suggests work that needs to be covered, but it does not have to be completed in the suggested timescales.

If exercises of a general nature do not relate to the experience of the individual offender they will prove ineffective, or at worst they will serve to de-motivate and can cause damage to the credibility of the OM/offender relationship. Care clearly
needs to be taken in the selection of materials to use in cases of oppressive offending – hate crime, domestic violence, sexual offending, etc., where there is a need for very sensitive confrontation. If there is strong denial and minimization in play, additional work will need to be undertaken, closely observed and with careful checks to ensure that there can be no perception of any collusion. The experience of being victimized can never excuse victimizing anyone else; there is, however, always a need to deal with victimization. If more sensitive work had been offered to victims in the past, many of those who now offend themselves may not have committed crime.

It is useful to remember that whenever we use victim empathy material we are making generalized assumptions. Nothing replaces the precise experience of direct victims themselves. There is plenty of evidence of the efficiency for all parties of victim/offender mediation/reparation and restorative processes. Should offenders exhibit a high level of personal remorse and/or express a wish to make amends; or during letter writing, for example, it appears that a letter may contain information that would be helpful to a victim, please contact your local VLU, Audrey Beckford (SPO), or Barbara Tudor (VODO).

**Notification of evidence of the undertaking and impact of Victim Awareness Work**

Case notes should clearly reflect the impact of victim awareness upon individual offenders. These should be personalized, along with any observed/ perceived risks and any additional work which may be necessary after issues surface during ongoing victim work. These issues should be traceable in case plans and risk assessments. In cases shared with the VLU there should be evidence that reports have been used sensitively and that any licence conditions requested by victims are highlighted, carried forward and acted upon respectfully in a timely fashion.

**Safeguarding child victims – either directly or as part of domestic violence issues**

Particular care should be taken when working with the materials in the workbook to ensure that any discussion around child victims does not involve any unintentional disclosure of information particularly where access is denied or the primary carer has moved to an undisclosed address. It may also be the case that in working through the materials additional disclosure may be made concerning actual or potential risk to children. For example the forming of a new relationship where there are children in the home. Should this occur ensure it is discussed with your line manager and record decisions about further information being passed to social care staff.
A pre release MAPPA meeting must occur at least 6 months prior to expected release date. The offender manager should ensure that victim issues are raised for the chair to clarify any actions that may be required. This will be particularly important where victims may have moved location in the period since sentence and could potentially now be living nearer to proposed release address – including identified Approved Premises. It is essential to be clear who the potential victim(s) may be and information gained through use of these materials may be very valuable in helping the MAPPA derive greater understanding of the nature of the risk and measures required. This will remain a key area for discussion throughout the length of supervision.

**Do not hesitate to contact the Victim Liaison Unit if you are in need of advice regarding use of these materials.**
Session 1

Introduction

a. Offence from the offender's perspective:

☑ e.g., Offending Chart Exercises

☑ Offending Behaviour Analysis

☑ Influence grid

b. Offence from victim's perspective (e.g., CPS, Victim Personal Statement (VPS), newspaper articles, pre-cons):

☑ e.g., victim's questions

☑ Victims of my offences
First name: .............................................. Date: ..............................

**Offence from the Offender’s Perspective**

**Offending Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: .....................</th>
<th>Time: ...........</th>
<th>Effects on victim(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where: ..................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offence: .................................</td>
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Who are the victims?

How the offence was planned:

How the offence was done:

Committed with whom?

Percentage of responsibility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me: %</th>
<th>Victim(s) %</th>
<th>Others %</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Effects upon me:

Events, feelings and thoughts:
*Before*

Effects upon family and friends:

*During the offence:*

*Afterwards:*

NPS-WM Area Victim Liaison Unit
Updated April 2008
Victim Awareness Workbook

First name: ..............................................  Date: ................................

**Offending Behaviour Analysis**

Here is a list of some of the reasons why offenders commit offences:

*I wanted to look good and impress my friends.*
*I was bored; it was fun.*
*It was exciting. It made me feel scared and I liked that!*
*It was what everyone else was doing; I wanted to do it too.*

In the box below, list your offences and beside each write your reason for offending. Some of your reasons might be like the ones above, but write as many of your own as you can. Be very clear about your reasons for offending. Only write those that are absolutely true.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
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Your list of reasons why you offended is called your motivation. Motivation is what makes you want to offend. Finding out where you get your motivation from will help you towards understanding your offending behaviour.
Influences

Below is a list of some of the common factors that can influence your motivation. As you read through the list, write how each factor influences your motivation to offend. Decide which factors you have the power to change.

Environment: this is your home, neighbourhood and local area (e.g., ‘There’s nothing to do here, so I get bored’, ‘It’s what everyone does round here’, etc.)

How does this influence your behaviour? ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
What can you do to control this influence? .......................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

Society’s Values: this is influence that comes from TV, newspaper, films, videos, politicians, school, music, etc. It affects you through public opinion (e.g., ‘Everyone speeds’, ‘Having a car looks good, makes you popular’, ‘A car is freedom’, etc.)

How does this influence your behaviour? ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
What can you do to control this influence? .......................................................
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Family Values: this influence is more direct and is the way your family encourage and help you do things, or don’t help you. (e.g., ‘My dad says it’s OK, so long as I don’t get caught or hurt anyone’, ‘Nobody cares what I do’, etc.)

How does this influence your behaviour? ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
What can you do to control this influence? .......................................................
...........................................................................................................................
First name: ..............................................  Date: ................................

**Influence Grid**

On the bottom of the grid list all of your offences. On the left-hand side of the grid list all the people you knew at the time of your offending – family members, friends, and acquaintances.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Total</th>
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Now shade in each box whenever a person has condoned, encouraged or helped you commit any of the offences listed on the bottom. On the right-hand side total the number of shaded boxes. The higher the number, the higher the influence that person has over your offending behaviour.

Who are the people that influence your offending behaviour most and why? ............

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Have you tried to stop offending before? If so, write what you did to stop and why do you think it did not work?
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Apart from offending, what other problems have you got? (e.g., no friends, truanting, no job, arguing with parents, nowhere to live, etc.)
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How did you get caught for your offences?
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How did you learn about committing crimes? (e.g. From TV, friends, books, etc)
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Victim’s Questions

Here are some questions that victims might want to ask. Try and answer as many as you can. Write and number your answers on a blank piece of paper.

1. Why me?
2. What did I do to deserve this?
3. Have you got a grudge against me?
4. Were you watching me?
5. Why did you do it?
6. How did you do it?
7. Why did you pick on me?
8. Were there others? Have they been caught?
9. Are you going to do it again?
10. What else did you take?
11. What can I do to stop you?
12. Is my family safe from you?
13. Do you realise what it feels like?
14. Do you know how much hassle it causes me?
15. Why cause damage when you wanted to take things?
16. Do you really understand the value of things (personal items)?
17. Did you touch anything else?
18. What are you really like?
19. What are your parents like?
20. Who are you?
21. Are you sorry?
22. Have you been punished?
23. Will this stop you?
24. What happened to what you took?
25. Where did you sell it?
26. Can I get it back?
27. Can you get it back?
First name: ..............................................  Date: ................................

**Victims of my Offences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Court</th>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Victim(s)</th>
<th>Effect of the offence on the victim(s):</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>At the time:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Afterwards:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>At the time:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Afterwards:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>At the time:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Afterwards:</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Session 2  

Victim Awareness

a. Offender as a victim:

☐ e.g., times when I was a victim of crime.

b. Effects of offending:

☐ Effect on me / family / friends / victim as a result of victimisation

☐ Victim of offender’s offence

☐ e.g., ‘How does it feel to be a victim?’

☐ Offence / effects on victim (chart)

☐ Effect of my offending on victims, my family and friends
**Victim Awareness**

**Times when I was a victim of crime**

Think back over your life to the times when you have been a victim of crime. You are invited to write those experiences down.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence against me</th>
<th>Effect on me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At the time:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Afterwards:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>At the time:</td>
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<td>Afterwards:</td>
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<td>At the time:</td>
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<td>Afterwards:</td>
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<td>At the time:</td>
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<td>Afterwards:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Victim Awareness

Now think about the effects of the offence you have committed (consequences) e.g., what happened to you as a result? What happened to others? Put down your answer below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The effect on me</th>
<th>The effect on my family</th>
<th>The effect on my friends</th>
<th>The effect on victim(s)</th>
<th>The effect on any others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

When you look at the above, what do you feel and think? ........................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

Now if it were possible to turn the clock back to before you committed the offence, think about what led up to the offence being committed (antecedents). Think of different things you could have done or said that would have ended up with you not committing the offence (options out). List them for yourself below:

1. ........................................................................................................................
2. ........................................................................................................................
3. ........................................................................................................................
4. ........................................................................................................................
5. ........................................................................................................................
 Victim of the offender’s offence

How does it feel to be a victim?

What is a victim? A victim is someone who is hurt as a result of your behaviour. List all the signs that would tell you that you had hurt or upset someone.

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How do you think your crimes have practically affected your victims? (e.g., paperwork, fixing damages, extra security, financial expense, more insurance costs, etc)

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How do you think your crimes have emotionally affected your victim? (e.g., tearful, fear of being alone in the house, upset, angry, unable to trust other people, etc)

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How do you think your victim’s behaviour may have changed since your crime?

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**Offender’s Perspective**

**Offence Ranking Exercise**

Rank in order of seriousness (1 being the *most serious*, 10 the *least serious*), according to your own value system:

- Assault by a parent on a child
- Burglary of a private house
- Criminal damage to a telephone kiosk
- Possession of cannabis
- Theft of sweets/food etc by shoplifting
- Affray, taking part in gang fight
- Assaulting a police officer during the course of his/her duty
- Driving with bald tyres
- Falsely claiming Social Services Benefits
- Armed robbery
- Murder
- Assault by a husband on his wife
- Not possessing a television licence
- Rape
- Burglary and theft of £2,000 cash from a warehouse
- Drunken driving
- Taking a car without the owner’s consent
- Supplying cocaine
- Falsely claiming expenses at work
**Offence/Effects**

Look at the offences listed below. First sort the list of offences in order of the most serious (1 being the *most serious*, 10 the *least serious*); then sort the list in order of offences that have the most effect on victims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Offence in order of seriousness</th>
<th>Offence in order of most effect on victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theft of £30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Possession of a firearm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoplifting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary of a garage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Theft of a pedal cycle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft of a CD-player/sat-nav</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Theft of a car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Death by dangerous driving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft of a handbag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminal damage: £300</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theft of an old car</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burglary of a house</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theft of a 4-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manslaughter</td>
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<td>Robbery of a bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deception</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug dealing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How do the two lists differ? .................................................................................................................................
The effect of my offending on victims, my family and friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Court</th>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Victim(s)</th>
<th>Effect of the offence on the victim(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>At the time:</td>
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<td>Afterwards:</td>
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<td>At the time:</td>
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<td>Afterwards:</td>
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<td>At the time:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afterwards:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 3

Looking at Strategies to Stop Re-offending

a. Offending triggers and prevention plans:

☐ e.g. ‘Offending Trigger’ exercise

☐ Situation I need to avoid at all cost

☐ Life changes

b. Making amends

☐ e.g. Making amends exercise

☐ Letter of apology

☐ Letter from your Victim
First name: ..............................................  Date: ................................

Offending Prevention Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offending Triggers</th>
<th>Prevention Plans</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Situations I need to avoid at all costs

1.

2.

3.

4.

Personal Changes I wish to make

I have read this prevention plan and will do everything I can to help make it work:

Signed: ........................................ Initial Date....................................................

Signed: ........................................1st Review Date............................................

Signed: ........................................2nd Review Date............................................

Signed: ........................................3rd Review Date............................................
First name: ........................................  Date: ................................

**Making amends**

Consider the possible ways you can make things better for your victims, and plan ways to make amends either directly or indirectly (a letter of apology, a reparation meeting, etc)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim(s) name(s)</th>
<th>Plan to make amends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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Use this in your prevention plan. **Do not** approach any of the victims without the permission of your supervisor and Area Victim Liaison Unit.
Exercise 40

A letter from your victim

You are your victim. Write a letter to yourself as if it came from your victim, or your victim’s parent / relative / friend.

It should say what the victim would probably say to you if he/she wrote the letter.

It should cover:
• how the victim felt about the offence at the time.
• how the victim feels now.
• how the victim feels about you.
• the resolution or outcome the victim would like to see.
• what else you think the victim would want to say to you.

Think this through carefully. Make some notes first, and then write the letter. Use extra paper if needed.

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Session 4

Review and Concluding Session

Review the Prevention plan by using the Monitoring Chart to measure attitude and changes in thinking. To be done via role play, exercises and reviewing / rewriting letters to victims.

☐ Monitoring chart

☐ Letter of apology

Should there be an expressed wish to make amends to the victim, please contact your local Victim Liaison Unit.
**First name:** ..............................................  **Date:** ................................

### Monitoring

Fill out the chart below once a week for a month. What triggers came up during the week? What action did you take? (If none, what action should you have taken?) What was the outcome?

Record any changes you make to your prevention plan. After a month discuss with your supervisor how often to do this chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triggers</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

### CHANGES TO PREVENTION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes to Prevention Plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First name: ............................................ Date: ................................

**Apology Letter**

Write a letter of apology to your victim (the most recent victim if you have more than one).

This letter should include:

- acknowledgment of your offence (taking full responsibility for it, including a clarification that the victim did not cause the offence.)
- acknowledgement of how you set up and tricked the victim.
- a statement showing full awareness of the harm you did to the victim.
- a statement showing understanding of the emotions you put the victim through.
- a *sincere* apology for committing the offence.
- an explanation of why, to the best of your knowledge, you did what you did.
- an explanation of how you have made sure you will never commit an offence again.

(Use the space below to write some notes. Use the next page to write your letter – you can use extra paper if you do not have space here).
Apology Letter

Dear ..................................................  (your victim’s first name)

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Signed: ...............................................................

This letter is NOT to be sent to the victim. If Mediation is being considered, please speak to your local Victim Liaison Officer.

Questioning Style
In order to encourage the offender to think carefully about the issues being discussed, it is important that the Offender Manager uses ‘open-ended’ questions. This particular style of questioning deters the offender from giving ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers to questions. Examples of open-ended questions are:

- ‘Tell me how you think your mother felt when she found out what you had done.’

- ‘What emotional impact do you think your victim felt when s/he came home and found the house broken into?’

  If the answer is ill-thought out, you can ask supplementary questions such as ‘You have obviously been giving this some thought; can you tell me a bit more?’ This is both motivational in style and encourages further thought by the offender.

- ‘I know you are keen not to re-offend again; can you explain to me some of the ways you intend not doing so?’ Again, this is motivational and encourages more thought.

- ‘Please explain to me what thought you gave to your victim before you committed the offence.’ This is both an assumptive question which is telling the offender that you are assuming they gave thought to the victim, but again it is open-ended inviting him/her to say more.

- ‘If you could meet your victim, what might you say to him/her to make him/her realise that you are genuinely sorry?’, ‘What else might you want him/her to know?’

Obviously, this is not an exhaustive list of examples – the key is to remember to ask questions that emphasise:

- How?
- What?
- Where?
- When?
- Why?

**A note about recording**

In almost every case it will be appropriate for the Sentence Plan on eOASys to include a SMART objective for victim work, and an indication of how this may be sequenced.
Suggested wording for eOASys Sentence Plan

Section 3 – victim issues

Dialogue box may be populated with “complete victim awareness workbook”

Section 7.1 Objectives and Plans

Relevant OASys item (A)

Select “Attitude to victim” from drop down menu

Objective – what are you trying to achieve (B)

Select “Improved ability to recognise victim’s perspective/needs” from drop-down menu under sub-heading “Offending behaviour/analysis of offence/victim issues”

How will you measure any progress made (C)

Suggested wording includes “Feedback from offender / increased offender ability to demonstrate perspective taking”.

What work will be done to achieve the objective (D)

Select “Victim awareness counselling” from drop-down menu and add “completion of victim awareness workbook” in free text box.
Examples of wording for CATO ECF recording

Attended. Completed session 1 of the Victim Awareness workbook. Participated well in offence analysis and work on victim perspective.

Attended. Completed session 2 of the Victim Awareness workbook. Further exploration of how it feels to be a victim.

Attended. Completed session 3 of the Victim Awareness workbook. Started to develop strategies to stop re-offending and to make amends.


The wording above is an example of concise recording. Offender Managers and Supervisors may want to customise it to fit individual situations.

On concluding the workbook, the Offender Manager will be required to update eOASys and review the offender’s progress in relation to victim awareness and identify if any further work is needed in this area. Updating of relevant scores in eOASys should also be done.
Advice from HM Inspectorate of Probation provided through our Regional Project

Why is victim awareness and empathy important?
Focussed work with offenders on victim awareness and empathy can reduce risk of re-offending and risk of causing harm to others.

What do I focus on?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for offender</th>
<th>Evidence of offender learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What or who is a victim?</td>
<td>Can provide lots of ideas examples of what being a victim is like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What effects does crime have on victims?</td>
<td>Can describe victims’ feelings in relation to types of crimes and own crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about other victims?</td>
<td>Can take a wider perspective on who may have been affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you feel about the victim?</td>
<td>Can describe the difference between sympathy and empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you say to the victim?</td>
<td>Can give expression to thoughts and feelings and how they might act on them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What have you learnt about victim impact?</td>
<td>Can identify negative impact of their own offending on their victim(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can you do about future behaviour?</td>
<td>Can identify actions to take and avoid so as not to create future victims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What approach do I take?

- Be mindful of your own experiences – how aware are you of what it is like to be a victim – remind yourself of your own experiences or someone you have supported, what helped you, what helped them?
- Encourage offenders to think carefully – use open-ended questions, i.e. avoiding yes/no answers, use questions beginning with how? what? where? when? why?
- Use motivational techniques that welcome reflection and empathy and encourage deeper consideration
- Talk to victim liaison officers about some of their experiences or invite them to a team meeting

In the case file and electronic records, where victim awareness work is planned, undertaken, reviewed or evaluated, always refer to this work in:

- assessments
- sentence plans and reviews
- constructive work undertaken (e.g. from Targets for Effective Change)
- restrictions imposed and maintained (or not)
- relevant interventions prepared for, attended and followed up with offender
- pre-and post-accredited programme work
- before and after questionnaires
- recording learning outcomes
In inspection interviews with offenders you will want them to be able to describe:

- who their victims were
- what’s in their plan
- what work they have done on the subject of victim awareness
- with what outcome
- with what success in applying this learning
- what else they have learnt

In inspection interviews with Offender Managers you should be able to explain and provide evidence of:

- why victim awareness and empathy is important
- what you focus on
- what approach you take (taking account of diversity, learning styles, basic skills levels etc)
- what outcomes you are looking for
- what successes you have had and what you have learnt.
Additional Materials
(Extracts from NPS-Staffordshire’s Workbook)

These can be used flexibly in response to individual need. Suggestions are provided regarding which sessions they most appropriately belong to.
Additional Materials

Session 1

Definition of a Victim

This first session involves initiating a discussion with the offender about the definition of a victim. Encourage the offender to come up with as many ideas and examples as possible.

The aim is for creative thinking – so not just obvious definitions. Encourage lateral thinking.

You will need a pen and paper. If the offender struggles to write, you can assist, but it is important you write the actual words the offender uses – not an interpretation.

Examples

- A person who has suffered injury because of an assault.
- A person who has lost financially because of theft.
- The parent of a child who has been killed by a drunk driver.
- An ambulance driver who attends a horrific road accident.
- A Police Officer injured whilst on duty.
- A person who witnessed a violent attack on another person.

Once you have list of examples (the list should not be exhaustive) work with the offender to try and produce an actual definition. This should be his/her definition to encourage real understanding and ownership. However, some may find this difficult, so prompting can help. Use the examples from the first part of the session.

Example

‘A victim is a person who has suffered physically, emotionally or mentally as a result of harm caused by another person or persons.’

Once you have a definition, ask the offender to reflect on an occasion when a person close to them has been a victim. This should not be themselves. Use open-ended questions to encourage the offender to begin thinking about how that person would have felt at the time. Do not spend too much time on this and remember the purpose is not to make the offender ‘feel bad’, but to think more empathically about victims.

Learning Points

- To think creatively about what constitutes being a victim.
- To produce a definition of a victim.
- To begin thinking empathically about the effects on victims.
Session 2

Thinking about the victim’s feelings

This session is aimed at encouraging the offender to think about the effects that anti-social and abusive behaviour has on victims.

Begin the session with an exercise that encourages the offender to think about what it means to be a victim. You will be using a victim awareness scenario. Do not be tempted to modify this exercise or allow the offender to use a personal experience.

Scenario

Imagine you have just started a new job. You and your partner have found a house to rent and at last you are getting things together. You are walking home planning a quiet evening in tonight. Your partner is home late so you are making the dinner.

- Write down what would go through your mind in this situation?

As you open the front door you notice the sitting room door is open, it is always left closed.

- What do you think and feel?

You go into the sitting room, there is an empty space where your TV and DVD should be. You look round the room and everything has been disturbed; your music centre is also missing. You now know you have been burgled.

- How do you feel?

You go into the kitchen and the back door has been kicked in, everything is in chaos; a picture of your mother has been smashed.

- What goes through your mind?

You go upstairs and find the same mess in the bedroom, drawers turned out and clothes strewn over the floor. Your partner’s bracelet is missing – this is not valuable but does have sentimental value as it had belonged to his/her grandma.

- How are you going to break the news to your partner about this? How does it make you feel?

You go downstairs – your partner is due home any time now.

- What are your thoughts at this time?
It is preferable that the offender writes down the answers to the questions so that they can be kept for reference. Do not hesitate in writing the answers for them if there is difficulty with literacy, but always make sure you use the offenders own words.

Now move on to a piece of work that draws out specific feelings that a victim will feel during and after an offence.

You will need a paper and pen for this exercise.

At the top of the paper the Offender Manager writes ‘How do victims feel?’ The offender is then encouraged to write as many adjectives as they can that describe the feelings of the victim. It may help if you refer back to the definition agreed in the first session.

**Examples**

- terrified
- scared
- repulsed
- panicky
- shocked
- angry
- frightened
- pain
- dirty

The list should be as long and as creative as possible.

The second part of the session begins to encourage the offender to associate some of these feelings to his/her own offence.

Ask the offender to explain who the victims of their offence were. If it is a specific person insist that they use the person’s first name. Stop the offender if s/he uses any derogatory terms and insist that the name is used. If they do not know the name of the victim/s use the term ‘victim’, or agree an imaginary name.

Ask the offender to talk through the brief detail of their offence in relation to the victim.

Using the list of adjectives that they produced in the first part of the session, ask them to identify which of those feelings would relate to their victim/s.

**A word about ‘victim-less’ offences**

Some offenders may try and insist that their offence did not have a victim. If this happens encourage them to think more creatively. For example, an offence of shoplifting – encourage discussion on how supermarkets will increase prices to maintain profits. This in turn will affect families with low incomes.

**Learning Points**

- To identify the types of feelings a victim will experience.
- To identify feelings the specific victim of the offender will have experienced as a result of his/her behaviour.
The wider victim perspective

This session encourages the offender to think more widely about how their behaviour may have affected other people – not just the direct victim of the offence.

You will need paper and pen for this exercise.

At the top of the paper write ‘Victim Ripple’. Then draw four circles – a large outer circle with three within it, getting a smaller – to create the effect of a ‘ripple’ (the result should look rather like a dart board – use Appendix A, if this helps).

Ask the offender to work from the centre of the ‘ripple’ and write the names of all the people who have been adversely affected by his/her offence. Those most seriously affected should be placed in the centre, with those less badly affected in the outer circle. Encourage broad-thinking so as to include those individuals that may not be obvious. For example, nurses in the Accident and Emergency department, parents, grandparents, Police and children who may not be the direct victims.

Now engage the offender in a discussion about how the victims will have been affected. Encourage him/her to distinguish between immediate, medium and longer-term effects.

**Learning Points**

- To identify other people who will have been affected by the offence and how they will have been affected.
- To identify the short, medium and long-term effects of offending on victims.
Session 4

Victim empathy and perspective taking

This is a discussion session, but a discussion where the offender should be doing most of the talking.

Begin the discussion with an open-ended question. Ask the question ‘What do you understand by the word empathy?’

Follow this with ‘How do you think this is different from sympathy?’

You may have to prompt the offender if they struggle, but encourage them to think it through themselves rather than simply telling them the answer.

Once you are satisfied that the offender understands the difference between empathy and sympathy, ask for some everyday examples of each.

Examples

**Sympathy**
- Feeling sorry for someone.
- Wishing something had not happened to someone.
- Worrying about someone.
- Showing approval of something.
- Agree with an opinion.

**Empathy**
- Understanding how someone else feels.
- Having the ability to imagine yourself in someone else’s situation.
- Being able to imagine how someone else would be feeling.

Then move on to discuss why empathy is important.

Example

Empathy is important because it means you understand and appreciate why someone has done something – you are able to imagine being in someone else’s position. As a result you are able to act in an appropriate way towards the person.

**Learning Points**
- Empathy involves not just recognising the feelings of another, but also acting in an appropriate way in response.

You will then lead into a discussion about perspective-taking – which is closely linked to empathy.
Give the offender the following scenario:

You are a member of a family of four: mother, father, a sixteen year old daughter and an eight year old son.

The father is in full-time work. The mother is in part-time work – working five half-days per week. Jane, the daughter, is in the middle of exams at school. Ben, the son, is also at school. Both children are very untidy and leave their bedrooms in a mess on a regular basis. The father’s job is physically demanding and he regularly works overtime to help pay the bills.

It is a Friday evening. The father has just come home from work and is demanding a hot meal.

Jane wants to go to a party; she has just had her last exam and wants to celebrate. Her bedroom is a huge mess.

Ben’s room is also a mess, but he thinks he is too young to tidy up. He wants his tea and to watch a DVD. He is not feeling very well.

The mother has had a hard day at work, finishing later than she should. She gets home having done the food shopping for the weekend. The general expectation from the family is that she should prepare the meal as that is what normally happens. She would like someone else to cook for a change.

Ask the offender to try and imagine him/herself in each family member's position and to think of five reasons for each person, as to why they should have their own way (mention that more than five reasons may be possible).

Depending on whether the offender is male or female be careful not to allow them to be more sympathetic with the family member of their own sex.

Try to ensure that each family member has the same number of legitimate reasons for having their own way.

Discourage inappropriate reasons e.g., ‘The mother should cook the meal because she is a woman.’

Ask the offender: ‘Why do you think perspective-taking is important for you and your offending?’ Elicit at least five examples from him/her.

Finish the session by praising the offender for being able to consider looking at things from other people’s perspectives.
Appendix A

The Victim Ripple
WORKBOOK FEEDBACK

We would like to know what you have to say about the workbook you have just finished so that we can look at how it could be improved.

First of all we would like to know a bit about you.

   □   □   □   □   □   □

2. Gender  Male  Female
   □   □

3. Race Identity

   Asian or Asian British  Black or Black British
   □ Indian  □ Caribbean
   □ Pakistani  □ African
   □ Bangladeshi  □ Other Black background
   □ Other Asian background

   Mixed  White
   □ White and Black Caribbean  □ British
   □ White and Black African  □ Irish
   □ White and Asian  □ Other White background
   □ Other mixed background

   Chinese and Other ethnic groups
   □ Chinese
   □ Other  please specify.................................................................
4. Name of workbook ____________________________________________

5. Did you enjoy the workbook?
   - Yes [ ]
   - Some of it [ ]
   - Not very much [ ]
   - Not at all [ ]

6. Did you understand the workbook?
   - Yes [ ]
   - Some of it [ ]
   - Not very much [ ]
   - Not at all [ ]

7. Was the workbook useful to you?
   - Very useful [ ]
   - Useful [ ]
   - Of little use [ ]
   - Not useful [ ]

8. How much did you learn?
   - A lot [ ]
   - Quite a lot [ ]
   - A little [ ]
   - Nothing [ ]
9. How likely is it that completing the workbook will help you reduce your Offending?

Very likely  Fairly likely  Fairly unlikely  Very unlikely

10. What are the most important things you have learned from the workbook?

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11. What, if anything would be the one thing you would change about the workbook?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form

Team:…………………………………………………………………….
(to be completed by offender manager)

Completed feedback forms should be sent to Carol Hopkins, Research Officer, at 1 Victoria Square.