Offender management

This is about how the time you spend in prison or under supervision in the community is managed.

Offender management is done to try to make sure that you are less likely to offend in the future.

It is being put in place for all offenders in stages.

Your assessment and sentence plan

Prisons and probation services use the Offender Assessment System. This is called OASys for short.

It helps them to find out why you offend and what you need to do to stop offending.

It is also used to find out if you are likely to harm yourself or other people and to work with you to help you not to.

Everyone who is going to be in prison for 12 months or more has a plan made through OASys.

You take part in the assessment and you are shown everything that is written down.

The assessment is used to make an action plan. This action plan is called your sentence plan.

For example, the sentence plan may show what you are going to do to change the way you behave sometimes or how you are going to tackle problems to do with drugs or alcohol.

Your sentence plan affects most decisions and changes during your sentence and after you are released.
Offender manager and other staff

The offender manager is someone from the probation service. They work in the community and will usually work with you all the time you are in prison or under supervision in the community.

They will help you to make changes to your life so that you are less likely to offend in the future.

When you are in prison you may also have an offender supervisor as well as a personal officer.

They will help you to keep to your sentence plan.

Your offender supervisor and/or personal officer will work with your offender manager. In some places, the offender supervisor and personal officer is the same person.

If you have any questions about OASys or offender management, talk to the prison staff.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

This is used by the police, probation and prison services to work with other professionals to manage violent and sexual offenders. It is used to protect the public from harm.

You will be told if this applies to you.

If you do have a MAPPA assessment, it will be used to make a risk management plan. The assessment will also help staff decide if you are a risk to other people, like children.
Your sentence plan

Your plan will have goals in it.
These are things you want to do or change.
For example, you might have goals to do with education such as

- literacy – reading and writing
- numeracy – maths and managing money
- learning a new skill so you are better able to get a job when you leave prison
- taking exams and getting qualifications.

As part of your plan you may have to go to groups or courses to help you think about why you offend and to help you change your behaviour.

Some examples

There are courses you can go on to help you think through situations and to control how you react. For example

- Courses called Enhanced Thinking Skills and Cognitive Skills Booster. Cognitive means to do with the way you think.
- A course to help you manage your emotions called Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage It (CALM).
- Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (often called SOTPs).
More about programmes

There are programmes to help you if you have problems with being violent.

For example

- The Healthy Relationships Programme if you have abused your partner.
- The Cognitive Self Change Programme if you are often violent.
- The Chromis Programme for people who are violent and have particular problems that they can not be helped with at other groups.
- Programmes to help you to settle back into the community after prison.

Education

There is a library and education department in every prison.

The library is there for you to use like the public libraries outside prison.

- You can borrow and order books.
- You should get the chance to go to the library for at least 20 minutes each week.
- Most libraries have books in other languages.
- There is more information in Prison Service Order 6710.

Learning

Before you start any classes you have an interview and a check to see what support you might need with things like reading and writing. This helps you to choose the courses that are right for you.

You get a timetable and your own learning plan that you have agreed with the education staff.
More about learning

You can do classes in many different subjects. For example

- reading and writing
- maths
- English lessons for people who speak other languages
- art
- business studies.

All the courses you do should lead to qualifications that are recognised outside prison, like GCSEs or NVQs. This is so you can carry on with your education when you leave prison if you want to.

You might be able to get help with distance learning courses, like Open University (OU) courses.

Prisoners over 21 should get the chance to take part in sports or PE sessions for at least an hour each week.

Work and training

Training

The Prison Service works with the Learning and Skills Council. Contact the education officer to find out more about what the Learning and Skills Council can offer you while you are in prison and when you get out.

Training is about helping you learn skills that will help you to get a job. This is called vocational training.

Vocational training is often linked to education classes. In this way, you can go to a training course and get qualifications.

For example, you might go on a training course in painting and decorating. At the same time, you might go to classes in maths and reading so you can get GCSEs or a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).
Each prison has a book called a **directory of education and training** that will tell you what training courses are run in your prison.

**Work**

Work should be one of the main things you do during your day when you are in prison. Work should be a big part of helping you to get skills and qualifications so that you can get a job when you leave prison.

Soon after you get to prison, you will have an assessment to see what type of work will be best for you.

Work in prison is usually through industrial workshops and/or agriculture (farming) and horticultural (gardening) units. You will make goods and run services that are needed in prison and for sale in the community.

Work in these units should give you skills and experience in trades like

- textiles
- engineering
- woodwork
- printing
- data entry
- plastic moulding
- computer aided design
- ground maintenance.

You will be paid for your work in prison. You will also be paid if you are willing to work but there is no work suitable for you in your prison. This pay is usually half of what you get if you are working.
Community work

Working for the local community near the prison is called **working out**. It is a chance for you to build up your self confidence before you leave prison. It will also help you to understand more about being responsible for your community and the people who live and work with you. Working out will include working

- on environmental projects
- with older people
- with people with disabilities
- on sports activities.

Job clubs

Some prisons run their own job clubs to help you to get a job when you leave. Job clubs will help you with things like preparing for interviews and how to search for jobs.

Ask the prison staff if there is a job club in your prison.

Most prisons have staff that are trained to give you advice and support with employment.

Volunteering

You may be able to volunteer in prison as a listener.

Or you may have a special job such as speaking up for other prisoners at meetings or helping in the chapel or library.
Getting ready to leave prison

Before you leave prison you will need to know

✓ Where you will live.
✓ How to sort out your benefits.
✓ What grants you can apply for to help you get somewhere to live.
✓ If you worked before you went into prison whether you need to send off tax forms.
✓ If your clothes that you wore in to prison still fit.
✓ If you have to see the probation service and you are on licence.

Your property

When you leave prison all the private property, like the clothes that you had on when you came in, will be given back to you. In most prisons you get a chance to try on your clothes a few days before you leave. If they do not fit or are for the wrong time of year, you can ask friends or family to bring clothes in for you.

If this is not possible, the Prison Service has to give you liberty clothing. This is clothing to leave prison in that fits you and is right for the time of year.

Ask about clothing a few days before you are due to leave.

Travel warrant

You will get a travel warrant to take you back to your home or another address in the UK. This will let you travel on a train, bus or coach.
Discharge grants

This is a grant to keep you going until you get Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance. It is a small amount of money – about £46.

You will **not** get a discharge grant if you

- are under 18
- you are serving 14 days or less
- are in prison for not paying a fine
- are a civil prisoner
- are on remand or awaiting deportation
- are going straight to hospital
- are going to live somewhere outside the UK
- are not eligible to get Income Support
- have been recalled for less than 14 days.

The governor may also pay another small grant to a housing provider (landlord) to help you find somewhere to live.

This grant is up to the governor, and the prison will check out if the place you want the money for is suitable.

Housing

If you will be homeless when you are released, there are organisations that can help you find accommodation. Most of the accommodation will be in hostels or shared houses. If you have an offender manager, they will also discuss this with you.

Ask the resettlement unit in the prison for help with this.

Some prisons can use NACRO’s Easily Accessible Service Information database. Ask if your prison can do this. This is information on a computer.
More about housing

NACRO is a charity that works with people who have been in prison.
You can contact them on 0800 0181 259.

Shelter is a charity that helps people who are homeless.
You can contact Shelter on 0808 800 4444.

Money and benefits

You apply for benefits through Jobcentre Plus.

You can ask the Jobcentre Plus and Benefit Surgery advisers working in your prison for help with applying for benefits before you leave prison.

If you can not see an advisor before you leave, phone or go into your Jobcentre as soon as you can after leaving prison.

- Tell them you need to see an advisor under the Freshstart Scheme. This is a scheme for people who have been in prison.
- You need to get this sorted out within 7 days of getting out of prison. This is so you can claim benefits from the day you leave prison.

When you go for your appointment at Jobcentre Plus you will need to take with you

- Some sort of identification (ID) like your passport, driving licence or birth certificate.
- Your National Insurance number.
- An official letter from the prison.

If you are not going back to your home area, or these documents are with friends and family, make sure you sort out how you will get them. Make sure you have done this before you leave prison.
Income tax

If you do not have a P45 form from your last job, you will be given an Inland Revenue form P80-1 before you leave prison.

You need to fill this in and send it to the tax office that dealt with your last job.

You need to fill it in for Jobseekers Allowance and Income Support.

If you are going to be self employed, get in touch with your local tax office.

Grants and loans

If you are going to be getting Income Support or Income Based Jobseeker’s Allowance you may also be able to get a Community Care Grant.

This grant is to help you if you do not have any clothing or furniture. They will take into account how long you have been in prison. They will also take into account if you have had clothing stolen, lost or damaged or if you have gained or lost lots of weight so your clothes really do not fit.

You do not have to pay this grant back.

Other grants

If you can not get a Community Care Grant you may be able to get a Crisis Loan. You have to pay this back. Payments will be taken straight out of your benefits until it is paid back.
**Your health**

You can ask to see the doctor or nurse before you leave if you have any worries about your health or medication.

Using street drugs is always dangerous. If you have been using illegal drugs in prison, remember they will probably be lower strength than those outside. You will have more of a risk of an overdose with drugs outside prison.

If you are having treatment for drug problems, you will be referred to a community drug treatment service to carry on your treatment.

**Release time**

On the day of your release, you will most likely leave prison before 8.45am.

If your release date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, you will leave on the Friday before.

If your release date falls on a Bank Holiday, you will leave on the last working day before the Bank Holiday. This will usually be a Friday.

If you are getting out on parole and your release date falls on a weekend then you will get out on a Monday. If it falls on a Bank Holiday, you will usually get out after the Bank Holiday. This will usually be a Tuesday.

**Licence and supervision**

If you had a sentence of more than 1 year you will be released on licence. Young offenders look at page 159 as you will have a licence if you are under 21. You will have to do the things your licence tells you, like stay in a certain place and see your offender manager.
Gate arrest

If you are likely to be arrested on your release, you will be told this by the governor before you leave, unless the police say you should not know. If the governor tells you that this will happen, you can tell your friends, family and your lawyer.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

This is a law about criminal convictions that can be spent from (taken off) your record after a period of time.

The period of time is called a rehabilitation period.

- The rehabilitation period is a fixed length of time from the date you were convicted.
- How long it is depends on the sentence you have been given, not the offence or how long you have been in prison.
- When a conviction is spent, you do not have to mention it when you apply for a job, get insurance or are involved in criminal or civil proceedings.
- Once a conviction becomes spent it stays spent, even if you are convicted of other offences later.

Sentences of more than 2 ½ years are never spent.
These tables show you what a rehabilitation period is likely to be for different lengths of sentence. These are for sentences where you go to prison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period 18 years and over</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period Under 18 years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 ½ years</td>
<td>These are never spent</td>
<td>These are never spent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 6 months and up to 2 ½ years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months or less</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>3 ½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines, probation, community service, compensation, combination and curfew orders</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>2 ½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute discharge</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For some sentences the rehabilitation period can vary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period 18 years and over</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period Under 18 years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation, supervision, care order, conditional discharge or bind-over</td>
<td>1 year or until the order expires (stops), whichever is longer</td>
<td>1 year or until the order expires (stops), whichever is longer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance centre order, hospital orders (with or without a restriction order)</td>
<td>5 years or 2 years after the order expires (whichever is longer)</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you have to declare spent convictions

You do have to mention spent convictions if you do certain jobs.

- lawyer
- doctor
- dentist
- accountant
- nurse
- chemist

You have to declare spent convictions if you apply for a job or to be a volunteer for any work that is with children and young people under 18.

You do have to mention spent convictions if you want to work in jobs like

- firearms dealers
- casino operators
- directors and managers of insurance companies and trusts
- nursing home manager
- some civil service jobs
- defence contractors

You do have to mention spent convictions if you apply for certificates for

- firearms
- shotguns
- explosives

If you are applying for a job and the application form asks you about any unspent convictions you should declare them.

If you do not and are found out, you may get the sack for not telling your employer about them.

If you are going to move abroad you should check what the rules are in that country about declaring convictions. You can find this out from the country’s embassy.
Criminal records

All offences, spent and unspent, stay on your criminal record. These records are on the Police National Computer.

They may be taken off if you have not come to the attention of the police after many years.

Some records will never be taken off, even if you have not come to the attention of the police for many years. This is because of the offence that you committed.