

Ingeus – The Ingeus Academy

[keywords: *peer mentoring*]

Overview

First set up in 2021, the Ingeus Academy provides an 8 week training programme for service users to become Peer Mentors, harnessing their lived experience, on a voluntary basis, to support the delivery, and inform the ongoing development, of our commissioned rehabilitative services. In some cases (e.g, Durham & Darlington Fire Service’s ‘Building resilience programme’) they also offer support to other local organisations working with those at risk of criminality. Many of the Academy “graduates” go on to be offered full time, paid employment with Ingeus, and people with lived experience, including Academy graduates, make up around 15% of our justice workforce at the time of writing (October 2024).

Its impact

The Academy has been independently evaluated, by Russell Webster, who found that engaging with people with lived experience in this way – both as mentors and as paid employees – has a positive impact on compliance and engagement among service users, and on the attitudes of other staff towards those with lived experience, and helps improve the quality and delivery of the services Ingeus provides. It also benefits the mentors themselves through improved employment opportunities.

What’s special about it

We believe this is an outstanding example of harnessing lived experience to the benefit of all concerned.

Wider applicability

We believe this approach could be widely adopted elsewhere – robust risk assessment and management is key to its success.

Further information

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See also: [KnowX.uk/Ingeus1-KBT24.pdf](https://www.knowx.uk/Ingeus1-KBT24.pdf) (Presentation)