

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE EMPLOYABILITY OF EX-PRISONERS AND EX-OFFENDERS

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Abstract

This paper presents the findings to date in a study of attitudes towards the employability of ex-prisoners and ex-offenders. The study surveyed four stakeholder groups (prisoners and offender, corrections services personnel, employment services personnel, and employers) in Victoria and Queensland, to gauge their attitudes to the employability of a number of disadvantaged jobseekers, including those with a forensic history. The survey also asked respondents about the importance of employment related skills and characteristics and the likelihood that ex-offenders and ex-prisoners would possess these. The findings presented represent the first of a two phase analysis of the data. The first phase of analysis found evidence of negative attitudes towards the employability of people with a forensic history in comparison to other disadvantaged jobseeker groups. It also found that there were low expectations that people with forensic history will have important employment related skills. The results indicate interesting differences between the respondent groups, and these will be investigated in the second phase of the analysis.