



PUBLIC PRISON SERVICE

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

I left school when I was 13 and in third form, I hated school and felt picked on by the teachers. I had a learning difficulty and had lagged behind the other students.

In 1999 I joined the Public Prisons Service (PPS), the Offender Management qualification was very new, and although not everyone was enthusiastic about completing the unit standards, I was initially encouraged by the fact that by achieving the level 3 qualification I would get a pay rise.

Once I began working on unit standards I realised that I could focus on one unit standard at a time, working at my own pace. By focusing on one unit standard at a time I was not daunted by the whole qualification. I found the unit standards to be easy to understand and when I did have questions I just picked up the phone and rang one of the facilitators. All of my facilitators were very helpful and supportive and they didn't make me feel like I was asking stupid questions.

The feedback I received from my facilitators and assessors was valuable, in particular the written feedback, which was very encouraging. The qualifications related to the work that I was doing and by completing the unit standards I was learning about my job and extending myself.

I achieved both the National Certificates in Offender Management [Level 3] and [Level 4] within three years and this helped me to successfully apply for Senior and Principal Corrections Officer positions. After achieving level 4 I went on to achieve the National Certificates in Offender Management [Level 5] over an 18 month period.

Achieving these qualifications has given me not only the skills to achieve my goals as a Corrections Officer but has helped me develop professionally. I have continued to study and have completed a Certificate in Management and a National Certificate in Front Line Management. Some of the unit standards that I achieved as part of my offender management qualifications are also part of other qualifications and I am now working towards a Level 5 Certificate in Public Sector Leadership and a National Diploma in Management which I hope to finish this year.