



HM Prison &
Probation Service

A Response to: Independent serious further offence review of Joshua Jacques

Report Published: 7 March 2024

Action Plan Submitted: 7 March 2024

12 Month Update Action Plan Submitted: 6 March 2025

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the recommendations. The action plan confirms whether recommendations are agreed, partly agreed, or not agreed (see categorisations below). Where a recommendation is agreed or partly agreed, the action plans provide specific steps and actions to address these. Actions are clear, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.

Term	Definition	Additional comment
Agreed	All of the recommendation is agreed with, can be achieved and is affordable.	The response should clearly explain how the recommendation will be achieved along with timescales. Actions should be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) as possible. Actions should be specific enough to be tracked for progress.
Partly Agreed	Only part of the recommendation is agreed with, is achievable, affordable and will be implemented. This might be because we cannot implement the whole recommendation because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must state clearly which part of the recommendation will be implemented along with SMART actions and tracked for progress. There must be an explanation of why we cannot fully agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.
Not Agreed	The recommendation is not agreed and will not be implemented. This might be because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must clearly state the reasons why we have chosen this option. There must be an explanation of why we cannot agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.



ACTION PLAN: Independent serious further offence review of Joshua Jacques

1. Rec No	2. Recommendation	3. Agreed/ Partly Agreed/ Not Agreed	4. Response Action Taken/Planned	5. Responsible Owner	6. Target Date
His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service should:					
1	Ensure there is consistent practice in the allocation and oversight of caseloads, including explicit reallocation of cases when a probation practitioner is absent from work.	Agreed	<p>The Excellence and Quality in Process (EQuIP) web-based resource contains the Case Allocation - Tiering Framework (justice.gov.uk) document which was published in October 2022. This outlines the principles for case allocation and for ensuring that cases are appropriately tiered (based on risk of serious harm, level of complexity and number of needs to be addressed). The framework mandates that offenders assessed as high risk of serious harm are allocated to qualified probation officers; identifying when professional judgement may be required in allocating cases below that threshold; setting out the principles which must govern the reallocation of cases when a probation practitioner is absent through illness; and requiring that managers record actions which they have taken to discharge their responsibility in overseeing the caseloads of those who report to them. As a result of this recommendation, timescales have been agreed on when reallocation should occur after a Probation Practitioner is unexpectedly absent from work, and the revised framework will be published in April 2024.</p> <p>HMPPS have developed a Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) report which improves the accuracy and reliability of the WMT by reducing the human error recording within it. The WMT report is produced monthly and flags instances where staff are on long-term leave and cases that require re-allocation. This includes cases held by Probation Practitioners with long-term absence (over 28 days).</p> <p>Data is now being delivered bi-monthly to the WMT Continuous Improvement Group, which is co-chaired by a Regional Head of Performance & Quality (WMT Lead) and the Probation Workforce Programme (WMT Lead). The WMT Continuous Improvement Group supports leaders and managers to make effective, informed and consistent workload decisions to support operational</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Improvement Support Group</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>Amended framework to be published in April 2024</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p>



			<p>delivery, including through improved continuity of supervision when a Probation Practitioner is on leave. Specific regional actions are set by the WMT Continuous Improvement Group and tracked with issues escalated to the Performance & Quality Strategy meeting.</p> <p>The Performance, Assurance and Risk (PAR) Group have completed an audit of tiering compliance in London. This includes staff absence cover via a staff survey and a report will be provided to the Chief Probation Officer by the end of March.</p>	Deputy Director, Performance, Assurance and Risk	March 2024
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 1 (March 2025)					
			<p>The revised case allocation tiering framework now provides national guidance regarding what cases can be allocated to a Newly Qualified Officer (NQO) and specific guidance now addresses reallocation of cases for those absent. Regions continue to monitor the allocation of cases via their Performance and Quality teams ensuring the new guidance is followed.</p> <p>Updated Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) user guidance has been produced for users and managers.</p> <p>Cases continue to be tracked via the WMT health check and concerns are raised for dissemination and action within regions via the Continuous Improvement Group.</p> <p>The report into tiering compliance was completed and shared with the Regional Probation Director for London and the Chief Probation Officer in March 2024. Steps to improvement are now being overseen by the Deputy Director for Sentence Management and Unpaid Work.</p>	Deputy Director, Sentence Management and Unpaid Work	Completed
				Deputy Director, Probation Operations Directorate	Completed
				Deputy Director, Probation Operations Directorate	Completed
				Deputy Director, Sentence Management and Unpaid Work	Completed
2	Ensure newly qualified officers are supported to develop their practice and are only allocated suitable caseload volumes and types of case during their post qualification period.	Agreed	Following engagement with operational staff and regional heads, the Probation Workforce Programme have developed and published a national framework for Newly Qualified Officers (NQOs). The framework sets out the support to be provided to staff during their NQO period and during the transition from the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) to the NQO stage. The	Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme	Completed



			<p>framework provides national assurance that each region adequately supports NQOs to develop their practice.</p> <p>The case allocation tiering framework was published in October 2022. It provides national guidance regarding what cases can be allocated to an NQO. The guidance mandates that a Senior Probation Officer (SPO) will need to endorse the allocation of high-risk cases in the community (or with 12 months or less to serve in custody) to NQOs, unless the sentence includes only standalone Unpaid Work or restrictive requirements in the community. A national 'allocate a person on probation' tool has been developed which will require SPOs to record their allocation decision. This will be automatically added to nDelius as a contact log. This will be rolled out incrementally throughout the year.</p>	Deputy Director, Probation Reform Programme	Completed
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 2 (March 2025)					
			<p>The rollout of the national framework for NQOs and its supporting guidance was completed in July 2024 to coincide with Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP's) qualifying. Each region has implemented the framework and guidance, and managers have attended a briefing by probation learning leads which set out the expectation on them as managers of NQOs.</p> <p>The 'allocate a person on probation' tool is now fully deployed across all 12 regions. In addition, the 'allocation journeys' to be addressed by the tool are now complete.</p>	Deputy Director, Transforming Delivery Directorate, Capability	Completed
			<p>The 'allocate a person on probation' tool is now fully deployed across all 12 regions. In addition, the 'allocation journeys' to be addressed by the tool are now complete.</p>	Deputy Director, Transforming Delivery Directorate, Capability	Completed
3	Develop an automated process to alert managers to unsuitable case allocations for practitioners (for example, to prevent unsuitable allocations to NQOs).	Partly Agreed	<p>This recommendation is partly agreed for affordability reasons. The feasibility of an automated alert has been thoroughly investigated. Unfortunately, a fully automated solution is not possible, as employee information on Probation Practitioners, such as experience and training completed cannot be integrated with Probation Case Management systems at this point.</p> <p>HMPPS will instead alert managers to suitability of case allocations through a new <i>Allocate a Person on Probation</i> tool, which will present SPOs information on the grade of Probation Practitioners in their teams, along with information on current caseload, case tier and case information. All these data are in one place, providing the SPOs with all the information needed to make an informed allocation. This new process includes Case Allocation Decision Evidencing</p>	Deputy Director, Head of Digital Probation	Completed



			<p>functionality (CADE), prompting users to reflect on the rationale behind the allocation decision and provide a justification.</p> <p>The Case Allocation Tool for people being sentenced from Court to community-based orders will be rolled out to all regions. The capability of the tool will be expanded to include those released and re-released from custody.</p>	Deputy Director, Head of Digital Probation	April 2024
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 3 (March 2025)					
			<p>Managers are now alerted to the suitability of case allocations through the new case allocation tool. This includes capturing management oversight within the tool, which is automatically recorded to nDelius.</p> <p>The case allocation tool has now been fully deployed to all 12 probation regions. Limited Access Offender records can now also be allocated via the tool.</p>	Deputy Director, Head of Digital Probation	Completed
				Deputy Director, Head of Digital Probation	Completed
4	Ensure that referrals, such as to approved premises and MAPPA, are completed sufficiently prior to release, to support the effective management of cases in the community (as suggested in HMPPS guidance).	Agreed	<p>Regional Probation Directors are responsible for ensuring applications for Approved Premises (AP) placements and MAPPA referrals are completed a minimum of six months prior to release unless there are exceptional reasons such as a short sentence or a change in risk. In these circumstances, the application must be made at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Operational guidance sets out the timescales for the Prison Offender Manager (POM) to hand over responsibility for offenders to the Community Offender Manager (COM). The handover timeframes from POM to COM for parole eligible cases has been extended from eight months prior to Parole Eligibility Date (PED)/Tariff End Date (TED)/Projected Release Date (PRD) to 12 months. All standard determinate sentence cases have also been extended from 7.5 to 8.5 months with all short-sentenced prisoners now allocated to a COM at point of sentence. Additionally, the handover guidance has been reviewed, simplified and republished. These changes will help to support more effective transition from managing offenders in custody into the community.</p> <p>The Regional Probation Director (RPD) for London has launched a Quality Improvement Programme (QIP) to improve compliance with the requirement in the Secretary of State’s MAPPA Guidance to convene pre-release MAPPA meetings six months before release, to set the level of MAPPA management.</p>	<p>Regional Probation Directors</p> <p>Deputy Director, Courts and Custody group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>



		<p>The QIP will also enhance the skills of practitioners in assessing and managing risk, taking enforcement action when offenders breach their licence conditions and in conducting motivational interviews.</p> <p>The Quality Improvement Programme is now a standing agenda on bi-lateral meetings between the Regional Probation Director and Area Executive Director to provide governance on the progress of the programme of work.</p> <p>A new accountability framework was launched in March 2023 with Heads of Operations meeting the Regional Probation Director monthly to account for priority Service Level Agreements including POM/COM handover (where the pre-release work starts including MAPPAs and Approved Premises AP referrals).</p>	<p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p>
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 4 (March 2025)				
		<p>Regional Probation Directors continue to be responsible for ensuring applications for Approved Premises (AP) placements and MAPPAs referrals are completed a minimum of six months prior to release unless there are exceptional reasons such as a short sentence or a change in risk. Governance is provided by supervision, internal audit tools and management oversight. Several regions have adopted a central referral hub to provide a more efficient system to ensure timely referrals, with some other regions taking steps to plan and implement similar arrangements.</p> <p>The reviewed guidance for handover timeframes from Prison Offender Manager (POM) to Community Offender Manager (COM) continues to support more effective transition from managing offenders in custody into the community.</p> <p>The Skills Improvement Programme delivered training to all staff, including a risk management module that addresses MAPPAs. Oversight of management information on MAPPAs screenings and reviews are now conducted by the MAPPAs Executive Office. Timely MAPPAs screening completions are now part of the district accountability structure that is chaired by the Head of Operations.</p> <p>The Quality Improvement Programme continues to be a standing agenda on bi-lateral meetings between the Regional Probation Director and Area Executive Director to provide governance on the progress of the programme of work.</p>	<p>Regional Probation Directors</p> <p>Deputy Director, Courts and Custody group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>



			The Regional Probation Director continues to meet Heads of Operations monthly to provide oversight for priority Service Level Agreements including POM/COM handover.	Regional Probation Director, London Region	Completed
5	Ensure that sufficient staff resources are allocated to the effective oversight, chairing and administration of MAPPA.	Agreed	<p>Public Protection Group have also conducted a review of the effectiveness of MAPPA co-ordination and administration which identified the following actions to support effective oversight, chairing and administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive suite of learning resources for MAPPA chairs and administration have been published. Learning Resources - General - MAPPA (justice.gov.uk). A formal evaluation in April 2024 is planned. A MAPPA Quality Improvement Toolkit has been published so that local areas can collate the findings to show where there are gaps in practice. By the beginning of November 2023 over 70 had been completed. Public Protection Group will continue to encourage MAPPA Strategic Management Boards (SMBs) to use it to enable them to assess the quality of the arrangements in their area. A Self-Assessment Toolkit for SMBs to identify areas requiring development has been published, this includes a section on resources. The Self-Assessment is informed by findings from the Quality Improvement Tool, by the beginning of November 2023 SMBs had completed their first self-assessment. The National MAPPA Team will use the findings to inform the next business plan (2024/2026). Public Protection Group will continue to encourage SMBs to use it to enable them to assess the quality of the arrangements in their area. The Quality Improvement and Self-Assessment Toolkits are now hosted on the MAPPA website. This allows the National MAPPA Team to collate responses which identifies areas for improvement, both in direct practice and in building capacity for SMBs. The National MAPPA team have provided an initial report to the MAPPA Responsible Authority Steering Group on the effective oversight, chairing and administration of MAPPA. They will provide a more detailed report to support proposal for activity from April 2024 to March 2026. <p>The RPD for London has shared key findings from this independent review at the London MAPPA SMB and with the Metropolitan Police.</p>	<p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Regional Probation</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>April 2024</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>April 2024</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>April 2024</p> <p>Completed</p>



			<p>The three Responsible Authorities (Police, Prison and Probation) have acquired additional funding to recruit three further MAPPA coordinators for the London region.</p> <p>The Responsible Authorities have reviewed and assured the SMB's approach to Quality Assurance of MAPPA meetings across London. As a result, the SMB chair is now the HMPPS Head of Public Protection.</p>	<p>Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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Progress against commitments – Recommendation 5 (March 2025)

			<p>The National MAPPA Team conducted an evaluation of the MAPPA Learning Resources in 2024 and found that where they were being used, respondents found them useful, with the videos being particularly well received. The survey did reveal that 22% of respondents were not aware of the resources prior to completing the survey; therefore, the National Team intend to continue to promote their use. The National Team will hold focus groups to steer the development of future learning resources.</p> <p>The MAPPA Quality Improvement Toolkit continues to be well utilised which allows local areas to collate findings to show where there are gaps in practice. Public Protection Group continue to encourage MAPPA SMBs to use the toolkit to enable them to assess the quality of the arrangements in their area.</p> <p>The Self-Assessment Toolkit for SMBs is being well used with the National MAPPA Team using the findings to inform the current business plan. Public Protection Group have continued to encourage SMBs to use the toolkit to enable them to assess the quality of arrangements in their area.</p> <p>The Quality Improvement and Self-Assessment Toolkits are now hosted on the MAPPA website. This allows the National MAPPA Team to collate responses which identifies areas for improvement, both in direct practice and in building capacity for SMBs.</p> <p>The National MAPPA Team have provided a detailed report to the MAPPA Responsible Authority Steering Group on the effective oversight, chairing and</p>	<p>Deputy Director Public Protection Group</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection Group</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection Group</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection Group</p> <p>Deputy Director</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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			<p>administration of MAPPA. The agreed proposals for activity have been set out in the current business plan, the focus is on changes made to improve policy and guidance being effectively embedded and to take further action as required. For example, recent audits have raised concerns about how MAPPA processes engage victims and offenders. As a result, the National MAPPA Team will produce a resource to assist local SMBs with this. The National MAPPA Team will collate the results and share with MAPPA Co-ordinators on an annual basis.</p> <p>Key findings from the independent review were shared by the RPD for London at the London MAPPA SMB and with the Metropolitan Police.</p> <p>MAPPA administrator resource has been reviewed, and additional MAPPA administrators have been recruited where appropriate. This is a rolling recruitment programme.</p> <p>The HMPPS Head of Public Protections is now the chair of SMB, the quality assurance process has been reviewed, and members of the SMB are now accountable at the quarterly meetings.</p>	<p>Public Protection Group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
6	Work with local and commissioned providers of drug misuse services to ensure that interventions and training are available to support probation practitioners to properly respond to cannabis dependence and its links to mental ill health.	Agreed	<p>Through the delivery of the cross-government drug strategy, initial improved arrangements will be deployed for drug treatment across the Criminal Justice System. This will include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 Health and Justice Partnership Coordinators have been deployed across England and Wales, to work with local health partners, including mental health, drug & alcohol commissioners and treatment providers, to improve access to appropriate services. • Revised substance misuse training has been launched, including a focus on cannabis, improving understanding of drug use and dependency, and referral into the Dependency and Recovery service of treatment as required. • The drug testing of those subject to a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) in the community has been expanded, including those with a dependency upon or propensity to misuse cannabis. • Drug testing in Approved Premises has been upgraded, including replacing oral fluid testing with urine testing. This has increased the timeframe in which cannabis use is detectable from two to 30 days. 	Deputy Director, Substance Misuse Group	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new seizures testing service has been delivered to enable forensic identification of drug finds within Approved Premises. Results are used to inform risk-based decision making and build a better intelligence picture of drug use within the Approved Premises estate. <p>A further longer-term project will support probation practitioners to properly respond to cannabis dependence and its links to mental ill health through re-procurement of HMPPS's drug testing contract - pending His Majesty's Treasury sign off - covering the testing of offenders in prisons, approved premises, and probation. The new contract aims to improve data collection of drug misuse in the community and deliver a more flexible service.</p> <p>London Probation Region has held a medical lecture event for all managers, on dependency and recovery, focusing on the impact of cannabis and brain functioning.</p> <p>The Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) Dependency and Recovery (D&R) service in London delivers a range of activities to support, engage and motivate people on probation to address their substance misuse issues and includes a focus on 'bridging the gaps' between probation and community treatment services, for example, working with people with cannabis related needs. London probation Region has recently developed their High-Level Design proposals for the next generation of CRS contracts (from 2025). Subject to national governance and sign off, the D&R service element will be positively adjusted to avoid any duplication with Local Authority treatment services and will include a clearer requirement to only deliver those clear gap areas. This will include a requirement to provide cannabis (and alcohol) support services.</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Substance Misuse Group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>April 2025</p>
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Progress against commitments – Recommendation 6 (March 2025)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57 Health and Justice Partnership Coordinators have now been recruited and mobilised across probation supporting key links to local partnership structures. Dependency and Recovery (D&R) services are delivered across all regions either by direct contract or co-commissioning arrangements. These are wrap-around services to existing dependency treatment services provided by health services. The supplier delivers D&R services by working in partnership with other organisations to enhance user access and support. HMPPS have continued to train those responsible for Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) testing, running training sessions each month with 	<p>Deputy Director, Substance Misuse Group</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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			<p>increased numbers of probation staff. Health and Justice Coordinators have completed briefings with probation staff to promote use of testing for those subject to a DRR which has seen an increase in the number of tests being completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urine testing is now standard practice across Approved Premises. • The seizures testing service is now in place and being used by Approved Premises <p>HMPPS remain on track to launch the new drug testing and laboratory services in July 2025. This will support probation practitioners to properly respond to cannabis dependence and its links to mental ill health</p> <p>A medical lecture event for all managers, on dependency and recovery, focusing on the impact of cannabis and brain functioning has taken place.</p> <p>The Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) Dependency and Recovery (D&R) service/contract in London will now be extended until 2027 in line with the national CRS recommissioning programme timeline. The national model for recommissioning has also been changed with former regional high-level designs for the new services being replaced with a single 'combined services' model in future. This means the D&R pathway element will form part of the new combined service and regions will have the opportunity to flex their service specification across the different pathway elements. In London, the aim is to continue to provide D&R service elements which complement local authority services and meet local gaps, specifically for cannabis and alcohol use support needs.</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Substance Misuse Group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed Completed</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
7	Ensure that probation practitioners understand their role in supporting the police and courts to monitor compliance with Criminal Behaviour Orders.	Agreed	<p>HMPPS has made changes to the Offender Assessment System (OASys) to better capture where offenders are subject to civil and ancillary orders such as Criminal Behaviour Orders. This means that where an individual is subject to a Criminal Behaviour Order the assessment is automatically sent for countersigning by a Senior Probation Officer.</p> <p>Development of the new 'civil & behaviour orders' learning product is scheduled for launch by the end of April 2024. Subject matter expertise in the area will be sought via engagement with the Advisory Panel for Probation Learning, Legal advisors and the College of Policing.</p>	<p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>April 2024</p>



			<p>All Regions will be required to demonstrate that training in the enforcement of civil orders is included in annual training plans.</p> <p>London Probation Region have completed a workshop for all managers on understanding and how to consider civil/ancillary orders within risk assessment and risk management.</p>	<p>Regional Probation Director, Learning & Development</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>Completed</p>
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 7 (March 2025)					
			<p>HMPPS continues to utilise changes made to the Offender Assessment System (OASys) which captured where offenders were subject to civil and ancillary orders such as Criminal Behaviour Orders. The assessment is automatically sent for countersigning by a Senior Probation Officer for those subject to these orders.</p> <p>The HMPPS Civil and Ancillary Orders Awareness eLearning was officially launched in April 2024 through Probation News.</p> <p>The HMPPS Civil and Ancillary Orders Awareness eLearning is required to be completed by a wide range of staff working in HMPPS. New entrant PQIP learners and/or Probation Services Officers, must undertake the learning within the first six months as part of foundation learning.</p> <p>A development session on civil orders was completed for all practitioners under the Skills Improvement Programme.</p>	<p>Deputy Director Public Protection Group</p> <p>Deputy Director, Transforming Delivery Directorate, Capability</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, Learning & Development</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, London Region</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
8	Ensure each person on probation has an up to date, timely, appropriate and completed assessment of risk and need which, where required, is quality assured through effective countersigning.	Agreed	<p>The Assessing Risks, Needs and Strengths (ARNS) project is scheduled to be concluded in Summer 2026. The project will deliver an organisational change in the approach to how assessments, risk management and sentence planning is undertaken. This will include capturing information and progress more dynamically, supported by a new enabling digital service. An early version of ARNS will be tested initially with a small staff cohort in August 2024. This early</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Delivery - Assessing Risks, Needs and Strengths Project.</p>	<p>August 2026</p>



		<p>pilot will introduce a new question set and functionality and be a step towards transformative change to assessment and sentence planning.</p> <p>Every region now has a quality improvement plan which sets out the actions they are taking to improve the quality of risk assessments.</p> <p>The OASys Countersigning Framework was revised in November 2023 with more emphasis on determining quality assessments and providing feedback. It was re-launched in tandem with the risk and OASys practice improvement suite to support practitioner and countersigning practice.</p> <p>The Performance, Assurance and Risk (PAR) Group has designed a Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) to assess the quality of risk and needs assessment. The mandated use of this tool is part of a comprehensive quality improvement programme across all regions.</p> <p>The Performance, Assurance and Risk (PAR) Group will continue to undertake annual sentence management audits across all regions. This covers the quality and timeliness of risk and needs assessments.</p>	<p>Regional Probation Directors</p> <p>Deputy Director, Improvement Support Group</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, Performance & Quality</p> <p>Deputy Director, Performance, Assurance and Risk</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p>
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Progress against commitments – Recommendation 8 (March 2025)

	<p>The initial pilot of the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) went live in December 2024. Several assessments have been completed to date, with observations and user research underway providing key feedback to steer the iterative development of the MVP. Alongside the iteration of the MVP, more features will be designed and built into the service to expand its capability. The commitment to capture information and progress it more dynamically, supported by a new enabling digital service will remain at the core of design and further development. As the project progresses, a review of how it meets the needs of people on probation and the staff that work with them will be completed.</p> <p>Every region continues to utilise quality improvement plans to help improve the quality of risk assessments.</p> <p>Changes have been made to the OASys countersigning framework to align with the new Management Oversight Policy Framework (MOPF) which moves towards a reflective practice approach. A minimum mandate has been</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Delivery - Assessing Risks, Needs and Strengths Project.</p> <p>Regional Probation Directors</p> <p>Deputy Director, Improvement Support Group</p>	<p>August 2026</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Commencing March 2025</p>
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introduced with a targeted approach in line with risk, need and responsivity principles and the skills and experience of the probation practitioner. The MOPF guidance provides best practice examples and information on effective management oversight. Cases outside of mandated management oversight will come to the attention of managers using Regional Case Audit Tools, Reflective Practice Supervision Standards and the use of Management Information systems and will receive oversight where appropriate. The MOPF is due to be implemented by regions from March 2025 and Central Operations Support will support regions with continuous improvement throughout 2025.

Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) and Court Case Audit Tool (CCAT) have been developed by the Performance, Assurance and Risk (PAR) Group and are available to all regions with the expectation they are completed accordingly. Since RCAT was launched, PAR have delivered benchmarking and training events and shared guidance materials with regions to support them to assess cases against the expected quality standards. A national dashboard has been developed and launched to monitor RCAT and CCAT completion numbers and audit results per region.

The Annual Sentence Management assurance programme had been delayed making way for a Responsive Assurance Programme which took place during Autumn 2024. A national thematic report has been published which provided overarching findings based on the Responsive Assurance programme, this included a focus on assessment and planning. PAR have also resumed its annual Sentence Management programme prioritising assessment and planning and findings should be available in April 2025 which can be used for comparison purposes.

Regional Probation Director, Performance & Quality

Deputy Director, Performance, Assurance and Risk

Completed

April 2025



Recommendations	
Agreed	7
Partly Agreed	1
Not Agreed	0
Total	8

