



**Outdoor Experiential Education Programmes for Socially Excluded
Young People
An Evaluation of the Venture Trust's 10-day Pilot Programme
Final Report**

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Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

In 2004, the Community Fund supported a programme of 10-day pilot courses at the Venture Trust in Applecross. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme the Venture Trust contracted the University of Edinburgh to study the outcomes of the 10 of these courses conducted in 2004. The following summarises the research approach taken and the main outcomes. Full details of these and a thorough literature review are presented in the main report.

Participants in the programme were referred by one of three main agencies; Fairbridge, Foyer Federation, and National Children's Homes and the study was carried out over a period of about 9 months. A combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews provided primarily qualitative data on 94 participants of which complete data sets were collected on 24. Results from both participants and their referral agency key-workers indicated that the 10-day course had, to a greater or lesser extent, a positive effect on personal and social aspects of the participant's lives and most notably on vocational development.

Participant Outcomes

- **Personal and Social Development:** The findings show signs of developing self-confidence amongst participants. This is reinforced by the experience of referral agencies, which suggests that, in the medium term, (up to three months after the course) young people benefited from programmes offered by the Venture Trust. These programmes were intended to encourage the development of self-awareness and self-confidence, improve communication and problem solving skills and develop team-work.
- **Vocational Development:** One of the areas affected to a greater degree than had previously been thought, was that of vocational development. Unemployment rates amongst participants were shown to have dropped by almost 50% post-course and significant numbers of participants not in full-time employment had taken up some form of voluntary work or training position since attending a Venture Trust course.
- **Drug and Alcohol Use:** Though not a significant issue with the majority in this client group, the Venture Trust course also appeared to have had a modest positive impact on those involved in drug use and offending behaviour. Though alcohol use was not an issue for the majority, the small numbers reporting medium to heavy use did not decline over the course of the research.
- **Offending Behaviour:** Results were similar to those for drug use.

The Venture Trust Programme

- The Venture Trust programme appears to be successful in establishing a level of understanding that is conducive to positive change; introducing techniques and approaches for dealing with issues faced by participants.
- By extending the study beyond the end of each course, results and feedback were collected which highlight the value of continued post-course support.
- Most referral agencies and participants reported congruence between the standards they expected and those they experienced on the Venture Trust programmes. This sense of congruence was reflected in the positive feedback from most participants about their experiences while on a course.

- The study indicates that the Venture Trust programme comprises a number of elements that are sequential, progressive and cumulative, supporting learning at a range of levels. It is developmental rather than simply a collection of isolated activities. The commitment to post-course follow up improved the chances of such learning being integrated into the lives of the participants through links and positive relationships with partner agencies.

Programme Delivery

The study found that the Venture Trust programme was characterised by:

- An effective balance between the giving of responsibility to participants and the maintenance of a clear safety framework.
- An emphasis on the importance of co-operation for the attainment of successful outcomes.
- The progressive transfer of appropriate responsibility to participants and encouragement to apply this to their home circumstances.
- The relaxed and congenial style of the Venture Trust staff, combined with the structure and programming, works to avoid conflict and prevent the alienation of individuals with challenging behaviour.
- Examples of diligent and comprehensive follow-on action plans and report systems to support on-going participant development.

Recommendations

- In order to ensure appropriate referrals to the course, guidelines on course content and participation should be clarified for referring agencies. This might be done using a variety of methods aimed at both participants and referral workers.
- There is evidence of good practice in the feedback process within some referral agency partnerships. Based on this experience, links with referral agencies should be developed and strengthened, implementing continued and sustained follow-up procedures to ensure continued and appropriate support for young people attending Venture Trust courses to reinforce their learning.
- The Venture Trust should consider encouraging its staff to gain experience of the referral agencies. This may be possible through short-term secondment or shared practice meetings. The Venture Trust should continue to support staff in developing further skills to maintain a high level of reflective, up-to-date practice, through appropriate training and appraisal procedures.
- The Venture Trust should consider ways in which evidence can be collated and recorded both in the long and short-term, to ensure its effective use in evaluation and analysis and future development of their course programmes.
- In order for ongoing evaluation of the programme to be most effective, it is necessary to develop a strategy for the continued collection of appropriate data. This will allow more detailed analysis of programme design. For example, are specific approaches and activities in current use those most effective in meeting the needs of the participants?

1 Introduction

Adventurous experiences in the outdoors have been used as a medium for personal growth and development in young people for many thousands of years, though over the last century this has become more stylised and formalised in western society. Whilst some trace the written origins of an understanding of an experiential approach to learning as far back as Plato (1955), it is Dewey (1938) who is often credited with promoting this as an approach to learning. In recent years a growing body of literature has further developed the philosophy and practice of outdoor education (for example, Nichols, 2000; Higgins & Nicol, 2002; Kolb, 1984, 1988; Warren, Sakofs & Hunt, 1995; Wurdinger, 1997).

Whilst outdoor adventure programmes have become increasingly diverse one specific strand has become particularly popular; the use of adventurous activities within an experiential learning context to bring about positive change in young people who, for various reasons may be experiencing 'exclusion' from or conflict with society. This practice involves engaging people in activities which are used as a medium to discuss the way in which they interact with the world and potentially change those patterns to be more satisfactory for themselves and for society.

The purpose of the present study is to evaluate the outcomes of a pilot experiential outdoor educational programme, which was developed at the Venture Trust to provide a medium for 16-25 year-olds to bring about positive change in their lives. The 10-day course was aimed at young people from across the United Kingdom, who are already engaged with youth organisations, such as:

- Fairbridge
- Foyer Federation
- National Children's Homes

A multi-method approach was developed to identify the outcomes of the 10-day programme and to evaluate the extent to which the programme's aims have been achieved. A comparison was also made between the effectiveness of this new 10-day programme and the 20-day programme previously conducted for a similar client group.

2 The Venture Trust in Context

2.1 The Outdoor Educational Context

To understand the context of the work at the Venture Trust it is useful to briefly review the history of outdoor education, particularly its application for personal and social development, and then to focus on the specific work of the Venture Trust.

According to Gillis and Priest (2003), the notion of using outdoor adventure education as a medium for personal development for a variety of groups in society has been in evidence since 1861. Specific references to the importance of experiential education for developing morals and values in young people can be found in the work of Socrates, Aristotle and Plato, as well as the work of Dewey (1925, 1938) and Maslow (1962). Although these authors are also pivotal in much of the theory which underpins outdoor adventure education, the academic body of knowledge to support its value has only been gathered over the last half-century (for example, Gibson, 1979; Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Higgins & Loynes, 1997a; Miles and Priest, 1990; Mortlock, 1984). Much of this has been more of a philosophical nature than based on empirical evidence.

Outdoor adventure education programmes have become increasingly diverse, in both their uses of the outdoors and in their underpinning philosophy or purpose. To place the work of the Venture Trust in context some of the most relevant examples of the literature relating to the field are reviewed and presented in Appendix 8.1.

There are several terms used to describe outdoor adventure programmes which use an experiential learning foundation. Therefore it is useful to establish a working definition for the purposes of this study.

Barrett and Greenaway (1995) suggest that outdoor adventure education “*denotes a package containing a number of different ingredients, any of which may have a significant impact on the personal and social development of the young people involved*” (p3). Further to this, Higgins and Loynes (1997a) advocate that each element, outdoor, adventure, and education are fundamental in the process:

[It] should not simply be recreational, nor should it take place without at least some experience of the outdoors. Adventure in this context implies that there is a ‘journeying out’ (a move into new ground) to embrace the experience. The process engaged in is that of learning ‘experientially’. To maximise the effect,

the experience should be direct rather than meditated, with the facilitator acting as a guide rather than in the usual formal capacity of a teacher.

Higgins & Loynes (1997a, p. 2)

In defining the nature of outdoor education Higgins and Loynes (1997b) also refer to the field *“as drawing on three main areas of outdoor activities, environmental education and personal and social development”* (see Figure 2.1). They suggest that effective facilitators often do not have an equal focus on all three areas at the same time, often concentrating on one or two areas particularly, *“but will still be sensitive to opportunities to guide experience within complimentary areas...tak[ing] place in a framework of safety”* (p.6). Programme delivery at the Venture Trust is an example of this, where general practice focuses within the outdoor activity and personal and social development areas, but due care and attention is still paid to the natural environment within which they operate, so as to educate within this area on a more subtle level.



Figure 2.1 The Range and Scope of Outdoor Education (Higgins and Loynes, 1997b, p. 6)

2.2 The Venture Trust

The Venture Trust (VT) was established 22 years ago and has been running residential courses for young people for nine years. Set in its own grounds, located in the rugged landscape of the northwest of Scotland, VT offers its participants the chance to take a break from their routine with space and support to reconsider their personal and social attitudes and circumstances. Their mission statement proposes that:

Venture Trust works to enable young people from throughout Great Britain to grasp the responsibilities and opportunities of a modern and complex society, by offering them a residential programme of opportunities that promotes increases in self-esteem, confidence and motivation and develops personal, social and life skills.

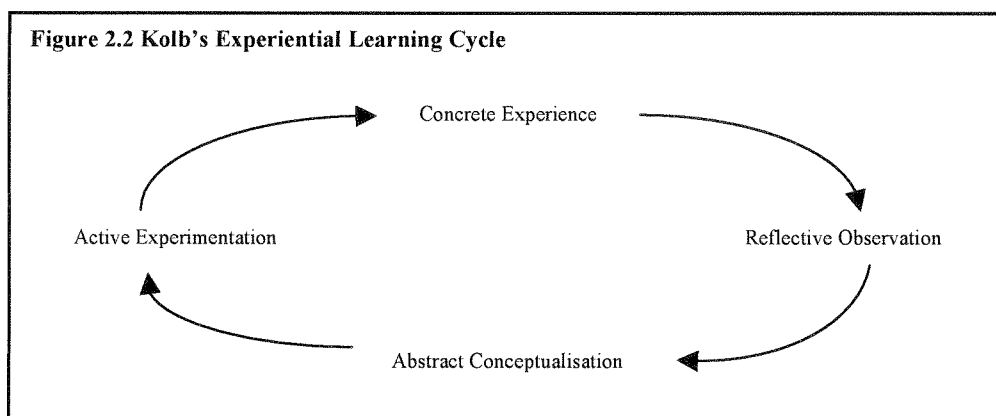
Venture Trust (2000, p.1)

With a focus on young people aged 16-25 years, who are often experiencing difficulties in their relationship with their community and the wider society (such as being out of education, training or employment; homelessness; problems with drugs or alcohol; or offending behaviour) VT strives to provide an environment where young people are comfortable to explore their beliefs, values and goals, aiming to raise awareness of the wide range of possibilities available to each participant.

Prerequisites for courses are simple; referral agents must be committed to providing a minimum of 3 -months post-course support, in order to help establish any new learning and build some structure to work within once the young person returns home; participants must possess the commitment to make changes to their lives. Wurdinger (1997) states that,

“...choice is the first step towards a meaningful learning experience. Adventure educators believe that in order for meaningful learning to occur students must determine that they want to participate, otherwise the activity is forced and may result in no learning at all. Therefore, choice is an important element not only in the midst of adventure, but at the very outset as well” (p.6).

Based on this enthusiasm and dedication, VT's courses are grounded in cognitive behavioural approaches (Gillen, 2003) to aid understanding and insight, combined with Kolb's experiential learning cycle theory (Kolb, 1984) (see Figure 2.2).



The structure of course programmes, which are of ten days duration, is grounded in the principle that experiences, which have the potential to nurture increases in self-awareness and responsibility in young people, can lead to a positive transformation in an individual's attitudes and behaviour. A range of approaches are used to guide the young people towards a greater level of self-awareness, understanding and learning.

In partnership with the referring agencies (Fairbridge, Foyer Federation and National Children's Homes being the main feeder organisations), VT's work with young people aims to build upon a foundation of development, which is already in progress. Therefore, individual needs are identified prior to the course, so that a more appropriate programme can be delivered to meet those needs. Throughout the course, close attention is paid to each young person, in order to work in a fashion that is appropriate to their learning style, thus maximising their learning potential. Within this supportive framework, attitudes, values and beliefs, which could be interpreted as negative, are confronted.

2.3 Course Structure

Courses offered are mixed gender, though generally, a higher percentage of referrals are male. Those who attend are made up of young people from across the United Kingdom, with a maximum of 24 on any one course. Venture Trust recognises that some of its participants will not have been as successful during formal education and therefore the programmes work with an experiential learning focus.

Using a combination of challenging indoor and outdoor activities, group work and one-to-one sessions, participants are provided with what is designed to be a solid foundation, from which they can work on developing their individual needs, such as raising self-awareness, motivation and personal and social skills.

The majority of the course is delivered using activities that explore themes around journeying, working with other people and reflection. This includes an actual journey in the form of an 'expedition', lasting several days, where the young people may rock-climb, abseil, hike or canoe and sleep out in tents or mountain huts. This medium is used as a metaphor to symbolise the journey each young person is passing through in his or her life. The intention of the expedition is to encourage each individual to face up to and overcome the challenges in the physical journey, with guidance (through group and one-to-one

discussions) enabling them to then develop the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to transfer their learning for use in their everyday lives.

The discussion periods are a chance for the young people to review how they feel they are progressing and with their one-to-one worker, discuss and work towards goals to help them succeed. Strategies to apply what they have learned in their everyday lives are discussed and action plans drawn up to help guide them once they have left VT. This action plan forms part of a detailed report, which highlights individual progress throughout the course. In order to maintain a solid structure to support their development the participants are then encouraged to re-establish contact with their referral worker when they return home.

3 Methodology

3.1 Complex phenomena

Data for this study were collected using two main approaches. First, an open-format questionnaire was used (Appendix 8.2, 8.3, 8.4) to collect qualitative data. Second, the Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) was used to collect quantitative data (Appendix 8.5, Figure 8.1 and Table 8.1).

Use of open-ended questionnaires and related quantitative methods are increasingly used in outdoor education research as researchers have recognised the value of gaining a more in-depth explanation of the processes involved and the changes that are reported. The sensitivity of such approaches allows for access to the more personal responses and individual narratives which are not typically found by statistical methods (Allison, 2000).

3.2 Open Ended Questionnaire

In the case of this study, the qualitative methods or open-ended questionnaires utilised were three approaches previously developed and in use by the Venture Trust. Due to the contrasting aspect of this study with an old VT programme, it was deemed necessary and appropriate to use the same methods of data collection in order to replicate the procedure as closely as possible.

The first qualitative method issued was the comprehensive application questionnaire (Appendix 8.2), which VT currently uses to screen its potential course participants. This contains sections completed by both the young person and referral agents, in order to gain as accurate a pre-course profile as possible. The second qualitative method distributed, again contains sections completed by both the young person and their referral worker, immediately post course (Appendix 8.3). This has always been sent out by VT staff immediately post-course, accompanied by a comprehensive report for each participant. The final qualitative method was distributed by the researcher for the referral worker to complete, based on their consultations with and observations of the young person over the 3-month period post-course. This was accompanied by a copy of the LEQ, completed by the young person for the third and final time.

3.3 The Life Effectiveness Questionnaire

In terms of quantitative research techniques, an instrument that reflects the holistic nature of the Venture Trust was considered the most suitable in terms of the programme evaluation. Ideally, a self-report instrument would have been specifically designed in accordance with the aims of the programme. However, this was not feasible in the given timeframe of the study. Therefore a previously developed instrument was used, the Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ-I) (Appendix 8.5, Figure 8.1).

There were two main reasons for using the LEQ in this study. Firstly given the instruments that were available at the time it appeared to be the most suitable in terms of its size, it was a one-sided self-report instrument that took approximately five minutes to complete. Also, it was relatively simple, therefore it was thought the VT participants would easily understand it and as it had been developed for specific use within the field of outdoor experiential learning, it appeared to be relevant.

The LEQ provides a multidimensional measure of 'personal or life effectiveness' (Neill et al, 1997). Although its name suggests it is a questionnaire, it is technically a self-report instrument (Figure 8.1).

Table 8.1 provides a description of each of the components and the specific items or statements to which they correspond. Each of the 29 items or statements on the instrument is divided into subsets of three (except for the 'locus of control' item, which currently has five, due to developmental processes in the instrument¹). These subsets relate to nine components of life effectiveness. The possible responses for each of the statements range from 1 'Not Like Me' to 8 'Like Me'. The score for each component is the average of the scores on the three to five related statements for that component. For example, the score for Achievement Motivation is the average of the score on items 4, 13 and 22.

3.3.2 Reliability and validity of the LEQ

Documented research on the reliability and validity of the LEQ (Neill et al, 1997; Neill, 2000a) suggests that the LEQ was reliable in measuring something and measuring it consistently. However, there was little evidence relating to any measure of validity. Subsequently, Neill did report that the instrument was 'equally applicable to males and

¹ For further information on the development and use of the LEQ see <http://www.wilderdom.com/leq.html>.

females, as well as for adolescents and adults' (Neill, 2000a, p.5). Thus reinforcing the view that the instrument was suitable for use with the population of this study; mixed gender adolescents.

To address the issue of validity the research was designed in such a way that the results from each approach, the LEQ and the open-ended style questionnaires could be tabulated to provide a form of convergent validity. The technique was used 'to get a 'true' fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it (the situation) or different findings' (Silverman, 2000, p.177). In this study the findings from the different measures are considered together in order to get an overall understanding of the effectiveness of the Venture Trust programme, however in doing so they also provide an indication as to the LEQ's validity in terms of producing findings which are relatively similar to those produced by the other measures. Cohen and Manion (1994, p.238) describe this process as 'triangulation between methods' stating that it involves 'the use of more than one method in the pursuit of a given objective'.

3.3.3 Adapting and Administering the LEQ

The LEQ had been designed for use with a variety of age groups ranging from adolescents to adults in a pre and post-intervention setting (Neill and Flory, 2000b). To determine the suitability of the questionnaire in terms of the participants' receptiveness to it, a full copy of the instrument was issued to senior staff at the Venture Trust. Following consultation, it was considered necessary to alter the format slightly from the more formal, exam style to a more generic format, thus moving away from anything which could be associated with formal education situations, from which many participants have either been or feel excluded from.

Administration of the LEQ in the first instance was carried out by the researcher to demonstrate to VT staff the style and process to be followed. This style was adhered to as closely as possible at subsequent first and second stages of the LEQ's administration. The third stage of administration was carried out by the referral agents. However, it was not considered necessary to provide instructions at this stage, due to participant familiarity with the process by now.

3.4 Summary of the multi-method approach and data collection

It was decided when possible to collect data prior to the course or failing that on the first or second day of the course. This was followed by further collection at the end of the course, another immediately after the course and three months after returning to the home community. This is represented diagrammatically in Table 3.1. Thus, data can be categorised as pre-, post- or 3 month-post and either from the questionnaire or the LEQ.

The strength in such a data collection approach is that it uses multiple methods which can then be tabulated and cross-referenced to build up as accurate a picture of young people's experiences as possible. One disadvantage is that it relies heavily on referral agencies, specifically support workers, completing paperwork and returning it in a timely fashion. This became an issue in the present study and is explored in some detail later.

A total of 94 participants (or their referral agencies) returned data but only 24 returned the qualitative data at all stages of the research (pre-, post- and 3 month post-course). In addition, due to the delayed start of the research, it was only feasible to collect quantitative data from four courses (courses four to seven; $n=57$). Of these 57, 21 returned the quantitative data at all three stages. The total data returned is represented in Table 3.2.

Following receipt of the qualitative data at the first and subsequent stages, information was evaluated using thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). This means that the information was grouped around common themes. Throughout this process, the data were treated in a horizontal style i.e. each statement was considered equal in value during the development of the themes (Creswell, 1998). Subsequently, these themes were entered into a codebook (see Appendix 8.8) in preparation for further analysis (Pallant, 2001, p.12). The data were then analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), generating various outputs of the data, both horizontally and vertically to develop a clearer profile of the young people attending VT courses. These outputs form the basis of the results presented in Section 4, which details figures generated using SPSS.

The quantitative data was also analysed using SPSS. However, due to the low numbers who returned the LEQ at all three stages ($n=21$), this method became void of use in terms of outcomes, validity or reliability. This was further supported by the fact only ten of the 21 actually answered every question, which is fundamental to the measurement process.

Table 3.1 Data Collection Point Summary

A	Course 1	Q	Q3	
A	Course 2	Q	Q3	
A	Course 3	Q	Q3	
A	Course 4	L	Q	Q3 & L
A	Course 5	L	Q	Q3 & L
A	Course 6	L	Q	Q3 & L
A	Course 7	L	Q	Q3 & L

Legend

A = Pre-course application questionnaire collection point

L = LEQ-I collection points

Q = Post-course questionnaire collection point

Q3 = 3 month post-course questionnaire collection point

Day 2 = 10-day course schedule

Day 9

Table 3.2 Number of respondents returning data at each stage (pre-, post- & 3 months post-course)

Data collected	Course 1			Course 2			Course 3			Course 4		
	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course
LEQ-I	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	16	12
Application questionnaire	14	-	-	13	-	-	10	-	-	17	-	-
Open-ended questionnaire (Post-course)	-	3	-	-	3	-	-	5	-	-	10	-
Open-ended questionnaire (3-months post-course)	-	-	9	-	-	9	-	-	9	-	-	15

Data collected	Course 5			Course 6			Course 7		
	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course	Pre-course	Post-course	3 months post-course
LEQ-I	14	12	6	7	5	2	19	18	4
Application questionnaire	14	-	-	7	-	-	19	-	-
Open-ended questionnaire (Post-course)	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	7	-
Open-ended questionnaire (3-months post-course)	-	-	10	-	-	2	-	-	5

After careful analysis it was decided to treat the complete data set (n=24, which is inclusive of the 21 who returned qualitative data) as a sample of the whole incomplete data set (n=94). The main analysis was conducted on this set (n=24) and where possible compared with the data from the incomplete returns. The comparisons of the profiles of gender, referring agency and age indicate that the sample is sufficiently representative to warrant this form of sampling analysis. This comparison can be viewed in Appendix 8.6, Figures 8.2 and 8.3.

Limitations

At this juncture, it is worth noting that a great deal of effort was made to increase the return rate from those non-responding referral agencies. This included numerous telephone calls, letters, e-mails and faxes from both the researcher at the University of Edinburgh and the Venture Trust staff.

This difficulty in obtaining responses from referral agencies can be interpreted in a number of ways which are discussed later. Nonetheless the result is that the data, analysis and conclusions which follow must be understood within this context and as a snapshot of the views and opinions of 18 referral agencies about 24 young people.

There are a number of possible explanations for the response rate. Presumably all of the letters and forms were received by the referral agencies as none were returned and addresses from the database are known to be accurate as a result of other communications from the Venture Trust and telephone call confirmations. Thus it seems reasonable to assume one of four possibilities,

1. letters were received and not completed because of a lack of interest, lack of time or some other factor;
2. letters were received by the referral agency but did not reach the relevant key worker or other staff member;
3. letters were received and not completed as the referral agency thought it was obvious that the young people had benefited from the experience and completion of the forms was only applicable to those cases that they were not concerned with;
4. letters were received by the agency and not completed as the young people, in the opinion of the agency or worker or both, had not gained from the experience but they did not want to report this for political and/or pragmatic reasons.

This leads to two possible interpretations of the statistics, which have been collected regarding the 24 young people,

1. The data are representative of those who reported generally positive benefits from the experience and the remaining non-respondents represent those who did not benefit from the experience. If this is the case, then the data collected and the resultant conclusions are not representative. This is the worst-case scenario but even then the outcomes were generally seen as positive in a third of cases.
2. Alternatively, the data are representative of the larger population who did not respond at all of the data collection points. If further data had been available it would support the emerging analysis and conclusions.

After making considerable efforts to do so, pragmatic considerations eventually led to the decision not to 'chase' referral agencies any further. First, there was insufficient time to continue 'chasing' when there was little enough time left for data analysis and report writing. Second, it should be noted that collecting a complete data set on 24 of 94 individuals on this type of programme would be considered a high success rate anyway. Their personal circumstances are by any standards 'problematic' and this is of course the reason for their attendance at the Venture Trust. Gathering data before and after the course is necessarily beset with pitfalls, and it could only have taken place with the considerable help of some of the referral agencies. Third, 'harassing' the agencies for the data may in any case have led to the data being of questionable credibility. Such 'harassment' was also judged to be unethical and counter to developing a longer-term relationship with the agencies.

Findings that are based on these data are necessarily weaker than they would be with a full response rate. However they are based on, what for this type of client group would be considered to be a high response rate, and can reasonably be used to comment on the effectiveness of the programme and suggest further areas of potentially fruitful investigation.

4 Data presentation, analysis and discussion

The following discussion is based on the qualitative and quantitative results and a discussion of their importance. Data were collated from:

- Pre-course information, detailing background circumstances of individual participants (completed by course participants and referral agents).
- Open-format questionnaires administered immediately post-course (from course participants and/or referral workers).
- Open-format questionnaires concerning participants' progress 3-months post-course, based on referral worker observations and/or consultation with participants.
- Quantitative self-report questionnaires (LEQ-I) relating to individual personal and social development.

The pilot 10-day programme was conducted on ten occasions in 2004. Each course had a total of 24 places available. Of the 168 places available on the seven 10-day courses evaluated during the period of the present study, a total of 94 young people attended. This is approximately 56% of the total number of places offered. Of these, 24 returned complete sets of data, and these form the basis of the analysis.

4.1 The client group

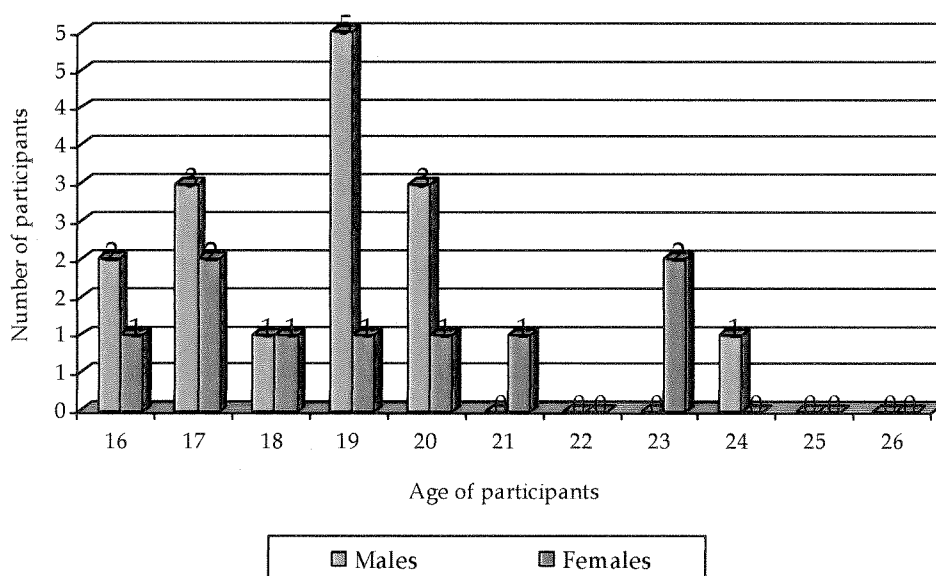
Overall, the sample group was made up of 15 (62.5%) males and 9 (37.5%) females. Age and gender distribution can be seen in Figure 4.1 and a comparison of age and gender ratios with the entire data set of 94 participants is presented in Appendix 8.6.

The distribution of referrals from the four organisation categories for the sample group was:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| • Fairbridge | 9/37.5% | (24/25.53%) |
| • Foyer Federation | 9/37.5% | (39/41.49%) |
| • NCH | 4/16.67% | (19/20.21%) |
| • Other Agencies | 2/8.33% | (12/12.77%) |

These ratios are reasonably representative of the distribution overall from the data set of 94 participants, details of which appear in brackets.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of age and gender (n=24)



4.2 Behavioural outcomes

4.2.2 Summary

The qualitative data from post- and 3-month post-course reveals a predominantly positive impact on behaviour in the short-term and up to 3-months after the course. Referral agents generally suggest that attending and experiencing a course at the Venture Trust is a positive step towards the growth and development of participants in that it provides them with the opportunity to explore personal and life issues in a safe environment, away from usual pressures. Participant feedback was similarly positive, the main aspects creating such an encouraging experience being; the opportunity to live, work and be with a peer group who are stimulated in related ways; and interacting and working with a staff team who outwardly demonstrate trust, empathy, patience and compassion, without any predisposed prejudices, acting as positive role models to help shape the attitudes and values of the young people.

4.2.3 Results and Discussion

One of the Venture Trust aims was to help young people develop the self-awareness, motivation, self-esteem and skills needed to progress in their lives. In an effort to meet participants' needs, an application questionnaire was designed by the Venture Trust (Appendix 8.2) sections of which the young people were required to complete. (The questionnaire asked them to rate their level of self-confidence; direction; motivation and self-esteem on a scale of one to nine (one to three = low; four to six = medium; seven to nine = high) for each category. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Participant self-perception of behavioural traits

Behavioural Trait	Perceived level									
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Medium 4	Medium 5	Medium 6	High 7	High 8	High 9	Unknown
Confidence	-	-	3 (13%)	4 (17%)	6 (25%)	4 (17%)	3 (13%)	-	-	4 (17%)
Motivation	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	3 (13%)	6 (25%)	5 (21%)	1 (4%)	-	3 (13%)	-	4 (17%)
Direction	-	3 (13%)	4 (17%)	3 (13%)	6 (25%)	-	3 (13%)	1 (4%)	-	4 (17%)
Self-esteem	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	3 (13%)	4 (17%)	6 (25%)	4 (17%)	1 (4%)	-	-	3 (13%)

Levels of 'confidence' were clustered around 'medium level five' with 14 participants (59%) in total reported for 'medium levels 4, 5 and 6'. 'Motivation' was around the middle to lower end of the scale with 14 participants (59%) in levels 'low 3' to 'medium 5'. 'Direction' was clustered even closer to the lower end of the scale with 16 participants (68%) in categories 'low2' to 'medium 5'. A slightly more even, but still low-end distribution was found for 'self-esteem' with 20 participants (72%) in the range 'low 3' to 'medium 6'. It is worth noting that for all four qualities there were a substantial proportion of participants who self-reported in the higher levels (6, 7 and 8); 7 (30%), 3 (13%), 3 (13%) and 4 (17%) respectively.

A fully matched post-course questionnaire could not be administered to the participants because there was an existing method in place, which has been used by the Venture Trust for many years. It was clearly important to maintain this long-term data set and it was impractical to ask participants to complete two post-course questionnaires at the second and third stages. Although a direct comparison of outcomes was not possible a reasonable assessment of changes in participant attitudes and personal qualities has been made, based on referral agent responses to open-ended questionnaires and participants' feedback conducted immediately post- and 3-month post-course. From these responses, some themes emerged which are described below. Sample quotations are provided as examples of these themes.

Of the referral agents who responded in the sample group of 24, eight (33%) described young people as being more focused, calm and self assured ...

"I have noticed a growing confidence [and he] seems to be more relaxed at home and his Dad agrees he has benefited from the VT course"

Seven agency staff (29%) reported a great improvement in all areas and immediate progress with the young person's action plan ...

"[he] has come back with increased motivation and confidence. He has stopped taking drugs and put plans into operation to change his lifestyle".

Five (21%) described seeing an abundance of self-confidence and enthusiasm ...

"[he] has changed significantly in terms of attitude and behaviour [and] the programme appears to have reinforced the development work he has engaged with at Fairbridge ... he has benefited from a more intensive application".

One agency worker (4%) reported the experience as enjoyable, but said that it was the wrong time for the participant to attend; and three (13%) gave no comment.

Three-month post-course, similar data were collated by again asking, referral agents to describe participant behaviour. Responses indicate that 13 (54%) participants had shown a great improvement in all areas ...

"[she] is currently putting in a lot of work fundraising so that she can go to Malaysia with Raleigh International next month. This has been an incredible motivator for her and has really helped in building her confidence and self-esteem". And ...

"after roughly four years of attending Fairbridge, [he] has had the motivation and courage to volunteer, full time with a project called Scratch, who distributes furniture to those who need it. So self-esteem, motivation, confidence and direction have been boosted by VT and continue to be boosted by his own realisations of what he can do".

Five (21%) were slightly improved; five (21%) showed no change ...

"...always appears confident [but has] little motivation or direction. [He] knows he is wallowing but has no desire to change things at this time"

Three months post-course one participant (4%) appeared to be worse than before they attended the Venture Trust.

Participant responses were all similar to each other when questioned immediately post-course about their experiences and what they had gained from the course at Venture Trust. Nine of the respondents (38%) said the experience had developed their life skills and helped them manage issues at home ...

"The programme helped me to learn new skills and develop certain areas within myself. I have applied a lot of what I have learned back home and feel that it has helped me with certain aspects in which I was lacking".

Seven (29%) expressed the view that it was the best thing they had done ...

"I have gained a lot from the course like trust, to be myself and to confront people. I loved the course – out of 16 years I finally got to be myself...because of the trust you gave me".

Four (17%) stated they had a great time and it had helped them either get a job, into training or education or similar ...

"Fantastic, very positive. Working with people I'd never met before and getting along with them has helped me in my new job"

A further four respondees (17%) expressed feeling more confident, determined and/or motivated.

Taken as a whole, it appears as though there is a predominantly positive impact on behaviour in the short-term and up to three-months after the course. From the referral agents' perspectives, the experience of attending a course at the Venture Trust is seen as positive, as it offers the young person an opportunity to explore personal and life skills issues in a safe environment away from their usual peer group and pressures. This period of time away seems to have provided the participants with the space, peace and resources necessary to confront the many issues they face, with time to reflect on them in a supportive, yet challenging environment. This appears to have raised self-awareness and enabled them to work on developing basic skills for coping with life.

From the young peoples' perspectives (gauged immediately post-course) it was apparent that most had enjoyed a positive experience. From the qualitative data collated at the second stage, it was clear that working, living and being with a different peer group who were similarly motivated was an important aspect of the course and many have maintained contact with other participants and in some cases have visited one another. One aspect of the course which made a strong positive impact on many participants was the trust, empathy, patience and compassion of the Venture Trust staff. Eighteen (75%) of the sample of 24 participants directly expressed in some way their gratitude towards the staff and commented on how these positive relationships had helped shape their experience and help them develop a more positive attitude. This is a clear indicator that positive role models are a key aspect of how a young person's attitudes and values are shaped.

4.3 General circumstances

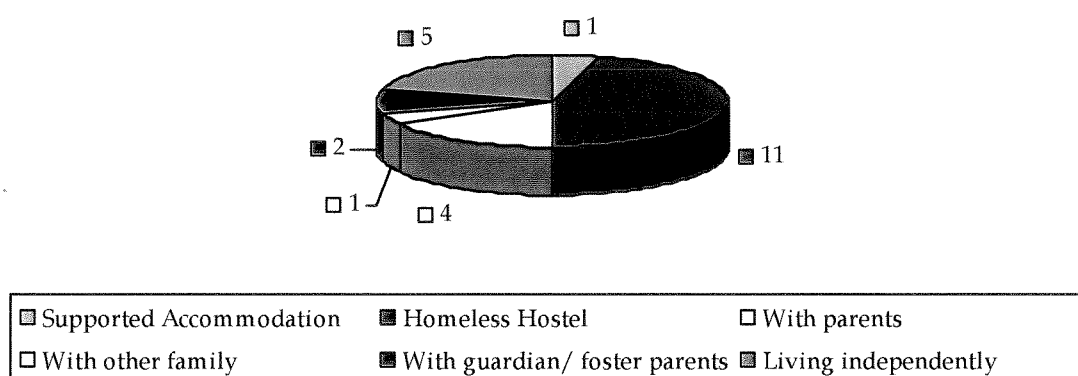
4.3.2 Summary

Overall, the data suggest that most young people who attended a 10-day course at the Venture Trust experienced positive change in their general circumstances. There was a small minority who experienced no change or a worsening of circumstances. However, the issues associated with these few are not believed to have been affected by any VT interventions and referral agents suggest that these issues could not be expected to be addressed wholly or partially by the course.

4.3.3 Results and Discussion

Pre-course data (n=24) indicate that 11 of the participants (46%) on Venture Trust courses are living in accommodation for the homeless (Figure 4.2). Qualitative data also suggest that for numerous reasons many of these young people do not have solid relationships with their immediate family. Aspects of VT courses endeavour to address issues which relate to these circumstances, in order to help participants to return home with a new sense of self and purpose.

Figure 4.2 Participant pre-course living circumstances (n=24)



Data on accommodation immediately post and 3-month post-course are summarised in Table 4.2. These data indicate some positive shift in circumstances with a reduction in the number living in a hostel for the homeless. There was also a shift in numbers moving onto supported accommodation, which is perhaps indicative of a greater sense of independence and confidence in the young person allowing them to take such a step. There seems to be little change in the numbers in what might be expected to be the more stable circumstances of living with parents, guardians or other family.

Table 4.2 Participant living circumstances (n=24)

TIME PERIOD	CIRCUMSTANCES						
	Supported accommodation	Homeless hostel	With parents	With other family	Guardian/ Foster parents	Living independently	Circumstances unknown
Pre-course	1 (4%)	11 (46%)	4 (17%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	5 (21%)	n/a
Post-course	2 (9%)	10 (45%)	3 (14%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	4 (18%)	1 (5%)
3-months post-course	3 (14%)	8 (36%)	4 (18%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	4 (18%)	1 (5%)

Qualitative data 3-month post-course also indicate a positive shift in the relationships young people sustain at home, such as those with parents, siblings, peers or referral workers. Ten referral agents (42%) reported an improvement in relationships alone, with some associating this progress with improved living circumstances as well. For example,

“[He] is looking at getting his own accommodation and has sat down and thought about his old circle of friends and found some of them not to be what he wants. He has changed his lifestyle greatly and is looking at improving his health”.

While the interview data suggest that most participants have experienced positive change in their general circumstances, for some there is also evidence of no change or a worsening of circumstances. However, these cases are very much in the minority and referral comments suggest that these cases are due to larger issues which could not be addressed wholly or partially by the Venture Trust programme.

4.4 Vocational development

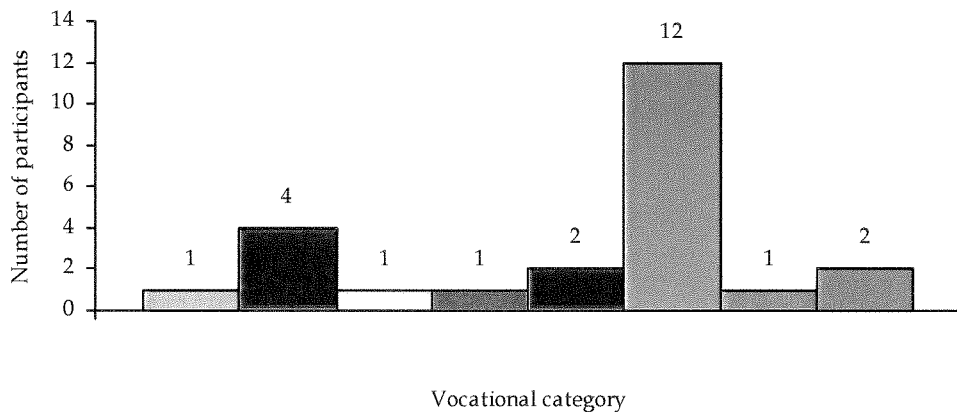
4.4.2 Summary

The research suggests that participation on the 10-day programme improved prospects of employment in the period up to 3-months post-course. Data beyond this period were not available.

4.4.3 Results and Discussion

As Figure 4.3 illustrates, before the start of the programme, 12 participants from the sample group attending VT were unemployed, with a further two not ready for employment.

Figure 4.3 Vocational status pre course (n=24)

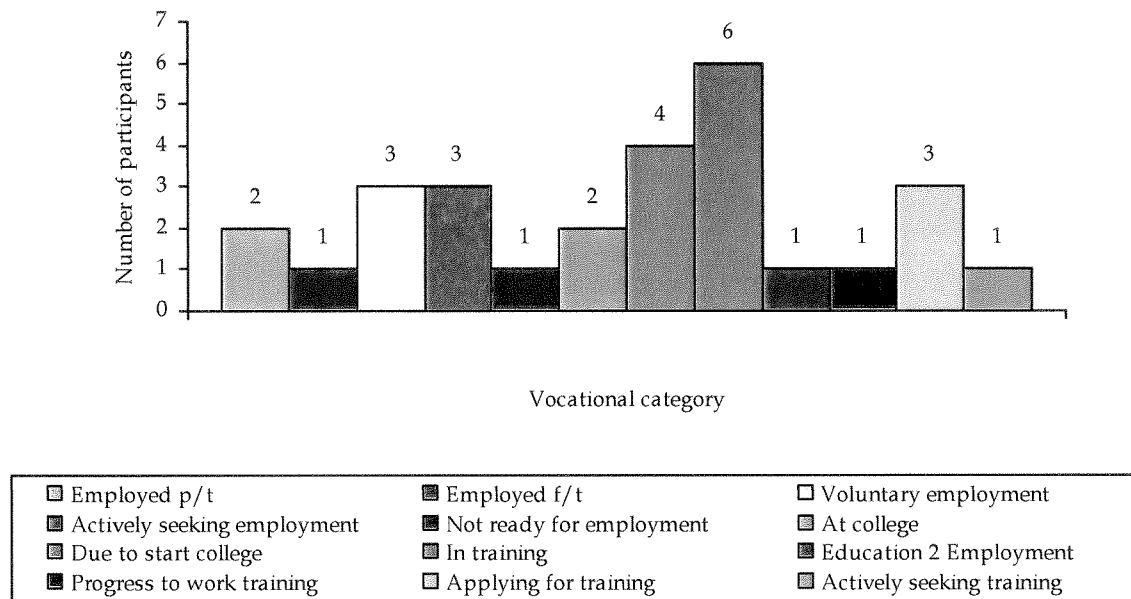


At School/6th form	At college	In training
Modern apprenticeship	Education 2 Employment training	Unemployed
Employed p/t	Not ready for employment	

However post and 3-month post-course data show a significant change in circumstances (see Figure 4.4). Unemployment rates had dropped by half post-course, remaining so 3-months post-course. One participant gained full-time employment post-course, maintaining their status 3-months post-course. There was also an increase in part-time employment, with two young people recorded post- and 3-month post-course. In addition, an uptake in voluntary employment was in evidence, with three participants actively involved post- and 3-month post-course. The numbers of those reported to be 'not ready' for employment dropped by half post-course, remaining the same after three months. Numbers were also recorded for those now actively seeking employment, with three participants active post-course, remaining steady after three months.

Those in education or due to start a formal course at school or college had also increased, with two already attending and four due to begin. The data also indicate that participation in vocational training also increased with six in some form of undefined training post-course, remaining so after three months. Three young people were actively applying for some form of training in the period up to the third data collection stage. One young person was also involved in 'progress to work' training post course, remaining so after three months; likewise, one young person was engaged in 'Education 2 Employment' training post course in the same period; and another young person was actively seeking vocational training during this time.

Figure 4.4 Vocational status 3-month post-course (n=24)



NB: At both post and 3-month post-course stages of data collection, figures add up to 34. This is due to several young people being involved in more than one area of development.

Whilst figures show that more than one million young people aged 16-24 years are not engaged in any form of education, training or employment (Prince's Trust, 2004), evidence from this research would suggest the VT programme can bring about positive change and improve vocational development, at least up to the 3-month post-course stage.

Although this research has been relatively short-term in nature, short and medium term impacts appear to be positive in motivating and engaging young people to seek some form of education, training and/or employment. Feedback from referral agents has suggested that the opportunity to take a step away from home surroundings is what many young people need in order to encourage them to develop some perspective, focus and clarity. For example,

"The course has helped [Jamie] look at himself in a realistic and positive way...primarily to face up to what he needs to work on. It has helped us approach this subject without appearing to make it personal and so keeping [Jamie] open to new ways"; and
 "Thank you for the invaluable help you have given [Katie] in finding herself and embarking on a new and really worthwhile life".

4.5 Drug and alcohol use and offending behaviour

4.5.2 Summary

In general, most participants demonstrated a decline in drug use, particularly the use of Class C drugs, such as cannabis. This was also evident in the small number using Class A drugs. The use of alcohol was generally not an issue for most young people attending VT, though over the course of the study, some referral agents reported a decline in use. Aside from illegal drug use, other offending behaviour was similar in that it was not an issue for most young people on the course. There was a small decline for those had offended pre-course in the first stage of post-course data collection. However, this was not sustained, the reasons for which are not clear.

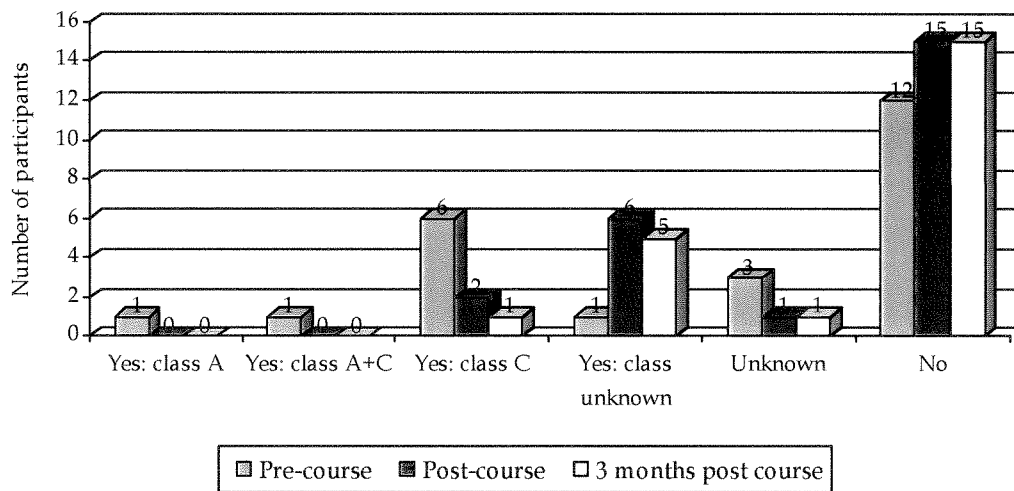
4.5.3 Results and Discussion

Though not a significant factor for the majority of participants at VT, the use of drugs and alcohol and other offending behaviour were significant features in the lives of some, hence its inclusion in this report. These are considered separately below. It is necessary to highlight that it has been recognised and understood that the use of drugs are also an offence, but for the purposes of this research, drug use and offending behaviour have been analysed separately.

4.5.4 Drug use

From the data collated, drug use appears to be the most significant of these issues affecting young people referred to VT. Although most are not involved in the use of 'harder' Class A and B drugs, some reported pre-course usage, details of which are presented in Figure 4.5. It is necessary to point out that the data collated from all 94 participants showed a wider range of drug use than that depicted in Figure 4.5. However, the reduction in use illustrated by the sample group (n=24) is a fair example of the drop in use evidenced from the data overall (n=94). See Appendix 8.7, Figure 8.4 for details of this.

Figure 4.5 Participant drug use (n=24)



As can be seen in Figure 4.5 Class C drugs, (notably cannabis) are used most, and their use does appear to see a decline over the course of data collection. Responses from participants suggest that a drug-free status is a desirable goal to aim for and achieve.

“My experiences at VT went very deep, we went through a lot of situations and these have already helped back home with the choices I have made – I have stopped smoking!!!”

However, the rise in drug use where the class of drug is unknown appears to be the result of a discrepancy in the data collection, which could be attributed to participants being inconsistent in their disclosure of drug use at each stage of data collection, thus creating a skewed overall result. It should be highlighted, that despite this discrepancy there does appear to be a decline in overall use. Referral agent feedback from the sample group generally supports this opinion with 20 reporting reduced or no drug use issues. For example,

“Drugs have been an issue. However, [Paul] has said that this has reduced since the course. His appearance and motivation reflects this” and “Drug use has definitely reduced and [John] is fit for work and on time”.

It is important to also draw attention to the fact that the remaining four participants in this sample, who showed an increase in drug use, appeared to be for reasons such as family influences, personal problems and undisclosed other issues. Referral agents stress that they are not likely to be representative of the data and any VT experience. For example,

“With the issues [Karl] is facing it is a very difficult time to fairly evaluate the success of Venture Trust”, and,

“Due to issues [Lucy] is facing, this may not be a true reflection of Venture Trust’s intervention”.

4.5.5 Alcohol use

The data suggest that alcohol use is not a significant factor among the young people attending the Venture Trust. As Table 4.3 illustrates, it is an issue for a small number of participants and has remained so throughout the period of data collection. However, overall, the heavy abuse of alcohol is minimal, with the majority drinking on a social basis or abstaining altogether. Referral agents in the sample group (n=24) acknowledged awareness where heavy abuse is an issue, reporting that appropriate action was being taken to tackle the problem.

Table 4.3 Participant alcohol use (n=24)

TIME PERIOD	ALCOHOL USE				
	YES: heavy use	YES: moderate/varied use	YES: social/low use	NO	Unknown
Pre-course	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	8 (33%)	9 (38%)	4 (17%)
Post-course	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	3 (12%)	6 (25%)	12 (50%)
3 months post-course	1 (5%)	2 (9%)	4 (18%)	5 (23%)	10 (45%)

The table also highlights a significant number of ‘unknown’ responses and it is impossible to establish whether the post-course increase in this has affected other dimensions of the results. For a substantial number (nine decreasing to five) there was no response to the questions and so presumably the use of alcohol was not deemed to be an issue at all. In general the use of alcohol, if any is of low significance and of a social nature and therefore not an issue that the VT programme could be expected to influence.

4.5.6 Offending behaviour

As in the case with drugs and alcohol use, offending behaviour is not a significant issue among Venture Trust participants. From the figures presented in Table 4.4 it can be

observed that overall, the majority of young people are not involved in any offending behaviour. From careful analysis of the data, it is also believed that the numbers of unknown cases pre-course are likely to be non-offenders, which would be congruent with the remaining data presented.

Table 4.4 Offending behaviour (n=24)

TIME PERIOD	STATUS		
	Yes	No	Unknown
Pre-course	2 (8%)	19 (79%)	3 (12%)
Post-course	1 (4%)	23 (96%)	-
3 months post-course	2 (9%)	22 (91%)	-

The background data from referral agencies and participants in the sample group (n=24) indicate that those involved in offending behaviour are mostly involved in petty crime, such as motoring offences or theft. There appears to be a modest decrease in the proportion who are not offending post-course and three-month post-course. There is a possibility that the three 'unknown' before the start of the course may have influenced the results. However all of these would have to have been in the non-offending category pre-course in order for there to have been no overall reduction in offending behaviour in the whole sample.

4.6 Life Effectiveness Questionnaire

Due to the insignificant number of completed returns (n=10), reliable outcome measurements were not possible with the LEQ. The output which was generated showed signs that the items time management; intellectual flexibility and emotional control could have been influenced, but due to such inconclusive data sets, these influences are largely speculative.

Results of this kind could be due to reasons such as the inappropriateness of the measurement tool for the client group or inadequate methods of administration, resulting in a misunderstanding of how to complete it efficiently. Overall, it is inconclusive and therefore further investigation is required if it is considered for future use.

5 Conclusions

The data suggest that most young people in the sample group experienced some form of positive personal development over the course of their 10-day programme.

Behavioural outcomes suggest that up to 3-months after the course, many young people demonstrated a positive difference in their attitude and approach to tasks, issues they engaged in or circumstances they encountered. This included a definite increase in motivation and self-awareness, which appeared to influence other areas such as self-confidence, a desire to seek some form of vocational development, a reduction in some drug use and improved interpersonal relationships.

However, as a result of existing data collection methods in long-term use by VT, pre- and post-course methods of qualitative data collection were not identical, and so analysis and outcomes reported could only be contrasted rather than compared like-for-like.

Due to the short research period and to a certain extent necessarily prescriptive methods of data collection, partially resulting from the intention to compare the 10-day programme approach with that of with the previous 20-day programme a full analysis of programme effectiveness is beyond the means of this study.

Even though the Venture Trust already put considerable effort into monitoring the effectiveness of the programme this is necessarily limited by resources and the results do not address deeper questions associated with programme delivery. Nor can such a process be expected to provide a full interpretation of participants' experiences during the courses and the influence of the course on their post-course and subsequent behaviour.

The Venture Trust's current system of post-course communication with referral agents is also noteworthy, as it emphasises the importance of longer-term support for young people attending its courses and places value on obtaining referral agents' evaluation feedback. However, in the present study relatively low numbers returned a complete data set, and this was after a degree of 'chasing'. Whilst this clearly indicates that current post-course data collection could be improved, it is important to note that this rate of return (24 out of 94) is in fact relatively high for such a client group, due to the inconsistent nature of their behaviour.

Though it is not realistic to imagine that a residential course at the Venture Trust will lead to all participants replacing their more negative behaviours with more positive ones, this is certainly an objective within VT's overall programme aims.

The literature review points out that the relationships and role models a young person is exposed to throughout their pre-pubescent and adolescent years have a considerable effect on their values, attitudes, and overall behaviour. It is fair to say that most of the young people who attend Venture Trust courses have come from backgrounds where this influence may not have been stable or a positive influence. Therefore, it follows that any intervention with this client group likely to affect their behaviour positively must be based on stable, trustworthy, and reliable foundations so they can learn by example. This is congruent with other recent research which highlights the benefits of working in ways which utilise 'pro-social modelling' methods of intervention.

6 Recommendations

It is possible to make a range of recommendations as a result of this study. Some of the recommendations are specifically concerned with the work of the Venture Trust while others may be generic to similar providers.

1. More detailed and specific guidelines should be developed for educating and informing referral agents about VT's programme content, ethos and experiential philosophy. This would aid them in preparing participants appropriately and assist in their efforts to support them in their subsequent learning and development. For example, induction days/weekends could be developed which would enable referral agents to *experience* some of what a young person may encounter at the Venture Trust, as well as introducing learning philosophies to support on-going post-course learning. If this is not possible for some referral agencies, VT staff could make visits to the agencies to explain the programme. Further examples might include a promotional CD Rom or video / DVD. It may also be worth developing some case studies that could be given to referral agencies to either develop their own understanding or perhaps to share with young people who might potentially visit the Venture Trust.
2. The Venture Trust staff should be supported in developing existing and new skills to ensure up-to-date practice and to enable them to remain at the forefront of development. This involves a strategic plan for staff training, development and appraisal procedures. Methods could include peer review processes, outside professional development from experts within the field of outdoor and experiential education and from those in the fields of social work, counselling and therapy. Staff could also be encouraged to gain experience of the referral agencies, which may be possible through short-term secondment or shared practice meetings.
3. Support from referral agencies is crucial to help young people to transfer their learning from the VT course to their home community, and thereby implement the changes they have planned. This adjustment and integration, post-course, could be supported by referral agencies liaising closely with VT staff, through personal visits to agencies and the Venture Trust. Other methods to enhance this process could include e-mail contact between participants, newsletters, and post-course follow-up weekends in more easily accessible locations such as the Peak or Lake District. Development of a website bulletin board might enable sharing of pictures, messages and narratives following the courses. This support structure could prove to be important in the implementation of post-course changes.

4. An evaluation strategy should be developed for the continued collection of appropriate data. This is developmental in itself, in that it becomes an integral part of the continuing growth of the programme. More thorough procedures could generate a richer data set. Analysis that is more detailed, focusing on process as well as affect should illuminate programme design. For example, are specific approaches and activities in current use, those most effective in meeting the needs of the participants?
5. A further advantage of an integrated evaluation strategy is that staff will also become more involved in a process, which is crucial to ensure that programmes remain effective and develop, and would contribute to their continued professional development. These methods of evaluation will also reflect the experiential nature of the programme, rather than simply adopting a written test, which is often inappropriate for such a client group. Examples might include recording of one-to-one sessions at various stages during the course, recording of group discussions and reviewing sessions using either audio or video equipment and reformulation of course application forms and post-course evaluations. One implication of taking this approach might be to offer staff some short in-service training on research and evaluation methods so they have an understanding and interest in the process and can assist in data collection without impacting validity of data.
6. Further research is required to establish clearer methods of evaluating this client group, throughout their engagement in a programme, as well as post-course. This will highlight processes and techniques, which are more suitable for the participants to engage in, as well as gather data, which are potentially of greater value. Development of methods in obtaining post-course feedback should take into account current experience of good practice in the feedback process with some referral agency partnerships and how these can be further developed to enhance data collection.

In conclusion, the above approaches could be supported by further research on,

- The education of referral agencies on the work of Venture Trust
- The education of Venture Trust on the work of referral agencies
- Further development of staff training strategies
- Development of post-course support structures
- Development of research and evaluation methods
- Staff training on research principles and practice

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8 Appendices

Appendix 8.1 Review of relevant literature

8.1.2 The Value of Outdoor Adventure Education

The use of the outdoors as a means of achieving developmental and educational objectives has a long history. James (2000) suggests that it probably has its modern foundations in Germany, in the work of Kurt Hahn, who set up Salem School in 1920, based on the educational foundations of Plato, among others. Later, in 1934 Hahn was instrumental in the setting up of Gordonstoun School, Scotland, followed by several other educational developments, including the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the formation of Outward Bound in 1941.

Outward Bound (OB) used the outdoors, amongst other elements of education, to encourage a wide range of personal attributes including self-confidence, initiative and teamwork. The success of this development is indicated by the spread of these ideas to what is the Outward Bound movement, which today has a worldwide influence.

The ideas first established by the Outward Bound movement have been continuously developed and refined. These approaches are based on Hahn's belief that it is feasible "*in a relatively short time, to introduce greater balance and compassion into human lives by impelling people into experiences which show them they can rise above adversity and overcome defeatism*" (James, p.12). Luckner and Nadler (1997) have persuasively argued that self-esteem is significantly affected during what they called 'peak adventure'.

There is also a wide range of anecdotal evidence that outdoor activities can contribute to the development of positive personal characteristics.

8.1.3 Positive change and the influence of constructive relationships

There is a significant amount of research evidence available, which documents the value in using outdoor adventure education as a medium for increasing self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem (Barrett and Greenaway, 1995; Kolb, 1988; Russell and Farnum, 2004), developing moral character (Wurdinger, 1997), improving interpersonal skills (Gair, 1997; Sibthorp, 2003) and expanding environmental awareness (Nicol, 2002a, 2002b, 2003). These outcome studies have been numerous in describing the effectiveness of various programmes and the developments they encourage.

Recent debates regarding the effectiveness of various interventions in raising self-esteem and motivation in young people to bring about positive change have again raised questions as to the most effective approach in understanding and working with these issues (for example, Richards, Ed. 2003).

While many of the discussions dance around the definition of terms and outcome debates, Peel (2003) appears to have made the connection with what truly matters, in relation to the desires and needs of young people. In her exploration of personal development in the wider context, Peel draws attention to the fact that the one common denominator, which has brought about positive change has been the relationship established and nurtured between the worker and young person. Without this relationship as a very basic but fundamental part of the process, Peel suggests that no matter how perfect a course may be designed in terms of its content, if a productive, comfortable and empathetic rapport cannot be established, then ultimately, the process will not succeed (p. 57).

Peel also draws attention to this person-centred approach (see Rogers, 1951 for a thorough description) in an outdoor adventure framework, illustrating that it is not about the activities themselves, but more based in the fact that through a reflective, relaxed approach an environment is created in which the young person feels safe to explore issues, which bring about greater awareness, regard and positive approval of themselves (p. 60).

There is also evidence to show the importance of the totality of an individual's experience on the development of self-esteem, particularly through relationships with others such as school, peers, parents and other significant adults that young people come into contact with (Morris, 2002).

In exploring the philosophical issues which underpin outdoor adventure education practice, Wurdinger (1997) highlights that wanting to and claiming to enhance such elements as self-esteem and personal growth is one thing, but we need to be sure and continually question ourselves and our practice, so that we do not fall into the trap of "*[making] assumptions that are inappropriate and inaccurate*" (p. vii).

Greenaway (2002) raised the question as to whether in fact the idea of high self-esteem should be a desirable outcome when it is often due to a lack of self-awareness in young

people, with reference to work by Furedi (2002). Furedi highlights that there are many myths associated with beliefs about low self-esteem and facilitators should be cautious in their practice, *"Individuals who have an unjustifiably high opinion of themselves can, in many cases, pose a far greater threat to those around them than people whose sense of self-worth is unusually low"* (2002).

In reference to a report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Furedi suggests that high self-esteem could be bad for many young people, as it is generally associated with more deviant behaviour. Low self-esteem on the other hand is said to be closely related to *"relatively low self-esteem is not a risk factor for delinquency, violence towards others (including child and partner abuse), drug use, alcohol abuse, educational under-attainment or racism"* (Furedi, 2002). This supports the point Wurdinger (1997) raises regarding effective professional practice and regular constructive critical analysis of this, which is further explored and supported by Higgins and Nicol (2002). They also draw attention to the issue of programme design and the importance of considering *"aims, assumptions, methods, content, evaluation and claims"* (p.3), along with reflective professional practice.

Furthermore, Brookes (2003a, 2003b) has argued that personal changes which occur in outdoor educational style programmes are situational and that changes which may be apparent within the programme do not transfer to other environments, such as the home environment of a young person.

Hopkins and Putnam (1993) suggest that as a very basic foundation, practitioners of outdoor adventure programmes using experiential education as a model for learning and development should nurture within themselves a clear understanding of the underlying theories of experiential learning and outdoor adventure education, which is founded upon a general philosophy of experiential education (p.12). This remains an issue, which is periodically highlighted in the literature (for example, Allison, 2003).

In summary, there is a range of literature available, which draws upon many disciplines, such as psychology and philosophy, but it is weak and easily criticised both methodologically and as over simplifying the complexity of human development and change. However, the emerging literature suggests that the use of residentially based outdoor education courses utilising an experiential approach may be an effective means of encouraging change and development.

8.1.4 Attitudes, Values and Beliefs of Young People

There are numerous organisations throughout the United Kingdom which are doing *things* for young people. How often do any of these projects actually stop to ask the young people themselves exactly what concerns them and what they hope for, truly listening to their needs and responding accordingly, rather than having a prefixed agenda of what they believe young people need?

In a recent study conducted by The Prince's Trust, which sought to explore this question, it found that *"many of the young people most alienated from society – including offenders and the unemployed – felt that nobody listens to, understands or respects them"* (The Princes Trust, 2001).

Among the key findings of the research, it highlighted that the majority of unemployed young people have a desire to work, but require positive adult role-models to motivate them. An unstable school life, which led to absenteeism, has resulted in widespread low self-esteem.

Many young people were noted to be actively working towards making positive changes in their lives, in spite of the many barriers they faced in doing so, but again, were lacking in the solid foundation of support needed to help and guide them along their journey. The majority are turning to peers for advice, rather than trained social workers for example. The research draws attention to the fact that these forms of *help* just make young people feel uncomfortable, in what is already an uphill struggle to progress.

Most recently, the need for all organisations to work more synergistically together in order to meet the needs of young people effectively has been urged, if current patterns are to be addressed and dealt with appropriately (The Princes Trust, 2004). Issues such as employing appropriate staff that have empathy and can build a natural rapport with the young people have been raised. As well as this, having a reasonable level of stability and continuation in the relationship between key staff and young people is paramount in order that a level of trust can be established in which to divulge personal issues. This is also echoed by recent research into effective practice with young offenders (Trotter, 1999; Loney et al, 2000; Hobbs and Hook, 2001), which highlights the benefits of using pro-social modelling methods of intervention with this client group. It is said that pro-social modelling is founded upon the belief *"that appropriate behaviour – punctuality, taking responsibility and understanding other*

people's point of view etc. – should be rewarded and that, crucially, this social behaviour should be modelled throughout the agency” (Hobbs and Hook, 2001, p. 15).

The availability of these services has also been in question, both in terms of the hours, which they are *open* and the workloads that can be managed efficiently, so as to provide the most effective form of support for each individual case. Research by Durgin and McEwen (1991) suggests that *“it is absolutely essential that every adventure course for troubled young people be integrated with a follow-up support program” (p.35).*

In short, young people want to have a voice that will be listened to by empathetic role models, who are patient, trustworthy and compassionate, available at a time when needs are most. Rather than prescriptive resources, which are *believed* to be what young people need and want, they would prefer resources be met according to their actual needs, based on actual conversations with those being targeted.

8.1.5 National Intervention and Commitments

References to physical activities in recent policy documents, both in the form of sport and the use of the outdoors, demonstrates the commitment of government to this form of development. This would appear to show continued support across government departments for the value of sport and physical activities in the development of young people. Earlier examples of such support in formal education for instance, include the presence of Outdoor and Adventure Activities in the national curriculum (DfEE, 1989), Inspectorate reports (HMI, 1990), and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 2004).

‘Adventure 2000’ (UK) is one of the most prominent of more recent initiatives. This £10 million government project aimed to develop forward planning and life skills for bridging the gap from compulsory school to work or further study for sixteen-year-old pupils. Initial evidence indicated a significant degree of success particularly amongst pupils who were less motivated and absented themselves from school. Significant outcomes refer to enhanced abilities of pupils when reviewing future plans in a positive way (DfEE, 2000). This research identified the following characteristics that may be of relevance for the Venture Trust 10-day programme:

- Activities delivered under the programme should be sufficiently challenging to “expose young people to the attainment buzz”, but care should be taken to ensure inclusion.
- Longer projects had a higher likelihood of young people reporting that the project had either completely changed or had a significant influence on their plans. Programmes of less than five days may be too short to provide genuine challenges for young people.
- Good practice included...
 - i) Continual review and feedback
 - ii) Encouraging young people to take responsibility for organising elements of the programme.

More recently, funding for outdoor education initiatives have come from other sources, such as the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), which allocated some £52 million for the period 2002-2005 *“to modernise indoor and outdoor facilities and £35 million for out-of-school projects. The latter includes an ‘active steps’ programme to divert 5-16s from behaviour likely to lead to crime”* (Nelson, 2004).

In their latest report, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) offer further support for the value in outdoor education practice, both in schools and residential centres. Among conclusions in the report, Ofsted found that on the whole good progress was made and important physical and social skills developed in challenging areas such as teamwork and leadership. Attitudes and behaviour during these outdoor adventure experiences were commended and seen to be mature in response to unfamiliar and demanding scenarios. Emphasis was also given to the benefit of working in smaller group situations also enabled teachers to establish more positive relationships, thus making assessments and feedback more accurate (Ofsted, 2004, p.8).

VENTURE TRUST

A chance for change

COURSE APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

10-DAY COURSE APPLICATION FORM

Course application form for organisations working with young people

Making an application to Venture Trust

The detailed information we ask for in this form is necessary to help us to provide the best support to each young person who takes part in a course at Venture Trust. All information will be treated in confidence. The form is divided into sections:

1. General information

General information and contact details about yourself and the young person you are referring.

2. To be completed by the person making the referral

Information about any relevant background, about the areas of personal development you wish us to focus on with the young person and about plans for follow-up work on their return home. It also asks for details of any issues that may affect a young person while they are attending a VT course. Please note that we cannot consider applications from young people who have been convicted of sexual offences, arson or recent serious violent offences.

3. To be completed by the applicant

Information about what the young person is hoping to get from the course, about their interests and about any use of alcohol and non-prescribed drugs. This section also includes a checklist and an equal opportunities form.

4. Personal and medical details - to be completed by the applicant with help from the person making the referral

Medical details. Because the course is both physically and emotionally demanding we would advise you to give consideration to any current mental health or medical issues, including pregnancy. This section also includes a release and assumption of risk statement.

Please do not hesitate to telephone us if you need any further information, or wish to discuss the suitability of a referral

When you have completed the form, please return it to:

The Venture Trust,
Applecross,
Strathcarron,
Ross- Shire IV54 8ND
Tel: 01520 744 332
Fax: 01520 744 306
E-mail: info@venture-trust.org.uk

We will acknowledge the receipt of the form when we receive it.

General Information: VT course applies for:

DETAILS OF PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL			
Name		Address	
Job Title			
Organisation			
		Post Code	
		Out of hours contact number (this will only be used in an emergency)	
Tel			
Fax			
DETAILS OF YOUNG PERSON BEING REFERRED			
Name	VT ref no:	Address	
Tel			
Date of Birth	Age	Postcode	
Height	Weight		Shoe size
Address of applicant's DSS office		Tel	
		Type of benefit received (e.g. JSA, income support)	
Postcode		National Insurance number	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL IF APPLICABLE

Is the applicant you are referring subject to a care or justice order?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please give details:

Are there any outstanding charges, court cases or warrants?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes please give details

Does the young person you are referring have convictions for any of the following?

Sexual offences ☐ Yes ☐ No Recent serious violence ☐ Yes ☐ No

Arson ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide details in a supplementary letter or report

Is there a current risk assessment? (If so please give details)

If you have difficulty with any part of this section then please contact us on 01520 744 332

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL

Please give us some background information on the person you are referring.

Please give us details of any domestic or other issue that may affect the young person while they are on the course at Venture Trust

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL

What preparation is being done with the young person to ensure they have a successful course at Venture Trust?

Please give us details of the areas of personal development you would like us to work on with the young person you are referring, while they are at the Venture Trust.

What are the plans to continue support for the young person, once they return from the Venture Trust?

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

What do **you** want to get out of your Venture Trust personal development course?

If there were three things you could change about your life right now; what would they be?

1.

2.

3.

Have you ever been a member of a youth club, or taken part in a course with another youth organisation, such as Fairbridge or Princes Trust?

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

How would you describe your current level of fitness?

(Please tell us about anything that could affect your ability to take part in cross-country walking / hiking)

What do you like to do in your spare time?

What non-prescribed drugs or alcohol do you use?

Please be honest about this, so that we can help and support you while you are on a course.

IMPORTANT

When you are on a Venture Trust course, you must remain drug and alcohol free (This does not include drugs prescribed by your doctor). If you feel that this will be difficult for you, then it may help to cut down on your use before you start the course.

Personal and medical details - to be completed by the applicant with help from the person making the referral
--

- During the course at Venture Trust, you will be taking part in some adventurous activities. The activities are physically and mentally demanding; it is important that the staff are aware of any medical factors that may have to be considered before you take part or while you are doing the activity.

We are keen to ensure that we offer equal opportunities to everyone. This means that we will try our best to make sure that young people with epilepsy, diabetes and other medical conditions can take part in our courses.

Please fill in the medical form in the knowledge that your personal details will be treated in confidence.

Your details	Address Postcode
Name	
Tel	
Age	
Date of Birth	Sex (Please circle) Female Male
Details of your next of kin	
Name	Address Postcode
Relationship to you	
Tel	

Medical details continued

Do you, or have you in the last 2 years, suffered from any of these conditions? Please circle

Asthma: yes no

Diabetes: yes no

Epilepsy: yes no

Tuberculosis: yes no

If yes, please give details

Do you suffer from any other medical condition not mentioned above?

Please circle

yes no

If yes give details

Have you been to hospital in the last 2 years through illness or injury? Please circle

If yes give details

yes no

Are you allergic to any kind of medication? Please circle

If yes give details

yes no

Are you taking any form of prescribed medication at the moment?

Please circle

If yes give details

yes no

Do you suffer from any physical or other disability? Please circle

If yes, give details

yes no

Are you pregnant? Please circle yes no	Blood group (if known)
Do you have any specific dietary requirements? (for example, vegan / vegetarian / allergies/ religious reasons?)	
Details of your doctor	Address:
Name:	Postcode:
Tel no:	
Release and assumption of risk	
I am aware that my attendance on the course with the Venture Trust is voluntary and that the activities I will take part in, may expose me to risks. I also confirm that I have read and understood clearly, the terms of attendance explained in the Venture Trust information pack. I also fully understand the terms of my participation and accept the risks, as described. I also agree that if, because of any medical condition, I am unable to give my consent to necessary medical or dental treatment, Venture Trust staff may give consent on my behalf.	
Signature of applicant	Date
Signature of referral agent	Date
Signature of parent or guardian (if applicant is under 18)	Date

Name	
Date of birth	Age

It is important that you read and understand the information in the pack about the Venture Trust and have signed the right forms before coming on a course. Please tick to show whether you have done this.

Have you read the information pack about the Venture Trust?

yes ☐ no ☐

Have you discussed this application with the person referring you to Venture Trust?

yes ☐ no ☐

Have the medical sections of this form been filled in?

yes ☐ no ☐

Have you read, understood and signed the statement on page 11 called 'Release and assumption of risk'?

yes ☐ no ☐

Ethnic origin I would describe myself a (please circle):	
Bangladeshi	Indian
Black-African	Pakistani
Black-British	White
Black-Caribbean	Other (please state below)
Chinese	

COURSE AGREEMENT

WHAT THE STAFF AT THE VENTURE TRUST WILL DO:

- ◆ Provide you with support and respect you for who you are
- ◆ Provide activities, challenges and opportunities for you to learn from.
- ◆ Work in partnership with you to maintain all the rules and boundaries fairly & firmly.
- ◆ Provide help and guidance to promote independence and personal responsibility.
- ◆ Write a development report on your achievements and time at the Venture trust.

WHAT YOUR REFERRAL AGENT SHOULD DO:

- ◆ Support you prior to arrival in Applecross
- ◆ Discuss your action plan with you
- ◆ Support you on return to your home environment.

WHAT YOU AGREE TO DO:

While on the course I will work in partnership with the staff and maintain The Venture Trust Boundaries, I understand this means:

- ◆ To be open to new people and new experiences
- ◆ To treat people with the respect I would wish for myself
- ◆ To try out new activities and experiences
- ◆ Not bringing alcohol or non-prescribed drugs to Applecross
- ◆ Not using alcohol or non-prescribed drugs whilst in, or travelling to and from Applecross
- ◆ Not to form any sexual relationships with other course members
- ◆ Not to use any threatening or violent or bullying behaviour towards other course members or staff
- ◆ To treat everyone and their property in the way I would expect to be treated myself

I also agree to commit to making changes and to enjoy myself, and to come with an open mind and a sense of humour.

Signed..... Date.....
(Applicant)

Name (printed).....

Signed Date.....
(Referral Agent)

Name (printed).....

PRE- COURSE INFORMATION

Participant's Name _____ Course No. _____ Course Dates _____

Type of Referral _____ Referral Agent Name _____ Referral Agency _____

Address _____ Postcode _____ Telephone No. _____

SELF-CONCEPT

	1	2	3	Average			High			Comments
				4	5	6	7	8	9	
Confidence										
Motivation										
Direction										
Self-esteem										

CIRCUMSTANCES

	Poor	Average	Good	Comments
Relationship With Parents				
Relationship with Peers				
Relationship with Partner				
<u>Accommodation</u>	With Parents	Hostel	Transition	Independent Other Comments

DRUG and ALCOHOL USE

	None		Social		Problem Level		Comments
Alcohol use							
Drug use	None ever	None now	Recreational use	Serious drug habit			Comments

OFFENDING

Outstanding Charges		Current risk assessment		Comments	
Yes	No	Low	Medium	High	

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Currently Employed (y/n)		At school	Actively seeking employment	Not ready for employment	Comments
P/T	F/T				

TRAINING / EDUCATION

Qualifications		At school	Left school	Further Education	Vocational Training	Other e.g. Voluntary work	Comments
Yes	No						
				Higher Education			

OTHER COMMENTS

- Please help us to complete our post course follow-up by completing this form as fully as possible. Thank you

Appendix 8.3

2a. Participant Comments

Participant's Name _____

Course Number _____

Course Dates _____

Now you are back home we would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to answer some questions about your time with us at the Venture Trust.

2a.1 What do you think you gained or experienced at the Venture Trust which can help you now you are back home?

2a.2 Have you had a chance to read your report? If so, are you proud of it? Do you feel it gives a fair picture of your time at the Venture Trust?

2a.3 Do you still think the plans and recommendations for your future are achievable? Do you feel confident about trying out some of the ideas listed?

2a.4 Do you have any suggestions for improving Venture Trust courses or any other thoughts which could be of use to the staff?

2a.5 Any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this form. Please return it to your referral agent.

2b. Referral Agent Comments

Participant's Name _____

Course Number _____

Course Dates _____

As part of our course evaluation process we would be very grateful if you could complete the following questions about the Venture Trust course, and return it together with the participant's comments as soon as possible.

2b.1 Have you noticed any immediate positive changes in attitude, confidence, motivation or direction since the participant returned from the Venture Trust?

2b.2 Were your expectations fulfilled? Did the participant appear to benefit from the course as you had hoped?

2b.3 Do you have any comments about the Venture Trust report?

2b.4 Do you feel that the Venture Trust recommendations are appropriate and achievable?

2b.5 Has the participant talked further about future plans or long-term ideas?

2b.6 Do you have any suggestions for course changes/ improvements?

2b.7 Any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Appendix 8.4

3. Follow on Evaluation Form ~ at 3 months

Participant's Name _____

Course Number _____

Course Dates _____

3.1 What contact has there been with the participant since the course?

3.2 How successful has the young person been at following their action plan so far?

3.3 Follow on Progress - Behavioural

3.3.1 What notable increases in self-confidence, self-esteem, motivation and/or direction have there been in the young person?

3.3.2 Describe any improvements in general circumstances such as housing or relationships?
Please be as specific as possible.

3.3.3 Has drug use been an issue? If so has it reduced, remained stable or increased since the course?
Please give details...

3.3.4 What offending or trouble involving the police, if any at all, has there been since the course?

3.4 Follow on Progress - Vocational

- 3.4.1 What progress has the participant made with regards to their vocational development?
(E.g. Higher education; training course; voluntary work; paid employment-p/t; f/t)

3.5 Follow on Progress - Involvement with other Organisations

3.5.1 What links have been maintained; talked of or established with youth organisations, including your own organisation? (E.g. Fairbridge; Raleigh International; Prince's Trust etc.)

3.6 In what way has the Venture Trust report been useful for the young person?
(E.g. a reference)

3.7 Any other Comments

L.E.Q. - I[©]

Figure 8.1

NAME: _____	DATE OF BIRTH: ____/____/____
MALE / FEMALE (circle one)	COURSE CODE: _____

STATEMENT	FALSE not like me								TRUE like me								
01. If I try hard enough, I can succeed at anything.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
02. I plan and use my time efficiently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
03. I am successful in social situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
04. When working on a project, I do my best to get the details right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
05. I change my thinking or opinions easily if there is a better idea.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
06. I am in control of things that happen to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
07. I can get people to work for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
08. I can stay calm in stressful situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
09. I like to be busy and actively involved in things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
10. I know I have the ability to do anything I want to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
11. I do not waste time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
12. I am competent in social situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
13. I try to get the best results when I do things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
14. I am open to new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
15. I believe I am responsible for all my actions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
16. I am a good leader when a task needs to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
17. I stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
18. I like to be active and energetic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
19. When I apply myself to something I am confident I will succeed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
20. I manage the way I use my time well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
21. I communicate well with people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
22. I try to do the best that I possibly can.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
23. I am adaptable and flexible in my thinking and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
24. I don't believe in chance, fate or destiny.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
25. As a leader I motivate other people well when tasks need to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
26. I stay calm when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
27. I like to be an active, 'get into it' person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
28. I believe I can do it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									
29. I can change the way I think and behave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									

Table 8.1 Life Effectiveness components

LEQ-I Components	Items	Description
Achievement Motivation	4, 13, 22	The extent to which the individual is motivated to achieve excellence and put the required effort into action to attain it.
Active Initiative	9, 18, 27	The extent to which the individual likes to initiate action in new situations.
Emotional Control	8, 17, 26	The extent to which the individual perceives he/she maintains emotional control when he/she is faced with potentially stressful situations.
Intellectual Flexibility	5, 14, 23	The extent to which the individual perceives he/she can adapt his/her thinking and accommodate new information from changing conditions and different perspectives.
Locus of Control	1, 6, 15, 24, 29	The extent to which the individual perceives that he/she has personal control of his/her life.
Self Confidence	10, 19, 28	The degree of confidence the individual has in his/her abilities and the success of their actions.
Social Competence	3, 12, 21	The degree of personal confidence and self-perceived ability in social interactions.
Task Leadership	7, 16, 25	The extent to which the individual perceives he/she can lead other people effectively when a task needs to be done and productivity is the primary requirement
Time Management	2, 11, 20	The extent that an individual perceives that he/she makes optimum use of time.

Appendix 8.6

Figure 8.2 Distribution of age and gender (n=94)

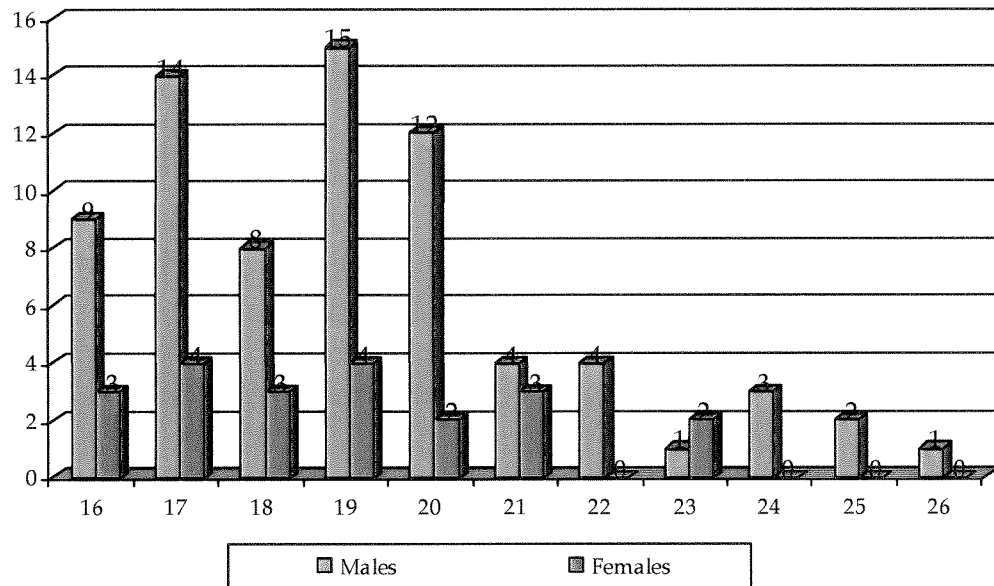


Figure 8.3 Distribution of age and gender (n=24)

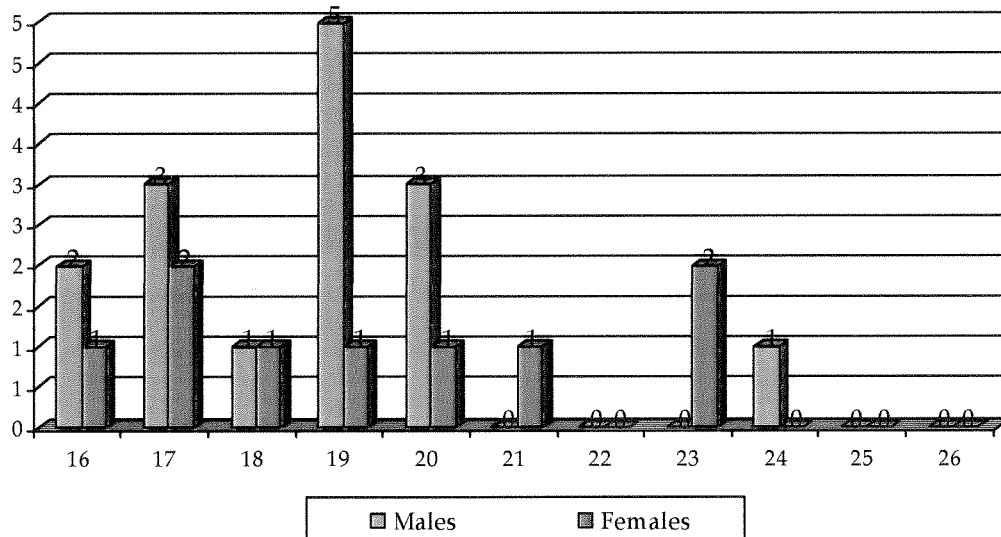
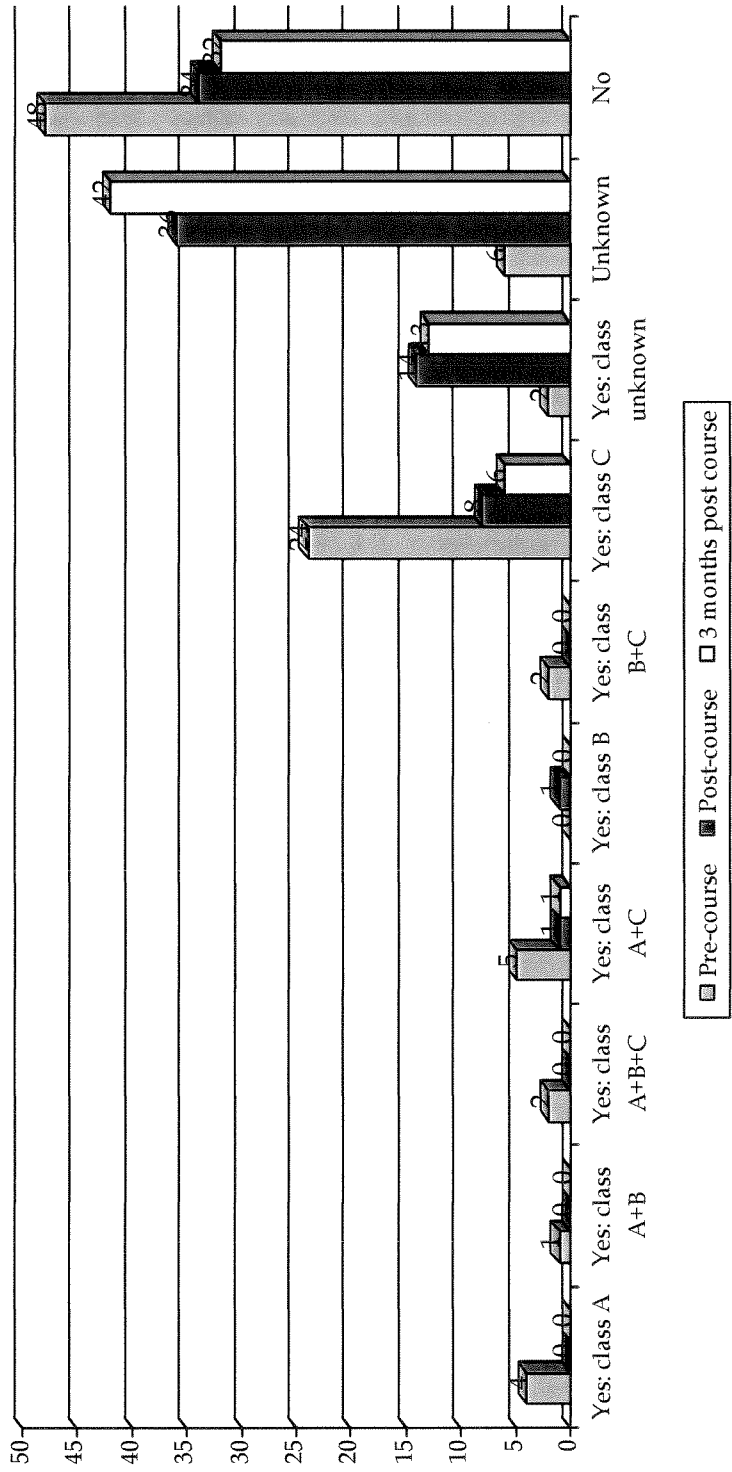


Figure 8.4 Participant drug use (n=94)



Appendix 8.8 Variable names & coding instructions for narrative data analysis

Full variable name	SPSS variable name	Coding instructions
Participant code	id	Subject identification number
Gender	gender	1=males; 2=females
Date of Birth	dob	In day, month and year
Referral Agency	referral	1=Milton Keynes Foyer; 2=NCH Ayrshire Crossover Project; 3=Coventry Foyer Foundation; 4=Aberdeen Foyer Foundation; 5=Hereford Supported Housing for Young People Project; 6=Foster NCH; 7=Amber Foundation; 8=Ludlow Foyer Foundation; 9=Challenge for Youth Belfast; 10=Fairbridge Edinburgh; 11=Fairbridge Solent; 12=Painswick Inn Foyer Foundation; 13=Beacon Housing Association; 14=Blackburn with Darwen Foyer Foundation; 15=The Daylight Project; 16=Fairbridge Tyne & Wear; 17=Blackpool Foyer Foundation; 18=Careers Scotland; 19=Fairbridge Dundee; 20=NCH Corner House Independence Project; 21=Brighton & Hove Foyer Foundation; 22=Careers Scotland Shetland; 23=Shetland Community Drugs Team; 24=NCH Community Living Project; 25=Bradford Foyer Foundation; 26=NCH for Action; 27=Fairbridge Solent; 28=Fairbridge Manchester; 29=NCH Path Project; 30=Fairbridge Glasgow; 31=Tyneside Foyer Foundation; 32=Fairbridge South Tyneside; 33=NCH Preparation for Life; 34=Careers Scotland Benbecula; 35=NCH Bridges Project; 36=Bristol Foyer Foundation; 37=Fairbridge Teesside; 38=Belfast Foyer Foundation; 39=Adref Ltd; 40=NCH Dros-y-Bont; 41=Rugeley Foyer Foundation;

		42=Fraserburgh Foyer Foundation; 43=Eastbourne Foyer Foundation; 44=Esther Community Project; 45=NCH Independent Living Project; 46=NCH Leaving Care; 47=Coops Foyer Foundation; 48=Barnabus Safe & Sound; 49=Fairbridge De Cymru; 50=High Wycombe YMCA; 51=Waterloo Foyer Foundation; 52=NCH Independence Support; 53=Sheffield Foyer Foundation; 54=Fairbridge London
Referral Organisation	reforg	1=Fairbridge; 2=Foyer Foundation; 3=NCH; 4=Other
Living Circumstances pre	livepre	1=supported accommodation; 2=secure accommodation; 3=homeless hostel; 4=with parents; 5=with other family; 6=with guardian or foster parents; 7=independent; 8=with friends; 9=Bed & Breakfast; 0=unknown
Living Circumstances post	livepost	1=supported accommodation; 2=secure accommodation; 3=homeless hostel; 4=with parents; 5=with other family; 6=with guardian or foster parents; 7=independent; 8=with friends; 9=Bed & Breakfast; 0=unknown
Living Circumstances postpost	livepp	1=supported accommodation; 2=secure accommodation; 3=homeless hostel; 4=with parents; 5=with other family; 6=with guardian or foster parents; 7=independent; 8=with friends; 9=Bed & Breakfast; 0=unknown
Employment Status pre	jobpre	1=employed f/t; 2=employed p/t; 3=unemployed; 4=voluntary work; 5=not ready for work; 6=N/A; 0=unknown
Employment Status post	jobpost	1=employed f/t; 2=employed p/t; 3=unemployed; 4=voluntary work; 5=not ready for work; 6=N/A; 7=actively seeking employment/applying for work;

		0=unknown
Employment Status postpost	jobpp	1=employed f/t; 2=employed p/t; 3=unemployed; 4=voluntary work; 5=not ready for work; 6=N/A; 7=actively seeking employment/applying for work; 0=unknown
Education pre	edpre	1=at school/6 th form; 2=at college; 3=due to start school/college; 4=N/A; 5=actively seeking courses/applying for courses; 0=unknown
Education post	edpost	1=at school/6 th form; 2=at college; 3=due to start school/college; 4=N/A; 5=actively seeking courses/applying for courses; 0=unknown
Education postpost	edpp	1=at school/6 th form; 2=at college; 3=due to start school/college; 4=N/A; 5=actively seeking courses/applying for courses; 0=unknown
Training pre	traipre	1=in training; 2=life shapers training; 3=vocational training; 4=modern apprenticeship; 5=applying for training course; 6=progress to work training; 7=education 2 employment training; 8=N/A; 9=actively seeking training/applying for training; 0=unknown
Training post	traipost	1=in training; 2=life shapers training; 3=vocational training; 4=modern apprenticeship; 5=applying for training course; 6=progress to work training; 7=education 2 employment training; 8=N/A; 9=actively seeking training/applying for training; 0=unknown
Training postpost	traipp	1=in training; 2=life shapers training; 3=vocational training; 4=modern apprenticeship; 5=applying for training course; 6=progress to work training; 7=education 2 employment training; 8=N/A;

		9=actively seeking training/applying for training; 0=unknown
Offending pre	offpre	1=yes; 2=no; 0=unknown
Offending post	offpost	1=yes; 2=no; 0=unknown
Offending postpost	offpp	1=yes; 2=no; 0=unknown
Drug Use pre	drugpre	1=yes: class A; 2=yes: class A+B; 3=yes: class A+B+C; 4=yes: class B; 5=yes: class B+C; 6=yes: class A+C; 7=yes: class C; 8=no; 9=yes: class unknown; 0=unknown
Drug Use post	drugpost	1=yes: class A; 2=yes: class A+B; 3=yes: class A+B+C; 4=yes: class B; 5=yes: class B+C; 6=yes: class A+C; 7=yes: class C; 8=no; 9=yes: class unknown; 0=unknown
Drug Use postpost	drugpp	1=yes: class A; 2=yes: class A+B; 3=yes: class A+B+C; 4=yes: class B; 5=yes: class B+C; 6=yes: class A+C; 7=yes: class C; 8=no; 9=yes: class unknown; 0=unknown
Alcohol Use pre	alcpres	1=yes: heavy use; 2=yes: moderate/varied use; 3=social/low use; 4=no; 0=unknown
Alcohol Use post	alcpost	1=yes: heavy use; 2=yes: moderate/varied use; 3=social/low use; 4=no; 0=unknown
Alcohol Use postpost	alcpp	1=yes: heavy use; 2=yes: moderate/varied use; 3=social/low use; 4=no; 0=unknown
Confidence pre	conpre	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Confidence post	conpost	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Confidence postpost	conpp	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Motivation pre	motipre	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5

		medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Motivation post	motipost	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Motivation postpost	motipp	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Direction pre	dirpre	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Direction post	dirpost	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Direction postpost	dirpp	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Self-Esteem pre	selfpre	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Self-Esteem post	selfpost	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Self-Esteem postpost	selfpp	1=1 low; 2=2 low; 3=3 low; 4=4 medium; 5= 5 medium; 6=6 medium; 7=7 high; 8=8 high; 9=9 high; 10=constantly fluctuating; 0=unknown
Initial post-course participant comments Q1	Q2a1	1=had great time & it helped get job/training/into education/similar; 2=more

		confident/determined/motivated; 3=developed life skills & helped manage issues @ home; 4=best thing ever done
Initial post-course participant comments Q2	Q2a2	1=yes & am very pleased with it/true representation; 2=gave feelings of confidence
Initial post-course participant comments Q3a	Q2a3a	1=happy about future; 2=making progress for future; 3=be confident & just do it
Initial post-course participant comments Q3b	Q2a3b	1=support workers/staff; 2=ask for help when needed
Initial post-course participant comments Q4	Q2a4	1=don't change a thing, it's great as it is; 2=more free time to get to know others; 3=not be treated like children; 4=longer expedition &/ course to challenge more; 5=stick to the proposed plan; 6=be more on time; 7=fewer group meetings, more 1-2-1s
Initial post-course participant comments Q5	Q2a5	1=staff excellent - thank you; 2= personality clashes; 3=like to go back; 4=more free time to get to know others; 5=update your promo material
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q1	Q2b1	1=all aspects greatly improved with immediate progress with action plan; 2=enjoyed experience, but not right time to attend; 3=abundance of self-confidence & enthusiasm; 4=more focused, calm & self- assured
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q2a	Q2b2a	1=realise potential & got motivated; 2=more communicative, up-beat & helping self; 3=gave time out needed; 4=benefits appeared huge at first but went back to old ways
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q2b	Q2b2b	1=increased confidence; 2=personal development aspects great; 3=more open to change & to practice learning; 4=more self aware & sensitive to others
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q3	Q2b3	1=very helpful/informative, feedback needed from other source boosted & encouraged them; 2=accurate & descriptive-

		impressive
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q4	Q2b4	1=very appropriate & achievable; 2=appropriate & achievable in due course
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q5a	Q2b5a	1=to get a house & job; 2=action plan; 3=reduce drug/alcohol use &/or get a job/go to college; 4=get personal circumstances under control; 5=go to college&/improve relationships; 6=nothing achieved
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q5b	Q2b5b	1=continual support
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q6	Q2b6	1=more free time to get to know others; 2=none-fantastic!; 3=an induction day &/or promo video &/or leaflets; 4=better communications between referral agents & VT; 5=certificate with reports; 6=ensure YP go to VT with clear objectives; 7=introduce a course for YP with learning difficulties & one for obese YP; 8=course for under 16s
Initial post-course referral worker comments Q7	Q2b7	1=Thanks-very valuable experience; 2=had real visible impact
3 Month Evaluation Q1	Q31	1=none; 2=daily, young person lives at referral agency; 3=regular (weekly meetings or similar); 4=seldom (very few meetings if more than one); 5=regular at first, but dropped off; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q2	Q32	1=very successful; 2=reasonably successful; 3=not very successful; 4=no success at all, plan not followed; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q3	Q331	1=greatly improved; 2=slightly improved; 3=no change; 4=worse; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q4	Q332	1=moved into independent housing and improved relationships; 2=moved to supported housing; 3=back at home with parents; 4=no change; 5=improved relationships; 6=moved into independent housing; 0=unknown

3 Month Evaluation Q5	Q333	1=N/ A – drugs never an issue; 2=remained stable/constant or no change; 3=reduced; 4=increased; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q6	Q334	1=N/ A – never had trouble with police; 2=no more offending occurred; 3=still offending; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q7	Q341	1=still at school; 2=still at college; 3=still in training; 4=still working (pt/ft); 5=started/starting education course (school/college); 6=started/starting training course; 7=started/starting paid employment (pt/ft); 8=started/starting voluntary employment (pt/ft); 9=N/ A (not ready for employment/involved in other things; 10=no progress; 11=actively seeking employment; 12=at school/college with p/t employment; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q8	Q351	1=links maintained with own org only; 2=links also established with other org + own org; 3=no new links established or old ones maintained; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q9	Q36	1=useful guide; 2=un-useful; 3=useful, but did not use it; 0=unknown
3 Month Evaluation Q10	Q37	1=thank you: good work done; 2=young person difficult to work with, but good job, thanks; 3=young person did not get anything from course; 0=no further comments OR unknown