

NSM Additional Information

The reoffending rate has remained broadly static at around 29% since 2010. Reoffending is costing society approximately £18bn per year and almost half of all prisoners reoffend within 12 months of release.

The Prisons Strategy White Paper was published in December 2021. As part of the paper, MOJ and HMPPS committed to:

"A new Prisoner Education Service, to make sure offenders can improve their basic literacy and numeracy, as well as acquire further vocational qualifications, like construction and computing, making them more employable when they leave prison."

To do this, we will give Governors the tools they need to deliver high-quality learning, training and skills, and we will hold prisons to account for the job opportunities and outcomes they achieve for prisoners.

We also know that people with neurodiversity needs in prison can be particularly vulnerable due to their social and communication difficulties, putting them at risk of not coping in a prison setting, being bullied, exploited, or manipulated by fellow prisoners and impacting upon their ability to effectively engage with rehabilitation interventions. For some people with neurodivergence, this can also mean difficulties in maintaining employment or building relationships with others.

In her 2016 review of prison education, Dame Sally Coates reported that nearly one third of prisoners self-identified on initial assessment as having a learning difficulty and/or disability. Since the Dame Sally Coates review, an HMIP report suggests that it would be reasonable to assume that at least 50% of prisoners have some form of neurodivergence.

The Neurodiversity Support Manager (NSM) is a new role which has been piloted in five Accelerator prisons since June 2021. The role of the NSM is to raise awareness of neurodiversity in prison and help strengthen approaches for identifying and supporting those with neurodivergent needs. This includes supporting prisoners in accessing and engaging in education, skills and work programmes in the prison.

This is an exciting new role. Working as a Neurodiversity Support Manager is a unique and rewarding role within prisons. Working as an advocate for neurodivergent prisoners, NSMs encourage prisoners to make positive changes and provide opportunities for them to engage in rehabilitation.

To learn more about the Neurodiversity Support Manager role please join the Neurodiversity Central Team for a digital information session on 24th January 2023, 17:00 – 18:00. The session will be made available on Teams using the following link: [Join live event](#)