



**HMCPSI**

HM Crown Prosecution  
Service Inspectorate

# **CPS induction processes**

**A thematic inspection of CPS  
induction processes to equip  
new prosecutors to successfully  
deliver CPS objectives.**

**November 2023**

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## Who we are

HMCPST inspects prosecution services, providing evidence to make the prosecution process better and more accountable.

We have a statutory duty to inspect the work of the Crown Prosecution Service and Serious Fraud Office. By special arrangement, we also share our expertise with other prosecution services in the UK and overseas.

We are independent of the organisations we inspect, and our methods of gathering evidence and reporting are open and transparent. We do not judge or enforce; we inform prosecution services' strategies and activities by presenting evidence of good practice and issues to address. Independent inspections like these help to maintain trust in the prosecution process.

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# 1. Summary

## Highlights

**1.1.** The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has seen a significant recruitment surge in the past three years, thanks to a notable budget increase. This growth was supported by an extensive local and national induction program which has been vital for preparing new staff, aligning them with CPS goals, and ensuring they understand their roles. The CPS recognises that effective induction is not only integral to onboarding but also crucial for retaining new talent.

**1.2.** Given that the CPS is the largest law firm in the country it is critical that the induction of prosecutors is effective, efficient, and comprehensive. Our findings are that the CPS has developed, supports and delivers a comprehensive induction programme. This induction programme consists of a national Lawyer Induction Programme (LIP) and further induction and support in local Area teams by managers and colleagues who act as 'buddies'.

**The CPS invests heavily in their new starters with a comprehensive programme of training.**

**1.3.** The COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the way that the CPS ran on a day-to-day basis, as it did with many businesses and government departments. New working practices had to be adapted so that the criminal justice system could continue to function. The new way of working presented some challenges of how the CPS delivered induction and

provided support in a remote and virtual way, but we found that the CPS continued to successfully recruit and induct new prosecutors.

**1.4.** While our overall view is that the induction provided by the CPS to new prosecutors is effective and the process does equip new prosecutors to commence their careers at the CPS, there are some aspects that could be improved.

**Managers and colleagues provide a supportive environment in which new starters can develop.**

**1.5.** We found that the "buddy" system works well in providing colleague support to new starters. Particularly in a hybrid working environment where face-to-face access to colleagues may be limited. The buddy system provides support, training and guidance in addition to that from line managers. Our findings are that not all Areas identify buddies

for new starters, and this can lead to a lack of support.

1.6. It is essential that all new operational staff who join the CPS can use the Case Management System (CMS). This is especially critical for new prosecutors because all work and legal tasks are managed and progressed on CMS. There is a national training course, which needs to be passed by all staff, before they are authorised to use CMS. While this course is a prerequisite for obtaining a license to use the system, it is not expected to comprehensively equip new lawyers with the skills to manage cases. Our findings indicate that managers and colleagues provide a significant amount of on-going training for new users. The inspection revealed a lack of clarity on how new staff could access support. Although additional national guidance and training videos are available, those we interviewed—both new staff and most managers—were unaware of this supplementary support and the material was difficult to find on the CPS intranet. A consistent national approach to CMS training would assist in ensuring that new starters are fully equipped to use CMS and may relieve some workload from managers and colleagues.

1.7. The overall induction process does equip new prosecutors with the skills and knowledge to be able to carry out their role. The CPS invests heavily in their new starters with a comprehensive programme of training and at a local level managers and colleagues provide a supportive environment in which new starters can develop. While we found no major issues with the process, addressing the following aspects could provide for a more consistent and streamlined approach:

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**Issue to address**

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The timing of CMS training during the induction programme does not always allow new starters to consolidate the learning at the time, resulting in them needing further support from colleagues in their Area. Further training on using CMS to carry out roles and tasks during the probation period of a new starter should be provided so that the learning can be consolidated. [paragraph 3.37]

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While additional training and guidance for using CMS are available nationally, they are not widely advertised or easily accessible. In some Areas, locally produced training duplicates existing material, potentially causing inconsistency and confusion for new staff. To address this, the CPS should ensure that national training is prominently accessible and identifiable for new prosecutors and take steps to maintain consistency in training materials across all Areas. [paragraph 3.37]

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Some Areas are not using the up-to-date versions of the induction checklist. Line managers should ensure that they are providing their new starters with the latest and most accurate information. [paragraph 4.10]

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The recording of one-to-ones and other meetings where performance, conduct and development of a new starter are discussed is inconsistent. A lack of appropriate recording could result in issues of performance, conduct and

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development not being addressed at the earliest opportunity. The CPS needs to ensure that appropriate records of such meetings are kept. [paragraph 6.24]

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The exit interview process is unclear and not utilised as well as it could be. This has resulted in a lack of understanding by the CPS as to the reason why prosecutors leave and fails to identify any themes that could be addressed to improve retention. The CPS needs to make sure the exit interview process is clear and applied consistently across Areas. The CPS should consider altering the exit interview process so that the responsibility for conducting an exit interview is proactively managed. [paragraph 6.32]

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### **Strengths**

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Line managers are encouraging and supporting new starters to access their Individual Learning Account (ILA) which assists with improving performance or career development. [paragraph 4.18]

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The buddy system provides identified support to a new starter which has been found to be invaluable, particularly when working using a hybrid model and face-to-face contact in the office is less frequent. The buddy system assists by identifying a person on the team who the new starter is able to contact remotely. [paragraph 4.38]

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## Introduction and context

**1.8.** The 2020 government spending review included a significant investment into criminal justice. This included plans to recruit 20,000 extra police officers. As part of this commitment, it was recognised that this level of police recruitment would result in additional work for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). To help match this increase in demand the CPS received a £85 million uplift to its budget. Having secured the additional funding, the CPS set itself a target to recruit nearly 400 new prosecutors by the end of June 2020.<sup>1</sup>

**1.9.** Shortly after this target was announced, the global COVID-19 pandemic started and the CPS, along with the majority of the country, was forced to adapt to new ways of working to ensure that prosecutions of crime continued.

**1.10.** For those newly recruited to the CPS and for those responsible for inducting them, there was the additional challenge of training and integrating new starters in Area and equipping them in their new role as prosecutors. All recruitment, training and support had to be undertaken virtually and remotely. There are long-term gains in recruiting new staff, but in the short term there are added pressures on existing staff in Area to train and support new starters. This challenge was compounded by additional pressures stemming from an increase in cases, initial court closures, and the need for prolonged periods of social distancing. Amidst these circumstances and a shift to virtual working, achieving the CPS's recruitment goals presented a formidable challenge.

**1.11.** While the impact of the pandemic continues to be felt in the criminal justice system and will be for some time, backlogs are recovering and, in some Areas, caseloads have returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, methods of working that came into place at the beginning of the pandemic have continued and developed and are the "new normal". This includes many prosecutors working in a hybrid way, where some days are spent in the office and others working remotely. Such shifts pose ongoing challenges to traditional induction methods. Consequently, the CPS has undertaken national and Area-specific developments in their induction processes. This adaptation aims to ensure that new starters receive the necessary training and ongoing support, enabling them to work effectively and contribute to the achievement of the CPS's aims and objectives.

## **2. Framework and methodology**

## The inspection framework

**2.1.** We devised an overarching inspection question with four criteria underpinning it. Each criterion had several sub-questions which are included in the full framework set out in Annex A.

**2.2.** Inspection question: How effective is the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) legal induction process in equipping new legal staff to successfully deliver the aims and objectives of the service?

**2.3.** Inspection criteria:

2.3.1. What is the national induction strategy, guidance and what central support is provided to the Areas?

2.3.2. What local training and initiatives are in place beyond the 12-week core induction programme to support legal induction?

2.3.3. What support was received by the legal managers responsible for inducting the new starters?

2.3.4. How was the legal induction assessed to ensure the new starters are successfully developing their casework understanding to fully deliver on their responsibilities?

## Methodology

### Surveys

**2.4.** Surveys were conducted with new prosecutors who had joined the CPS in the financial year March 2022 – April 2023 and their line managers.

**2.5.** Surveys were sent to 244 new prosecutors and 103 line managers. We received responses from 92 new prosecutors (37.7%) and 59 line managers (57.3%).

**2.6.** The question set and data are included in Annex B.

**2.7.** There were five additional questions not included in the question set at Annex B for new prosecutors:

2.7.1. In which CPS Area did your induction take place?

2.7.2. On what day did your induction with the CPS start?

2.7.3. Please rate your overall experience with the CPS induction programme (scale of 1-10)

2.7.4. What worked well during the induction process?

2.7.5. What aspects of the induction process could have been improved to make the induction process more effective?

**2.8.** The data for these questions have not been included in Annex B due to the potential for responses to identify individuals. Where relevant, responses have been summarised or referred to within the body of the report.

**2.9.** There were four additional questions not included in the question set at Annex B for line managers:

2.9.1. In which CPS Area did you induct new legal staff?

2.9.2. Please rate your overall experience with the CPS induction process (scale of 1-10)

2.9.3. What additional support or tools would have been helpful during the induction process?

2.9.4. What improvements, if any, could be made to make the induction process more effective?

**2.10.** The data for these questions has not been included in Annex B due to the potential for responses to identify individuals. Where relevant, responses have been summarised or referred to within the body of the report.

## **Interviews, focus groups and document review**

**2.11.** Inspectors conducted interviews and focus groups with relevant staff in CPS North East, CPS Wessex and CPS West Midlands. Inspectors spoke to new prosecutors who had joined the CPS within the last 12 months, line managers of new starters, and prosecutors who act as “buddies” to new starters. We also spoke to Area learning and development managers and HR Area advisors. We examined relevant documents relating to the induction of new starters.

**2.12.** Inspectors also conducted interviews with relevant staff in CPS Headquarters, including Head of Learning and Development, Head of Strategic Workforce Planning, the Central Operational Training Team (COTT) and

## **CPS Induction Processes**

Central Legal Training Team (CLTT). We examined relevant documents from CPS Headquarters relating to the induction of new starters.

### **3. National induction, guidance, and central support**

## National Induction Strategy

**3.1.** A new starter to the Civil Service and the CPS is subject to both a Civil Service corporate induction and a CPS specific induction. The CPS induction includes training provided by the Central Legal Training Team (CLTT), the Central Operation Training Team (COTT) and Area.

**3.2.** A new starter needs to undertake the appropriate parts of induction at the right time to ensure that they are best equipped to successfully deliver the aims and objectives of the CPS. This requires liaison between the teams which all have responsibility for elements of induction.

**3.3.** At a strategic level there are regular meetings between the corporate HR function (CPS Headquarters) and local Areas. There are fortnightly meetings between the teams involved with induction (national and local) where the approach to induction is discussed. These fortnightly meetings are also used to share information about new starters joining the CPS (as lawyers are usually recruited through national campaigns and clearance is handled by the national team) so that elements of induction can be joined-up and delivered.

**3.4.** While it is clear that the large programme of recruitment is clearly managed and delivered both nationally and locally, with good levels of liaison and cooperation, there is no formal overarching national induction strategy. We have found in our inspection elements of national training being duplicated by Areas due to the presence of the national training not being widely known and Areas providing training and support in differing ways. While there will be a need for differing Areas to provide some tailored training due to local practices, an overarching national induction strategy could assist in providing a positive and streamlined induction process for new starters by ensuring that the many different aspects of induction are fully and consistently covered and that the different teams involved in the delivery of induction are fully engaged.

## Lawyer Induction Programme

**3.5.** The Lawyer Induction Programme (LIP) is a national programme delivered by the Central Legal Training Team (CLTT) that was introduced in 2018 to support Areas in delivering effective induction to new lawyers. The programme was developed to ensure that new lawyers have the skills that they required to deliver the CPS strategic objective of delivering high quality casework.

**3.6.** The LIP provides classroom, courtroom and online training to supplement the training that new starters receive from Area. During the height



of the pandemic the programme was delivered solely online but is now a hybrid of face-to-face and online learning.

**3.7.** The LIP consists of seven modules:

- Introduction/welcome (1 hour)
- Introduction to Prosecuting (3 days)
- Introduction to Proactive Prosecuting, Building Advocacy Skills and Overnights (3 days)
- Essential Trial Advocacy Skills (3 days)
- Proactive Disclosure/Introduction to Charging (3 days)
- Domestic Abuse Drills/Introduction to the Youth Court (2 days)
- Victim Communication and Liaison (VCL)/Advocacy and the Vulnerable (2 days)

**3.8.** For new prosecutors with no or limited experience of working in criminal law, an additional course, the “Criminal Law Foundation Course” is offered, which should be taken before module two. This is a 3-day course.

**3.9.** New prosecutors who are deployed in non-advocacy roles must attend modules 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 with the option of attending the other modules. New prosecutors deployed in advocacy roles must attend all seven modules.

**3.10.** New prosecutors should start the LIP within 4-6 weeks of commencing employment. Before beginning the LIP, individuals are required to complete e-learning modules. We found some examples of new prosecutors having to wait longer than 4-6 weeks before commencing the LIP. This could cause some difficulties, as in some cases the ability to carry out meaningful work in Area prior to starting the programme is not always possible. Delayed starting to the LIP also meant for some that the programme was completed nearing the end of a new prosecutor’s probationary period, which can cause some issues (see later). We recognise that there are challenges in the recruitment process and scheduling starting dates for those joining the CPS will not always be possible. However, given the critical importance of the LIP to new prosecutors’ development and the positive feedback of the programme we have received the CPS may wish to consider if delaying start dates to ensure that the timely recruitment into cohorts may be a better approach.

**3.11.** The LIP takes three months to complete, with the modules taking place at a minimum of two-week intervals to enable new prosecutors to practice the skills they have learnt on the LIP in their role in Area.

**3.12.** Each module requires some degree of preparation, pre-reading and homework.

**3.13.** The LIP is delivered in cohorts. It is anticipated that a new starter will remain in the same cohort throughout and therefore will be undertaking all of the modules on the programme with the same delegates. There is flexibility for a delegate to change cohorts or modules, if necessary, but we found that most new starters remained in their cohort.

**3.14.** Historically this programme was delivered in person, but with the advent of the pandemic, the programme moved to be delivered remotely using technology. During this time the programme was still delivered using the cohort structure and therefore the same delegates would largely be attending the same modules. This did allow for some support from cohort colleagues, but we heard that these relationships were not as strong as those who attended modules in person as there was more opportunity to build rapport with colleagues in face-to-face circumstances. As the restrictions of the pandemic lessened, the programme began to reintroduce face-to-face modules. As of January 2023, all advocacy modules of the programme are delivered in person, where possible.

### **Quality and content of the LIP**

**3.15.** New starters found the LIP effective in preparing them for starting a career at the CPS. In our prosecutor survey 73 out of 92 responses said that they (79.3%) found the programme effective. In the Area focus groups we conducted, new starters described the LIP as being of high quality and the trainers knowledgeable and approachable, providing constructive and helpful feedback to delegates.

**New starters described the LIP as being of high quality and the trainers knowledgeable and approachable, providing constructive and helpful feedback to delegates.**

**3.16.** Of those we spoke to who attended the LIP when it was delivered completely online, the majority would have preferred to have face-to-face training, particularly for the advocacy modules. However, despite the practical limitations, delegates still felt the training provided was excellent, comprehensive and equipped them in their new role as prosecutors.

**3.17.** Some felt that the LIP should be more tailored to the units in which they would be working. Particularly for those going into a Crown Court or Rape and Serious Sexual

Offences (RASSO) unit, the learning most pertinent to those roles comes later in the programme, when they may have already been working in Area for a number of months without having undertaken the necessary modules. It is recognised however that the LIP is a national programme, and its function is to equip new prosecutors with the learning and skills necessary to fulfil their role, alongside comprehensive induction and training provided from the Area. The LIP modules are not mandatory for all new starters, therefore those not in advocacy roles do not need to attend modules of less relevance. However, due to the cohort structure and availability of courses, this means that a delegate may still be some months into the role before taking some of the later modules, even if they haven't had to take earlier ones.

**3.18.** CLTT has confirmed that there is flexibility to take the LIP modules at different times and that cohorts can be interchanged. Responses to our surveys and in focus groups suggests that many delegates are not aware of this, and this degree of flexibility (within the bounds of needs) has not been communicated to new starters adequately.

## **The Criminal Law Foundation Course**

**3.19.** The criminal law foundation course was introduced by CLTT in 2020 and was designed as an introductory module for new prosecutors who did not have a background in criminal law or did not have recent criminal law experience. The course was introduced following feedback from new starters undertaking the LIP.

**3.20.** Those who have undertaken the foundation course have found the module useful as an introduction to criminal law. However, when the course is taken after module two of the LIP (Introduction to Prosecuting), delegates expressed that the course lost its value, because module two covered elements of the foundation course in more detail.

**3.21.** There has been some difficulty in availability of the foundation course due to a lack of available trainers, meaning that new starters who would benefit from attending were unable to at the appropriate time. CLTT are aware of this difficulty and are looking at ways to increase the availability of the course. This includes increasing cohort size for the foundation course and producing video training which was in the process of being produced at the time of our inspection.

### Feedback

**3.22.** Trainers conducting the modules on the LIP provide feedback to delegates. Delegates have found the feedback provided to be constructive and useful for their development. This includes a written record of performance for advocacy training.

**3.23.** Feedback to line managers is not automatically provided by CLTT. Managers are able to request the written feedback from the advocacy modules and this can assist with probation assessments. We heard from CLTT that line managers may contact the team if there is a specific issue with a delegate and managers and CLTT work together if delegates are struggling to provide support and further training if necessary.

**3.24.** In our focus groups and from our survey results we found that managers would find more regular feedback from CLTT useful and would want feedback to be provided as standard rather than having to seek it as an issue arises.

### Case Management System (CMS)

**3.25.** A prosecutor with the CPS will be required to access, navigate, and use a number of digital systems in order to carry out their work. This includes systems for accessing digital material from the Police, such as Egress or NICE, the Crown Court Digital Case System (CCDS) for managing and sharing material with the court and defence, and the CPS' own system, CMS.

**3.26.** CMS has two interfaces, CMS Classic and CMS Modern. Disclosure management is carried out solely on CMS Modern, but prosecutors tend to use both CMS Classic and CMS Modern when carrying out their work. All evidence, case reviews, correspondence, case management decisions and outcomes must be recorded on CMS. It is therefore an essential part of a prosecutor's job that they are able to use and navigate the system efficiently and effectively.

**3.27.** In order to be able to use CMS, a user must first obtain a licence. To obtain a licence requires training to be undertaken and a test passed. Once a licence is then issued, the user can access all elements of CMS required to

fulfil their role. The required training to obtain a licence is universal for all roles and grades that use CMS and is not tailored specifically to prosecutors.

**3.28.** So that licences are obtained as early as possible, the required CMS training is carried out at the early stages of a new starter's induction. The training is provided by the Central Operations Training Team (COTT) and is now an instructor led course, having previously been online due to the pandemic. The training has recently been extended from one day to two days. COTT also is involved in parts of module two and module five of the LIP where some specific functions of CMS are covered.

**3.29.** COTT confirmed that the CMS training they provide was not intended to be a comprehensive program but rather aimed to offer a basic understanding of CMS, enabling users to obtain their licenses. It was understood that continued support would be necessary for a new prosecutor to develop their ability to use CMS effectively, depending on their placement in Area units. This ongoing support and training was expected to be provided by the respective Area, recognising the need for a degree of tailoring based on the recruit's placement. However, it was acknowledged that this approach was established before the pandemic. Considering new ways of working, there may be a need to reconsider how further support and training are delivered, acknowledging that the support may not be as easily achievable in the current environment.

**3.30.** We universally heard from new starters and line managers that the national CMS training does not provide new starters with the ability and confidence to use the system at the point at which it is central to the work that they are expected to do.

**We universally heard from new starters and line managers that the national CMS training does not provide new starters with the ability and confidence to use the system at the point at which it is central to the work that they are expected to do.**

**3.31.** The responsibility for the continued learning and support around CMS is with the Areas. This is largely provided through the support of managers, identified buddies and other colleagues that a new starter may be shadowing. We heard in focus groups and interviews with buddies and managers that they would spend a lot of time supporting new starters with the practical usage of CMS to ensure that they have the skills they need. This places a significant burden on those providing this additional support, many of whom will have their own large caseloads or management responsibilities. We heard from new starters that they felt that they had to rely on busy colleagues to show them how to use CMS and

while we heard that this support was always forthcoming, the new starters were conscious of their colleagues' own work and priorities. In one Area that we visited, the new starters praised the Associate Prosecutors (APs) that they were shadowing in court for their patience and knowledge when supporting them with learning CMS.

**3.32.** Results from our surveys show that 65 out of 96 (70.7%) of new starters felt that during their first four weeks they were provided with adequate training and support on IT systems, for example CMS, to enable them to carry out their role effectively. 27 (29.3%) did not.

**3.33.** Managers felt that they were able to provide sufficient support to their new starters in learning new systems such as CMS in 19 out of 53 cases (32.2%). 35 (59.3%) felt able to provide some support, with others in Area providing additional support and 5 (8.5%) felt that they were unable to and required additional support themselves.

**3.34.** There is additional learning and guidance on CMS which is available to new prosecutors. COTT told us that there was additional guidance on their digital channel which would be available to all staff. This training is not compulsory and COTT were unsure as to the level of awareness in Area of the availability of this training. The training videos can be accessed on the CPS intranet, although are not easily accessible and are stored in a location with upwards of 70 training videos on various topics without a clear index or naming convention. We were told that COTT were about to release further CMS training on recording hearing outcomes, directions and how to record a review on CMS. These were developed following feedback from CPS Areas

**3.35.** The intranet also contains CMS Learning Checklists, which are tailored to each role and identifies which functions in CMS as user will be required to know. These checklists appear comprehensive and would provide a new starter and their line manager a good basis to ensure that a good working knowledge of CMS is obtained. We did not hear of these checklists being used and it is not clear how actively this resource is being provided to Areas.

**3.36.** In Areas that we visited, we found examples of local guidance being developed and used which provided step by step instructions on how to carry out various functions on CMS such as how to complete a review or dealing with disclosure. Local training was planned in Wessex on various aspects of CMS usage and in the West Midlands guidance documents had been produced on how to use CMS, which were available in the Area's training library. It is to the credit of Areas that they have produced further guidance and training but appears to be a duplication of what is available through COTT, which does not appear to have been widely advertised.

**3.37.** CPS Areas appear to be independently creating training and guidance to train new starters in the use of CMS. Better promotion of the COTT guidance and training may negate the need for some of the work being undertaken by Area and would ensure that consistent information is available to new starters across the organisation.

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**Issue to address**

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The timing of CMS training during the induction programme does not always allow new starters to consolidate the learning at the time resulting in them needing further support from colleagues in Area. Further training on using CMS to carry out roles and tasks during the probation period of a new starter should be provided so that the learning can be consolidated.

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While additional training and guidance for using CMS are available nationally, they are not widely advertised or easily accessible. In some Areas, locally produced training duplicates existing material, potentially causing inconsistency and confusion for new staff. To address this, the CPS should ensure that national training is prominently accessible and identifiable for new prosecutors and take steps to maintain consistency in training materials across all Areas.

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## **4. Local training and initiatives**



## Onboarding

**4.1.** When a new starter joins the CPS, there are various elements that need to come together to ensure that the new starter is ready to start their first day. This includes ensuring equipment such as laptops are available and set up with usernames, emails addresses and the like.

**4.2.** Our survey indicated that 85 out of 92 new starters (92.4%) were provided with all the required equipment and they had sufficient information to enable them to set it up, with support if required.

**4.3.** Managers reported that there was sufficient support when arranging for equipment such as laptops to be provided for new starters in 38 out of 59 cases (64.4%), with 19 (32.2%) cases the Area business centre being responsible for the arrangements. The survey highlighted two occasions of there being insufficient support.

**4.4.** We heard in focus groups and from the surveys conducted that where there were technical issues, the IT service desk was helpful and able to resolve the issues in an adequate time.

## Induction Checklists

**4.5.** There is a national induction checklist that is to be used by line managers to assist with the induction process. The checklist provides actions for the manager prior to the new starter commencing employment, during the first week, weeks 2-4, weeks 5-8 and weeks 9-12. Mandatory corporate e-learning is identified at the appropriate stages. Managers are asked to work through the checklist and share it with the inductee. Regular reviews must take place checking progress against the checklist. The checklist is for all new starters and not specific to prosecutors.

**4.6.** In our interviews and focus groups with new starters, we were told that their managers had gone through the checklist with them at the beginning of the employment, but its use tended to wane during the induction process and reviews of the checklist were not always carried out. From our surveys, 70 out of 92 (76.1%) responses said that there were regular (at least monthly) meetings to check progress against the checklist, with 22 (23.9%) saying this did not happen.

**4.7.** New starters described the checklist as being useful to ensure that all corporate policies and e-learning had been covered. Some Areas were using outdated versions of the checklist which refer to systems and programmes

such as the Prosecution College that are no longer in use. This can cause confusion for new starters when trying to access learning. Areas should ensure that they are using the most up to date version of the induction checklist.

**4.8.** In our survey of line managers, 83.1% (49 out of 59) found that the induction checklist was an effective guide in helping to induct a new starter. In focus groups, we were told that checklists were useful to ensure that the manager had covered all relevant corporate policies and were helpful to ensure that actions prior to the new starter commencing employment had been carried out.

**4.9.** The induction checklist is a tool that is used for all staff joining the CPS and is not tailored to legal staff. In interviews with managers in CPS North East, we heard that the Area are in the process of developing more detailed and comprehensive checklists tailored to the roles of Crown Prosecutors (CP) and Senior Crown Prosecutors (SCP). In addition to the national checklist, details are included as to where the new starter will be working – from home, the office, or court – for the first two weeks, tailored tasks specific to the role and details of legal guidance to be read in that week. Accompanying the checklist is a record of completion of the required reading which is to be signed off by a manager and any learning needs recorded.

**4.10.** The bespoke checklist is still being developed but it is envisaged that the tailored approach will ensure that training needs are identified and met early in the induction process and that new starters have a clear understanding of what will be expected of them during their induction. This approach further enables the process to be tailored to those with a background in criminal law and those without, ensuring that a new starter obtains the training they require at the appropriate pace and enabling those with more experience to progress efficiently.

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### **Issue to address**

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Some Areas are not using the up-to-date versions of the induction checklist. Line managers should ensure that they are providing their new starters with the latest and most accurate information.

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## **Continued Training and Support**

### **Training plans and objectives**

**4.11.** As part of the induction process, aims and objectives should be discussed and agreed between a new starter and their line manager. The

induction checklist says that this should take place in the first week. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely).

**4.12.** Our survey results showed that in 26 out of 92 responses (28.3%), objectives were discussed and agreed in the first week, in 45 responses (48.9%) within the first month and in 21 cases (22.8%), objectives were not discussed and agreed.

**4.13.** Training plans are a useful tool to identify and record any learning and developmental needs a new starter may have. Training plans should be “living documents” which are updated to show progress, record learning that has been undertaken and to identify continued development goals and needs.

**4.14.** From our survey responses, 65 out of 83 new starters (78.3%) discussed and agreed development needs with their line manager and 18 (21.7%) did not.

**4.15.** We found that the use of training plans varied between Areas. We found evidence that training plans were completed at the time of the new starter joining the CPS, but they were not regularly updated to show that either training had been completed or to identify new training needs. This is similar to what we were told about the induction checklist not being regularly reviewed after its initial production.

**4.16.** At CPS West Midlands we found examples of individual bespoke training plans being devised and these were regularly reviewed and updated. New starters told us that they found these plans helpful, that they were clear as to what was to be covered on a week-by-week basis and they could discuss with their line manager any training or development needs as they arose and update the plan accordingly.

## Individual Learning Account (ILA)

**4.17.** The Individual Learning Account (ILA) is a resource available to all staff. Each staff member has £350 to spend on learning and development each financial year. The expenditure must be targeted at improving performance or preparing an individual for career development. A person’s ILA can be put toward the following:

- Personal Development
- Wellbeing (up to £50 on resources to support mental wellbeing and up to £50 to support physical/nutritional wellbeing)
- Diversity and Inclusivity Awareness

- Courses
- Books
- Apps
- Sponsorship of qualifications

**4.18.** When conducting focus groups with new starters, we found that all had been made aware that they had access to their ILA, knew how to access it and were encouraged by their line managers to use it. New starters were impressed with the resources available and thought it was positive that they could tailor and supplement their learning and development by using their ILA.

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### Strength

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Line managers are encouraging and supporting new starters to access their Individual Learning Account (ILA) which assists with improving performance or career development

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## Hybrid working

**4.19.** The global pandemic acted as a catalyst for a blended way of working, which the CPS have developed through their Hybrid Working Principles; Attending with purpose, Focused on wellbeing, Collaboration is key. The Hybrid Working Principles are supported by a Hybrid Working Policy which sets out objectives, principles and considerations for managing hybrid working in a way that maximises benefit to the CPS and to the employee.

**4.20.** The Hybrid Working Policy contains a chapter on Induction and Probation and sets out guidance to managers as to how to ensure that induction of new starters is effective in a hybrid working environment.

**4.21.** From our survey results, new starts were attending their office or court as follows:

- Every day – four out of 92 (4.3%)
- Three to four times per week – 10 out of 92 (10.9%)
- One to two times per week – 48 out of 92 (52.2%)
- Never – 16 out of 92 (17.4%)
- Not applicable as working remotely – 14 out of 92 (15.2%)

**4.22.** In 75.3% of responses (55 out of 73) where new starters were attending the office, the new starters line manager and/or buddy were working in the office at the same time, therefore allowing face-to-face interaction with identified support to take place.

**4.23.** There were mixed views as to whether attendance in the office assisted new starters with their learning and development. Some expressed the view that attending the office, meeting other colleagues in person (particularly those in administrative roles) and learning through seeing and hearing what their colleagues are doing was helpful. However, others found that being able to work individually at home on a task and contact their colleagues or manager remotely if required benefited their way of learning.

**4.24.** We found in all Areas that we visited that the units made good use of Microsoft Teams, using video calls and the chat function to contact individuals. We found in all Areas teams would have their own chat groups where colleagues could post a question and any team member could respond. New starters found this function a useful way to ask more general questions without interrupting colleagues' work. They also found it helpful to ask questions in a group setting, meaning that one individual was not being asked questions time and again.

**4.25.** New starters, buddies and managers all said that they found the screen sharing function of Teams to be useful when training and support was being provided around CMS and other systems and was preferable to watching a colleague's screen in the office. The screen sharing function also enables more than one new starter to easily access training at the same time.

## **Areas and teams have developed good methods of communication and remote learning.**

**4.26.** Within our focus groups, interviews and from survey results we found that those providing support to new starters were able to do so adequately either remotely or in the office. There were no reported issues of being unable to access colleagues remotely, although it was recognised that some individuals may

wait until they are struggling with a task to ask for support when working remotely, which may impact on efficiency. We were told by buddies who were providing significant support to new starters that they often found they are able to work more effectively when working at home, enabling them to manage the additional workload that comes with supporting new starters.

**4.27.** Areas and teams have developed good methods of communication and remote learning. It is acknowledged that some areas of induction are best

suites to a face-to-face environment, such as attending court and certain modules on the LIP. However, we found that office work is achievable in a home working and hybrid working environment.

### Support from line managers

**4.28.** New prosecutors reported feeling largely supported by their line managers. Among 92 survey responses, 88 (92.4%) indicated that either their line manager or another manager met with them to welcome them on their first day. 69 out of 92 (75.0%) attended their office in the first week to be introduced to colleagues, 14 (15.2%) did not, six (6.5%) were part of a remote team and for three (3.3%) Covid restrictions were still in place preventing travel to the office.

**4.29.** During a new starter's first week, 83 out of 92 (90.2%) were provided with an overview of the induction process and probation period by their line manager or someone else in a suitable role and nine (9.8%) did not.

**4.30.** Our survey results show that when a new starter was attending the office, their line manager and/or buddy were working in the office at the same time in 55 out of 73 responses (75.3%).

**4.31.** We found examples of new starters having more than one line manager during their induction. While this cannot always be avoided, feedback indicated that those with more than one line manager felt less settled compared to their counterparts. Additionally, we noted cases where line managers were assigned to different offices than their new starters, this posed challenges in accessing support. However, the adoption of hybrid and remote working helped mitigate some of these challenges.

**4.32.** Line managers are often very busy and have competing demands, including the induction of new starters. Despite busy schedules, line managers prioritise supporting new starters through regular formal and informal check-ins. This support is complemented by buddies and colleagues in the Area.

### Buddies

**4.33.** The new starter induction checklist includes a manager action for identifying a buddy for the new starter prior to them joining Area. The person identified as a buddy should be of a similar grade and in the same team as the new starter. Within our survey data, 66 out of 92 new starters (71.7%) had a buddy identified for them and 26 (28.3%) did not.

**4.34.** While there is no national guidance on the expectations of the role of the buddy, it is commonly understood that the buddy serves as the 'first port of call'

after a new starter's line manager. Buddies are individuals available to offer advice, guidance, and assistance with queries. Although no formal training is provided for those in the buddy role, we found no evidence of training being sought or required.

**4.35.** Within our focus groups of new starters and buddies we found that buddies often took a role in providing new starters with additional support and training with the CPS systems, particularly CMS.

**4.36.** From our focus groups and surveys, we found that new starters valued the support from their colleagues, especially the assistance provided by their buddies. At a time when hybrid working is common and colleagues spend less time together in the office, having a designated buddy helped newcomers settle in and build working relationships. Knowing their assigned buddy allowed new starters to confidently seek guidance and support remotely via Teams.

**4.37.** Becoming a buddy is a voluntary role, although a line manager will often ask a team member to consider being a buddy as a development opportunity if they deem them suitable for the role. We noted that some individuals were selected as buddies for multiple occasions after demonstrating their success in the role.

**4.38.** Buddies that we spoke to in focus groups were content to invest additional time in supporting their colleagues, many having had their own positive experiences of the buddy system when they joined the CPS. However, the recurring nature of individuals serving as buddies poses a potential challenge. Certain team members may consistently shoulder this responsibility alongside demanding workloads, leading to increased pressure. And instances were observed where there was a lack of willing volunteers.

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### **Strength**

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The buddy system provides identified support to a new starter which has been found to be invaluable. Particularly when working using a hybrid model and face-to-face contact in the office is less frequent, the buddy system assists by identifying a person on the team the new starter is able to contact remotely.

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## **Induction unit at CPS West Midlands**

**4.39.** In April 2023 CPS West Midlands launched a dedicated induction unit. CPS West Midlands is a large Area and there is a high level of recruitment. In particular, CPS West Midlands were finding it difficult to recruit Senior Crown Prosecutors (SCPs) and would therefore plan to recruit additional Crown Prosecutors (CPs) with the view of developing them for promotion. CPs tend to be less experienced than SCPs and are less likely to have much, if any,

experience of practising criminal law. It was considered that recruiting in the quantities required would create an unmanageable pressure in individual units due to the additional resourcing and input required when inducting new starters. Therefore, a separate bespoke induction unit was created so all new prosecutors could initially be placed there.

**4.40.** The unit is managed by a Senior District Crown Prosecutor (SDCP) and three District Crown Prosecutors (DCP), one of whom had been within the magistrates' court unit, one within the Crown Court unit and one within the Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) unit. This provides a good breadth of experience within the management structure of the induction unit.

**4.41.** New starters are recruited in cohorts and will be on the same cohort as each other for the national Lawyer Induction Programme (LIP). When conducting focus groups with prosecutors in the induction unit, they said that they found the support provided by their cohort colleagues invaluable and found it beneficial that they were progressing together.

**4.42.** Individuals in the unit have tailored training plans and meet with their line manager regularly to discuss and update these. We found that most the new starters were aware of the plan for their learning and development over the coming weeks and could clearly map their progress and aims. This was not the case for some members of the unit due to an unexpected absence of their line manager, however this was acknowledged by Area and was in hand and being resolved.

**4.43.** It is envisaged that prosecutors in the induction unit will remain there for 6-12 months, therefore beyond the probationary period. There will be a 12-week transition plan where the new prosecutor will move from the induction unit to their identified casework unit. During this period, work is to be agreed between the line manager in the induction unit and the future line manager in the casework unit to build up the volume and variety of casework that the individual will be undertaking once they move to their casework unit.

**4.44.** At the time of our inspection, all new starters in the induction unit were within their first six months of joining the CPS and were still subject to probation. The transition plans had not commenced and as such, we were unable to assess how well the unit had prepared and equipped new prosecutors for their roles.

**4.45.** It is anticipated that the workload of the new prosecutors will increase substantially during the transition period and when they join their casework unit. We found in all Areas that we visited that new prosecutors found their caseload increased early in the induction process and particularly after



successful completion of the LIP. There is a risk that those in the induction unit will have been somewhat more shielded from the reality of working with substantial caseloads and this may require some adjustment from the new starter to ensure they are able to work effectively and efficiently. However, the tailored approach and significant management support within the unit should adequately prepare the new starters for this.

**4.46.** When joining the induction unit, a decision has not been made as to which unit the new prosecutor will eventually join apart from a limited number of new starters who were directly recruited to join the RASSO unit. Due to this, new starters are required to undertake the full LIP programme and shadow magistrates' courts to gain experience. For those who will be going into SCP roles and carrying out review work, this part of the induction may not be as beneficial as it will not be relevant to their eventual casework, and they may already have extensive experience of court advocacy. While the training for new prosecutors is tailored to an extent, the lack of confirmation of which casework unit the prosecutors will end up means that all elements of work are undertaken.

**4.47.** The approach of all new starters being allocated to the unit can have the consequence of new prosecutors spending time carrying out training and shadowing which will have little long-term benefit, and also can prevent those that are more experienced from assisting casework units at an earlier opportunity. If the CPS are considering this model for other Areas or a national approach this limitation of all new recruits, no matter their experience, being inducted through a comprehensive long-term programme may need to be reconsidered.

**4.48.** Another issue with this approach is the challenge in securing sufficient resources for new starters to attend court for shadowing. Limited opportunities for shadowing were reported, particularly for those allocated to specific courts due to resource constraints. For individuals bound for an advocacy role in the magistrates' court unit, early exposure to advocacy is crucial for their development. However, these opportunities may be hindered by others engaged in shadowing who may not require it to the same extent.

**4.49.** At the time of inspection, it was not possible to assess whether the introduction of the induction unit has reduced workload pressure for the casework units or whether the transition from the induction unit to the casework team will cause similar pressures as inducting a new starter. It is anticipated that the prosecutors leaving the induction unit will be well-equipped to commence their role in a casework unit and that this can be managed more effectively and efficiently than a new starter joining the unit on their first day.

**4.50.** We found that the early cohorts in the induction unit did not have buddies and were told there had been difficulties in recruiting buddies from the casework units, particularly as the new starters eventual destination was often unknown. There was an attempt for those nearing their transition period end to have buddies assigned, but recruiting buddies from the casework units was difficult. There is a significant amount of support from managers in the induction unit. New prosecutors receive support from more experienced colleagues when shadowing at court but as identified above, the shadowing opportunities can be hindered due to a lack of resource. As the unit has developed, we found evidence of older cohorts being buddies for newer cohorts. While there is a lot of support on the induction unit, there is likely to be an advantage in buddies being identified when a new prosecutor is transitioning from the induction unit to their casework unit.

**4.51.** The induction unit approach is innovative, providing new prosecutors with a supportive structure and the benefits of being part of a team all sharing similar experiences. The team acknowledge that there is a large investment in them from the CPS and are impressed by the training and support they have received.

**The induction unit approach is innovative, providing new prosecutors with a supportive structure and the benefits of being part of a team all sharing similar experiences.**

**4.52.** The structure of the unit and being separate from casework units appears to be a real advantage for a large CPS Area such as the West Midlands where recruitment numbers make this approach possible. Adequate numbers are required to use the cohort structure and developing new starters in this way lessens the burden on the casework units. We have not been able to establish whether the approach of the induction unit at CPS West Midlands is being trialled for national adoption or is unique to Area. However, it does not appear that smaller CPS Areas would be in a

position to form their own induction units when recruitment levels are lower because the cohort structure and support this provides would not be achievable.

## **5. Support to managers**

**5.1.** Many managers felt that they had enough information about the induction process of new lawyers to help them ensure new starters could access CPS systems and policies. There were practical arrangements in place to support them to induct new staff, such as the delivery of IT equipment along with standard checklists and processes. This was evidenced in the survey data and during our focus groups and interviews.

**5.2.** From our surveys, 38 out of 59 managers (64.4%) felt supported by senior management within Area during the induction process and 21 (35.6%) did not. 10 out of 59 (16.9%) felt supported by CPS Headquarters, 25 (42.4%) did not and 24 (40.7%) did not feel they required further support.

**5.3.** 39 out of 59 managers (66.1%) had not received any training in relation to managing new starters going through the induction process, 14 (23.7%) received some training before new starters joined and 6 (10.2%) received training after new starters had joined. In our focus groups, we heard that line managers feel they would benefit from training around the induction process. Managers newer to the role were seeking support and guidance from more experienced managers about process.

**We found that induction processes were not being consistently followed.**

**5.4.** We found that induction processes were not being consistently followed. Checklists were not consistently reviewed, training plans were not uniformly updated, and records of meetings with new starters were not consistently kept.

Training on the induction process is likely to be useful to ensure each induction is being carried out consistently across Areas. The current manager training programmes do not specifically cover induction, but we have been told that this is being developed so that new managers are taught the technical skills for inducting new staff. Given that we were assured that a change in training programme for managers will include much more focus on the skills needed to induct and support new recruits we have not made a specific recommendation at this time.

## **6. Assessment of legal induction**

## Line management oversight

### One-to-ones

- 6.1. It is expected that line managers hold regular one-to-ones with all team members, at least monthly.
- 6.2. From our survey results we found that 70 out of 92 (76.1%) new starters were having regular (at least monthly) informal meetings to check progress against the induction checklist. Regular meetings were not taking place in 22 out of 92 cases (23.9%)
- 6.3. However, within our survey responses and from our focus groups, we heard that managers were meeting with their new starters on a regular basis, although these may have been informal “check ins” and did not always address the induction checklist.
- 6.4. We were told in focus groups with new starters and line managers that even those one-to-ones which were largely informal were felt to be useful and productive in ensuring progress with objectives and to identify any additional support or training needs that may be required.
- 6.5. We found a mixed picture of whether there was a record made of one-to-one meetings. There was a large degree of inconsistency by managers. While it may not be essential to document every meeting, given the nature of support and discussions in the early days of a new starter's career, there is merit in noting key discussions. Without proper documentation and the ability to review progress and reflect on matters discussed, potential issues and concerns may not receive adequate attention. This becomes particularly crucial in the event of a change in line manager.

### Individual Quality Assessments (IQAs)

- 6.6. High standards of Casework Quality are essential to delivering justice. The Individual Quality Assessments (IQA) framework enables managers and prosecutors to work together to improve the quality of the service provided by the CPS.
- 6.7. For prosecutors engaged in an Advocacy role, managers are required to conduct a minimum of two IQAs per year. For prosecutors engaged in a non-Advocacy role, managers are required to conduct a minimum of one IQA per quarter. This requirement includes all new prosecutors who are still on probation.

**6.8.** The IQA App was launched in October 2022 and is the tool used to record IQAs. Details of the assessments are recorded in the app and available to managers and the prosecutor assessed.

**6.9.** Senior managers (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutors and Senior District Crown Prosecutors) are required to quality assure a sample of the IQAs undertaken in their Area. The required sample is 10% of all IQAs undertaken for each of the two categories (advocacy and non-advocacy) in any quarter.

**6.10.** We found that in one Area, IQAs were not being undertaken with new starters who were still on probation, with managers informing us that they did not think IQAs were required at this stage. This appears to be due to miscommunication. Instead, managers in the Area had developed a less formal assurance process to assess new starters work and to identify any requirements for development. It is positive that the Area were still undertaking assurance assessments but as the local approach is unnecessary and IQAs should be carried out in line with national expectations and requirements.

**6.11.** For those new starters who had been subject to an IQA, they reported that they found the process useful for their development and felt that the feedback provided in the assessments was detailed and fair.

**The feedback provided through IQAs is constructive and provides a detailed record of assurance.**

**6.12.** The use of IQAs provides a record of assurance that can be used to ensure the progress of a new starter and will assist to identify any areas that may be of concern or that require further learning and development. We found the IQA assessments that we viewed were detailed and identified both positives and

areas of improvement. The feedback provided through IQAs is constructive and provides a detailed record of assurance.

## **Probation**

**6.13.** New starters to the CPS who have not transferred from another Civil Service department are subject to a probation period of 6 months unless otherwise agreed. For many other Civil Service departments, including the Government Legal Department, the probation period is 10 months.

**6.14.** Probation can be extended for a period of no more than three months only in exceptional circumstances and following HR advice.

**6.15.** Probationary review meetings are to be held during the first week to set objectives, standards and expectations, and in the third and fifth months of employment to discuss performance.

**6.16.** Areas of performance, conduct or attendance which need improvement should be highlighted by line managers at the earliest opportunity. At this stage it should be considered whether further assistance and training is necessary or whether the new starters need to be formally informed of concerns and an improvement action plan agreed.

**6.17.** An Initial Probation Assessment Report should be completed by the end of the third month of employment and a Final Probation Assessment Report should be completed by the end of the fifth month.

**6.18.** Within the documents we requested from Areas, we found evidence of Initial Probation Assessment Reports and Final Probation Assessment Reports being completed. The reports were comprehensive and identified ongoing training needs that would need to be met beyond probation.

**6.19.** It is understood that a new starter successfully completing the probation period will still require further learning and development as they gain experience in their new role. The probation period is to assess that the new starter can achieve the required standard of performance, attendance and conduct and not that they are the “finished article”. Six months is deemed sufficient for a line manager to make the assessment as to whether the required standards can be met.

**6.20.** For new prosecutors at the CPS, the probationary period involves a substantial learning curve to fully prepare them for their role. This is especially challenging for those with limited or no experience in criminal law. In our focus groups and survey responses, managers expressed concerns that the six-month probationary period may be too short for a thorough assessment of performance and conduct.

**6.21.** Within our focus groups we found examples of new prosecutors completing minimal amounts of review work. In many cases the new prosecutors had passed their probationary period and been ‘signed off’. Given the minimal amount of review work completed, some individuals may not have had their experience in this aspect fully tested. It would have been beneficial for them to gain more exposure to review work during their probationary period for further experience.

**6.22.** Guidance states that the probationary period should only be extended in “exceptional circumstances”. Understandably, new starters wish to complete



their probation at the earliest opportunity and within focus groups we were told that if a prosecutors probation period was extended, they would feel concerned.

**6.23.** It is recognised that there are circumstances where new starters may face difficulties in demonstrating complete coverage of all required areas during their assessment and managers may find it difficult to fully assess individuals. This could be due to practical difficulties such as the LIP having been completed (this is not a necessary requirement for successful completion of probation but provides a good basis for assessment) or if there have not been suitable courts to cover or review work to complete. In these cases, a manager may have limited information in which to conduct a thorough assessment, potentially leading to the oversight of issues due to restricted opportunities in certain areas of work.

**6.24.** In such situations, extending the probation period may be appropriate to ensure comprehensive coverage of all required areas. This extension is not indicative of performance issues but rather addresses the challenge of assessing performance adequately. We heard in our focus groups with managers that if the probation period was to remain at six months, that an opportunity to extend probation without the current barriers would be useful.

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**Issue to address**

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The recording of one-to-ones and other meetings where performance, conduct and development of a new starter are discussed is inconsistent. A lack of appropriate recording could result in issues of performance, conduct and development not being addressed at the earliest opportunity. The CPS needs to ensure that appropriate records of such meetings are kept.

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## Exit Interviews

**6.25.** Exit interviews are useful tools to enable a department to understand why employees are choosing to leave and whether any themes can be identified that could lead to changes and higher retention of staff.

**6.26.** In 2022/23, 44 legal staff left the CPS with less than 12 months' service. 37 (84%) of these were permanent staff and seven (16%) were fixed term appointments. This accounts for 14.2% of legal staff that joined the CPS in this period (310 legal staff joined in 2022/23).

**6.27.** Eleven of the legal staff with less than 12 months' service (25%) completed an exit interview. Two of those that completed exit interviews indicated that the job "did not meet expectations of employment in the CPS", however one stated that they "would recommend employment with the CPS".

**6.28.** We were provided with no information relating to further comments provided by those completing the exit interviews and no themes or understanding as to why expectations were not met.

**6.29.** The process around exit interviews within the CPS is unclear. We found different approaches in all Areas that we visited and consistently found a lack of information and data being recorded, or a lack of knowledge as to whether such recording was taking place.

**6.30.** When an employee leaves the CPS, a questionnaire on the organisation's electronic HR system (Oracle) is available which captures basic details as to the reasons for leaving. They can also speak with a member of HR about their experience and give reasons for leaving the CPS. Both of these options are left to the person leaving.

**6.31.** The questionnaire is triggered by the line manager completing details on Oracle of the person leaving. If this is left until late, then there may be little time for the person leaving to complete.

**6.32.** From our discussions with CPS Headquarters, it is acknowledged that more could be done to understand as to why legal staff are leaving the CPS within their first twelve months of service and a lack of information does not enable any themes to be identified and improved. We were assured that work is being done and a team in the CPS People function are focusing on retention and particularly those leaving the service within 36 months.

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**Issue to address**

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The exit interview process is unclear and not utilised as well as it could be. This has resulted in a lack of understanding by the CPS as to the reason why prosecutors leave and fails to identify any themes that could be addressed to improve retention. The CPS needs to make sure the exit interview process is clear and applied consistently across Areas. The CPS should consider altering the exit interview process so that the responsibility for conducting an exit interview is proactively managed.

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# **Annex A**

## **Inspection framework**



## **CPS Induction Processes Inspection 2023 – Framework**

**How effective is the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) legal induction process in equipping new legal staff to successfully deliver the aims and objectives of the service?**

### **1. What is the national induction strategy, guidance, and what central support is provided to the Areas?**

1. How does the national induction strategy for lawyers ensure that the CPS has well trained prosecutors within a standard timeframe with a consistent and good level of knowledge?
2. Do new prosecutors feel that the national induction programme prepares them for their role in a reasonable timeframe?
3. Is the guidance available, accessible and comprehensive, and is feedback encouraged and actioned where appropriate?
4. Do managers and new starters find the guidance easily accessible and comprehensive?
5. What support is available from CPS HQ to assist Areas in inducting new legal staff?
6. Do Area managers feel that there is sufficient access to support from HQ in delivering induction?

### **2. What local training and initiatives are in place beyond the 12-week core induction programme to support legal induction**

1. Is the induction package customised to reflect the skills and knowledge of the individual?
2. Are training plans appropriately customised to the individual? Are they maintained and updated? Is there a record of discussions between new starters and managers around their training needs and to facilitate feedback?
3. Have Area introduced any local initiatives to support the core induction programme? How successful have they been?
4. Do new starters feel that the training provided after the core induction programme has been successful in equipping them to carry out their role? What parts of their training has been the most useful?
5. How could the experience have been improved?

### **3. What support was received by the legal managers responsible for inducting the new starters?**

1. Have managers been provided with training around the induction process?

2. Do legal managers have sufficient information to carry out the induction process?
3. How effective is local support within the CPS in assisting legal managers in delivering lawyer induction and having new starters up and running from the first day?
4. Does CPS HQ provide sufficient support for legal managers during the induction process?
5. Has the Area adopted a particular line management structure or division of responsibilities in relation to induction and how successful has this been in delivering induction effectively?
6. How do Areas oversee and monitor the success of the induction process?
7. Is the mentor/buddy system used and how effective is it?
8. What could be improved in terms of support provided to managers carrying out inductions?

**4. How was the legal induction assessed to ensure the new starters are successfully developing their casework understanding to fully deliver on their responsibilities?**

1. Are regular one-to-ones carried out effectively?
2. Are IQAs carried out effectively?
3. Have there been issues identified in the probationary period, and what action was taken if so?
4. What methods are used locally to assess that the induction process has been successful in equipping new prosecutors to carry out their role?
5. How is feedback delivered to new starters during the induction process?
6. How does the induction process identify development needs?
7. Does the Area encourage feedback from new starters and use it to improve the induction process?

# **Annex B**

## **Survey data**

**Responses to a HMCPST survey sent to all CPS Areas from prosecutors joining the CPS since April 2022**

Question	Response	Volume	Percentage
Were you provided with all required equipment, for example, your work laptop, ready for use on your first day?	Yes	85	92.4%
	No	7	7.6%
Were you provided with sufficient information to allow you set up and use your equipment?	Yes	85	92.4%
	No	7	7.6%
Did your line manager or another manager where appropriate welcome you on your first day?	Yes	88	95.7%
	No	4	4.3%
Where was your first day of work carried out, at the office or at home?	Office	83	90.2%
	Home	9	9.8%
Did you attend your local CPS office within your first week and be introduced to your colleagues?	Yes	69	75.0%
	No	14	15.2%
	NA: I am part of a remote team	6	6.5%
	NA: Covid restrictions were still in place	3	3.3%
Was a 'buddy'/mentor identified and were you introduced to them on your first day or at the earliest, suitable time thereafter?	Yes	66	71.7%
	No	26	28.3%
During your first week, did your manager or someone else in a suitable role provide you with an overview of the induction process and probation period?	Yes	83	90.2%
	No	9	9.8%
Were organisational IT policies explained to you?	Yes, within first week	63	68.5%
	Yes, within first month	24	26.1%
	No	5	5.4%
Were organisational health and safety policies explained to you?	Yes, within first week	56	60.9%
	Yes, within first month	29	31.5%
	No	7	7.6%
Were organisational HR policies explained to you?	Yes, within first week	55	59.8%
	Yes, within first month	25	27.2%
	No	12	13.0%
During your first week, were you provided with an overview of your Areas	Yes, within first week	55	59.8%
	Yes, within first month	22	23.9%
	No	15	16.3%

**CPS Induction Processes**

structure and organisational chart?			
Were you notified by the Central Legal Training Team (CLLT) of your CPS lawyer induction date?	Yes, within first week	60	65.2%
	Yes, within first month	31	33.7%
	No	1	1.1%
Did you find the CPS lawyer induction programme effective in preparing you for starting your career at the CPS?	Yes	73	79.3%
	No	19	20.7%
Did your line manager discuss and agree your objectives with you for the forthcoming year?	Yes, within first week	26	28.3%
	Yes, within first month	45	48.9%
	No	21	22.8%
Were you told how to create a Civil Service Learning account and an Oracle account?	Yes, within first week	73	79.3%
	Yes, within first month	14	15.2%
	No	5	5.4%
Were you advised on what mandatory e-learning courses needed to be completed?	Yes	89	96.7%
	No	3	3.3%
During your first four weeks, were you provided with adequate training and support on IT systems, for example CMS, required to carry out your role effectively?	Yes	65	70.7%
	No	27	29.3%
During your probation period, were there regular (at least once per month), informal meetings with your line manager to check progress against the induction check list?	Yes	70	76.1%
	No	22	23.9%
Were you provided with constructive feedback where applicable?	Yes	82	89.1%
	No	10	10.9%
During your first six months, on average how often were you attending the office per week?	Three to four times per week	10	10.9%
	One to two times per week	48	52.2%
	Never	16	17.4%
	NA: Remote working	14	15.2%
	Every day	4	4.3%
When you attended the office, was your line manager or buddy/mentor usually working in the office?	Yes, my line manager only	20	21.7%
	Yes, my buddy/mentor only	3	3.3%
	Yes, a mix of my line manager and buddy/mentor	32	34.8%



**CPS Induction Processes**

	No	18	19.6%
	NA: I was not attending the office	19	20.7%
During the induction, were you introduced to the Area's Learning and Development manager?	Yes	55	59.8%
	No	37	40.2%
Did you discuss and agree any development needs with your line manager?	Yes	65	70.7%
	No	18	19.6%
	NA	9	9.8%

**Responses to HMCPSI's survey from line managers responsible for the induction of new prosecutors**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
In the past 12-month period, how many inductions have you carried out? (please input a number)	0	1	1.7%
	1	17	28.8%
	2	11	18.6%
	3	14	23.7%
	4	8	13.6%
	5	1	1.7%
	8	1	1.7%
	12	1	1.7%
	10	2	3.4%
	20	1	1.7%
	22	1	1.7%
	Was an induction checklist provided to you or were you advised on how to access it prior to your new team member(s) starting?	Yes	54
No		5	8.5%
Was the induction checklist an effective guide in helping you induct and mentor a new starter(s)?	Yes	49	83.1%
	No	10	16.9%
Did you receive sufficient support when arranging equipment such as laptops and/or other devices for your new team member(s)?	Yes	38	64.4%
	No	2	3.4%
	NA: My Area business centre made these arrangements	19	32.2%
Was sufficient information provided to the new team member(s) to allow them to login to their CPS account and access relevant information on their first day?	Yes	52	88.1%
	No	7	11.9%
Were you able to identify a suitable 'buddy' within your team?	Yes	52	88.1%
	No	7	11.9%
Did you have enough information to explain the buddy system to your new starter(s)?	Yes	53	89.8%
	No	6	10.2%
Did you have enough information to advise your new starter(s) of the mandatory e-learning they needed to complete during their induction period?	Yes	54	91.5%
	No	5	8.5%
	Yes	43	72.9%

**CPS Induction Processes**

Did you have enough information to advise your new starter(s) of organisational IT policies?	No	5	8.5%
	NA: Someone else in the Area carried this out	11	18.6%
Did you have enough information to advise your new starter(s) of organisational health and safety policies?	Yes	43	72.9%
	No	7	11.9%
	NA: Someone else in the Area carried this out	9	15.3%
Did you have enough information to advise your new starter(s) of organisational HR policies?	Yes	44	74.6%
	No	4	6.8%
	NA: Someone else in the Area carried this out	11	18.6%
Were you contacted by the Central Legal Training Team (CLTT) and provided with dates for your new starter(s) lawyer induction date?	Yes	45	76.3%
	No	4	6.8%
	NA: the person was contacted directly by the CLTT	10	16.9%
Did you feel you were able to provide sufficient support to your new starter(s) in learning new systems, for example CMS to carry out their job effectively?	Yes, I was able to provide support myself	19	32.2%
	Yes, I was able to provide some support with others within the Area providing additional support	35	59.3%
	No, I required additional support myself	5	8.5%
Did you feel supported by senior leaders within the Area during the induction process?	Yes	38	64.4%
	No	21	35.6%
Did you feel supported by CPS Headquarters during the induction process?	Yes	10	16.9%
	No	25	42.4%
	NA: No further support was required	24	40.7%
Did you undergo any training in relation to managing new starters going through the induction process?	Yes, before new starter(s) joined	14	23.7%
	Yes, after new starter(s) joined	6	10.2%
	No	39	66.1%

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