

Gateway to Practice

Introduction

What is the Gateway to Practice?

The Gateway to Practice describes the core learning objectives to be achieved by new practitioners by the end of their induction to a Probation Service Provider and provides guidance for delivery.

What is the purpose of the Gateway to Practice?

The Gateway to Practice has been designed to ensure all new practitioners receive an induction to facilitate their understanding of the purpose, key tasks and values of NOMS in the context of delivering probation services, including:

- Assessment and management of **risk** of serious harm
- Interagency work within the community and **criminal justice system to protect the public**
- **Communication** skills
- **Diversity**

Who should attend and when?

The Gateway to Practice is aimed at all new staff who are employed to work directly with service users. This will include all new Probation Services' Officers. The Gateway to Practice will normally be completed and signed off by the line manager within the first 10 working days of an individuals' initial appointment, and before they undertake any work on further qualifications or work with offenders on their own. The maximum time scale for completion can be extended to 20 working days, where the employer feels this is justified.

What is the basis for the Gateway to Practice?

The Gateway to Practice builds on existing Ministerial guidance for Probation Services Officer Induction: the Passport to Practice, contained in Probation Circular (PC) 18/2007 and PC 15/2008. This emphasises the need for the achievement of an understanding of risk of harm and public protection in the first one or two weeks and prior to face-to-face work with offenders.

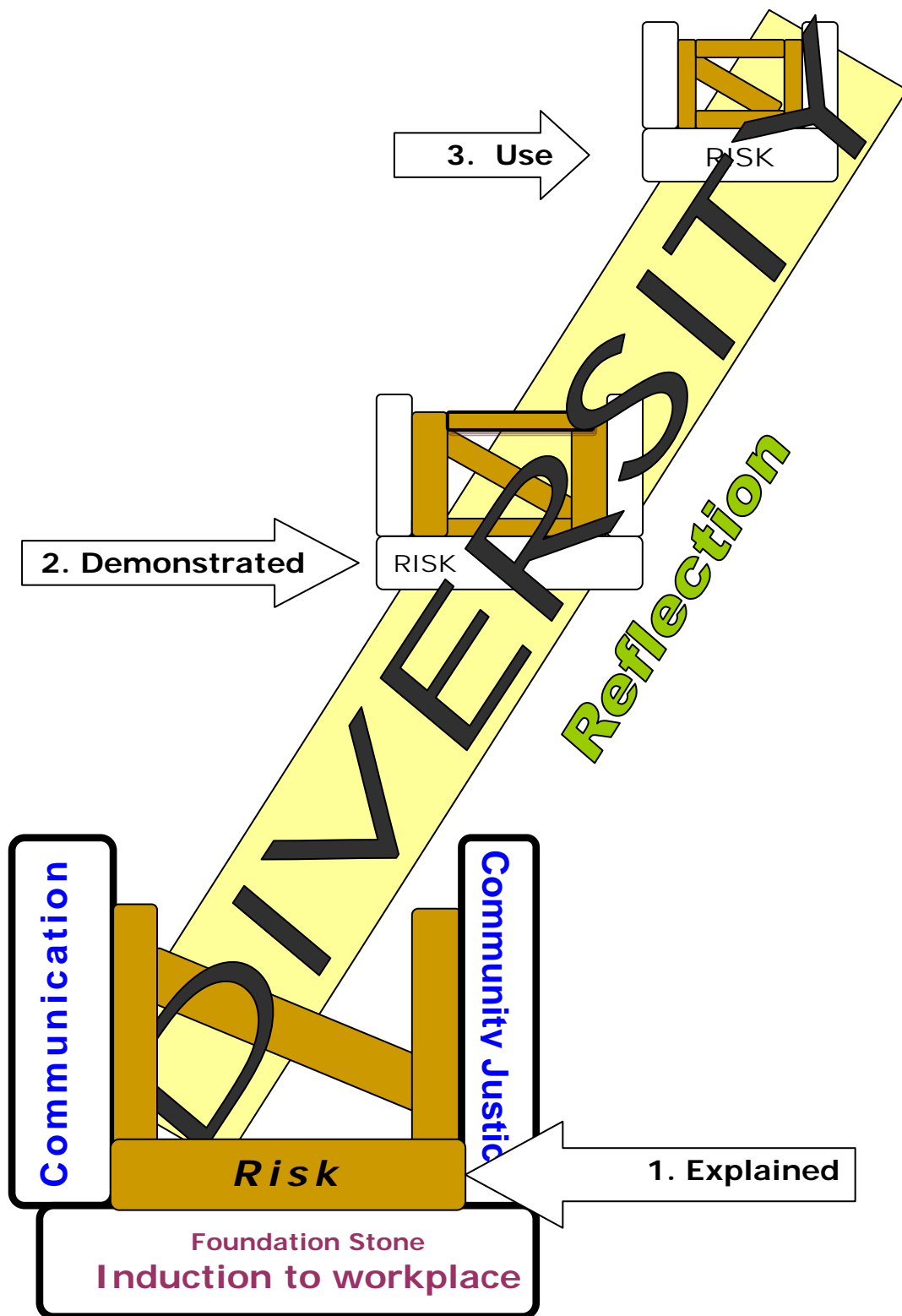
Best induction practice has recognised that an understanding of risk of harm and public protection cannot occur in isolation. It requires some of the additional foundation knowledge and skills, described in the probation circulars above, including an introduction to the workplace, the context of the criminal justice system, core skills and values.

How can it be delivered?

It is recommended that a step by step approach to induction is provided, which incorporates adult learning methods of explanation and discussion, demonstration and exploration, guided application and feedback. A range of people should contribute towards the induction so that the breadth of experience is provided.

The Structure of the Gateway to Practice

The Gateway to Practice introduces professional development via a series of 3 gates with an underpinning pathway of responding to diverse needs.



The Diversity Pathway starts before the first gate and continues throughout employment. Development in this area involves an understanding of the values of the probation service particularly the importance of responding to the diverse needs of service users, probation stakeholders and colleagues.

Foundation Stone

Work-place induction is the foundation for all other learning. It is recommended that a planned programme of activities to prepare and orient people to their workplace and new post is provided from commencement.

At the end of induction new practitioners will be able to:

- Describe roles and responsibilities relevant to their role
- Access resources relevant to their role
- Describe key policies relevant to their role including human resources, health and safety and information sharing and protection.

Gate 1 - Explanation

In order to fully understand the importance of assessment and management of serious harm and public protection new practitioners will also need to understand the context of the community justice systems, core communication skills required to gain and share this information and core values to respond to diverse need. At this gate they will be able to explain:

The Community/Criminal Justice System

- What the community justice system is
- Who the key stakeholders are
- Why we have a Probation Service
- What the Probation Service is expected to achieve.

Risk of serious harm and public protection

- What risk of serious harm and public protection means
- Why it is essential to assess and manage risk of serious harm
- Why inter-agency work is important when working with offenders to protect the public

Effective communication

- What the core elements of effective communication are
- Why it is important to use effective communication in Probation work

Diversity

- What the core values of the Probation Service are
- Why it is important to value diversity

Gate 2 - Demonstration.

Within the induction period new practitioners should also see examples of what the above looks like in practice. Shadowing should include work in some of the following

areas: assessment, sentence planning, interventions, reviews, court, prison, approved premises, unpaid work, victim work. At the second gate new practitioners will be able to describe how they will put their learning into practice and what effective practice looks like.

Gate 3 - Use of knowledge and skills

Prior to lone practice or formal assessment, new practitioners should undertake an initial guided, joint piece of work followed by discussion of key learning points. At the Gateway to Practice this will normally be of a limited basis, such as one joint interview or more informal interactions with service users.

Throughout the journey

New practitioners are encouraged to reflect upon their practice. Workbooks to support self directed learning have been designed to assist this process and can be used from the first day of appointment and referred to throughout the Gateway to Practice and subsequent work and study.

Through the gateway

A checklist of learning outcomes is provided below. This can be used as a guide to compiling evidence of completion and a record of comments. The line manager will sign off completion of the Gateway to Practice and prepare for next steps.

Consistency of practice whilst meeting diverse needs

The Gateway to Practice has been designed to ensure both a consistency of high standard induction whilst incorporating the flexibility to meet the diverse needs of individual new practitioners and their employers. All practitioners should be provided with an induction, signed off by their line manager which incorporates the 5 key learning outcomes of:

- 1 Workplace induction
- 2 Risk of harm
- 3 Orientation to Community and Criminal Justice systems
- 4 Communication and Interpersonal skills
- 5 Equality and Diversity

Methods and experiences to achieve this will vary at the discretion of the Probation Service Provider.

Gateway to Practice

Checklist

By the end of the Gateway to Practice new practitioners should be able to explain the importance and implications for practice of risk assessment/management, protection of the public and related core skills and knowledge. The focus is upon relevant learning experiences being provided by the Probation Service Provider, rather than assessment of practice which will occur in more detail after the induction stage.

The line manager is responsible for ensuring availability of the programme, employee participation and attendance and will sign off that learning opportunities have been provided and taken up.

A copy is to be retained by the employee, the line manager and placed on the employee's personal file.

Probation Area/ Trust and unit

Name of new practitioner.....

Line Manager.....

Date of appointment.....

The Gateway to Practice should normally be provided for all new practitioners. Where the learning has occurred elsewhere this should be noted.

Delivery methods can be flexible to meet individual and Area/Trust needs, including shadowing, meetings with colleagues, use of induction workbook, Risk CD rom, supervision, mentoring or workshops.

Gateway stage	Learning objectives New practitioners will be able to:	Evidence and date of achievement of objectives
Foundation Stone	<p>1. Induction to workplace and local area</p> <p>Access resources to undertake their role including Information Technology</p> <p>Describe roles and responsibilities relevant to their role.</p> <p>Access local resources and partnerships</p> <p>Describe - key local policies including: Health and safety, human resources, information sharing and security.</p> <p>Access risk assessment tools: OASys</p>	
Gate 1	<p>2. Orientation to the Community/Criminal Justice system and legal framework</p> <p>Identify the key purposes of their agency.</p> <p>Identify key performance expected of the service.</p> <p>Identify own role in the community justice system</p> <p>Access further information on National standards, policies and key legislation</p> <p>Explain why it is important to share information related to risk of harm with other agencies</p>	

<p>Gate 2</p> <p>Gate 3</p>	<p>Describe - the roles and joint working of a variety of community/ criminal justice agencies including prison and probation work</p> <p>Identify implications of learning for practice.</p> <p>Start to apply the above in a workplace setting (e.g. contribute to an interview/meeting).</p>	
<p>Gate 1</p> <p>Gate 2</p> <p>Gate 3</p>	<p>3. Introduction to risk of harm assessment and management</p> <p>Describe the importance to the organisation of the assessment and management of risk of serious harm</p> <p>Describe the importance of interagency work in relation to working with offenders to protect the public</p> <p>Identify implications of learning for practice.</p> <p>Describe how information about risk of harm can be accessed</p> <p>Start to apply the above in a workplace setting. (e.g. access information. OAsys or contribute to interview/meeting).</p>	
<p>Gate 1</p>	<p>4. Communication and interpersonal skills</p> <p>Identify the key components of effective communication relevant to their role.</p> <p>Describe how to maintain personal and professional boundaries</p>	

Gate 2	Identify implications of learning for practice	
Gate 3	Maintain appropriate boundaries Use appropriate communication skills at work.	
Gate 1	5. Equality and Diversity Identify why it is important to understand and respond to the diverse needs and experiences of people in the criminal justice system.	
Gate 2	Identify implications of learning for own practice.	
Gate 3	Demonstrate respect for individual differences.	

Completion of Gateway to Practice

New Practitioner’s comments on strengths, areas for development and diversity needs

Completion of Gateway to Practice

Signed.....New Practitioner...Date.....

Line Manager's comments on strengths, areas for development and diversity needs

Completion of Gateway to Practice

Signed: Line Manager Date: