



The Crito Project Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Report of the trustees for the year ending June 2021

The trustees of the Crito Project charity present an annual report for the year ended 01 June 2021 and confirm they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the charity's constitution, and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Our Aims	2
Our Objectives	3
Review of Activity and Achievement	4
Future Plans	5
Financial Review	6
Structure and Governance	7
Trustees & Volunteers	8

Our Aims

The Crito Project proceeds from two key beliefs:

- 1) That education is the most cost-effective and successful mode of reform available to our society.
- 2) That universities have a civic duty to seek out students in unconventional settings, especially those whose lives stand at critical junctures, and who can benefit the most from higher education.

In light of these beliefs, our primary aim is to provide access to higher education to inmates serving their sentence in the east of England.

Second, we advocate for, and work to bring about, the provision of accreditation for those students, in association with strategic partners including the University of East Anglia, the US-based Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison, prison governors, education companies working in the sector, and affiliated charities.

Third, we analyse and audit our work in order to add to the collective knowledge and understanding of the impact that such study has upon the wellbeing, life chances, behaviour and decisions of the Charity's students. We also assess our activity in order to improve the provision of our tutors and the efficacy of our courses.

We confirm that we as the charity's trustees have complied with our duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the commission in exercising our powers.

Our Objectives

Our objectives for our second year were drastically reduced by the coronavirus pandemic and the beginning of the UK lockdown on 23rd March 2020. Before these events we were preparing to move into the long-awaited second stage of provision, with the Crito Project becoming the UK's first fully accredited university/prison initiative, in partnership with the University of East Anglia (UEA) and People Plus at HMP Wayland. The lockdown interrupted the module *Time Meaning & Utopia*, with its 18 students, in which we close read a piece of literature in relation to its philosophical motivations and its technical writing methods. Since then we have not been able to resume teaching.

The Ministry of Justice acted to shut down face-to-face teaching the day after the trustees unanimously voted to halt provision. HMP Wayland, where we are primarily based, has suffered with particularly bad outbreaks of Corona in 2021. This has forced us to curtail and alter our objectives for the year. Our revised objectives included:

- Maintaining positive relations with all key partners through a period of reduced communication and in the absence of an active contract to teach.
- Continue to work for the UEA's accreditation of three of the charity's modules.
- Open a charitable account with an ethical bank, finalise insurance for recommencement of teaching and ready the charity to take payments and generate invoices when teaching recommenced.
- To advocate for our students to receive greater support from the prison regime, specifically in terms of independent study hours and access to word processing to complete their written assessments.
- Forge strategic links with overseas prison education bodies to widen our knowledge base and form supportive alliances
- Take a fresh look at our communications and website.

Review of Activity and Achievement

Our primary purpose was effectively impossible to achieve this year, as our charity was founded with the intent to provide face-to-face higher education to inmates serving their sentences in the east of England. With no possibility of face-to-face teaching, and with no possibility of using internet services such as Zoom or Windows Teams due to security laws for IT in prison, it has been a testing year for the charity.

Despite that there have been a few actions we could take at such a distance.

- We renovated our charity website (www.thecritoproject.org) to better represent our aims, curriculum and philosophy.
- We secured permission from various companies and individuals to allow the use of their videos and podcasts within HMP Wayland's education intranet, such as Bard College's *College Behind Bars*, the podcast series *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps*, and a selection of *Closer to Truth's* video interviews. We have uploaded over ten hours of interviews and over 200 hours of podcasts on philosophy, cognitive science and the history of thought this year.
- We have successfully lobbied HMP Wayland to allow our future students to have access to computers for a weekly independent study period.
- Our Course Director has been invited to take part in Bard College's Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison Summer Residency, 28th June – 16th July 2021.
- We have incurred no significant costs during the year, due to our two tutors and our board of trustees all operating on a voluntary basis. This leaves us in a healthy state from which to restart provision.

Future Plans

After talks with Sheirra Matthewson, the Regional Director of Education at People Plus, we operated on the assumption that September 2021 would represent a possible date to restart face-to-face teaching.

Our tutor team delivered a series of academic presentations across the summer, advocating for higher education in prison and publicising the charity.

We look forward to the finalisation of the UEA's accreditation process. Once achieved & implemented, the Crito Project will become a field-leader in the UK.

Assuming the above schedule holds, April 2022 would represent our scheduled commencement of accredited teaching at HMP Wayland. This term represents the realisation of significant work by the charity and it will allow us to bring more teaching staff on from the UEA.

Our two tutors have begun working on a project to support our future students with a range of podcasts, interviews, videos and introductory papers. We are exploring the possibility that we may be able to move from sourcing podcasts and videos from content creators towards recording our own short films and interviews. The trustees recognise, however, that our charity's expertise lies in face-to-face higher education.

And finally, our Course Director Dr Ben Walker was invited to the Bard College Prison Initiative Summer Residency. This is the first time anyone has been invited to this intensive three-week residency outside of the United States, and we see it as a fantastic chance to learn from the most successful university/prison partnership in history; BPI is also the inspiration for Crito, and we hope this invite signals an opportunity for us to work more closely with them. As such the three-week conference promises to change a great deal for our charity, as well as forging vital new alliances and mentorships. In the longterm Bard College have again expressed an interest in the Crito Project-UEA partnership being the first international body to join their Consortium for Liberal Arts in Prison.

Financial Review

Financially the charity is still in its infancy, with no costs or income for the period 02/06/2020–01/06/2021, and so our balance sheet remained blank for this period. The charity has no current or fixed assets and it holds no reserves. Therefore, whilst the charity technically runs a receipts & payments system of accounts, it has no receipts, payments, purchases, funds, assets or liabilities to declare.

Because it has no dedicated offices and no contracts, the charity has no fixed costs. Its variable costs for volunteer travel and teaching materials were, as of March 2020, being paid privately by the charity's volunteer Course Director, Dr Ben Walker. This is clearly an unsustainable arrangement and one we will cease once contracted accredited teaching can commence.

The Crito Project's financial wellbeing and development are tied to the process of accreditation that is ongoing with the University of East Anglia. With accreditation will come a change in the charity's financial status: we have been contracted by People Plus to deliver our course when it recommences, for which we will receive approximately £4200 per module per cohort, with our provision being for two full cohorts at the time of the 2020 national lockdown's interruption.

In June 2021 People Plus confirmed that we would be able to invoice the company for work previously completed at HMP Wayland from September 2019 to March 2020 despite its interruption. We will submit invoices with a total value of £12,354, with this total being calculated according to People Plus's own *Prison Education Framework* contract, meaning that this will be the last fiscal year where the charity operates without an income.

This year we registered a charity bank account with Unity, an ethical and sustainable independent bank. We do not expect any substantial expenditure or income until teaching recommences.

Structure and Governance

The structure of the Crito Project has remained unchanged since its incorporation, mainly due to our relative inactivity and lack of provision this past year. However we hope to change this in late 2021, due to three main factors.

Firstly, assuming a recommencement in September 2021 the charity will have to take account of greater financial and operational complexity due to delivery of accredited higher education for the first time.

Secondly our renewed communication and mentorship with the Bard College Prison Initiative will no doubt lead to our revisiting our procedures and priorities, and with them the structure that best serves.

Thirdly in the medium-term we expect greater integration with the UEA.

All of these factors may necessitate the recruitment of a fourth trustee and, eventually, of employing a 0.2 contract administrator, dependent upon recommencement of contracted teaching and budgetary restrictions.

Trustees & Volunteers

Chair

Professor Liam Dolan, *Sherardian Professor of Botany, Magdalen College, Oxford*

Trustees

- Dr Tom Greaves, *Head of Philosophy Department, UEA*
- Georgie Oatley

Volunteer Teaching Staff

- Dr Ben Walker, *Crito Project Course Director, UEA*
- Jack Manzi, *Postgraduate Researcher, UEA*

Research

Head Researcher

Dr Rob Lock