



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

Consultation on the probation inspection framework in response to 'Probation Reset'

HM Inspectorate of Probation, August 2024

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Foreword

On 01 July 2024, the Probation Service introduced operational changes under its 'Probation Reset'¹ arrangements. These measures represent significant changes to service delivery, with contact to individuals from the Probation Service being suspended where criteria are met. As an independent inspectorate we focus on the things that make a difference to the quality of work with individuals and we strive to inspect in a way that is fair and proportionate. To continue to achieve this in light of the operational changes, we are proposing to amend the things that we ask when we inspect work in cases where contact has been suspended.

In this consultation we are asking for your views on our proposals. Our aim, as it was when we introduced the current standards, is to remain focused on the things that make a difference to the quality of probation work, aligning strategic activity with frontline delivery to individuals. We propose to ask key questions which are aligned with those we ask in all cases, and we will continue to focus on engagement, desistance, and keeping people safe. To achieve this in a way that is fair and proportionate, for each standard we will either reduce the number of questions we ask, replace existing questions with new ones, or leave the questions unchanged but revise our guidance to ensure it is relevant to cases where contact has been suspended.

We do not want to raise or lower our expectations of the quality of probation work. So, our ratings will continue to follow the established four-point scale and we will include cases where contact has been suspended within those ratings. We will continue to publish the scores that underpin our ratings and the detailed narrative describing our findings will continue to be presented in our reports.

This consultation is hugely important to us in shaping an approach that maximises our impact by driving improvements where they are needed and shaping the policy landscape.

Our consultation closes at **23:59 on 15 September 2024**. We would very much welcome your views on the detail of our proposals, and I hope you will take the opportunity to respond.



Martin Jones CBE

Chief Inspector of Probation

¹ Probation Reset Changes to Probation Contact in Post Sentence Supervision and the Final Third of Community Order/Suspended Sentence Order with Rehabilitation Activity Requirement or Licence (HMPPS and the Probation Service, 2024)

1. Background

1.1 Probation Reset² ('reset') is the terminology used by the Probation Service to describe the operational changes introduced from 01 July 2024. These measures represent significant changes to service delivery. The Probation Service cites the overall aim of the reset as 'driving the focus of probation practitioners to the beginning of orders where the evidence shows the most impact can be had.' The objectives of the reset are to:

- help alleviate workload pressures
- focus probation practitioners' time on where the evidence shows the most impact can be had supporting people on probation.
- prioritise probation resources to focus efforts on the highest risk cases
- achieve a whole organisational approach to the management of the person on probation.

1.2 To continue to drive improvement HM Inspectorate of Probation have considered how, in the light of the research³ and inspection evidence that underpins reset, our inspection approach needs to be adapted. We want to accommodate the significant changes that reset will create whilst still inspecting the things we know make the greatest difference to the quality of probation delivery. This consultation summarises our proposed approach and asks for your views. There are five questions we would like respondents to focus on:

Question 1- Should we adapt our approach in response to the Probation Reset?

Question 2 – Is our proposed approach fair and proportionate?

Question 3- Are the prompts the right ones for us to ask?

Question 4- Are there any prompts that are not included but should be?

Question 5- Should we include in our ratings those cases where contact has been suspended?

1.3 We also welcome your comments on any other aspects of our proposals.

² Probation Reset Changes to Probation Contact in Post Sentence Supervision and the Final Third of Community Order/Suspended Sentence Order with Rehabilitation Activity Requirement or Licence (HMPPS and the Probation Service, 2024)

³ [Hazards of different types of reoffending - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/publications/hazards-of-different-types-of-reoffending)

2. Probation Reset explained

2.1 Probation Reset is an operational response to high probation service workload priorities, prison capacity issues and the impending 'SDS40'⁴ temporary reduction in sentence served Prisoner Release scheme. The response represents an operational rather than a legislative change, although changes to legislation may follow. The operational changes that the reset brings are mandated for all staff in all probation areas with no possibility for any local or regional decision making. The changes are:

- For individuals sentenced to under four years custody, the final face-to-face appointment will be undertaken at the two-thirds point of the licence, unless the individual meets the exemption criteria.
- For offenders sentenced to four years custody and over, one further face-to-face appointment, which is enforceable, must be arranged during the midpoint of the final third of the licence.
- That all Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR) appointments and activity days delivered directly by probation practitioners will cease in the final third of the RAR; unless the offender meets the exemption criteria.
- That all sentence management contact under Post Sentence Supervision (PSS) will cease, unless the offender meets the exemption criteria.

2.2 There are some exemptions to this as follows:

- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) offenders.
- Those who are directly managed by specialist probation practitioners in the National Security Division (NSD).
- Those offenders who have an active child protection flag in place.
- Those assessed as Very High Risk of serious harm.
- Those subject to an Intensive Supervision Court pilot and criteria for reinstatement.

2.3 Reinstatement of contact in the final third of RAR/Licence or PSS, will only occur if information is received that indicates a change in circumstances which means the individual now meets the exemption criteria.

2.4 The elements of service delivery that remain unchanged are:

- all licence conditions other than reporting to the probation practitioner
- other intervention requirements within a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order (SSO) such as Unpaid Work (UPW) or treatment requirements will continue in the final third
- Accredited Programmes (AcP) that are specified PSS or AcP requirements or licence conditions but not as part of RAR requirements
- Drug testing by probation practitioners will continue where a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) is in place
- Electronic Monitoring.

⁴ [SDS Operational Guidance for prisons and probation. v1.0.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

2.5 Where an AcP continues into the final third of an order or licence, post programme work will not be undertaken by the probation practitioner.

Question 1- Should we adapt our approach in response to the probation reset?

3. Guiding principles

3.1 All our inspections are underpinned by the following guiding principles. We have applied these principles to our proposed approach to inspecting delivery under the reset arrangements.

Fair - our inspections will look at the right things in the right way and do so consistently across inspections.

Valid - our inspections will generate objective judgements which successfully measure the key areas and stand up to scrutiny and challenge.

Reliable - our findings will be reliable - providing accurate, consistent judgements about the quality of service delivery.

Future proof - our standards will benchmark effective practice regardless of delivery arrangements and as such should be able to stand the test of time.

Flexible - our approach will be flexible enough to enable us to put inspection resource where it will have the greatest impact.

Intelligence-led - we will use intelligence to inform where, when, and how we inspect.

Proportionate - we will be mindful of the effort and activity that inspection triggers and make sure that all our activity is necessary and in the right measure to drive improvement.

4. Our proposed approach

4.1 We do not intend to change the frequency of our inspections, how we decide where to inspect, or the methods we use to collect evidence. Instead it is our standards framework, and how we apply it, that forms the basis of our proposals.

4.2 Our standards for PDU and regional inspections are grouped into two domains. They are structured separately, to allow us to review, judge, and rate specific areas of work. Domain one focuses on organisational arrangements and activity. Evidence for domain one standards is qualitative, comes from a range of sources, and is triangulated with quantitative domain two data. Our domain one standards are underpinned by key questions and prompts, and supported by a comprehensive set of rules and guidance that enables our inspectors to make fair, valid and consistent judgements against the standards. Domain two standards focus on the inspection of cases. They are based on numerical data that is generated from responses to closed questions (typically yes/no). Case level guidance for these standards is contained within the Case Assessment Rules and Guidance (CARaG).

4.3 Our proposal for inspecting cases where contact has been suspended is to leave domain one unchanged and, for domain two, to continue to assess case files and interview probation practitioners. We will take a proportionate approach to inspecting those cases where contact has been suspended but our expectations of sufficiency in the work that is delivered will remain true to the evidence base for delivering quality services. We recognise that some cases will have contact suspended at the early stages whereas for others suspension of contact will come after a more substantial period of supervision. Regardless of the stage at which contact is suspended, if the case

is within the scope we have set out below, the revised prompts will apply to the entire inspection of that case.

What we need to achieve

4.4 Although reset will suspend contact on some orders and licences, the orders and licences do remain active. There remains a critical role therefore for the Inspectorate to continue oversight of these cases both before and during the period of suspension. This will enable us to provide assurance to Ministers, the public and stakeholders about the quality of service delivery.

4.5 The presumption of reset is that if contact with thousands of cases is suspended across each probation region, the probation service will be able to target resources at the early stages of supervision, which should lead to an improved quality of service delivery. We want to inspect in a way that enables us, over time, to comment on the effectiveness of this change.

4.6 Our approach must be able to accommodate circumstances where a change during the period of contact being suspended has resulted in the appropriate action being taken.

4.7 Although active probation contact will cease in some cases, there will be other requirements/conditions/activities that must continue in the final third and we need to make sure we can capture these in the usual way.

4.8 We are mindful that individual probation practitioners or PDUs do not have control over what is a national directive. Whatever changes we make should be fair and proportionate, enabling us to best comment on the reset arrangements and drive improvement where it is needed.

Scope

4.9 Against our current prompts, we will continue to inspect all community orders, SSOs and licence cases over three months. This is because in these cases the time period will be sufficient for us to see delivery against all the prompts. There may be some cases where contact is suspended at a later date but, where this happens, we will not transfer to the revised prompts as we do not want to inspect one case against two different sets of prompts.

4.10 Against our revised prompts, we will inspect PSS and licence cases under three months. Whilst there will still be assessing, planning and some delivery in these cases, in the main we anticipate this will be in preparation for suspension and referral to other agencies, and that direct delivery from the Probation Service will be minimal. This approach means we capture all those cases both where contact is suspended after one contact and others that have had very limited contact and are then suspended.

4.11 The court work, resettlement, statutory victim work, and unpaid work elements of our case inspections that inform the regional domain two standards will be unchanged as they are unaffected by reset.

Our proposals

4.12 We do not inspect probation services in terms of how well they do or do not deliver the requirements of any particular operating model or on the basis of their local delivery arrangements. Instead, we inspect services against our standards, which are based on research and inspection findings. We recognise that research suggests focussing effort on the early stages of an order or licence could have benefits on reoffending rates over time. However, work to promote desistance can still be of value at the later stages of an order. We recognise that any intervention that protects the public is vital at any stage in an order.

4.13 We will continue to look at assessment, planning, implementation and delivery and reviewing and the standards will remain unchanged as follows:

P 2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well informed, analytical and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

P 2.2 Planning

Planning is well informed, analytical and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

P 2.3 Implementation and Delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the person on probation.

P 2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

4.14 Our starting point in developing our approach to inspecting cases where contact has been suspended was our existing domain two standards, key questions and prompts. We will continue to focus within each standard on engagement, desistance and keeping people safe.

4.15 The standards and key questions will remain unchanged, and instead we have focussed on the prompts that sit beneath the key questions. We have for all key questions either reduced the number of prompts, replaced existing prompts with new ones or kept the prompts as they are. Where we have kept the prompts as they are we will revise our CARaG to ensure it is relevant to cases where contact has been suspended. It is by following the revised CARaG underpinning the prompts that inspectors will make their judgements about sufficiency, reflecting the things that we would expect to see in cases where contact has been suspended. What we want to find out in each case is whether the right thing was done at the right time for each individual.

4.16 Our proposed changes to the prompts are set out below, along with the rationale for those changes.

Question 2- Is our proposed approach fair and proportionate?

Assessment

4.17 For some cases where contact has been suspended, we anticipate that assessment will be based on a small number of contacts, meaning there is limited opportunity for effective assessment to be evidenced. In others there will be sufficient time for assessment, planning, and implementation before contact is suspended. What we expect to see is meaningful contact ensuring that risks of reoffending and harm to others are known and identified for the purposes of future escalation and risk management, explanation of the suspension period, and signposting to other community agencies.

P 2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well informed, analytical, and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

P 2.1.1 Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does assessment analyse the motivation and readiness of the person on probation to engage and comply with the sentence?	a) Does assessment consider the individual’s motivation and triggers to re-engagement post-suspension?	To focus on triggers to re-engagement rather than compliance with the sentence.

b) Does assessment analyse the protected characteristics of the individual and consider the impact of these on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery?	b) Does assessment consider diversity factors and potential barriers to re-engagement post suspension?	To focus on triggers to re-engagement rather than compliance with the sentence.
c) Does assessment analyse the personal circumstances of the individual and consider the impact of these on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery?	Not applicable.	This is included in b).
d) Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	d) Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	No change.

P 2.1.2 Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does assessment identify and analyse offending-related factors?	a) Does assessment identify the critical factors requiring ongoing support/engagement from local services?	To reflect the reset arrangements where we expect to see ongoing support and engagement from local services based on the critical identified factors.
b) Does assessment identify the strengths and protective factors of the person on probation?	b) Does assessment identify the strengths and protective factors of the person on probation?	No change.
c) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information?	c) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information?	No change.

P 2.1.3 Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does assessment identify and analyse clearly any risk of harm to others?	a) Does assessment identify and analyse clearly any risk of harm to others?	No change.
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	No change.

c) Does assessment analyse any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	c) Does assessment analyse any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	No change.
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Planning

4.18 At the planning stage, we anticipate that for most cases all objectives will be suspended unless there is any ongoing activity such as treatment services. In all cases we will expect to see there is a plan to manage harm in the suspension period, including identifying potential triggers to escalation.

P 2.2 Planning

Planning is well informed, holistic, and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

P 2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in planning, and are their views taken into account?	a) Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in planning, and are their views taken into account?	No change.
b) Does planning take sufficient account of the protected characteristics of the individual which may affect engagement and compliance?	b) Does planning consider diversity factors and plan for potential barriers to re-engagement post suspension?	This includes both b) and c) from the current prompts.
c) Does planning take sufficient account of the personal circumstances of the individual which may affect engagement and compliance?	Not applicable.	Not included as covered by b).
d) Does planning take sufficient account of the readiness and motivation of the person on probation to change, which may affect engagement and compliance?	d) Does planning consider motivation and plan for potential barriers to re-engagement post suspension?	To focus on planning for potential barriers to re-engagements rather than ongoing engagement throughout an order.
e) Does planning set out how all the requirements of the sentence or licence/post-sentence supervision will be delivered within the available timescales?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
f) Does planning set a level, pattern, and type of contact sufficient to engage the individual	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

and to support the effectiveness of specific interventions?		
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P 2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does planning reflect sufficiently offending-related factors and prioritise those which are most critical?	a) Does planning reflect sufficiently offending-related factors and prioritise those which are most critical?	No change.
b) Does planning build on the individual's strengths and protective factors, utilising potential sources of support?	b) Does planning build on the individual's strengths and protective factors, utilising potential sources of support?	No change.
c) Does planning set out the services most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?	c) Does planning set out the services most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?	No change.

P 2.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does planning address sufficiently risk of harm factors and prioritise those which are most critical?	a) Does planning address sufficiently risk of harm factors and prioritise those which are most critical?	No change.
b) Does planning set out the necessary constructive and/or restrictive interventions to manage the risk of harm?	b) Does planning set out the necessary constructive and/or restrictive interventions to manage the risk of harm?	No change.
c) Does planning make appropriate links to the work of other agencies involved with the person on probation and any multi-agency plans?	c) Does planning make appropriate links to the work of other agencies involved with the person on probation and any multi-agency plans?	No change.
d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	No change.

Implementation and delivery

4.19 Under the reset arrangements the PDU will not be directly delivering work in cases where contact has been suspended. Instead of direct work we will be interested in exit planning and engagement with other services to inform those agencies about suspension and the ongoing support that is needed. We will be especially interested in referral pathways, signposting, exit planning and partnership working. Access to mainstream services in a timely and effective way will also be important.

P 2.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality well-focused, personalised, and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the person on probation.

P 2.3.1 Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Do the requirements of the sentence start promptly, or at an appropriate time?	a) Is the person on probation sufficiently informed of the requirements of the suspension period?	To reflect the suspension period rather than sentence requirements.
b) Is sufficient focus given to maintaining an effective working relationship with the person on probation, taking into account their diversity needs?	b) Is sufficient focus, including to diversity factors, given to engagement in order to identify appropriate support during the suspension period?	To reflect the suspension period rather than sentence requirements.
c) Are sufficient efforts made to enable the individual to complete their sentence, including flexibility to take appropriate account of their personal circumstances?	c) Have sufficient services been identified to provide appropriate support during the suspension period?	To reflect the suspension period rather than sentence requirements.
d) Are risks of non-compliance identified and addressed in a timely fashion to reduce the need for enforcement actions?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
e) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	Not applicable.	Not applicable here but we will ask a question about enforcement for our information in the reviewing standard.
f) Are sufficient efforts made to re-engage the individual after enforcement actions or recall?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

P 2.3.2 Does the implementation and delivery of services support desistance effectively?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Are the delivered services those most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	a) Are the intended services most likely to reduce offending and support desistance?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.
b) Wherever possible, does the delivery of services build upon the individual's strengths and enhance protective factors?	b) Do the intended services build upon the individual's strengths and enhance protective factors?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.

c) Is the involvement of other organisations in the delivery of services sufficiently well-coordinated?	c) Are services engaged to provide support and sustain desistance during the suspension period?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.
d) Are key individuals in the life of the person on probation engaged where appropriate to support their desistance?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
e) Are the level and nature of contact sufficient to reduce reoffending and support desistance?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
f) Are local services engaged to support and sustain desistance during the sentence and beyond?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

P 2.3.3 Does the implementation and delivery of services support the safety of other people effectively?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Are the level and nature of contact offered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
b) Is sufficient attention given to protecting actual and potential victims?	a) Is sufficient attention given to protecting actual and potential victims?	No change.
c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing and minimising the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	b) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing and minimising the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	No change.
d) Are key individuals in the life of the person on probation engaged where appropriate to support the effective management of risk of harm?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
e) Are home visits undertaken where necessary to support the effective management of risk of harm?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
	c) Was there effective multi-agency coordination in relation to child safeguarding?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.
	d) Was there effective multi-agency coordination in relation to domestic abuse?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.

Reviewing

4.20 In inspection work to review cases we will consider how new information has been managed in cases where contact has been suspended. This will be whether or not enforcement action has been taken and whether contact, where necessary, has been appropriately reinstated.

P 2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well informed, analytical, and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

P 2.4.1 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does reviewing consider compliance and engagement levels, and any relevant barriers, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	a) Are sufficient efforts made to re-engage with the person on probation following changes in circumstances?	To reflect the suspension period rather than the direct delivery of work.
b) Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in reviewing their progress and engagement?	b) Is the person on probation sufficiently informed of any changes in relation to their supervision or contact arrangements?	To reflect the suspension period rather than direct ongoing supervision.
c) Are written reviews completed when appropriate as a formal record of actions to implement the sentence?	c) Is contact re-instigated when necessary?	To reflect the requirements in cases where contact has been suspended.

P 2.4.2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors linked to offending behaviour, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors linked to offending behaviour, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	No change.
b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building on the strengths and enhancing the protective factors of the person on probation?	b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building on the strengths and enhancing the protective factors of the person on probation?	No change.
c) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies working with the person on probation?	c) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies working with the person on probation?	No change.

d) Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of the progress towards desistance?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
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P 2.4.3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Current prompts	Proposed prompts	Rationale for change
a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors related to risk of harm, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors related to risk of harm, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	No change.
b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	No change.
c) Is the person on probation (and, where appropriate, are key individuals in their life) involved meaningfully in reviewing the risk of harm?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
d) Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of the management of the risk of harm?	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

4.21 We also want to identify whether there has been a change in risk that triggers reinstatement of contact, so we will ask if there has been an increase to a very high ROSH, MAPPA registration, new child protection registration or NSD allocation. Where this has been the case, we will introduce the following prompts:

- c) Has appropriate recall action been taken where the risks can no longer be managed in the community?
- d) Has a sufficient review of assessment and planning taken place?
- e) Has sufficient management oversight been provided?

Question 3- Are the prompts the right ones for us to ask?

Question 4 - Are there any prompts that are not included but should be?

Rating

4.22 We will continue to rate individual PDUs against our domain one and two standards. For cases where contact has been suspended, our judgements about sufficiency will be based on the revised key questions and prompts and will be included along with all other cases when we calculate the rating for each standard. When we aggregate PDU data as part of a regional inspection, cases where contact has been suspended will be included. We will be able to comment separately on what we find in cases where contact has been suspended and we propose to have a section in the report that provides a narrative specific to these cases.

Question 5 - Should we include in our ratings those cases where contact has been suspended?

5. Timing

5.1 We expect to implement our revised approach for inspections where we undertake the fieldwork from November 2024 onwards.

6. Impact assessment

Regulatory

6.1 The quality of probation service delivery is important for all and we believe our proposals will help drive improvements in service delivery where they are needed. We think the inspection activity we are proposing is appropriate and proportionate.

Equalities

6.2 Our definition of quality has not changed, our expectations remain grounded in research and inspection evidence, and we will look for sufficiency in the delivery of the work done with people on probation. The standards framework remains supported by inspection guidance documents, which will include material relating to specific sub-groups and protected characteristics as it does currently.

7. Next steps

7.1 The consultation process will run until **23:59 on 15 September 2024**. We will consider all responses carefully and will test our proposals from October 2024 before finalising our approach and guidance accordingly. We will continue to work with services and stakeholders to keep our inspection standards relevant, comprehensive and up to date.

8. How to respond

7.1 The deadline for responses is **23:59 on 15 September 2024**.

Please email responses to helen.mercer@hmiprobation.gov.uk.

7.2 You can also send any questions you may have to that email address, and we will endeavour to respond as soon as we can. Alternatively, if you would like to discuss any part of the consultation, please email Helen Mercer (helen.mercer@hmiprobation.gov.uk) to arrange a time to do so.

7.3 As part of your response, please ensure:

- You state clearly who the submission is from. For example, from an individual in a personal capacity or sent on behalf of an organisation.
- You include a brief description of yourself/your organisation.
- You state clearly if you wish your submission to be confidential and/or you do not want to be contacted with follow-up enquiries (see confidentiality statement below).

Confidentiality statement

7.4 The information you send HM Inspectorate of Probation may be published in full or in a summary of responses. All information in responses, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are

primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

7.5 If you want your response to remain confidential, you should explain why confidentiality is necessary and your request will be acceded to only if it is appropriate in the circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding.