

Careers in Probation

Probation

Working in the probation industry centres on managing and rehabilitating offenders/ex-offenders to protect the public from both, direct crime and the effects of crime. This includes working in prisons, courts and in the community. The role is challenging and varied and activities include:

- Meeting and supporting the offender on a regular basis
- Dealing with community orders
- Liaising with the courts providing information to determine what sentence an offender gets
- Protecting victims and communities by collaborating with other agencies such as the police
- Speaking with victims of serious crime, keeping them up to date on the offender's progress and understanding how the crime has impacted on the victim.
- Providing reports to prison and parole officials to help them decide whether an offender should be released and if so, what conditions.

High risk offenders are managed by the National Probation Service, whereas low to medium risk offenders are managed by Community Rehabilitation Companies in 21 areas across England and Wales.

Entry Routes

There are many roles that you can work in within and related to the probation industry. Job titles include:

- Youth Offending Officers
- Prison Custody Officers
- Programme Facilitator
- Case Administrator/Officer
- Community payback Officer
- Probation Services Officer (unqualified Probation Officer)

Work experience is mandatory to get into these roles. Further information on these roles can be found here: [/www.justice.gov.uk/jobs/probation](http://www.justice.gov.uk/jobs/probation)

Becoming a Probation Officer

To become a Probation Officer you will need to complete the work based qualification called the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) programme. To qualify for this programme, you will need to have completed an undergraduate degree (or a level five equivalent qualification e.g. foundation degrees – FdA and FdSc, HND and HNC).

In addition to this you will need to have completed the four modules below:

- The Criminal Justice System
- Understanding Crime and Criminal Behaviour

- Penal Policy and the Punishment of Offenders
- Rehabilitation of Offenders

These can be completed as part of your degree. If your degree does not contain these modules you can study these independently or take entry level routes.

If you are not sure whether your modules do cover the topics above then you can complete a Secure Gateway Assessment form from a NOMS (National Offender Management Service) accredited university (this currently costs £75 – accurate as of 27/07/2016) and they will verify your modules.

Visit: www.traintobeaprobationofficer.com/university-providers/ to see a list of NOMS accredited universities.

You will need to have at least three out of the four necessary modules verified by the university to be able to go onto apply for the PQiP. If you have fewer than three, then you will need to apply to a NOMS accredited university to study the modules as a distance learner. Please note that you will need to pay for each module. Please see www.prospects.ac.uk and search for 'Probation Officer' for further information.

Getting Experience

Getting relevant experience working with challenging people is mandatory in order to work in the industry. The main way you will get this is through volunteering and work shadowing. Contacting Community Rehabilitation Companies in your local area is a good way of getting work experience as they often have voluntary roles available.

Some key websites that you can use for looking for work shadowing or volunteering include:

- Apex Trust: www.apextrust.com
- Do-it.org: www.do-it.org
- Nacro: www.nacro.org.uk
- Prince's Trust: www.princes-trust.org.uk
- SOVA: www.sova.org.uk/
- St Giles Trust: www.stgilestrust.org.uk
- Time bank: <http://timebank.org.uk/>
- Trail blazers: www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk
- Unlock: www.unlock.org.uk
- Vinspired: <https://vinspired.com/volunteer>
- Working Chance: www.workingchance.org
- Working Links: www.workinglinks.co.uk
- Volunteer now: www.volunteernow.co.uk
- YMCA: www.ymca.org.uk
- Prison Advice: www.prisonadvice.org.uk

Finding Jobs:

- Blue Line Jobs: www.bluelinejobs.co.uk/
- Civil Service jobs: www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi
- Clinks: www.clinks.org/voluntary-community-sector/vacancies

- National Offender Management Services: www.noms Careers.com/
- Sodexo jobs: <http://sodexojobs.co.uk/>
- Work with offenders: www.workwithoffenders.co.uk/jobs/search

Further Resources

- National Careers Service: nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/ProbationOfficer.aspx
- Prospects: www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/probation-officer
- Skills for justice: www.sfjuk.com/community-justice-learning
- Targetjobs: targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/278201-probation-officer-job-description
- Train to be a probation officer: www.traintobeaprobationofficer.com
- University of Kent: www.kent.ac.uk/careers/workin/Probation.htm
- Work With Offenders: www.workwithoffenders.co.uk