

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL TRANSFORMING LIVES



APPLICANT PACK

Prison Officer - Operations

Thank you for your interest in the above role. Below, you will find the job description and person specification, outlining how the different criteria will be assessed throughout the recruitment process. You will also find information on the recruitment and selection process and key dates.

Job Description

Job Purpose	
<p>As an Operations Officer, you will be in an almost unique position of being able to make a real difference to the community that you live in and be at the very heart of delivering the SPS' vision of 'Helping to build a safer Scotland by Unlocking Potential and Transforming Lives'. Your role will be challenging and immensely rewarding with responsibility for maintaining custody and order whilst facilitating opportunities for those in our care. You will influence and encourage offenders to maintain contact with their families, access education and training and ultimately assist them on their journey to be contributory citizens within our communities.</p> <p>Contributing towards the prevention and management of challenging behaviour; you will provide safe and secure custodial services that empower offenders to take responsibility and transform their lives.</p> <p>In this role you will be responsible for the overall functioning and security of the establishment, working as part of a team and carrying out roles in Front of House, Visits, Electronic Control Room, Patrol and Prisoner Reception.</p>	
Key Responsibilities	
1	<p>You will be the first point of contact for meeting and greeting visitors to the establishment and will interact with people from a wide range of backgrounds, including offenders' family and friends, lawyers, solicitors, pastors, ministers and SPS staff. You will follow procedures and demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills; showing compassion, empathy, building rapport and offering advice where necessary. You will have responsibility for maintaining security, by screening, searching and facilitating entry and exit of individuals from the establishment. In doing so you will confidently and constructively challenge individuals appropriately when required.</p>

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2	Family contact is important for offenders to maintain relationships with their family and friends. The SPS encourages visits to maintain family contact and support the development of these important relationships. You will be responsible for observing and supervising visits as well as being a key point of contact for family support. You
	will be responsible for safety and security within the visit room and demonstrate effective problem solving skills when addressing emerging situations. In doing so you will demonstrate respect for individuals' needs and human rights.
3	The Electronic Control Room (ECR) manages the movement and security of staff and prisoners throughout the prison establishment. You will be responsible for monitoring security systems, including closed circuit television, alarm and communication systems to maintain the safety and security of everyone within the establishment; demonstrating strong team working and effective communication skills.
4	You will be responsible for ensuring the safety of staff, offenders and the public by checking physical barriers in and around the establishment. You will be required to apply your effective problem solving skills to identify and respond to any potential breaches of security and order. You will demonstrate good housekeeping and adhere to procedural requirements applying high ethical, moral and professional standards.
5	Within the Reception area you will be responsible for managing the entry and release of offenders from prison, assessing the needs of individual offenders and ensuring the correct procedures are followed. You will be faced with a diverse range of situations and you will be required to demonstrate care, compassion, dignity and respect in determining the most appropriate course of action.
6	You will be responsible for the safe and secure escorting of offenders throughout the establishment and externally as directed by management i.e. hospital, interprison transfer, court procedures as required. Managing the movement of offenders between residential accommodation and other areas of the establishment, such as education, health centre, visit room and offender work areas. You will also be responsible for escorting external contractors and visitors, ensuring the safety and security of individuals, buildings and equipment. You will remain vigilant and confidently deal with emerging issues, in line with SPS policies and procedures.

Person Specification & Assessment Information

Our selection approach is based upon the principle of merit which means that we will look to appointment the person who best meets the requirements of the role as outlined in the person specification. In determining the most meritorious candidate, applicants will be assessed against the published criteria during the selection process, as detailed below. The most meritorious candidate will be the one who best meets the essential criteria for the role. Performance against any published desirable criteria will only be considered where two or more candidates have performed equally against the essential criteria and there is a need to use the desirable criteria to identify the preferred candidate.

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Criteria	Essential/Desirable?	When assessed?
Qualifications		
Professional Development Commitment to undertake formal training and qualifications to support your learning and development.	Essential	Interview
Experience		
Working with others Work experience which demonstrates your ability to work effectively within teams, interact with people and build successful working relationships.	Essential	Interview
Influencing the behaviour of others Evidence of your ability to confidently and positively influence or challenge the behaviour of others.	Essential	Interview
Problem solving Experience of solving problems, demonstrating your ability to proactively identify the issue, explore options and take the necessary action to resolve the issue.	Essential	Interview
Knowledge & Skills		
Numeracy & literacy skills	Essential	Cognitive Ability Test

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Basic level of numeracy and literacy skills in order to comprehend and clearly articulate information.		
Following Processes & Procedures Evidence of an ability to follow processes, procedures and instructions to ensure accuracy and standards are met	Essential	Interview
Commitment to SPS Vision & Values Personal values which are aligned to and consistent with SPS values. Belief - believe that people can change Respect - have proper regard for individuals, their needs and human rights Integrity - apply high ethical, moral and professional standards Openness - work with others to achieve the best outcomes Courage - have the courage to care regardless of circumstances Humility - recognise that we can learn from others	Essential	Situational Judgement Test

Recruitment & Selection Process

Application Submission On submission of your application, we will review the content and ensure you meet the SPS minimum criteria.

Situational Judgement Test

If you meet the minimum eligibility criteria, you will be invited to undertake an online situational judgement test (SJT). This is designed to measure your values, behaviours and attributes against those identified as important within the role. There is no time limit within the test and it should take between 25-30 minutes to complete, however you should note that you will only have 5 days from the invite being sent to you to complete the assessment. Following completion we will review your results and confirm whether your application will be progressed to the next stage of the process.

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Cognitive Ability Test

If successful at sift you will then be invited to undertake an online cognitive ability test. The test, lasting 12 minutes in total, will assess your general cognitive ability across three areas: verbal, numerical, and logical reasoning designed to assess your ability to understand and comprehend written and numerical information as well as your ability to draw logical conclusions. This will help us to determine your ability to engage in the training and learning required as well as to perform successfully within the role.

As the cognitive ability test is completed in unsupervised conditions (i.e. in your own time), you should be aware that if invited to the final (interview) stage of the process, you may be invited to complete a second online assessment in under supervised conditions (i.e. onsite at SPS). This step is taken as a precaution to ensure that all candidates are evaluated fairly and equally on their actual capabilities and competencies.

Interview

If successful at the Cognitive Ability Test, you will be invited to attend the final stage of the selection process which consists of an interview. The interview will be competency based and there will be a panel of assessors present on the day. Further information about interviews, including useful tips, can be found in the “Guidance for Applicants” document.

Whilst preparing for your interview, you may wish to prepare some bullet points or prompts to support you during your interview. A few key words can be enough to help you remember what you want to cover. Using prompts should not negatively impact your engagement or communication style during the interview; the panel may intervene if your use of prompts begins to have a negative effect (e.g., if you are over-relying on notes and/or reading directly from notes).

As previously mentioned, it is at this stage that you may be invited to complete a further cognitive ability test to verify the results from your earlier test.

Pre-employment Checks

The final stage before appointment is the pre-employment checks. The checks consist of the following elements:

- [Fitness Test](#) – to assess level of fitness to operate safely and effectively in the role
- References – to check employment history (and character) over the preceding three years to ensure suitability for employment
- Disclosure Scotland - to ensure suitability for employment in accordance with SPS criminal convictions guidance
- Health Declaration & Medical Examination (you may also be subject to a substance misuse test) – to ensure mental and physical fitness to undertake the full requirements of the role

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If you have any queries regarding the vacancy or have a disability which you feel may affect your performance at any stage in the recruitment and selection process, please contact **the resourcing team** by email at: vacancies@prisons.gov.scot or by telephone on: **01324 710410** to allow reasonable adjustments to be made to assist you.

