



HMP HIGHLAND CANDIDATE PACK

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WELCOME FROM THE GOVERNOR

Welcome, and thank you for considering a career at HMP Highland, currently still operating as HMP Inverness. As Governor, I'm proud to introduce you to a team that plays a vital role in protecting the public, supporting rehabilitation, and maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all who live and work here.

Joining us as an Operations or Residential Officer means stepping into a role that is both challenging and deeply rewarding. You'll be at the heart of our custodial community - building effective working relationships, managing risk, and helping individuals make positive changes in their lives. Your integrity, resilience, and professionalism will be key to our success.



Our establishment is a close-knit team with a strong sense of community. We value teamwork, diversity, and continuous learning. We pride ourselves on being a supportive and inclusive workplace, where staff are empowered to make a real difference. You'll receive comprehensive training and ongoing development to help you succeed and progress in your career.

At HMP Highland, we're building a modern, values-led custodial environment. We invest in our staff because we believe in their potential. This is more than a job, it's a chance to make a meaningful impact every single day.

You'll help shape safer communities and support individuals on their journey in custody. If you're ready to make a lasting impact, lead with integrity, and build a career you can be proud of, I look forward to welcoming you to our team and seeing the contribution you'll make.

Our staff play a key role in Scotland's justice system. The work we do is challenging but can be incredibly rewarding. If you think you have the values, skills and experience to be part of the SPS, we look forward to hearing from you.

Scott Watson
Governor in Charge, HMP Inverness

BACKGROUND

The SPS is responsible for those who are committed to our care by the Courts and are accountable to Scottish Parliament for the delivery of custodial care in accordance with The Prisons and Young Offenders Institution (Scotland) Rules 2011. Our operating context is dynamic, demand-led, and extremely complex. Prisons are small communities, which operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our prisons are also the working environment for our staff and as such, there are a range of regulatory and legal requirements that must be met. This means we must be agile to be able to respond to competing demands whilst maintaining our longer-term strategic direction.



However, the impact of our work is also felt beyond the prison walls. SPS works with multiple partner agencies, including third sector organisations, to keep the public safe and to support people to live crime-free lives. We operate the Victim Notification Scheme for registered victims of crime, who have the right to receive information about the progression and eventual release of people convicted of the offence against them. We also manage the contract for the Scotland-wide Court Custody and Prisoner Escorting Service for the provision of safe and secure transport for those in custody to and from courts, and appointments on behalf of multi-agency justice partners

The role of Scotland's prisons is derived from two key documents: the Scottish Government's 'Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022' and the Scottish Sentencing Council's 'Purposes of Sentencing'.

The government's vision makes it clear that Scotland 'must look to redefine the role of custody in the context of needing to better support individuals' rehabilitation, by taking a trauma-informed and person-centred approach whilst also ensuring public safety.' Our Strategic Intent as set out in our recently published 5-year corporate plan sets out our priorities and alignment to the Scottish Government's vision.

The past few years have tested the SPS in a way none of us have experienced before, but have provided another opportunity for this organisation, and our staff, to demonstrate our immense resilience and agility. We continued to operate Scotland's prisons in circumstances that required innovation, rapid decision making, and close partnership working, but also with the compassion and understanding that are the hallmarks of the relationships our staff have built with those in our care.

We now have an opportunity to take the lessons of the pandemic and use them to deliver even more positive outcomes for people in custody, the wider justice system, and Scotland's communities.

Like much of the public sector and wider Scotland, we face a cost crisis, with rising inflation, rising energy bills, and uncertain supply chains for goods and services. Like Scottish families and businesses, we are budgeting carefully and looking to make smart decisions so we can continue to deliver our statutory duties as well as continue with our innovation such as our continued focus on Women's strategy and mobilisation of new female custody, investment in digital including implementation of in-cell telephony and progressing with plans for new prisons to replace HMPs Barlinnie and Inverness.

Over the next five years, we will focus our efforts on the delivery of **three strategic objectives**:



The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) will deliver prison services in a way that is more person-centred, inclusive, trauma-informed and rights-based. We will better promote the health, safety and well-being of all people who live in Scotland's prison system and our skilled and dedicated staff will be supported and have the knowledge to do their jobs well. We will carry out our role and duties in support of just, safe and resilient Scotland.

SPS VALUES

We deliver our work in accordance with our seven organisational values:

Belief

we believe that people can change



Respect

we are inclusive, respecting the needs, rights and voices of everyone equitably



Openness

we work with others to achieve the best outcomes



Integrity

we have high ethical, moral and professional standards



Compassion

we care about people and believe that positive relationships are a critical enabler of change



Humility

we cannot do this on our own, we recognise that we need to work with and learn from others



Innovation

we continually find ways to improve the delivery of prison services in Scotland



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



The SPS is committed to ensuring our people, and everyone we work with are treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect for their human rights. The SPS is an equal opportunities employer and committed to adopting an inclusive approach to managing our workforce and providing services to those in our care. Diversity is vital to achieving our vision and we have made a clear commitment to diversity and inclusion through our corporate planning and performance activities.

SPS is committed to fulfilling and, where possible, going beyond our obligations under the relevant Equality and Human Rights legislation. SPS also seeks to respect, protect, and fulfil the full range of international human rights obligations, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

SPS' Equality Outcomes, shaped by consultation and engagement with external and internal stakeholders, reflect the areas of equality that require the greatest focus from the SPS, set against our commitments and obligations under the Scottish Government's Justice Strategy and the National Performance Framework.

Scottish Prison Service's Equality Outcomes

- The SPS' employee profile will be reflective of the wider Scottish society.
- We actively promote and support the Mental Health and well being of our employees, those in our care and those who come into contact with the SPS.
- Both our diverse workforce and those in our care understand why we collect equality and diversity monitoring information and the impact of this in helping us manage and deliver our business.



Our vision for valuing diversity, promoting equality and human rights is:

- Everyone in SPS values diversity in all aspects of work;
- Everyone in SPS is responsible for respecting and promoting equality and human rights; and
- We have sustainable and effective policies and procedures that place equality, diversity, inclusion and respect for human rights at the centre of everything we do.

This is based on a human rights based approach which is underpinned by human rights values. As this has been a cultural change the process is on-going, progressing this approach in all our areas of our work.

THE ROLE OF OPERATIONS OFFICER

What is the role of an Operations Officer within SPS?

Operations Officers are responsible for the overall security and functioning of prison establishments. They ensure the safety and security of all individuals within the prison, including those in custody, staff, and visitors.

This involves a range of duties, including managing access points, controlling prisoner movement, and responding to security incidents. As an Operations Officer you'll operate as part of a busy team carrying out roles in Front of House, Visits, Electronic Control Room, Patrol and Prisoner Reception.



What does a typical day look like?

An Operations Officer follows a structured yet varied daily routine focused on maintaining safety, security, and smooth operations across the prison. Their day often begins with a team briefing, followed by duties in key areas such as the front of house, where they greet and screen visitors, or the Electronic Control Room, where they monitor CCTV, alarms, and secure access points. They may also work in reception, managing the intake and release of individuals, ensuring procedures are followed and needs are assessed. Throughout the day, they conduct perimeter patrols, supervise visits, and escort individuals within SPS care within the establishment.



THE ROLE OF RESIDENTIAL OFFICER



What is the role of a Residential Officer within SPS?

Residential Officers take on many different roles. Most notably, they are one of the main points of contact for those within custody, as they're predominately based within the accommodation areas of the prison.

Residential Officers are responsible for supporting those in custody on a day-to-day basis through effective case management and will help to guide individuals through personal development programs. As a Residential Officer you'll conduct health and welfare checks, update records and reports, monitor residential areas, support rehabilitation, and help those in custody progress.

What does a typical day look like?

As a Residential Officer, every day can be different. However, there is structure to a typical day and the routine. Residential Officers start their day by attending a daily briefing, where they receive relevant information and updates from the previous shift. Once this has been completed, they will check on the wellbeing of all individuals in custody and will implement daily routines. Throughout the day, Residential Officers will supervise those in custody, ensuring attendance where necessary at education, work programs, and rehabilitation activities, and will provide support and guidance where needed. As a Residential Officer, some of your daily duties may include case management, administrative tasks, incident response, and security checks. Overall, you will have some responsibility for the smooth running of a residential area, with responsibility for the welfare of those in custody, whilst ensuring compliance with relevant legislation including prison rules.

What is it like to work in a prison?

If you have never been in a prison before, the environment will probably be very different to what you expect. Many of our establishments have been recently rebuilt or refurbished and are bright, open and modern spaces.

Our prison establishments are made up of various departments, functions and teams including our operational staff, psychologists, instructors, chaplaincy staff, administrative staff, HR, finance, external partners and health care. Together they form a community which you will be at the heart of.

What is the best part about the role?

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a Prison Officer, whether you are Operations or Residential, is the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. Prison Officers aren't just responsible for maintaining safety and order - they're also mentors and sources of support. Helping someone turn a corner, whether by encouraging them to take up education, guiding them through a personal crisis, or simply treating them with dignity, can be incredibly fulfilling. It's a career that challenges you but also gives you the chance to grow into a stronger, more empathetic version of yourself.

“As a newly qualified Operations Officer, I find staff across all departments are always helpful. Every day is different, and I enjoy the problem solving that is required with the role.”

“Being a Personal Training Instructor for the SPS gives you a lot of satisfaction, you are helping people in custody improve their mental health and assisting in improving both their overall and specific fitness goals.”

“As a Residential Officer, we get to help people every single day, and we are part of an individual's journey in custody. There's something special about that.”

Will I be inducted and trained to do the role?

What is the Officer Foundation Programme (R/OFP)?

The R/OFP is our new, streamlined training programme that brings together the best of our previous training for Operations and Residential Officers. It's designed to give you the skills, knowledge, and confidence to start your career in the SPS.

What to Expect

5 Weeks of Core Training

Everyone starts with five weeks of essential training. You'll learn how to carry out your role safely, legally, and professionally. This includes practical skills and assessments to make sure you're ready for the job.

Specialised Role Training

After the core training, you'll move into a two-week block focused on your chosen role:

- **Operations Officers:** Learn how to maintain secure order and support daily operations.
- **Residential Officers:** Learn how to supervise and support individuals in custody, including case management and rehabilitation.

Assessment

You will have a number of assessments throughout your course in order to ensure you meet the legal requirements for the role. The College team will be on hand to support you and prepare you to undertake these assessments.

What You'll Learn

Our training focuses on three key areas:

- **Values:** Understand and embody the SPS's mission and values in your daily work.
- **Secure Establishment:** Learn how to maintain safety, order, and effective operations within our prisons.
- **Case Management (Residential Officers only)**
- Develop the skills to support individuals in custody, helping them address their needs and prepare for life beyond prison.

SUPPORT ROLES

As a large public sector organisation, the Scottish Prison Service requires a great variety of different skillsets and abilities in order to function.

Within our prison establishments we have a wide variety of business functions that support our Mission of creating a safer Scotland.

While Prison Officers are directly responsible for the security and rehabilitation of prisoners, their work requires support and facilitation from a number of other activities and business functions – all of which require the work of skilled and committed people.



Estates

Administration

Psychology

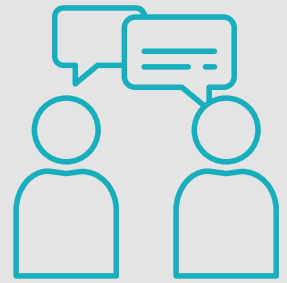
Finance

Procurement

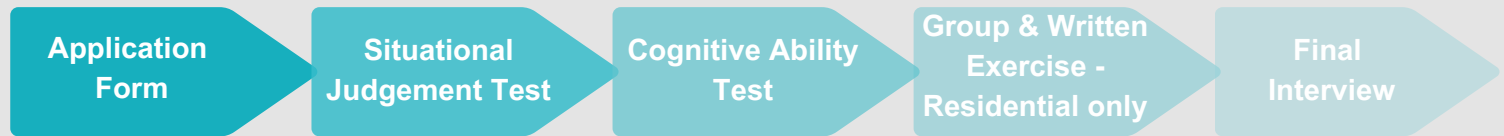
**Learning &
Development**

Chaplaincy

RECRUITMENT PROCESS



The recruitment process for Prison Officer roles will consist of the following elements:



Application Form

The first stage of the process is to submit an application. This is completed online. You will need to provide some personal information about you, information about your work history and list any qualifications you have gained. You will then be asked to provide a personal statement to give us insight into yourself.

Situational Judgement Test

The online test is designed to measure your values and behaviours against those identified as important within the role. The test will give you an insight into different situations you may be faced with as a Prison Officer.

You will be presented with 17 situations or scenarios, and you are required to choose from a list of options, which response you believe would be most effective and least effective in the given situation. There is no time limit within the test, however you should allow around 30 minutes to complete this. You will have five days to complete the assessment.

Cognitive Ability Test

If successful at the SJT stage you will be invited to take an online cognitive ability test. The test will be made up of three sub tests and will last 12 minutes in total. The test will assess your general cognitive ability across three areas: Verbal; Numerical; Abstract Reasoning.

You will have four minutes to complete each test. The tests are designed to assess your ability to understand written and numerical information and to draw logical conclusions.

**The Group & Written Exercise is only applicable to candidates applying for the role of Residential Officer, if successful at the Cognitive Ability Test.*

Group & Written Exercise

Group Exercise

You'll work alongside up to 4 other candidates. You'll be presented with a scenario and as a group you'll be required to work together to make decisions. You'll have 5 minutes to read the brief provided, and 30 minutes to carry out the group discussion.

Written Exercise

Once the Group Exercise has concluded, you'll then complete the Written Exercise.

Final Interview

If successful at the Cognitive Ability Test for the role of Operations Officer, or if successful at the Group & Written Exercise for the role of Residential Officer, you will be invited to attend a final interview.

The interview will be competency based and will explore how your knowledge, skills and experience align to the requirements of the role and the SPS Values; you'll be asked to provide some examples which best demonstrate your experience aligned to the essential criteria of the role.

Pre-Employment Checks & Fitness Test

For all successful candidates, prior to any formal offer being made, you must satisfy the pre-employment checking process. These include a Medical Examination; Fitness Test; Criminal Record check; Internal Vetting checks; Baseline Personnel Security Standards check; Verification of Identity; Right to Work check; Employment History check; Character Reference checks (where required) and Overseas Residency Checks (where required). **Following successful pre-employment checks you will be allocated a place on one of our Residential or Operations Officer Foundation Training courses. The training will last for six weeks.**

BENEFITS



Some of the benefits you will enjoy in role are:

- 34 days annual leave, rising to 42 days from year six onwards
- Opportunity to join Civil Service Pension scheme. You will contribute between 4.60% to 5.45% (depending on pay grade) and SPS will contribute a generous 28.97% (2024/27 rates)
- 35 Hour Working Week
- Free onsite parking
- Free onsite gym access
- Maternity, paternity and adoption leave arrangements (above the statutory minimum), with the first 27 weeks at full pay and option to share leave with partner.
- Career development options, with a commitment to supporting you reach your goals and furthering your career aspirations. Some development programmes you can get involved in include mentoring, leadership development and peer learning groups.
- Access to a range of employee well being support, including access to an Employee Assistance Programme, a free confidential 24-hour service providing specialist support for employees and their immediate family, and access to mental health support services.
- Cycle2Work scheme, a government initiative allowing you to enter a salary sacrifice agreement for the hire of a bike and/or bike accessories for a 12-month period. You'll not pay any tax of national insurance on the payments, and there are bikes available to suit all budgets.
- Lets Connect benefit providing you with access to a range of home technology products for personal use. Payments for the products come directly from your salary in monthly instalments over a 24-month period, helping spread the cost.
- Access to a range of discounts, offers and great savings on leisure, shopping, health and more. In addition, access to register for Blue light card for £4.99 for 2 years, giving you access to more than 15,000 discounts from a range of retailers.

Search '[Prison Officer Careers - Inverness](#)' to find out more!

FURTHER INFORMATION



Contact Us

If you have any further questions, please contact the Resourcing team at:

SPSHighlandRecruitment@prisons.gov.scot

SPS Website

You can also find further information on our website: www.sps.gov.uk. We have a dedicated section on our website for HMP Inverness, soon to be HMP Highland, you can find it within the Careers page, Our Roles, Prison Officer Careers and then **Prison Officer Careers - Inverness**. This page will also direct you to more information on the support roles available.

Competencies for Success Framework

You may also find our competency framework, Competencies for Success Framework (CSF). a supportive tool during your application process. This framework outlines the behavioural competencies that are essential to support effective performance in all roles across SPS. You can find a copy on our Careers Page of our website, under Working for SPS and **Career & Development**.

Apply Now!

If working within the Scottish Prison Service, specifically within Inverness, is something you want to explore further, visit our careers page to apply today. You can do so through the Careers page then **Current Vacancies**.



We would like to take the opportunity to thank you for reading this document, and wish you the best of luck should you choose to apply for our roles!

