

The Community Justice Honours Degree

1. Introduction

The Community Justice Honours Degree provides qualified Probation Services' Officers (PSOs) with a career progression pathway, subject to employer selection, by which they can become qualified for the Probation Officer role. It comprises a three-part Community Justice Honours Degree together with the Vocational Qualification level 5 in Probation Practice (See [Appendix 2.1.2b](#)). It is designed to enable PSOs to progress and demonstrate occupational competence in the delivery of appropriate probation outcomes when working as Probation Officers with high risk offenders.

2. Eligibility to apply for the Community Justice Honours Degree

The Community Justice Honours Degree, or any part of it, is only open to qualified PSOs selected or recruited by Probation Service Providers with the involvement of the contracted Higher Education provider. A "qualified" PSO is a PSO who has obtained the Vocational Qualification Diploma in Probation Practice at level 3. A full NVQ level 3 in Community Justice can be considered as equivalent if all units obtained were registered prior to end of September 2010.

2.1. Interim arrangement

Interim arrangements until April 2011 allow entry to the Community Justice Honours Degree by unqualified existing staff who hold Higher Education Certificate in Community Justice awarded by a Higher Education Provider of the previous qualification: the Diploma in Probation Studies. This is an interim arrangement only, to allow for a smooth transition in the introduction to the new qualifications. After April 2011, Higher Education providers may continue to provide accreditation of prior learning for the HE Certificate in Community Justice once access to the degree has occurred, however, only qualified Probation Services' Officers will be eligible to apply for the Community Justice Degree.

3. Part 1 and 2 of the Degree - The Foundation Degree

The first two parts of the Honours Degree constitute a Foundation Degree in Community Justice or similar discipline. The Foundation Degree will satisfy the general requirements for such degrees:

- That it is co-designed with the employer
- Is based on National Occupational Standards - in this case the 6 initial vocational qualification units in Probation Practice at Level 5
- Articulates with an Honours degree -in this case the Community Justice Honours Degree

- Covers core skills - problem solving, numeracy, communication, interpersonal and team skills, Information Technology, self management and professional development.

Part 1 of the Foundation Degree consists of 120 academic credits at level 4, and Part 2 of 120 academic credits at level 5. During Part 1 level 3 units already completed by PSOs may be articulated against the Degree, as agreed with individual Higher Education providers. In Part 2 six Vocational Qualification units at level 5 will also be completed and articulated towards the Degree.

Although Part 1 and Part 2 are each notionally equivalent to an academic 'year', the expected time taken to complete them is flexible according to the delivery model required to meet the needs of staff in the workplace. However, employers are entitled to set reasonable maximum limits so as to preserve their workforce planning intentions. The successful completion of both Part 1 and Part 2 leads to the award of a Foundation Degree.

The Foundation Degree will combine academic study with workplace learning to equip people with the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills to deliver practice to the required standards and to improve individual performance and productivity. Throughout, there will be a balance between taught and work-based learning, including integration of the vocational qualifications.

4. Part 3- Final part of the Honours Degree

Part 3 of the Honours Degree provides the final requirements for eligibility to apply for Probation Officer roles. It consists of 120 academic credits at level 6 and 6 further vocational units at level 5/6. Those taking this final component of the Honours Degree programme will normally be expected to have concluded their academic studies within 9 months. The Honours Degree will be in Community Justice or a similar discipline and will be articulated with the Community Justice Foundation Degree. The learning programme provides a balance between taught modules and work-based learning.

The work-based learning and taught parts of the programme will be fully integrated, and the work-based learning units will attract academic credits. The Vocational Qualification Level 5 mandatory units will be articulated into this part of the Honours Degree. (Although the whole of the Vocational Qualification is at Level 5, three of these final units are at level 6).

Notional learning hours and other resources for the units of each part of the Honours Degree will be clearly defined by individual Higher Education programme providers.

5on. The Community Justice Honours Degree Core Curriculum

The core curriculum for the Honours Degree provides a benchmark for monitoring and evaluation of programmes. It is not intended to provide a detailed teaching scheme to be followed prescriptively. Individual Higher Education providers will also demonstrate how teaching, learning and assessment arrangements are organised to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

**Probation Qualifications Framework
Curriculum for
Degree Part 1 and 2 (Foundation Degree)**

Prior to commencement of the Foundation Degree PSOs will demonstrate their ability to achieve the degree including numeracy, literacy and Information Technology skills.

In the first part of the Foundation Degree PSOs will be expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate a foundation level of knowledge of concepts and principles
- Evaluate and interpret data
- Develop lines of argument
- Make sound judgements

In the second part of the Foundation Degree PSOs will be expected to be able to:

- Apply knowledge of concepts and principles to practice
- Critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to problem solving
- Understand the limits of their knowledge

Knowledge, skills and values

Learning and Professional Development

- Relationships with individuals (offenders and colleagues), group, team, hub; co-working with prison colleagues and other inter-agency and liaison skills.
- Being a learner adult learning theory and links to work with offenders
- Contribute to the quality of team working

Public protection and risk of serious harm

- Introduction to public protection and risk of serious harm
- Risk Management
- Inter-agency, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA),
- Mentally disordered offenders,
- Families and child protection,
- Risk tools
- Respect the needs of victims and understand how their needs can affect practice

Values, Ethics and Diversity

- Promote equality and value diversity

Offender management and interventions

- Overview of theory and structures, criminogenic need and brokerage

Assessing and managing offending behaviour

- Understanding of research basis practice
- Working with individuals to enable them to understand and address their difficulties through offender management and/or the delivery of accredited programmes
- Processing information preparing reports and sentence plans based on the assessment of individuals and their offending behaviour
- Responding to assessments of risk of danger to substance users and others
- Mental health
- Contributing to prevention and management of abusive and aggressive behaviour and protecting yourself from the risk of violence at work

Probation Law

- National standards and enforcement processes
- Functions and purpose of law in relation to crime
- Key legislation setting framework for custodial and community sentences

Penal Policy

- Key concepts of justice, punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation and reparation
- Key stake holders and interagency work
- Diversity issues

Understanding crime and criminal behaviour:

- Criminological research and the development of effective practice
- Causes of and management of crime
- Social policy and social problems, local communities, social inclusion
- Factors which reduce the likelihood of re offending and aid resettlement into the community
- Victims
- Restorative justice
- Cognitive behavioural theory
- Learning theory

Introduction to the Criminal Justice System**Effective Interpersonal skills**

- Engagement and Pro-social modelling,
- Motivational skills
- Practical diversity practice
- Represent the service

Assessment of practice

- Offender Management, and / or
- Interventions and accredited programmes.
- Including one written assignment on an aspect of practice

**Figure 3: Probation Qualifications Framework
Curriculum for
Degree Part 3 (Honours Degree) / Graduate Diploma**

At the Honours Degree / Graduate Diploma level, PSOs are expected to be able to demonstrate:

- Integration of theory and practice
- Techniques of analysis and enquiry
- Conceptual understanding
- Sustained arguments/solve problems
- An appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- A project management approach
- An ability to work towards performance outcomes

Knowledge, skills and values

Learning and Professional development:

- Team, unit, or hub membership: using and offering staff supervision
- Develop and sustain effective working with prison service colleagues and staff in other agencies.
- Represent the agency in courts and formal hearings

Advanced interpersonal and motivational skills

- Advanced motivational skills
- Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Pro-social reinforcement of positive goals
- Assisted and Visual Communication Technology

Values, Ethics and Diversity

- Practical approaches to demonstrating respect and valuing difference including:
 - religious and cultural values
 - mental health
 - radical views and behaviour
 - use of interpreting and translation services

Public protection and Risk Management

- Advanced and specialist tools for violent and sex offenders
- Prolific and Persistent Offenders
- Defensible decision making
- Child Protection and families.
- Mentally Disordered Offenders
- Substance abuse
- Assess and manage high risk of harm

Research Methods

Work-based learning project in which practitioners will be asked to identify an area of professional practice; review the current research evidence, discuss relevant national and local policies and reflect on own work and learning

Offender Management

- Assess, plan, monitor and review offender focused work.
- Advanced report writing skills
- Delivery of sentences in the community to standards required through assessment, planning, supervising, enforcing and reviewing.
- Adaptation of materials and interventions to diverse needs of service users including mental health and substance abuse

Understanding crime and offence categorizations

- Offender groups/pathways (e.g. violence, domestic violence, racially motivated offending, sexual offending, substance abuse, drink driving ,dishonesty etc),
- Abnormal and developmental psychology
- Mentally disordered offenders
- Women offenders
- Young Adult offenders
- Offenders with special needs

5. Resourcing

Probation Service Providers will support the Honours Degree by the provision of assessment, internal verification, appropriate relevant work experience, practice tutoring, and protected learning time.

Higher Education providers will support the qualification by the provision of appropriate learning materials, assessment and academic tutoring. Resource requirements will vary from individual to individual and will be identified in individual Learning Agreements (See [Appendix 3.2.2b](#)).

6. Completion

On attainment of the Honours Degree in Community Justice and Vocational Qualification Diploma at level 5 in Probation Practice PSOs will be eligible to apply for Probation Officer posts.