



HM Prison & Probation Service

HQ Job Description (JD)

Band 8

Directorate: Rehabilitation Pathways and Partnerships

Job Description: Senior Evidence Specialist

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Job Description

Job Title	Senior Evidence Specialist
Directorate	Rehabilitation Pathways and Partnerships
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Overview of the job	This is a specialist manager job within HMPPS headquarters. Evidence-Based Practice integrates scientific evidence with the operational perspective to design and provide high-quality services reflecting the goals of the organisation and the interests, values, needs and choices of the individuals we serve. The primary purpose of the job is to provide an evidence-based practice service to the joint HMPPS and NHS England Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) Pathway programme. The job holder must set standards for acceptable evidence and review the evidence base in relation to correctional practice in order to ensure that HMPPS policy and practice is defensible and effective. The job holder is responsible for effectively communicating the evidence base to others across the organisation in a transparent and accessible way. Additionally, they will help to develop the evidence base in order to inform agency practice, involving both in-house research and collaboration with research partners in MoJ and beyond the agency. This is a non-operational role.
Summary	This is a specialist manager role supporting the delivery of the HMPPS strategy principle to create an open, learning culture by drawing on data, evidence, information, research and experience from across the system – building on what we already know and helping to fill the gaps. The job holder is accountable for critically evaluating the evidence-base and communicating this to inform and direct operational policy and practice. The post holder influences operational policy, strategy and practice through the generation of evidence summaries on topics and practice issues relevant to staff working in prison, probation and youth custody, and through providing evidence consultation to central and local teams. This includes considering evidence against value for money, to guide spending by the Service. HMPPS aims to deliver safe, decent, fair and rehabilitative services to those in prison, in youth custody or on the probation caseload. The role contributes to these aims through the expert translation of evidence to shape everyday practice in prisons, probation and youth custody, delivering research to fill knowledge gaps and consulting into the strategic development of policies and practice to bring the best outcomes for staff and the people in our care. The team works alongside colleagues in other departments and groups within the agency including,

	psychology and effective practice in each of our three sectors as well as central strategy teams and local staff and managers. The job holder needs to have experience in conducting research and a professional qualification that reflects specialist skill in this area. They will need to demonstrate knowledge of the existing correctional research literature and the skills required to source and monitor fast-moving developments in the field and convey these to a non-technical audience. The role also requires an understanding of which research methodologies are appropriate for different research questions and demonstrable skills in managing large datasets and running robust data extraction and analysis. The role also includes developing the evidence-case, by conducting original research. As a manager within the Evidence-Based Practice Team, the post holder will be expected to demonstrate the qualities set out in the Leadership Qualities Framework, including an ability to set purpose and direction for their area of work. They will also be expected to contribute expertise and knowledge to the corporate design and vision of the Service and its strategic objectives. They will ensure that they deliver on key objectives and make an effective contribution to the work of the Group, HMPPS and Ministry of Justice (MoJ). They will attend and contribute to meetings and be responsible for promoting the roles and work of Groups across HMPPS and with other stakeholders and partners.
Responsibilities, Activities and Duties	The job holder will be required to carry out the following responsibilities, activities and duties: 1. Responsibility for translating the existing evidence base to inform policy and practice in HMPPS: • The job holder will take responsibility for the production of systematic evidence reviews from start to finish in order to produce robust and useful summaries of the literature on relevant topics for HMPPS colleagues, providers and further stakeholders. These summaries will be of publishable standard and the job holder will be responsible for the quality and integrity of the product and for ensuring all research governance standards are properly met. • The output of these reviews may take various forms from informal verbal advice to formal written corporate products that will help HMPPS practice stay close to the evidence. The post holder will need to monitor and evaluate the evidence base on assigned key themes and identify gaps in our knowledge and contribute to strategies for filling these. • An important function of this role is to bring relevant evidence into decision making in a way that is clear and transparent; translating what may be complex or conflicting information into robust and defensible advice that seeks to reflect the evidence base while recognising operational realities. • The job holder will contribute to the development, interpretation, translation, and dissemination of research evidence and work to promote the value of evidence-based practice in the Agency and help people to adopt this

approach in their work/activities.

- The job holder will contribute to draft responses to Parliamentary and Ministerial enquiries for their area. Ensuring responses to questions are accurately researched, drafted and coordinated with relevant partners and completed within deadlines.

2. Participating and contributing to academic and practitioner networks and contacts:

- Ensures that research, practice and emerging knowledge can be used to inform and steer HMPPS practice and policy. The job holder will work with colleagues across MoJ, HMPPS, other partners and the research community to maintain information sharing networks, collate learning, translate information and determine evidence to underpin what HMPPS delivers and how HMPPS operates.
- The job holder will collaborate with colleagues across HMPPS, MoJ and other government departments to establish information sharing networks, collate learning, translate information and determine evidence to underpin policy and practice. The job holder will need to foster excellent working relationships with colleagues across HMPPS and MoJ and with private and voluntary organisations.
- The job holder will be expected to share evidence and guide evidence-based practice by attending and contributing to programme boards and workstreams across the Agency.

3. Responsibility for developing the evidence base:

- The job holder will be responsible for conducting research and analysis using both existing datasets and new data generation to steer HMPPS' approaches to its priorities. This work must be conducted to rigorous methodological standards, so that it passes peer review and directly enables policy change/development that is empirically grounded.
- The work must also often be conducted within tight timetables to meet the needs of HMPPS. The job holder will be directly responsible for the quality and conduct of these research activities.
- The job holder will contribute to the evidence base by leading on specific delegated projects including both in-house and external research.

The duties/responsibilities listed above describe the post as it is at present and is not intended to be exhaustive. The job holder is expected to accept reasonable alterations and additional tasks of a similar level that may be necessary. Significant adjustments may require re-examination under the Job Evaluation Scheme and shall be discussed in the first instance with the job holder.

An ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English or (where specified in Wales) Welsh.

Civil Service Success Profile Criteria

Behaviours	• Changing and Improving • Developing Self and Others • Making Effective Decisions • Communicating and Influencing • Seeing the Bigger Picture
Strengths	Note: we recommend you choose 4 to 8 strengths locally – select from the list of Civil Service strength definitions on the intranet.
Experience	The level in the organisation at which the job holder is expected to function requires: • Experience, knowledge and understanding of research methods and standards and skills in the interpretation of evidence, including demonstrated ability to conduct critical literature reviews and quantitative or qualitative research to publishable standard. • A track record of publishing research and/or conducting research reviews to peer review standard is required for this post. • Experience of working across stakeholder groups to deliver finished products that are fit-for-purpose. • Understanding and experience of reducing reoffending/ rehabilitation and public protection. • Experience of delivering to deadlines and under time pressure.
Technical Requirements	• Qualification to degree level or equivalent and/or professional/ management qualification and/or commitment to Continuing Personal/Professional Development. • Advanced technical skills in data management and data analysis. An advanced user of Excel and SPSS software packages.
Ability	• Able to understand complex information, including technical and statistical research reports, and translate it into evidence based pragmatic products. • Excellent written and oral communication skills particularly evidenced through strong drafting skills.
Minimum Eligibility	<i>Please do not alter this box</i> • All candidates are subject to security and identity checks prior to taking up post. • All external candidates are subject to 6 months' probation. Internal candidates are subject to probation if they have not already served a probationary period within HMPPS. • All staff are required to declare whether they are a member of a group or organisation which HMPPS consider to be racist.
Hours of Work (Unsocial Hours) Allowances	<i>Leave Blank</i> To be used by the JES Team only