



## Qualifying on the job with the Custodial Care NVQ

Pride, professionalism and a new sense of confidence to carry out the job - that's what the new nationally-accredited Custodial Care NVQ (CCNVQ) is aiming to bring to every prison officer entering the Service. The CCNVQ is the foundation of the Prison Service's new Professional Development Framework - a support structure for employees at all levels of the Service, from operational support grades to Governing Governor. The framework identifies opportunities for staff development both vertically and horizontally, allowing staff either to work towards promotion or to specialise.

Vicki Ellis, a newly recruited PO at HMP Manchester is two months into her probation period and her NVQ Level 3.

Her assessor, Steve, regularly visits her in the detox unit where she works and assesses her as she carries out various duties and gives her lots of pointers on how other less obvious tasks can also count towards the NVQ.

She says: "When I'll have done something quite well, and he's not been there to observe me, I will photocopy the evidence and ask my line manager Donna to sign it, and it will be taken into account, which is great because no experience is wasted."

"Donna's been a big help," continues Vicki. "She's always encouraging me and making sure I'm doing everything I need to be doing, so I don't feel I'm on my own."

"Because I have to be assessed on lots of things as part of the course, it's made me really keen to get stuck in and do certain tasks that I probably wouldn't have attempted so early on in my career. It's giving me a lot of confidence and the knowledge that it's down to me to make the most of the opportunities the Prison Service can offer."

SO Donna Towse is Vicki's line manager and is impressed by how fast she's learning the ropes.

"I do think the NVQ is helping her to develop much quicker. She's already doing things like 'moves' - which involves controlling exactly how many prisoners there are on a wing, where they are and what they're doing. It's a really important job and in the old days it would be down to a prison officer with years of experience.

## For more information

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call **0114 261 1499**

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"I think all SOs should welcome the NVQ. Your staff will develop much more quickly into rounded, experienced prison officers, and it's great for morale as it shows staff that the Prison Service cares about their professional development."

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