

Probation inspection domain two

Case assessment rules and guidance (CARaG)

HM Inspectorate of Probation, September 2021

Domain two standards, questions and prompts are supported by the domain two case assessment rules and guidance (CARaG). This is a comprehensive set of published rules and guidance to be followed by inspectors and local assessors in their assessment of cases. The CARaG promotes transparency and consistency in our inspection of cases. Inspection staff and local assessors should use the CARaG as a reference document when assessing a case.

Guidance is provided in the CARaG for all key questions and prompts within the standards framework, as well as for questions that we ask in order to gather additional data. The CARaG is updated regularly, to ensure that it remains consistent with any changes that we make at standard, question and prompt level and so that it remains linked to evidence.

Included in the cases we inspect are community sentences with a single requirement of unpaid work, and cases with an unpaid work requirement combined with non-rehabilitative requirements such as a curfew or exclusion. For simplicity, we refer to such cases as unpaid work only cases, as unpaid work is the only requirement delivered by the Probation Service. When inspecting post-release cases, we also inspect the pre-release work by the community offender manager, from the point they take formal responsibility for the case.

Not all questions apply to all cases, and this is explained throughout the CARaG.

Key:

Example	Question Format	Represents:
Does assessment identify offending-related factors?	Plain text	A question directly linked to a prompt in the inspection standards. The answers to these questions directly influence the summary judgement at key question level.
<i>Were domestic abuse checks undertaken?</i>	<i>Italics</i>	An information question, asked to provide additional background information about the case, or to gather evidence for inspection of domain one, but less strongly linked to summary judgement questions.
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	Bold text	A summary judgement question, answering a key question from the inspection standards.
Does planning sufficiently reflect offending-related factors and prioritise those which are most critical?*	*	Questions marked * do not apply in unpaid work only cases, or other cases with no rehabilitative requirements.

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I 1 Information about the person on probation

	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
I 1.02	<i>Is there evidence that the person on probation has been asked about their diversity characteristics at the start of the current period of supervision?</i>	We believe that it is important that each period of supervision starts with a discussion with the person on probation about their specific diversity characteristics. In that way, the probation practitioner will be able to develop an understanding of the lived experience of the individual, and the impact of diversity characteristics on their life. That provides a solid basis for establishing a positive working relationship for the period of supervision. While completion of a diversity monitoring form may be a part of that process, on its own it is not sufficient.

2.1 Court work

CW 1	Is the pre-sentence information and advice provided to court sufficiently analytical and personalised to the individual, supporting the court's decision-making?	
	We inspect court work where a pre-sentence report (PSR) (of any type) has been prepared within the previous 12 months, in the inspected probation delivery unit (PDU).	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
CW 1.02	<i>At the point the report was presented to court, were there any indicators that the person on probation might be a perpetrator or victim of domestic abuse?</i>	<p>We recognise the cross-government definition of domestic abuse as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of their gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse covers, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychological • physical • sexual • financial • emotional. <p>Inspectors look at evidence that would have been available to the report author. The index offence might constitute domestic abuse directly, due to the nature of the offence, such as an assault. Victim and witness statements and other prosecution documents may also indicate elements of domestic abuse in relation to other offences, such as theft and drugs offences.</p> <p>Lists of previous convictions do not indicate which individual offences constituted domestic abuse. We expect report authors to show an appropriate level of professional curiosity in the circumstances where previous convictions include offences such as assault, criminal damage, threatening behaviour, harassment or breach of restraining orders.</p> <p>Existing Probation Service records may indicate that the individual has been a perpetrator or victim of domestic abuse. Offender assessment system (OASys) assessments, nDelius case records and other available documents, including external reports, child protection conference notes and communication with other agencies, may provide useful sources of information.</p>

		<p>The individual might disclose in interview that they have been a perpetrator or victim of domestic abuse, or might disclose other information about their relationships which could indicate the potential for domestic abuse to be present. We expect report authors to use suitable professional curiosity to explore these issues.</p>
<i>CW 1.03</i>	<i>Is there evidence that enquiries were made to the police domestic abuse unit?</i>	<p>We expect the Probation Service to initiate domestic abuse checks with the police in all cases at the point a PSR is ordered by the court. Those checks, and responses from the police, should be recorded clearly on nDelius. The only situation where fresh checks are not required is where there is sufficient, up-to-date information available from other sources, such as records of a current case or Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) information.</p> <p>We expect the Probation Service to be working with police forces to facilitate a clear, detailed and speedy response to all enquiries. If not done at the point of the PSR, we still expect the Probation Service to make these checks once the case has been allocated, if they were not done at the court report stage, but this does not absolve the Probation Service of our requirement to initiate checks prior to sentence. We recognise that this differs from HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) guidance.</p>
<i>CW 1.05</i>	<i>At the point the report was presented to court, were there any indicators that there might be child protection or child safeguarding concerns in this case?</i>	<p>Inspectors look at the information that would have been available to the report author. The index offence might have had a child co-defendant, a child victim or child witnesses.</p> <p>For most offences, the list of previous convictions does not identify which individual offences indicated risks to, or concerns for, children. We expect report authors to show an appropriate level of professional curiosity to explore the ages of any co-defendants, and of victims of sexual or violent offences.</p> <p>Existing Probation Service records may reveal current or previous child safeguarding or child protection concerns. OASys assessments, nDelius case records and other available documents, including external reports, child protection conference notes and communication with other agencies, may provide useful sources of information.</p> <p>The individual might disclose issues in interview which indicate child protection or child safeguarding concerns. We expect report authors to use suitable professional curiosity to explore these issues.</p>

CW 1.06

Is there evidence that enquiries were made to children's services?

We expect to see clear evidence recorded to show whether the individual has been asked if they have children or are in contact with children (so we know if checks are required).

We expect the Probation Service to initiate child safeguarding checks with children's services in all cases where the individual:

- has children, or
- is in contact with children, or
- presents a potential risk of harm to children.

Checks should be made at the point a PSR is ordered by the court. Those checks, and responses from children's services, should be clearly recorded on nDelius.

The only situation where fresh checks are not required in these cases is where there is sufficient, up-to-date information available from other sources, such as records of a current case.

We expect the Probation Service to be working with local authorities to facilitate a clear, detailed and speedy response to all enquiries.

If not done at the point of the report, we still expect the Probation Service to make these checks once a case has been allocated, if they were not done at the court report stage, but this does not absolve the Probation Service of our requirement to initiate checks prior to allocation. We recognise that this differs from HMPPS guidance.

CW 1.08	Does the information and advice draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including child safeguarding and domestic abuse information?	<p>Inspectors need to consider what sources of information were available to the report writer at the time the report was written. Were there gaps? If so, were attempts made to find this information from other sources?</p> <p>As a minimum, documents from the CPS, including previous convictions and any information on OASys or nDelius about current or recent supervision, should form the basis for information given to the court. The victim impact statement, if there is one, should also be taken into account.</p> <p>In some circumstances, information from other agencies, such as substance misuse or mental health services, should be sought and utilised.</p> <p>Failure to obtain child safeguarding and/or domestic abuse information may result in a negative response to this question, if that information might have had a bearing on the assessment of risk in the information and advice provided to court.</p> <p>It is not always appropriate to share detailed information from children’s social care services or police domestic abuse units with the court, but the content of any report should refer to checks having been made, and should take any relevant information into account.</p>
CW 1.09	Is the individual involved meaningfully in the preparation of the report, and are their views considered?	<p>We do not want to see a ‘one size fits all’ report or proposal. Is reference made in the report, or any other documents, to the views and circumstances of the individual? Has a self-assessment questionnaire been completed, and/or is it clear that the report writer has explored the issues that the individual identifies for themselves? The report should include a sufficient description of the personal circumstances gathered through the interview with the person on probation to reflect their engagement. Where a report is prepared before a plea or finding of guilt, we expect to see a full explanation of that, and of any constraint that that places on the report preparation process.</p>

CW 1.10	Does the advice consider factors related to the likelihood of reoffending?	<p>Inspectors will be looking to see whether the written record of the report makes clear the main factors related to likelihood of reoffending. The report should be used to address someone's needs in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodation • education, training and employment (ETE) • relationships • lifestyle and associates • alcohol misuse • drug misuse • emotional management and wellbeing • attitudes, thinking and behaviour • finance, benefits and debt. <p>These are the needs that evidence shows either predict reoffending if they are not met, or, if they are addressed, will contribute to the stability that people need to be able to deal with other significant issues. In general, the more of these needs that the person has, the greater their likelihood of reoffending.</p>
CW 1.11	Does the advice consider factors related to risk of harm?	<p>Inspectors will be looking to see whether the written record of the report makes clear whether there were any factors related to risk of harm, not just risk of serious harm (RoSH), and if so, what they were. This includes factors related to the offence for which the individual is appearing in court, and other known factors about risk of harm presented by the individual, including any domestic abuse or child safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>There is no requirement for the report to state the level of assessed risk of harm, as in many cases the full assessment of risk of harm is not completed until after the case has been sentenced.</p>
CW 1.12	Does the advice consider the individual's motivation and readiness to change?	<p>This does not have to be an extensive analysis, but there needs to be some explanation of the motivation of the individual, and an assessment of their readiness to change or not. Inspectors will expect to find evidence that the individual has been informed about the proposal, and that their level of motivation and willingness to comply has been considered. Assessments for alcohol treatment, drug rehabilitation and mental health treatment requirements require the individual to consent to treatment.</p>

CW 1.13	Does the advice consider the individual's diversity and personal circumstances?	We expect to see evidence of discussion of diversity characteristics and other personal circumstances with the individual, which may be recorded on a diversity monitoring form. Where there are relevant factors, particularly where they might affect the ability of the person on probation to comply with any sentence imposed, we would expect these to be drawn to the attention of the court.
CW 1.14	Does the advice consider the impact of the offence on known or identifiable victims?	We expect the report to comment on the impact of the offences on any identifiable victims, and the attitude of the individual to that. This should be more than a duplicate of the victim impact statement or information in the CPS documents. The report should summarise the impact appropriately and analyse any victim empathy or remorse, if shown.

CW 1.15

Is an appropriate proposal made to court?

We expect the proposal to allow for assistance to be given with any factors related to offending and for management of any identified risk of harm.

Where a rehabilitation activity requirement (RAR) is proposed, we expect to see an explanation of the factors that might be covered by any such requirement, to assist sentencers. Court officers should specify the rehabilitative needs to be addressed and the number of days needed to do so. There is no maximum number of RAR days but the 'offender group reconviction scale' (OGRS) score, based on age, gender and criminal history, should be the main guide to the number of days proposed. This is because there is a clear link between the OGRS score and the number of rehabilitative needs.

OGRS	Guideline RAR days
0–24%	Not recommended
25–49%	1–15 days
50–74%	15–25 days
75–100%	25–60 days

Where the individual likely to be eligible and suitable for any accredited programmes, an accredited programme should normally be proposed to court. If a programme is not proposed or it is unclear if suitability was assessed, inspectors will assess the suitability of the proposed requirements/sentence to address the offending related factors.

Where the proposal has been for a requirement or set of requirements without any rehabilitative content (any combination of unpaid work, curfew, prohibition), that should meet the needs of the case.

Even where the court has asked for a specific assessment, such as for unpaid work, the Probation Service should check out and inform the court about whether that is likely to be an effective sentence.

Where there are factors related to harm, for example domestic abuse, we expect the proposal to allow for these issues to be addressed and safely managed, even where the index offence is not related to these issues.

We expect the proposed sentence to be achievable by the individual, considering their personal circumstances and diversity factors.

Where custody (immediate or suspended) has been proposed, we expect to see an explanation about why no other sentence is appropriate.

Drug rehabilitation requirements (DRRs) can be given when the court is satisfied that the person on probation is dependent on or misuses drugs, and that treatment is likely to help and is available. Alcohol treatment requirements (ATRs) can be given when the court is satisfied that a person on probation is dependent on alcohol and that treatment is likely to help and is available. The assessment of suitability of treatment should be completed by the local substance misuse provider and this should be made available at the time of sentencing. The person on probation's dependency on alcohol does not have to have caused or contributed to the offence for which they have been convicted. Where the consent of the person on probation is required (e.g. ATR and DRR), it should be clearly recorded.

Mental health treatment requirements (MHTRs) can be given where the court is satisfied that an offender has a mental health condition that is treatable either in a community setting or as an outpatient in a non-secure setting. The court must be satisfied that on the evidence of a registered medical practitioner the mental health condition of the individual is such as requires, and may be susceptible to, treatment but does not warrant making a hospital order. Arrangements should have been made for the treatment intended. MHTRs can be used for any mental health issue, including personality disorders, and the treatment offered can cover a wide range of interventions, from therapy for depression and anxiety through to secondary and psychiatric care.

Where other measures, such as a curfew or prohibition, are proposed, relevant checks should be carried out, including checks of child safeguarding and/or domestic abuse information where necessary, to ensure that proposals are safe and appropriate.

Inspectors will answer this question negatively where the proposal is not clearly stated, where there is insufficient information to explain the proposal or where the proposal does not allow for key offending or risk of harm factors to be addressed, based on information that was or should have been available to the person preparing the report.

CW 1.16	Is there a sufficient record of the advice given, and the reasons for it?	<p>The main source of evidence about the record of advice given to court, and the reasons for it, will be the written report. For standard delivery and short-format written reports, this will be the typed report itself. For oral reports, it will be the uploaded copy of the report. The written record of oral reports may be brief or even non-existent, but our judgement is still based on the available record.</p> <p>Under the current working arrangements with HM Courts & Tribunals Service, we cannot expect reports to be long documents in all circumstances. We do, however, expect them to make an appropriate proposal, based on sufficient information. We also expect them to be sufficiently personalised.</p> <p>The reason for this is that a probation practitioner will base their supervision on the written record of the report. The practitioner needs to understand what was proposed to the court and why, and the content of the report may form part of a breach case in the future.</p>
CW 1 S	Is the pre-sentence information and advice provided to court sufficiently analytical and personalised to the individual, supporting the court's decision-making?	<p>To make a judgement, inspectors take into account the answers to all the questions in this section. We consider whether the report preparation process obtained, and used properly, all the relevant information that was, or could reasonably have been expected to be, available. We expect the report preparation process to be sufficiently personalised, depending on the needs and circumstances of the individual. We expect to see an appropriate proposal put to the court, allowing relevant factors related to reoffending and risk of harm to be addressed. We focus on the proposal made, not the sentence actually imposed. We expect sufficient evidence to be entered on nDelius, so that any subsequent probation practitioner can understand the nature, content and purpose of advice provided to court. The absence of written evidence of court work is likely to lead to a negative judgement.</p>

2.2 Assessment

A 1	Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	
	<p>'Assessment' includes all assessment activity, not just the preparation of a written assessment. We expect to see assessment that is proportionate to the nature of the individual's offending, circumstances and the type of sentence. We look for evidence from a range of sources, including case records and the interview with the probation practitioner. We judge the quality of the assessment process in its entirety.</p> <p>In post-release cases, we expect the community offender manager to assess the case at the point they take responsibility for the case while the individual is still in custody. We expect that initial assessment to be reviewed at the point of release.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, or other cases with no rehabilitative requirements, we expect assessment to be proportionate to the nature of the sentence.</p> <p>While OASys is the main assessment format used in the Probation Service, we do not require the use of any specific assessment tool, and recognise that assessment in unpaid work only cases may be completed in a different format.</p>	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
A 1.01	Does assessment analyse the motivation and readiness of the person on probation to engage and comply with the sentence?	Inspectors are looking for more than a simple statement about the individual's motivation and readiness to engage and comply with the sentence. We expect to find a clear statement about their readiness to engage, noting their own view of their motivation to comply, and any supporting or contradictory factors. We look for evidence in formal assessment documents, the case record and the interview with the practitioner. This question only refers to motivation and readiness to engage and comply with the sentence. Motivation to change is recorded in a later question. If a written self-assessment has been completed (such as the OASys self-assessment questionnaire), this may contain useful information. We expect the practitioner to consider information from previous periods of probation supervision and to identify any potential barriers to engagement, which may be indicated by information from previous breaches or non-compliance.
A 1.02	Does assessment analyse the protected characteristics of the	Inspectors expect to see a meaningful exploration of any diversity factors relevant to the individual. We recognise the nine protected characteristics (gender, age, race, religion and

	<p>individual and consider the impact of these on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery?</p>	<p>belief, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sexual identity, gender reassignment, and marriage or civil partnership). As a starting point, inspectors expect to see a fully completed and up-to-date diversity monitoring form. We also expect to see evidence that this has been discussed with the individual, to gain a clear understanding of the impact of each factor on their life and on their ability to engage with the sentence.</p> <p>The potential impact of any factor and the degree to which it needs to be taken into account will vary according to the individual case. A number of factors can have an impact on the extent to which individuals are able to engage with services; experience of discrimination can contribute to this. Many users of adult probation services have had these experiences. We recognise that many individuals have multiple relevant protected characteristics, and inspectors will consider issues of intersectionality.</p> <p>Having analysed the diversity factors, we expect to see an account of the impact these have specifically on the ability of the individual to engage and comply with the sentence.</p>
<p>A 1.03</p>	<p>Does assessment analyse the personal circumstances of the individual and consider the impact of these on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery?</p>	<p>Inspectors expect to see a clear analysis of any relevant personal circumstances; for example, living in a rural area, employment patterns, issues around immigration status or understanding of English, caring responsibilities, educational difficulties, having grown up in local authority care, past trauma (for example, linked to refugee status or childhood abuse) or level of maturity. Any of these factors can make it difficult for individuals to access services and interventions or may mean that 'one size fits all' services are not appropriate.</p> <p>Analysis should include a description of any circumstances that are relevant to the life of the individual, and of how these affect or have affected their life. The potential impact of any factor and the degree to which it needs to be taken into account will vary according to the individual case. A number of factors can affect how individuals are able to engage with services; for example, experience of having been in care, mental health problems and substance misuse can all contribute to this. Many users of adult probation services have had these experiences, which can affect their ability to develop appropriate supportive networks and form trusting relationships with professionals, and their self-perception. People with recent care experience may not have access to a range of support networks, which are important for desistance.</p>

		Having analysed relevant personal circumstances, we expect to see an account of the impact these have specifically on the ability of the individual to engage and comply with the sentence.
A 1.04	Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in their assessment and are their views taken into account?	<p>Inspectors will look for evidence that the individual has been interviewed as part of the assessment process, and that the interview has taken their needs into account. There should be evidence in the assessment of the individual's perspective on their behaviour. We expect to see use of an interpreter where the individual does not speak English as a first language. Sources of evidence include any written self-assessment, or sections of assessment tools, recording the attitudes of the individual. A detailed note on the case record of an interview where these issues have been discussed and recorded could be sufficient.</p> <p>If the views of the person on probation are not recorded, we cannot judge if those views have been taken into account. Where the views of the individual have been recorded, we look for evidence about how those views have been taken into account in the assessment process. Practitioners should balance the views of the person on probation with the overall management of the case.</p>
A 1 S	Summary judgement: Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of assessment of engagement meets the needs of the case and the nature of the sentence. Sufficient assessment for an individual with a limited offending history may be less detailed than assessment for someone with more convictions. Assessment for an unpaid work only case may be less detailed than for a case with multiple requirements. Assessment in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case. Assessment should be sufficiently personalised, both engaging the individual in the assessment process and assessing the factors that are likely to have an impact on their willingness and ability to comply with supervision.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but for a sufficient assessment of the most important factors related to engagement. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances a particular omission may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient. For</p>

example, assessment that failed to take into account an individual's ethnicity may be judged insufficient, even if it covered all other factors relevant to engagement.

A 2 Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
A 2.01	Does assessment identify and analyse offending-related factors?	<p>Inspectors are looking for an analysis of the offending behaviour, that explained why the individual committed the offence, not just how. Where there has been previous offending, we expect assessment to identify and incorporate information relevant to the current offence as well as any previous offending history. Information from prosecution documents should be used, and any discrepancies between the prosecution account and that given by the individual should be explained.</p> <p>We expect analysis to explore what happened and what the individual thought about it, at the time and afterwards. It should also include an assessment of the individual's acceptance of responsibility, and their attitude to, or motivation for, the offence.</p> <p>Assessment should identify and analyse the specific factors that contributed to the index offence and other offending. Ideally, the evidence for this will be within a single assessment document, but inspectors will also look at self-assessments, notes of interviews, and other available documents. For more complex cases, additional specialist assessments may be needed.</p> <p>In post-release cases, we expect practitioners to identify factors that are relevant during the custodial and community phases of the sentence.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, assessment does not need to be detailed, but should identify the main factors in the case, to allow appropriate placement and management. Particular attention should be paid to ETE needs, as unpaid work has the potential to address these directly.</p>

A 2.02	<i>In the opinion of the inspector, which factors are most important linked to offending?</i>	<p>Using all the evidence available in the case, not just any written assessment, inspectors identify which factors are most strongly linked to offending. These factors are later followed up, to see whether sufficient services have been delivered to address them, and whether any outcomes have been achieved.</p> <p>In post-release cases, inspectors identify any pre-release resettlement factors as well as factors relevant to the post-release period.</p>
A 2.03	Does assessment identify strengths and protective factors of the person on probation?	<p>We expect assessment to identify the strengths of the individual under supervision, and also any protective factors. Strength are those factors that support sustained desistance. They include external and social aspects of the person’s life, as well as internal and psychological factors. All strengths support desistance.</p> <p>Protective factors are those strengths that mitigate against criminogenic factors, so not all strengths are protective factors. Examples of protective factors include stable accommodation, secure employment, engagement with substance misuse treatment, pro-social activities and pastimes, and stable supportive relationships.</p> <p>We expect to see some analysis of the nature and relevance of identified protective factors to the individual. In some cases, inspectors might find that there are no strengths or protective factors.</p>
A 2.04	<i>In the opinion of the inspector, what are the most important strengths and protective factors in this case?</i>	<p>Using all the evidence available in the case, not just any written assessment, inspectors identify which are the most important strengths and protective factors. These factors are later followed up to see whether sufficient services have been delivered to support them, and whether any outcomes have been achieved.</p>
A 2.07	Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information?	<p>We expect assessment to be based on all available sources of information. This could include current and previous records of supervision, assessments by other agencies (including youth offending services and healthcare providers), specialist assessments and information about the custodial part of sentences. We expect that as much relevant information as possible is sought by the probation practitioner to inform assessment. We expect the probation practitioner to incorporate and analyse evidence from multiple sources in their assessment. The level of information available will vary, depending on the nature of the case. Inspectors will base their judgements on the sources of information that the probation practitioner would</p>

		reasonably have been able to access at the time of the assessment. Probation practitioners should actively seek all relevant information; if needed, escalation processes should be used to obtain key sources of information that are held by other agencies.
A 2 S	Summary judgement: Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of assessment of desistance meets the needs of the case and the nature of the sentence. Sufficient assessment for an individual with a limited offending history may be less detailed than assessment for someone with more convictions. Assessment for an unpaid work only case may be less detailed than for a case with multiple requirements. Assessment in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case.</p> <p>Assessment should be sufficiently personalised, identifying the most important factors related to offending and desistance for the person on probation.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but for a sufficient assessment of the most important factors related to engagement. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances omission of a single critical factor, such as substance misuse, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p>

A 3	Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
	HM Inspectorate of Probation expects all factors relevant to risk of harm to be identified and analysed (not just factors related to risk of serious harm).	

A 3.01	<i>Were domestic abuse checks undertaken?</i>	<p>We expect the Probation Service to initiate domestic abuse checks with the police in all cases at the point a PSR is ordered by the court. If checks had not been done at the court stage, we expect the Probation Service to make these checks once the case has been allocated (or transferred to the community offender manager, in custodial cases). The only situation where fresh checks are not required is where there is sufficient, up-to-date information about known domestic abuse concerns, available from other sources, such as records of a currently supervised case or CPS information. We recognise that this differs from HMPPS guidance. We expect the Probation Service to be working with police forces to facilitate a clear, detailed and speedy response to all enquiries.</p>
A 3.02	<i>Did child safeguarding information sharing take place?</i>	<p>We expect to see clear evidence recorded to show whether the individual has been asked if they have children or are in contact with children (so that we know if checks are required). We expect the Probation Service to initiate child safeguarding checks with children's services at the point a PSR is ordered by the court, in all cases where the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has children, or • is in contact with children, or • presents a potential risk of harm to children. <p>If checks have not been done at the court stage, we expect the Probation Service to make these checks once the case has been allocated (or transferred to the community offender manager, in custodial cases). The only situation where fresh checks are not required is where there is sufficient, up-to-date information about child safeguarding concerns available from other sources, such as records of a currently supervised case or CPS information. We expect the Probation Service to be working with local authorities to facilitate a clear, detailed and speedy response to all enquiries. We recognise that this differs from HMPPS guidance.</p>
A 3.03	Does assessment identify and analyse clearly any risk of harm to others?	<p>Principles for inspection</p> <p>Our key principle is that we inspect the quality of assessment overall rather than the use of any specific document, tool or process. We do not require the use of any specific assessment tool, but instead judge the quality of assessment in the round. Our judgements are based on the overall assessment process, including evidence from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OASys (RoSH screening, full analysis, and other sections) • any other specific assessments completed • ongoing case records

- any interview with the responsible officer.
- information from external sources, including YOT records, where relevant.

We inspect against our published standards, not against the adherence of the probation service to any specific policy regarding assessment.

In any assessment of risk of harm towards others, we expect **any and all** factors related to the risk of harm (not just factors related to risk of serious harm), to be described and analysed. Harm includes physical harm, sexual harm and psychological harm. We expect responsible officers to identify the potential for long-term psychological harm arising from non-violent offences, such as child neglect or domestic abuse.

A risk of harm assessment should consider:

- **actuarial risk assessments** (including RSR and OVP)
- **static risk factors**, including age, gender and nature, number and circumstances of previous convictions
- **dynamic risk factors** (which may be acute or stable)
 - acute dynamic risk factors are those which have the potential to change quickly, such as substance misuse
 - stable dynamic risk factors are those which may change over a longer period, such as problem-solving capability or response to trauma
- **strengths** of the service user, including internal protective factors (such as feeling part of the community or being hopeful about the future)
- **resources** available to the service user, or external protective factors (including positive personal relationships and access to rehabilitative interventions)
- **capacity and motivation to change** (including the extent to which the service user is able and willing to engage with risk management)

We expect to see information verified where possible, and the credibility and relevance of information considered. We also consider the content of any specialist assessments completed in the case.

In stand-alone unpaid work cases, or other cases with no rehabilitative requirements, we still expect to see sufficient assessment of any risk of harm in the case.

A 3.04	<i>In the opinion of the inspector, which factors are most important linked to risk of harm?</i>	Using all the evidence available in the case, not just any written assessment, inspectors identify which factors are most strongly linked to risk of harm. These factors are later followed up to see whether sufficient services have been delivered to address them, and whether any outcomes have been achieved.
A 3.05	Does assessment of risk of harm draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	<p>We expect assessment to be based on all available sources of information. This could include current and previous records of supervision; assessments by other agencies (including youth offending services, healthcare providers, adult social care services), specialist assessments and information about the custodial part of sentences. Information from the person on probation (and their family members if available) should also be taken into account. We expect that as much relevant information as possible has been sought, to inform assessment. However, assessment should not be delayed unnecessarily if some information is not available. The level of information available will vary, depending on the nature of the case. Our judgements are based on the sources of information that the probation practitioner would reasonably have been able to access at the time of the assessment. Probation practitioners should actively seek all relevant information; if needed, escalation processes should be used to obtain key sources of information that are held by other agencies.</p> <p>Information about current and previous convictions will come from prosecution documents, probation records and the person on probation. In some cases, there will be additional information from external sources such as the youth offending team or prison records, the police, the Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). Information about past (unconvicted) behaviour could come from a range of sources, including the person on probation, their family members and other professionals working with them. This may include responses to previous orders, juvenile behaviour and views of previous practitioners. We expect practitioners to consider the impact of any trauma experienced by the individual on the risk to others. In some cases, there will be no previous convictions or information about past behaviour. Probation practitioners should be persistent in trying to obtain information from other organisations. They should analyse whether past behaviours remain relevant, and the circumstances in which the behaviour may manifest. An example would be a return to drinking following a period of abstinence.</p>

A 3.06	Does assessment analyse any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	<p>Assessment should identify, where possible, any and all actual or potential victims, using the following categories: general public, known adults, children, staff and prisoners. Within these broad headings, assessment should clearly identify any sub-groups that are more likely to be at risk, such as 'general public – peers in pubs/clubs', 'known adults – grandparents', 'children – within family and friendship circles' or 'staff – police and security guards'. When assessing who might be potential future victims, we expect probation practitioners to look for patterns of behaviour that are repeated and therefore likely to reoccur.</p> <p>We expect assessment to be clear about whether or not there is ongoing risk to any victims of current or previous offences. Assessment should specify the nature and level of any ongoing risks to current or previous victims, and to any identifiable potential victims.</p>
A 3.07	<p><i>What is the risk of serious harm classification of the person on probation (at the start of the order or the point of transfer to the community offender manager) according to the probation practitioner?</i></p>	<p>We recognise the OASys definitions of the levels of serious harm. "Serious harm is defined as an event which is life-threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible." While we do expect all factors relevant to risk of harm to be identified and analysed, when assessing the level of risk of harm, we are looking at the level of risk of serious harm.</p> <p>Assessment should be specific about exactly what harm might be caused and the circumstances in which future harm is most likely to occur. The best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. The level of serious harm is defined in terms of the likelihood of serious harmful behaviour happening.</p> <p>Definitions of levels of RoSH are:</p> <p>Very high: There is an imminent RoSH. The potential event is more likely than not to happen imminently, and the impact would be serious.</p> <p>High: There are identifiable indicators of RoSH. The potential event could happen at any time and the impact would be serious.</p> <p>Medium: There are identifiable indicators of RoSH. The offender has the potential to cause serious harm but is unlikely to do so unless there is a change in the circumstances</p> <p>Low: Current evidence does not indicate the likelihood of causing serious harm.</p>

Assessment should be clear about the level and nature of the risk presented to any/all categories of actual or potential victim.

In assessing the likelihood of seriously harmful behaviour, we expect probation practitioners to consider the following:

If there are **no** factors at all which indicate the potential for seriously harmful behaviour, or where there **are** factors indicating the potential for seriously harmful behaviour, and there is good evidence that those factors are mitigated by a combination of internal and external factors, and the circumstances of the person on probation are stable and likely to remain so, an assessment of low RoSH may be appropriate. If there are factors which indicate the potential for serious harm to be caused but this is unlikely to happen unless circumstances change, this should be assessed as medium risk of harm.

Where there are current factors indicating the potential for seriously harmful behaviour, we expect probation practitioners to consider the following, when judging the level of RoSH:

- What do the static factors in the case and statistical predictors indicate? Older people are less likely to reoffend. Higher scores on the Risk of Serious Recidivism tool and OASys Violence Predictor may indicate a higher likelihood of future seriously harmful behaviour.
- What is known about the stable dynamic risk factors? This may include issues such as problem-solving ability or emotional regulation. The presence of a range of stable, or improving, dynamic risk factors may reduce the assessed level of RoSH.
- What is known about the acute dynamic risk factors? This may include issues such as substance misuse or likely response to stressors. The presence of a number of acute dynamic risk factors may increase the assessed level of RoSH.
- What is known about the strengths of the person on probation, including internal protective factors (such as feeling part of the community or being hopeful about the future). The presence of known strengths may reduce the assessed level of RoSH.
- What resources or services are available to the person on probation, including supportive family relationships or access to rehabilitative services?
- What is known about the person on probation's capacity and motivation to change. To what extent has the person on probation demonstrated that they are able and willing to engage with risk management? Evidence of commitment to change and

		<p>cooperation with risk management arrangements may reduce the assessed level of RoSH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the circumstances in which seriously harmful behaviour might arise, and how similar are the current circumstances? • Is there evidence that the person on probation is actively seeking opportunities to offend? • Is there evidence that the person on probation is engaging in other behaviour that directly or indirectly increases the likelihood of serious harm? <p>Absence of immediate access to victims, whether by imprisonment, child protection arrangements or the ending of a relationship, or other external constraints, is not in itself a reason to lower the assessed level of RoSH.</p> <p>Evidence that the person on probation is genuinely complying with arrangements to protect victims or reduce access to victims may contribute towards lowering the assessed level of RoSH.</p>
<i>A 3.09</i>	<i>Is the probation practitioner's classification of risk of serious harm reasonable?</i>	In cases close to a boundary between classification levels, inspectors will consider whether the probation practitioner's classification was reasonable in the context of all the information available to them at the time. We recognise that the precise level of RoSH is a point on a continuum, and that for cases close to the boundary between two levels, it is a fine judgement about the actual level to be assigned. We expect to see a clear explanation of the reasons that the particular level of RoSH has been set, based on OASys definitions.
A 3 S	Summary judgement: Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of assessment of risk of harm meets the needs of the case, taking into account the nature and level of risk of harm in the case, and will look for a proportionate approach to assessment. Assessment in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case. Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but for a sufficient assessment of the most important factors related to risk of harm. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances omission of a single critical factor, such as domestic abuse, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.

Where there were no factors related to risk of harm, inspectors answer 'yes'.

2.3 Planning

P 1	Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	
	<p>'Planning' includes all planning activity, not just the preparation of a written plan. We expect to see planning that is proportionate to the nature of the offending, the circumstances of the individual and the type of sentence. We look for evidence from a range of sources, including case records and the interview with the probation practitioner. We judge the quality of the planning process in its entirety.</p> <p>In post-release cases, we expect the community offender manager to plan how to address the needs in the case at the point they take responsibility for it (while the individual is still in custody). Planning should address immediate needs to be met before release, and longer-term needs that may not be addressed until after release. We expect initial planning to be reviewed at the point of release.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, we expect planning to reflect what can be reasonably delivered within the constraints of the sentence.</p>	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
P 1.01	Is the person on probation meaningfully involved in planning and are their views taken into account?	<p>Inspectors will look for evidence that the individual has been able to contribute to, and participate in, the planning. 'Involvement' should be more than simply completing a self-assessment tool or signing a sentence planning document. We expect evidence of specific discussion with the individual about the plan for their sentence, and we expect completed planning documents to be shared with them.</p> <p>Planning should identify set goals relevant to both the person on probation and the purpose of the sentence. Any enabling factors should be identified and built into the sentence plan. Where possible, there should be evidence that the probation practitioner sought to identify and address any potential barriers to achieving the planned outcomes. Inspectors need to be satisfied that engagement with the person on probation was appropriate to the individual, relevant and responsive to the needs of the case.</p>

P 1.02	Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity factors of the individual which may affect engagement and compliance?	Inspectors will look for planning that takes sufficient account of the individual's diversity needs. Planning should set out how these needs can be accommodated. Where there are protected characteristics or other relevant factors, inspectors expect the practitioner to have considered the impact of these on the individual's ability to engage and comply with the sentence. Where assessment has not identified all relevant factors, we still expect planning to be based on all relevant factors, not just those that have been identified.
P 1.03	Does planning take sufficient account of the personal circumstances of the individual which may affect engagement and compliance?	We expect probation practitioners to consider the social context and lived experience of the individual, as well as specific personal circumstances; all such factors should be planned for. This might include planning to overcome transport difficulties, caring responsibilities, or to accommodate the needs of people who have care experience or who pose a risk of self-harm or suicide. Where assessment has not identified all relevant factors, we still expect planning to be based on all relevant factors, not just those that have been identified. Where the person on probation has specific learning or neurodiversity needs or a personality disorder, bespoke approaches may be required. Where there is joint working with other agencies, such as the police in cases convicted of sexual offences, an appropriate approach to planning should be agreed with other staff involved.
P 1.04	Does planning take sufficient account of the readiness and motivation of the person on probation to change which may affect engagement and compliance?	Planning should follow on from the assessment of readiness and motivation to change and should be clear about how any identified barriers to engagement and compliance will be addressed. Planning should address how the probation practitioner will work with the person on probation to increase their motivation to take active responsibility for their offending and for changing future behaviour.
P 1.05	Does planning set out how all the requirements of the sentence or licence/post-sentence supervision will be delivered within the available timescales?	Planning should take account of all requirements of the sentence or licence. For post-release cases, we expect planning to cover work delivered before and after release from custody. We expect a record of discussion of all legal requirements, to ensure that the person on probation understands what is expected of them. Planning should also be commensurate with the nature of the order/licence. So, for example, we would expect to see much less planning in an unpaid work only case or a community order with a single requirement of 10 RAR days, than a licence in the case of a person who has committed sexual offences. For cases with RAR requirements, we expect planning to specify exactly what is required and how the RAR days

		will be delivered. We expect planning to be sufficient to ensure that all requirements of the order/licence can be delivered before the expected termination date.
P 1.06	Does planning set a level, pattern and type of contact sufficient to engage the individual and to support the effectiveness of specific interventions?	<p>The level, pattern and type of contact planned should be appropriate within the requirements of the sentence, proportionate to the case, and set at a level that meets the needs of the individual. There should be an explicit record of what/when/where contact will take place. In post-release cases, this question only refers to the post-release phases of the sentence. Contact should occur in a suitable and safe place that allows for privacy and effective case management. We recognise that the Probation Service sets minimum standards for the frequency of contact; inspectors are aware of these but will still make judgements based on whether or not the set level of contact meets the needs of the case, rather than whether it meets national standards. Where there are arrangements for flexible types of contact, inspectors will use their judgement about the appropriateness of such arrangements.</p> <p>We recognise that a RAR 'day' does not mean continuous activity throughout a whole day, but all activities delivered under RAR requirements need to be enforceable. The activities that count as one 'day' could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual face-to-face planned and structured sessions designed to address identified need • a planned activity with a third-party provider • two or more separate planned activities or sessions in the same day.
P 1 S	Summary judgement: Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of planning for engagement meets the needs of the case. Planning in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient planning for a single critical factor, such as failing to accommodate disabilities, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p>

P 2 Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
P 2.01	Does planning sufficiently reflect offending-related factors and prioritise those which are most critical?*	<p>Planning should reflect the relevant factors in the case, and should be proportionate to the nature of the sentence. In unpaid work only cases, planning should focus on factors that can be met through the unpaid work requirement. Where the assessment has failed to identify desistance factors, inspectors still expect planning to address them.</p> <p>We expect to see some evidence of sequencing, and prioritisation of work to be undertaken. Where that is not the case, there should be a clear explanation about why, such as where initial work is needed to enhance engagement or increase motivation. For example, homelessness should be addressed before any specific work on other offending-related factors.</p> <p>In post-release cases, initial planning while the individual is still in custody should prioritise critical resettlement factors, but should also set out longer-term planning to support desistance after release. Planning should be integrated with any other plans involving the individual, such as joint working with the police in cases where individuals have been convicted of sexual offences.</p>
P 2.02	Does planning build on the individual's strengths and protective factors, utilising potential sources of support?	<p>Planning should build on the individual's strengths and protective factors, whether or not they have been identified in assessment. This includes planning to develop internal strengths as well as external protective factors. Examples could be supporting employment or improving family relationships, where that is safe. Planning should actively facilitate attendance at positive activities, and build on any existing positive activities that have been identified. In post-release cases, planning should develop any positive activities that can be accessed while in custody. It is good practice to identify external sources of support.</p>
P 2.03	Does planning set out the services most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?	<p>Inspectors look for planning that sets out services and/or activities that will support the individual's desistance. It should set out which activities will be completed by the Probation Service and which by the person on probation, and should be understandable. It should be clear what the person on probation is expected to do, and when they have achieved the desired outcome.</p>

		<p>Planning should set out clearly the range of services, activities and approaches to be used in the case. These should be in line with desistance literature, and appropriate for the individual. Inspectors will expect to see a personalised approach when selecting interventions to address the needs of the case, whether as part of a RAR or otherwise.</p> <p>Examples of activities could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocation to a specific unpaid work project to improve employability skills • programmes designed to address specific issues such as emotional management • enforceable appointments with a specialist organisation to help achieve specific outcomes relating to housing or financial needs • working with a mentor – for example, to attend college, go to the library or help prepare a CV • structured sessions with the probation practitioner, third-sector provider or in-house specialist, to help improve an individual’s ability to solve problems or access and maintain engagement with other services.
<p>P 2 S</p>	<p>Summary judgement: Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?</p>	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of planning for desistance meets the needs of the case. Planning in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case. Planning in unpaid work only cases should focus on what is achievable within the delivery of unpaid work hours.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient planning for a single critical factor, such as failing to accommodate disabilities, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p>

<p>P 3</p>	<p>Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</p>
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	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
	HM Inspectorate of Probation expects all factors relevant to risk of harm to be planned for (not just factors related to RoSH).	
P 3.01	Does planning sufficiently address risk of harm factors and prioritise those which are most critical?	<p>Planning should identify activities and interventions that minimise any identifiable risk of harm to others (not just RoSH), and address all factors relevant to keeping other people safe. Planning should include both work to be done directly with the person on probation, and work to be done by the Probation Service, potentially on a multi-agency basis. The person on probation should be involved in the planning to address the safety of others.</p> <p>Planning should specify who is to complete the activities, and how the person on probation knows when the outcome has been achieved. It should address all factors relevant to keeping other people safe, irrespective of whether they were identified at the assessment stage.</p> <p>Planning should prioritise the most critical factors, those which have the strongest link to the likelihood of harm being caused.</p> <p>Planning should be proportionate to the nature of the sentence, and the level and nature of risk of harm. In post-release cases, initial planning should involve staff from the prison, and should consider risks within the prison environment and in the community.</p>
P 3.02	Does planning set out the necessary constructive and/or restrictive interventions to manage the risk of harm?	<p>Depending on the level and nature of the risk in the individual case, not all of these elements are necessary in every case.</p> <p>Planning for constructive interventions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision as part of the order or licence, and supervision that may be offered by other organisations working with the person on probation • specific, focused interventions, including accredited programmes, RAR activities or one-to-one interventions designed to address factors linked to risk of harm • trauma-informed planning, where necessary. <p>Planning for restrictive interventions may include:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control measures such as curfews or accommodation at Approved Premises, which aim to restrict the ability of the person on probation to cause harm • identifying an appropriate unpaid work placement to avoid contact with potential victims • monitoring of activities by the probation practitioner, police or others, to ensure compliance and identify changes in risk factors • planning to keep actual and potential victims safe, including specific licence conditions and information sharing. <p>Inspectors will judge whether all reasonable constructive and restrictive interventions have been used, dependent on the needs of the case. In unpaid work only cases, it is likely that only restrictive interventions will be possible. In some cases, very few or no restrictive interventions may be required. All cases where there are factors related to risk of harm, other than unpaid work only cases, should have at least some constructive interventions.</p>
P 3.03	Does planning make appropriate links to the work of other agencies involved with the person on probation and any multi-agency plans?	<p>The content and rationale of other agencies' plans should be known to the probation practitioner. Copies of the plans should be available on the case record. There should be integration between different plans, and they should support each other.</p> <p>Where a case is assessed as high/very high risk of harm, and significant multi-agency risk management is needed, it is essential that plans contained within MAPPA notes, child safeguarding records, Active Risk Management Systems and OASys are aligned, and make clear reference to each other, to facilitate joint working and ensure that emergency action can be taken safely if required.</p>
P 3.04	Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	<p>Contingency planning should be in place where an increase in the level of risk of harm could be anticipated. In medium RoSH cases, contingency plans may be brief. More detailed contingency planning is needed for those presenting a high or a very high RoSH. Contingency planning should be specific and address known potential threats. This could include steps needed to protect known victims, or changes in supervision arrangements, including curfew variation or recall, to address other behaviour linked to risk of harm. Generalised phrases such as 'consult manager' or 'consider enforcement' are unlikely to be sufficient. Examples of contingency action could include referring the case to children's social care services if a domestic abuse perpetrator forms a relationship with a person with children; moving a person on probation to Approved Premises; sharing information about</p>

		risk of harm with organisations in contact with the person on probation; increasing the level of MAPPA management.
P 3 S	Summary judgement: Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall quality of planning to keep other people safe meets the needs of the case. Planning in post-release cases should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case, and should involve prison-based staff. Planning in unpaid work only cases should focus on what is achievable within the delivery of unpaid work hours, including multi-agency working and ensuring a safe work placement.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient planning for a single critical factor, such as failing to undertake domestic abuse checks prior to release from custody, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p> <p>In cases where there have been no factors related to risk of harm, inspectors will answer 'yes'.</p>

2.4. Implementation and delivery

D 1	Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively, with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	
	<p>In post-release cases, we expect the community offender manager to ensure the delivery of services to address resettlement needs in the case during the pre-release period. We look at pre-and post-release work under this standard.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, we expect planning to be proportionate to the nature of the sentence.</p>	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance

D 1.01	Post-custody cases only: Did the community offender manager ensure a proportionate level of contact with the prisoner before release?	Prisoners should receive sufficient contact from the assigned community offender manager prior to their release from prison, to support meeting their resettlement needs. Where possible, this should include face-to-face contact, either by a visit or a video conference.
D 1.02	Do the requirements of the sentence start promptly, or at an appropriate time?	We expect the requirements of an order or licence to be commenced promptly, unless there is a specific and defensible reason not to. In orders or licences with multiple requirements, we would expect the different requirements to be sequenced in a sensible fashion. This sequencing needs to be known by the person on probation and by any partner agencies who are delivering requirements. Individuals should be able to access any specific requirements in good time, so that the completion timescale allows for consolidation work if needed. Inspectors will look at the case record and speak to the probation practitioner about the rationale for sequencing. We will make their judgements based on the work and interventions actually delivered, rather than those which are planned. In post-release cases, this question refers specifically to post-release requirements, not to pre-release resettlement work.
D 1.03	Is sufficient focus given to maintaining an effective working relationship with the person on probation, taking into account their diversity needs?	Inspectors will assess the effectiveness of the working relationship between the person on probation and the probation practitioner, as evidence shows that this relationship will facilitate and support desistance from offending. Discussions with the probation practitioner and the case record give an understanding of the nature of the relationship between person on probation and probation practitioner. We expect to see the probation practitioner tailoring their approach to fit individual needs, including diversity needs. We expect probation practitioners to understand the concept of procedural justice; evidence shows that people are most likely to respond to punishment when they feel they have been treated fairly. Research found that people on probation were most likely to credit their probation officer for helping them desist from offending when the officer was seen as being committed, fair and encouraging, and the relationship was seen as active and participatory. In custodial cases, we expect practitioners to pay attention to developing a working relationship with the individual prior to release. In cases where there is a high level of non-compliance, inspectors will judge whether the probation practitioner has taken reasonable steps to understand the reasons for non-compliance, and has used a bespoke approach to attempt to improve this.

		In cases involving a risk of sexual harm, a delivery style that avoids shaming, labelling and stigmatisation is important.
D 1.04	Are sufficient efforts made to enable the individual to complete their sentence, including flexibility to take appropriate account of their personal circumstances?	We expect probation practitioners to make reasonable efforts to enable the person on probation to overcome any barriers to compliance. This may include adapting services to meet the diversity needs and personal circumstances of the person on probation. Inspectors will look for evidence of efforts made by the probation practitioner, and staff in partner agencies, to mitigate any barriers to engagement, including in the pre-release phase for people in custody. Where an accredited programme is a requirement, we expect attention to be paid to preparing the person on probation for attendance on the programme. We expect probation practitioners to exercise professional judgement about the balance between flexibility and the need to deliver the requirements of the sentence. Discussion with the probation practitioner (and person on probation, if they consent) and reference to case records may give an indication of how individual needs are met. In custodial cases, this question is answered in respect of the post-release period only.
D 1.05	Are risks of non-compliance identified and addressed in a timely fashion to reduce the need for enforcement actions?	In some situations, where RoSH is high, we expect enforcement action to be swift following any non-compliance. In most other circumstances, we expect reasonable efforts to be made to engage with the person on probation at the earliest stage of any non-compliance, before any formal enforcement action (breach or recall) is taken. In custodial cases with a history of non-compliance, we expect pre-release consideration about how to improve compliance post-release. Inspectors will look for use of a variety of ways to engage – for example, telephone calls or a home visit. This is a balanced judgement, and it must be clear that when professional judgement is used, this is appropriate, and that people on probation do not inappropriately dictate the management of the case.
D 1.06	Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	This question refers to early enforcement action including the issue of warning letters or applications to vary licence conditions, as well as formal action such as breach or recall. Prompt formal enforcement action should be taken when needed and appropriate. If there have been several incidents of non-compliance, we would expect to see formal enforcement unless a clear rationale is set out for not doing this. For all decisions about formal enforcement, we expect probation practitioners to bear in mind the overall level of compliance, any factors related to risk of harm or likelihood of reoffending, and the 'public

		interest' in enforcement. In custodial cases, this question is answered in respect of post-release enforcement only.
D 1.07	Are sufficient efforts made to re-engage the person on probation after enforcement actions or recall?	The probation practitioner should work proactively with people on probation who have been subject to warnings, breach proceedings or recall. Where an individual has been recalled to prison, work should start immediately to prepare for custody-based sentence planning, or release where appropriate. For those breached on community orders, we will look for evidence of actions taken to re-engage the individual, including discussion about the reasons for enforcement, and how to avoid future non-compliance. Working through challenges such as this can strengthen the nature of the working relationship with the probation practitioner, and can be a critical part of the individual's desistance journey.
D 1 S	Summary judgement: Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively, with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	Inspectors will judge whether the overall implementation of the sentence meets the needs of the case. In post-release cases, pre-release work should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case, with a focus on developing a working relationship before release; both pre- and post-release work should be sufficient. Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient planning for a single critical factor, such as failing to communicate sufficiently with a prisoner prior to release from custody, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.

D 2	Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
D 2.01	Post-custody cases only: Did the community offender manager address	The community offender manager should ensure that services provided meet the needs of the individual. This should include critical pre-release resettlement needs (such as identifying

	<p>the key resettlement or desistance needs before release?</p>	<p>accommodation, or setting up a bank account or benefit claim) as well as longer-term desistance needs. Community offender managers should be in contact with the offender management unit, and other prison departments which have been working with the prisoner. We expect them to be proactive in discovering which interventions have been delivered in custody, and advocating for any further offending behaviour or risk reduction work that is needed before release.</p>
<p>D 2.02</p>	<p>Are the delivered services those most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?</p>	<p>We expect to see services delivered in line with available evidence about desistance. Inspectors will look at the specific interventions and services delivered, and the reasons for choosing them. We will judge the appropriateness of interventions, which should be consistent with the nature, requirements and length of the order/licence. There should be a clear rationale for delivering specific interventions, in line with the needs of the person on probation.</p> <p>Service delivery should address the desistance factors in the case, and should be sequenced to address the most critical factors first, unless there is a specific reason for doing otherwise. Where assessment has failed to identify desistance factors in the case, we still expect service delivery to address all factors. When interventions have not been delivered as required, there should be a clear explanation recorded, and planning should be adjusted.</p> <p>We will look for interventions which may include work delivered individually or in a group, by the probation practitioner, commissioned rehabilitative services, partner agencies or external mainstream services. For delivered services to support desistance, they need to address both external factors and internal inhibitors relevant to the person on probation. For people on probation under 25 years of age, services should be appropriate to the individual level of maturity.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, the nature of the work placement should support the development of ETE and employability skills where required in the case, and encourage a sense of being part of a community.</p> <p>In custodial cases, pre-release delivery should focus on critical resettlement needs and on making links between other desistance services received in prison and relevant services in the community.</p>

		<p>If non-compliance was a barrier to delivering planned services, this will not necessarily result in a negative answer. Inspectors will make a judgement on the level of effort, skills and tenacity used to try to engage the person on probation in the interventions.</p>
D 2.03	<p>Wherever possible, does the delivery of services build upon the individual's strengths and enhance protective factors?</p>	<p>Services delivered should build on the individual's strengths and protective factors, whether or not they have been identified in assessment. This includes interventions to develop internal strengths, such as motivation to change, and external protective factors, such as involvement in pro-social activities.</p> <p>Strengthening bonds with non-offending partners and family also supports desistance, as does time spent with non-offending friends, and the individual's own children, where it is in the child's best interests to do so. Family and intimate attachments can provide a sense of purpose, meaning and direction. In some cases, individuals who devote themselves to raising their children or caring for elderly parents may find that offending is incompatible with such roles. However, that does not apply in cases where there has been exploitation, coercive control, child sexual abuse or internet-based offending. Reduction in abuse of alcohol and substances is often associated with desistance. People on probation who find steady employment – particularly if it offers a sense of achievement, satisfaction or proficiency – are more likely to stop offending. Generating and maintaining hope and motivation are powerful influences towards desistance, and the role of the probation practitioner can be crucial here. Individuals who find ways to participate in and/or contribute to society, their community or their families appear to be more successful at giving up crime. People with criminal records who do not define themselves purely as 'offenders' but see themselves as basically good people who made a mistake may find it easier to desist. Being believed in has a strong and encouraging influence on many individuals, and supports the development of hope. People on probation are strongly encouraged by someone else believing that they can and will change, that they are good people and that they have something to offer society or other people.</p>
D 2.04	<p>Is the involvement of other organisations in the delivery of services sufficiently well-coordinated?*</p>	<p>Where other agencies or organisations are delivering services to the person on probation, we expect to see the probation practitioner coordinating that activity. If the delivery of services has been well coordinated, we are likely to find a clear rationale and sequencing, and services that complement and reinforce progress made. In some cases, there will be no other organisations involved, so no need to coordinate work.</p>

		<p>RAR activities can be delivered by a commissioned rehabilitative service, an in-house specialist or by the probation practitioner. When the probation practitioner is delivering RAR interventions, this should be recorded as such, as it is distinct from their offender management activity. The probation practitioner should ensure that the person on probation is engaging with the process and making progress.</p> <p>All appointments instructed by the probation practitioner, whether delivered by the probation practitioner or another RAR provider, are enforceable.</p> <p>Probation practitioners should ensure regular communication with the provider of the RAR activity regarding attendance, progress and suggested next steps.</p> <p>Where other agencies are involved in delivering services such as drug, alcohol or mental health treatment, probation practitioners should also ensure regular communication about attendance and progress.</p>
D 2.05	<i>Were sufficient services delivered for the factors you identified as related to offending?</i>	<p>For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, we identify whether sufficient services and/or interventions were delivered in the case, to address that factor. Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.</p>
D 2.06	<i>Were sufficient services delivered for the strengths and protective factors you identified as related to offending?</i>	<p>For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, we identify whether sufficient services and/or interventions were delivered in the case, to address that factor. Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.</p>
D 2.07	Are key individuals in life of the person on probation engaged where appropriate to support their desistance?*	<p>We expect probation practitioners to engage with key individuals in the life of the person on probation, where appropriate, to support desistance. Given the evidence of the central role played in supporting desistance by parents and partners, probation staff should consider how to support and maintain these crucial relationships, where that can be done safely. The probation practitioner should be able to identify who key individuals are, and describe how they have engaged to support the individual's desistance. In some circumstances, there may be other professional workers with a key role in the life of the person on probation.</p>

D 2.08	Are the level and nature of contact sufficient to reduce reoffending and support desistance?	<p>The sufficiency of the nature and level of contact will vary, depending on the level of offending-related need in the case. Inspectors will consider the nature, length and requirements of the order or post-release supervision. Where contact has been insufficient, inspectors will identify whether that was because insufficient contact was offered, or whether it was due to non-compliance. In addition to ensuring that specific interventions are delivered, the probation practitioner has additional offender management activities, including encouraging motivation, promoting and sustaining hope, and overseeing the overall direction and sequencing of activities in the order. Supervision appointments do not count as RAR days, and the practitioner can offer as many of these as they feel are necessary during the order. There may also be other unstructured discussions between the practitioner or others and the person on probation, to support them in addressing their identified needs.</p> <p>Where an individual is attending an accredited programme or other structured intervention, effective delivery should include regular appointments with the probation practitioner while the programme or other work is being undertaken.</p>
D 2.09	Are local services engaged to support and sustain desistance during the sentence and beyond?*	<p>We expect there to be some exit planning, so that individuals are able to continue to access services locally, to support them once their supervision has ended. There should be evidence of referrals and advice given to individuals about local services. In some cases, signposting will be sufficient. In others, the probation practitioner may need to arrange visits and meetings to support relationship building.</p> <p>The person on probation cannot be instructed to attend more RAR days than those given in their sentence. The RAR days do not necessarily need to be spaced out for the duration of the sentence, they can be completed whenever is most appropriate. After completing the RAR activities to address the risk of reoffending, the probation practitioner can signpost the person on probation to further support if needed.</p>
D 2 S	Summary judgement: Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	<p>Inspectors will judge whether the overall implementation of the sentence meets the desistance needs of the case. In post-release cases, pre-release work should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case, with an initial focus on addressing immediate resettlement needs; both pre- and post-release work should be sufficient.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection,</p>

but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances if planning for a single critical factor, such as an unpaid work placement, does not sufficiently address the ETE needs of the case, this may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.

D 3 Does the implementation and delivery of services support the safety of other people?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
	HM Inspectorate of Probation expects work to be delivered to address all factors relevant to risk of harm (not just factors related to risk of serious harm).	
D 3.01	Post-custody cases only: Did the community offender manager address key risk of harm needs before release?	This includes risks of harm that might be present during the period in custody, including risk of harm to staff and other prisoners. For risk of harm that is present in custody, the community offender manager should ensure that prison-based staff are aware of steps they need to take to keep other people safe, and should escalate concerns if needed. For risk of harm that might be present after release, work may be required to check and address the safety of victims, partners and children, and to ensure that suitable licence conditions are in place.
D 3.02	Are the level and nature of contact offered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?*	Contact with people on probation should be sufficient to deliver constructive interventions, monitor RoSH and provide the probation practitioner with opportunities to make an ongoing assessment. For cases assessed as presenting high or very high RoSH, weekly contact should be maintained, other than in exceptional circumstances. The nature of contact should reflect the level and nature of the risk of harm. Where appropriate, it should include planned and unplanned home visits, face-to-face meetings, and meetings at different times of the day.
D 3.03	Is sufficient attention given to protecting actual and potential victims?	In all cases, regardless of whether the statutory victim contact scheme applies, we expect probation practitioners to identify whether there is a previous victim or other identifiable potential victims who could be at risk of harm. This is often the situation in domestic abuse or

		<p>child protection cases. Inspectors will look for active management in the case that gives priority to victim safety. Evidence could include ensuring that the individual's place of residence or employment does not increase the risk to any victims or potential victims; active liaison with police, children's services or other agencies; discussion with employers or employment agencies about restrictions on employment; use of MAPPA and ViSOR to access and share information; and minimising contact through appropriate consideration of unpaid work placements, reporting times, programme allocation, etcetera. Most of the restrictive requirements and conditions available in orders and licences are intended to protect known or potential victims. These conditions can be varied, if necessary, after the start of the order or licence.</p> <p>Effective delivery would include active monitoring of any licence conditions or other orders (such as restraining orders, sexual harm prevention orders, domestic violence prevention orders).</p> <p>In cases where there is a victim eligible for statutory victim contact, inspectors will look in more detail at the work done to maintain contact with eligible victims under our specific standards for this work.</p>
D 3.04	Is the involvement of other agencies in managing and minimising the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	<p>We expect to see evidence of regular and effective communication between all agencies involved in the case, to manage and reduce risk of harm. Multi-agency forums (for example, MAPPA/multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) must be effective, including the right people to allow effective actions to be taken. We expect to see evidence of effective challenge and escalation, including by senior managers, if difficulties cannot be resolved. In some cases, there will be no need to undertake multi-agency work.</p>
D 3.05	Are key individuals in the life of the person on probation engaged where appropriate to support the effective management of risk of harm?*	<p>We expect probation practitioners to engage with key individuals in the life of the person on probation, to support desistance; it is good practice to start this before release in custodial cases. Given the evidence of the central role played in supporting desistance by parents and partners, probation staff should consider all ways possible to support and maintain these crucial relationships. The probation practitioner should be able to identify who key individuals are, and describe how they have engaged them to support risk management. Examples might include support to the partner and family of the person on probation, to reinforce child safeguarding arrangements. In some circumstances, there may be other professional workers</p>

		with a key role in the life of the person on probation and, with appropriate information sharing, they may also be engaged to support risk management.
D 3.06	Are home visits undertaken where necessary to support the effective management of risk of harm?*	We expect to see home visits used in all cases where there are child safeguarding or domestic abuse issues, unless there is a specific reason for not doing this (for example, the person on probation is resident in Approved Premises). In other cases, it is good practice to conduct home visits, to understand the circumstances in which the person on probation lives, and to meet partners and other family members.
D 3.07	<i>Were sufficient services delivered to address the factors you identified as related to risk of harm?</i>	For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, we identify whether sufficient services and/or interventions were delivered in the case, to address that factor. This includes constructive interventions, restrictive interventions and multi-agency working, where relevant. Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.
D 3 S	Summary judgement: Does the implementation and delivery of services support the safety of other people?	We expect probation practitioners to take reasonable steps to keep other people safe, including ensuring that constructive and restrictive interventions are delivered. Inspectors will judge whether the overall implementation of work to address risk of harm meets the needs of the case. In post-release cases, pre-release work should start as soon as the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case, with an initial focus on planning for a safe release; both pre- and post-release work should be sufficient. Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient planning in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient planning for a single critical factor, such as failing to check the suitability of a proposed release address, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient. In cases where there have been no factors related to risk of harm, inspectors will answer 'yes'.

D 4 Additional information about services received		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
D 4.01	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's accommodation needs?</i>	If the individual does not have access to accommodation for the point of release, we expect the community offender manager to work with others to ensure that accommodation is available from the date of release.
D 4.02	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's ETE needs?</i>	We expect ETE needs to be met during the custodial phase of the sentence – for example, by engaging in education, training or work in prison. We expect the handover to be sufficient, so that these activities can be continued immediately following release.
D 4.03	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's finance, benefit and debt needs?</i>	As a minimum, we expect individuals to have access to a bank account and an identity document at the point of release. Where required, we expect a benefit claim to have been commenced before the individual leaves custody.
D 4.04	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's personal, relationships and community needs?</i>	Where required, possible and safe, we expect attention to be paid to improving the individual's family relationships before they leave custody.
D 4.05	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's needs as a victim of domestic abuse?</i>	If a prisoner has been a victim of domestic abuse, we expect them to be signposted to relevant services in the community at the point of release, if they require that.
D 4.06	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to</i>	If a prisoner has previously been a sex worker, we expect them to be signposted to relevant services in the community at the point of release, if they require that.

	<i>address the individual's needs as a previous sex worker?</i>	
D 4.07	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's alcohol misuse needs?</i>	If a prisoner has had an alcohol misuse problem previously, we expect work to be delivered in custody to address this, and referral to relevant services in the community at the point of release, if required.
D 4.08	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's drug misuse needs?</i>	If a prisoner has had a drug misuse problem previously, we expect work to be delivered in custody to address this, and referral to relevant services in the community at the point of release, if required.
D 4.09	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's mental health needs?</i>	If a prisoner has mental health needs, we expect work to be delivered in custody to address this, and referral to relevant services in the community at the point of release, if required.
D 4.10	<i>Were sufficient resettlement services delivered pre-release to address the individual's other complex needs?</i>	Where a prisoner has other complex needs, we expect a bespoke approach to addressing those needs pre-release, and ensuring continuity of care at the point of release. Complex needs may include foreign nationals, people on recall, people with learning disabilities, care leavers, ex-services personnel and people from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background.
D 4.11	<i>Has the individual been subject to any drug testing since the start of the order or post-release supervision?</i>	This might be a formal requirement of a DRR, an integrated offender management scheme or a licence. We do not include testing as part of other community treatment arrangements outside the criminal justice service.
D 4.12	<i>Did the individual receive any interventions from commissioned rehabilitative services?</i>	We will obtain details about commissioned rehabilitative services in each PDU at the planning stage for inspections, and will note any services being received in the cases inspected.

2.5 Reviewing

R 1	Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	
	<p>Reviewing is an ongoing process; it should recognise and respond to any changes in individual circumstances. Written reviews may form part of the reviewing process; the timing of written reviews should depend on the needs of the case, and except for reviewing immediately after release, we do not set any specific timescale for this.</p> <p>For post-release cases, we expect to see a full written review at the point the individual is released from custody.</p> <p>In unpaid work only cases, we expect reviewing to be proportionate to the nature of the sentence.</p>	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
R 1.01	Does reviewing consider compliance and engagement levels and any relevant barriers, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	<p>We expect to see active monitoring of the level of compliance and/or engagement, and any difficulties with either should be actively discussed with the person on probation. Probation practitioners should be constantly reviewing whether the approach they are taking is having the desired impact. The purpose should always be to check whether the initial planning is still adequate for the case.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments should be made to planning, to support the person on probation to comply with the order. Reviewing may make small changes, such as in the time or location of appointments, and needs to be based on a good understanding of the individual's behaviour and needs. Where there have been any difficulties with compliance and/or engagement, this should be actively discussed, and attempts made to find ways to overcome any barriers.</p>
R 1.02	Is the person on probation involved meaningfully in reviewing their progress and engagement?	Inspectors will look for evidence that the views of the person on probation have been taken into account in any reviewing. Much of the review will be iterative, as the sentence goes forward; evidence of this may include details of discussions about progress recorded on the case record; changes to any plans or assessments; or a new self-assessment questionnaire.

R 1.03	Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of actions to implement the sentence?	We expect a full written review at the point of release from custody. As the community sentence cases being inspected will be approximately six to seven months old, we do not always expect to see a formal written review of compliance and engagement at the time of inspection, unless there has been a significant change. That could be formal breach action or recall, or a significant improvement or deterioration in the level of motivation or engagement. In cases where supervision has been transferred out of the PDU or terminated, we expect to see a written review of progress made.
R 1 S	Summary judgement: Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	<p>We expect probation practitioners to be alert to any changes in the level of compliance and engagement. In cases where compliance is generally good, little or no reviewing will be required. In resettlement cases, inspectors will consider reviewing across the pre-and post-release phases of the sentence, from the point where the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient reviewing in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient reviewing of a single critical factor, such as a sudden change in compliance with one element of supervision, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p> <p>In cases where no reviewing of compliance and engagement was required, inspectors will answer 'yes'.</p>

2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
R 2.01	Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors linked to offending behaviour, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?*	<p>Reviewing should be used to take stock of the progress to date and to give positive messages about the potential for desistance. It should take into account any changes in individual circumstances. Reviewing should cover relevant improvements and deterioration in behaviour linked to desistance. It should identify what work has been effective and what has been achieved, as well as work that is still outstanding, or needs to be reconsidered or redesigned. The completion of any requirement of an order/licence should lead at least to an informal review with the individual. Being charged with a new offence will also be considered as a change in factors linked to desistance and offending, and we would expect to see some discussion with the individual about any new allegations.</p> <p>Necessary adjustments might involve changing the way that a particular issue is to be addressed; referrals to outside agencies; identifying additional work necessary because of a new offence; or ending work that has succeeded. Reviewing should always involve the person on probation, and take their views into account.</p>
R 2.02	Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building on the strengths and enhancing the protective factors of the person on probation?	<p>Inspectors will look for reviewing that identifies the degree of success in enhancing strengths and protective factors. Much work with people on probation focuses on identifying and targeting factors that increase the likelihood of reoffending. Often, less attention is paid to identifying and building personal strengths, and individuals can find this bias to be demotivating.</p> <p>Reviewing should identify any changes in relevant factors, and should consider the impact of delivered services. It is important that reviewing is used to mark achievements along the journey towards desistance. It can provide feedback on the distance travelled, and recognise the effort made to make changes.</p>
R 2.03	Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies	Where other agencies are working with the individual, information should be sought routinely from them as part of informal or formal reviewing. This can provide additional feedback or challenge to the person on probation.

	working with the person on probation?	
R 2.04	Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of the progress towards desistance?	<p>We expect a full written review at the point of release from custody. As the community sentence cases being inspected will be approximately six to seven months old, we do not always expect to see a formal written review of desistance at the time of inspection, unless there has been a significant change. That could be a positive or negative change to the key factors related to offending and desistance, including completion of a substantial piece of work or commission of a new offence. The outcome of any RAR intervention or other specific work needs to be recorded, including a statement of whether the desired outcomes that were agreed as part of the initial sentence plan have been achieved. In the case of RAR requirements, the probation practitioner needs to confirm to the person on probation that this counts as the completion of the RAR. If fewer days have been completed than were ordered by the court, the officer needs to record the rationale for taking this decision, a description of the progress that has been made and the outcome achieved. Similar principles apply to pieces of work being delivered by other organisations, or on a one-to-one-basis by the probation practitioner.</p> <p>In cases where supervision has been transferred out of the PDU or terminated, we expect to see a written review of progress.</p>
R 2 S	Summary judgement: Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the person on probation's desistance?	<p>We expect probation practitioners to be alert to any changes in the factors related to desistance, including improvements and deterioration. We expect to see positive feedback about any successes, as well as challenge where there have not been improvements. In resettlement cases, inspectors will consider reviewing across the pre-and post-release phases of the sentence, from the point where the community offender manager takes responsibility for the case.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient reviewing in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient reviewing of a single critical factor, such as failure to identify successes, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p>

R 3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
	HM Inspectorate of Probation expects all factors relevant to risk of harm to be reviewed (not just factors related to risk of serious harm).	
R 3.01	Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors related to risk of harm, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?	<p>We expect to see ongoing reviewing of risk of harm, even in cases where the assessed level of risk of harm is low. Informal reviewing would be evidenced by continuing enquiries about relationships, contact with children, level of substance misuse, behaviour and any reoffending. It may also consist of information from relatives or other professionals, including police intelligence. We expect probation practitioners to have an enquiring mind. Any new behaviour that might be linked to risk of harm should be identified, analysed and taken into account in any reviewing of planned activity. In some cases, there may be no new information which necessitates formal reviewing of risk of harm, but probation practitioners should take sufficient steps to ensure that existing information remains correct.</p> <p>In cases assessed as high or very high risk of harm, reviewing activity should be ongoing, to ensure that the risk management plan is working. Evidence of reviewing could include multi-agency meetings or discussions, or consultation with a manager, and does not always need to be completed in OASys. In cases where the person on probation has been convicted of a sexually motivated offence, we would expect relevant specialist assessments to be reviewed in any circumstances where there are changes in any of the factors.</p> <p>Changes should be made to the ongoing plan of work in response to changes in the nature of any risk of harm, not just to the assessed level, in order to manage and reduce risks. Based on their knowledge of the case, inspectors will decide if the correct changes have been identified. This might include making checks about new partners or considering the impact of a pregnancy or the ending of a relationship (both of which can increase the level of risk of harm); increasing the level of contact or home visits; or referrals to other agencies. For significant changes in risk of harm factors, it may be necessary to reassess the level of risk of</p>

		<p>harm. Where the assessed level of risk is increased or decreased, we expect there to be a clear rationale for that as part of a written review. Reduction of the assessed level of risk of harm should be based on verified evidence of behaviour change, not just on circumstantial change, such as the ending of a relationship, or on superficial compliance with restrictions. In some circumstances, it would be reasonable for probation practitioners to seek advice from their manager before completing a full review of risk of harm.</p> <p>Where the original assessment of risk of harm was insufficient, but there have been no subsequent changes in factors related to risk of harm, inspectors will not necessarily score negatively for the absence of reviewing; that judgement will be made on the basis of the level of ongoing alertness to change.</p>
R 3.02	Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing risk of harm?	<p>Information from other agencies is critical in reviewing risk of harm. In domestic abuse cases, we expect to see regular information sharing with police domestic abuse staff about any new reported behaviour. In cases where children’s services are working with a child in contact with the person on probation, we expect to see regular communication with social workers. Probation practitioners should always attend multi-agency meetings, including MARAC, MAPPA and child protection meetings. If additional information comes to light, this must be shared with relevant agencies, so that they are apprised of key information in the case. This question will be answered negatively if inspectors find a lack of professional curiosity; if the risk is seen in isolation from other agencies; or if reviewing does not lead to necessary action.</p> <p>Reviewing of cases with known domestic abuse issues should be alert for points when risk is likely to be increased, including entering a new relationship, failure to cooperate with children’s services, an increase in substance misuse or deteriorating mental health.</p> <p>Reviewing must include any other agencies involved in the case. Probation practitioners must be alert to the potential of safeguarding and child protection issues, throughout the span of the order/licence. Where there are known concerns, these should be managed proactively, monitored and reviewed. Where new concerns are identified, action to protect children and vulnerable adults should be the priority. In all cases, information sharing will be critical; probation practitioners should not assume that other agencies know about situations and circumstances. Reviewing could involve a fresh referral of the child to children’s services, or</p>

		<p>participation in multi-agency reviewing. Planning by the probation practitioner should be adapted in light of the outcome of any external reviews. Probation staff can make a significant contribution to child safeguarding, but to do this they need to understand their role and responsibilities and know how to represent the views of their organisation. Records should evidence effective contribution to multi-agency reviews.</p>
R 3.03	<p>Is the person on probation (and, where appropriate, key individuals in their life) meaningfully involved in reviewing their risk of harm?*</p>	<p>The nature and level of involvement of the person on probation should depend on the nature and extent of the risk of harm. The probation practitioner should be able to relate how they have considered the views of the person on probation and, where appropriate, any key individuals in their life. People on probation should know what is expected of them to reduce risk of harm, and reviewing should involve them and consider progress towards this.</p>
R 3.04	<p>Are written reviews completed as appropriate, as a formal record of the management of the person on probation's risk of harm?</p>	<p>We expect a full written review of risk of harm at the point of release from custody. As the community sentence cases being inspected will be approximately six to seven months old, we do not always expect to see a formal written review of risk of harm at the time of inspection, unless there has been a significant change. We do not set any specific period where we expect to see written reviews. We expect to see a written review where there has been a significant change in the case. That could be a positive or negative change to the key factors related to risk of harm, including completion of an accredited programme or other requirement of the order or licence; the start or end of a relationship in cases where domestic abuse is a feature; termination of the order or licence; repeat or escalation of previous risk-related behaviour, emergence of new risk-related behaviour; or allegations of a new (harmful) offence.</p>
R 3 S	<p>Summary judgement: Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</p>	<p>We expect probation practitioners to be alert to any changes in the factors related to risk of harm, including improvements and deterioration. We expect to see positive feedback about any progress, as well as challenge where there have not been improvements. We expect probation practitioners to be proactive in seeking and verifying information which may have an impact on keeping other people safe, throughout the whole period of supervision.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient reviewing in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. So, in some circumstances insufficient</p>

reviewing of a single critical factor, such as failure to investigate a new relationship, may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.

In cases where there have been no factors related to risk of harm, inspectors will answer 'yes'.

2.6 Outcomes

O 1	Do early outcomes demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made, in line with the personalised needs of the person on probation?	
	<p>Under this standard, we judge the extent of progress that has been made during the period being inspected. In making judgements about each of these questions, our inspectors take into account evidence from the case file and from their interview with the relevant probation practitioner. These judgements about sufficiency take into account the needs of the individual person on probation, the nature of the sentence and what progress is reasonable to expect by the time of inspection.</p> <p>We recognise that for some people on probation, expecting progress within six to seven months would be unrealistic; in some cases, 'sufficiency' may be about maintaining stability. Where stability is deemed to be a reasonable and defensible expectation for an individual person on probation, we should give credit for this. In these instances, we expect to see planning for progress beyond the period of stability.</p>	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
O 1.01	<i>Have there been improvements in the individual factors you identified as related to offending?</i>	<p>For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, we identify whether there have been improvements in that factor. We will answer positively where there have been improvements, irrespective of how those improvements were achieved and whether or not the improvements could be attributed to the work of the Probation Service.</p> <p>Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.</p>
O 1.02	<i>Have there been improvements in the individual strengths and protective factors you identified in the case?</i>	<p>For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, we identify whether there have been improvements in that factor. We will answer positively where there have been improvements, irrespective of how those improvements were achieved and whether or not the improvements could be attributed to the work of the Probation Service.</p> <p>Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.</p>

O 1.03	Have there been improvements in those factors most closely linked to offending, both in developing strengths and addressing needs?	<p>Inspectors make an overall judgement based on progress related to the needs identified at the start of the period of supervision. We are looking for reasonable progress to be made on those factors identified as most critical. We understand that sequencing of interventions may mean that work has not started on all factors by the point of inspection. Inspectors will answer positively where there have been improvements in the most critical factors, irrespective of how those outcomes were achieved. We give credit for all outcomes, whether they have been delivered or driven by the Probation Service, or achieved by the individual themselves, or by the involvement of agencies outside probation supervision.</p> <p>For unpaid work only cases, inspectors will only look for improvements that could reasonably be achieved as part of the specific sentence. For example, we could expect ETE outcomes arising out of unpaid work placements, but we could not expect outcomes related to substance misuse.</p>
O 1.04	<i>Have there been improvements to the individual factors you identified as related to risk of harm to others?</i>	<p>For each factor identified by inspectors at the assessment stage, inspectors we identify whether there have been improvements in that factor. We will answer positively where there have been improvements, irrespective of how those improvements were achieved and whether or not the improvements could be attributed to the work of the Probation Service. Inspectors will bear in mind what is achievable within the constraints of unpaid work only cases.</p>
O 1.05	Has there been a reduction in factors most closely related to risk of harm to others?	<p>Inspectors consider the factors related to risk of harm at the start of the period of supervision, and are looking for reasonable progress to be made on those factors identified as most critical. The best evidence about changes in factors related to risk of harm comes from changes in behaviour. We recognise that changes related to risk of harm can be slow and incremental. We understand that sequencing of interventions may mean that work has not started on all factors by the point of inspection. Inspectors will answer positively where there have been improvements in the most critical factors, irrespective of how those outcomes were achieved. We give credit for outcomes that have been achieved by the individual themselves, or by the involvement of agencies outside probation supervision.</p>

O 1.06	<i>Has the individual been charged or convicted for any offences committed since the start of the order or licence being inspected?</i>	We ask this question for information only, and recognise that probation practitioners may not always be aware of circumstances where the person on probation has been charged with a new offence but not yet convicted.
O 1.07	Has there been a reduction in offending?	Inspectors will consider the number of offences for which the individual was charged or convicted in the six to seven months immediately before the current sentence was imposed, or before the individual was sentenced to custody; and the number of offences charged or convicted since the order/post-release supervision started. Where there has been a pattern of frequent offending in the period before the current sentence was imposed, and there has been reduced offending since the date of the sentence, inspectors will be able to answer positively. In cases where offending was infrequent before the current sentence, or where the individual has recently been released from a longer custodial sentence, inspectors may not be able to come to a judgement about this question.
O 1.09	Has there been sufficient compliance?	Full compliance would include good attendance, as well as good engagement with all services and interventions offered. Partial compliance might include cases where there was superficial compliance but with insufficient engagement; or a patchy pattern of reporting, with the individual being reasonably well engaged when they did actually attend.
O 1 S	Do early outcomes demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made, in line with the personalised needs of the person on probation?	<p>We hope to see some progress on the most critical factors in a case. The extent of progress we expect to see depends on the circumstances of the case, the needs of the individual and the nature of the order or post-release supervision. We recognise that desistance is a long process; inspectors will answer positively if the early outcomes from a single period of supervision are encouraging. We are not looking for certainty about sustainable change. In more complex cases, we recognise that the period of stability may be an important first step towards change, and we will give credit for maintaining stability. We also recognise that there are many factors contributing towards an individual journey towards desistance, and will answer positively where outcomes have been achieved other than through receipt of probation services.</p> <p>Improvements in factors such as accommodation or ETE will only be influential here if those factors are relevant to desistance in the individual case. In terms of outcomes related to risk of harm, so long as there has been no deterioration, inspectors may answer this question</p>

	<p>positively even when there have been only early or unproven changes in relevant factors. We would expect to see sufficient compliance to allow the sentence to be delivered as intended.</p> <p>To answer positively, inspectors will look for reasonable progress on the most critical factors linked to offending. We need to take account of the answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the areas where outcomes have been achieved outweigh those where there may have been less progress. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient progress in the circumstances of the case.</p>
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O 2 Additional data about outcomes for people on probation		
This additional data is gathered to develop an understanding of emerging issues and support our further analysis and research. These questions do not influence inspection judgements.		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
O 2.01	<i>What was the individual's accommodation status at the start of the order/licence?</i>	We will look for evidence from assessment and case records, not just the recorded accommodation status.
O 2.02	<i>What was the individual's accommodation status at the point of the inspection?</i>	We will look for evidence from assessment and case records, not just the recorded accommodation status.

O 2.03	<i>What was the individual's ETE status at the start of the order/licence?</i>	We will look for evidence from assessment and case records, not just the recorded ETE status.
O 2.04	<i>What was the individual's ETE status at the point of the inspection?</i>	We will look for evidence from assessment and case records, not just the recorded ETE status.

2.7 Statutory victim work

V 1 Does initial contact with victims encourage engagement with the victim contact scheme and provide information about sources of support?		
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
V 1.05	<i>Is there a clear record of the protected characteristics of the victims?</i>	We expect to see a clear record of the protected characteristics of all victims, so that appropriate account can be taken of these when contact is made.
V 1.07	Is appropriate initial contact made soon after sentence, with consideration given to the timing of such contact?	We expect contact to be made as soon as reasonably possible, being sensitive to issues such as date of the offence, date of birth of the victim, holiday and festival periods and any other factors that may have an unnecessarily adverse impact on the victim. We recognise that the Probation Service Instruction requires contact to be made within 40 working days from the date of notification of the case by the witness care unit. There is an expectation that initial contact will be made in writing by conventional mail, unless there are reasons that this is not appropriate.
V 1.08	Are the initial letters appropriately personalised, considering the nature of the experience of the victims and any diversity issues?	As a minimum, we would expect letters to be professionally constructed and to use accurate spelling for the names and addresses of victims. In cases where the person being contacted is not the direct victim (for example, they are the next of kin of a deceased victim or the parent of a child victim), the letters should recognise the relationship. The letters should also recognise any pre-existing relationship between the perpetrator and any victims. The language of the letter, while not naming the offence that the victim has experienced, should be sensitive to the nature of the offence.
V 1.09	Is clear information given to victims about what they can expect at different points in a sentence?	Any letters should be clear about what the victim contact scheme can and cannot offer the victim. Language must be straightforward and understandable. The tone of the letter should make it clear that the victim is free to choose whether or not to participate. It should also make it clear that an initial choice not to participate can be changed at any point that the victim wishes. It should explain what the victim should do in those circumstances.

V 1.10	Do the initial letters contain sufficient information to enable victims to make an informed choice about whether to participate in the scheme?	<p>We expect letters to include details of the victim contact scheme, and the roles of the Probation Service and the victim liaison officer. They should include an explanation of the victim's right to decline contact and/or opt in to the victim contact scheme at any point in the offender's sentence. The letter should also include the victim liaison officer's contact details; a suggested date and time when the victim liaison officer could meet the victim at their home (or an alternative location); details of how to confirm this appointment; and how to arrange an alternative location, time or date. The letter should give reassurance that the victim liaison officer will not proceed with this meeting without the victim's permission, and should encourage the victim to contact the victim liaison officer to confirm a meeting. Victims should be assured that the victim contact scheme is a flexible service, and that the meeting will, if possible, be arranged to fit around the victim's commitments (for example, employment or childcare commitments). They should be told that a friend, colleague or member of a charity such as Victim Support can be present at the meeting if the victim wishes.</p> <p>Victims should be provided with contact details for Victim Support and/or any other appropriate local support organisations, including details of the Victim Support line, along with supporting literature and leaflets, if available. Letters and appointments should make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any special requirements that have been highlighted by the witness care unit. This might include providing information in a different language or an easier-to-read format. If the victim is a child or vulnerable adult, the letter should request the view of an appropriate adult about whether the victim should be involved actively from the outset.</p> <p>The letters need to be clear about what the victim contact scheme can and cannot offer the victim. Language must be straightforward and understandable. The tone of the letters should make it clear that the victim is free to choose whether or not to participate. They should also make it clear that an initial choice not to participate can be changed at any point that the victim may choose so to do. It should explain what the victim should do in those circumstances.</p>
V 1.11	Are victims informed about the action they can take if the prisoner attempts to make unwanted contact with them?	This may be covered in leaflets, letters to victims or in meetings with victim liaison officers.

V 1.12	Are victims referred to other agencies or services, or given information about available sources of help or support?	General information should be provided in initial letters sent to victims. Following the first meeting with the victim liaison officer, consideration should be given to providing information or arranging a referral to generic and specific support services where appropriate. This could include agencies such as Women's Aid, Rape Crisis, Victim Support or specific localised provision. In some cases, provision of general information will be sufficient. In cases with a greater level of need, we expect victim liaison officers to make relevant referrals.
V 1 S	Does the initial contact with victims encourage engagement with the victim contact scheme and provide information about sources of support?	We expect victim liaison staff to make reasonable and sufficient efforts to encourage victims to engage with the scheme, considering the nature of the offence that has been committed and their personal circumstances. The fact that a victim chooses not to accept the offer of victim contact is not a reason for answering the summary judgement question negatively. Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient attempts at contact in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. For example, sending an initial letter close to the date of a key anniversary in the case may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.

V 2	Is there effective information and communication exchange to support the safety of victims?	
	These questions are only answered if the victim opted into the victim contact scheme.	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance

V 2.02	Are victim liaison staff involved in Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements where appropriate?	MAPPAs arrangements commence six to nine months before the perpetrator is due to be released from custody. Inspectors expect to see victim liaison staff involved in MAPPAs arrangements, at all levels. This could include professionals' meetings and other multi-agency meetings for MAPPAs level 1 cases, as well as formal meetings in those cases that are managed at levels 2 and 3.
V 2.03	Do victim liaison staff share relevant information with the probation practitioner?	We would expect to see an exchange of information between the victim liaison officer and the perpetrator's probation practitioner, to ensure that the wishes of victims are incorporated into relevant documents and licences. Many of the duties carried out by victim liaison officers depend on cooperation and communication with the probation practitioner, particularly those that involve communicating information about the offender's sentence to the victim. This is a two-way process of communication. Timely and clear information exchange between the victim liaison officer and the probation practitioner requires lateral communication and support. This is particularly necessary, given the often emotionally demanding and stressful nature of this work. Depending on the stage of sentence, and the prison location of the perpetrator, the probation practitioner may be based in the community, or may be working in a prison under Offender Management in Custody arrangements.
V 2.04	Are the concerns of the victims addressed and is attention paid to their safety when planning for release?	We expect to see that consideration of the location of the victim is considered when planning for release. Timely communication with the victim about release arrangements is critical. We would also expect to see liaison with police staff if additional safety measures are required. We expect victims' views to be considered, but recognise that it is not always reasonable or possible to meet all of their needs, or put in place everything that a victim requests. The Probation Service is likely to be the first point of contact when victims are dissatisfied with the service they have received from the Parole Board, as contact with the Parole Board will occur when victim contact will have been established for some time. At the stage when victims are first notified about the commencement of the parole process, they should be provided with information about the Parole Board's single point of contact for dealing with complaints. If a victim is dissatisfied with the service they have been provided with by the Probation Service, they should complain under the normal process, and then, if appropriate, to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

V 2.05	Are victim liaison staff provided with appropriate and timely information about the management of the offender?	<p>Probation practitioners must notify the relevant victim liaison officer as soon as they become aware that one of the key stages in the offender's sentence is approaching, or when there are any other key developments in a case which might have an impact on the victim. Effective systems must be in place to ensure that probation practitioners and victim liaison officers exchange information quickly and allow sufficient time for victims' views to be sought and fed into the decision-making process. The probation practitioner should pass any victim information provided by the victim liaison officer to the relevant decision-maker (internal prison board/Parole Board). Where the victim has a right to make representations about a particular stage, the probation practitioner must take account of this in informing the victim liaison officer in good time. When a parole application is being considered, the probation practitioner should pass on victim representations about licence conditions, and must include any victim personal statement and/or victim contact report in the Parole Board dossier.</p>
V 2 S	Is there effective information and communication exchange to support the safety of victims?	<p>We look for a proportionate response, taking into account the length and nature of the sentence, and the range and type of situations that should generate information sharing with the victim.</p> <p>Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient communication in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. For example, failure to notify a victim about a key change in the case may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.</p>

3	Does pre-release contact with victims allow them to make appropriate contributions to the conditions of release?	
	These questions are only answered if the victim opted in to the victim contact scheme.	
	Inspection question	CARaG Case assessment rules and guidance
V 3.01	Are victims given the opportunity to contribute their views to inform decisions about the person on probation's release in a timely way and supported in doing so?	The victim needs to be consulted as soon as a request for permanent release approaches. Victims need sufficient time to reflect on the contribution they wish to make, in a timely fashion without additional pressure. We recognise that the role of the victim liaison officer is to support the victim in preparing their contributions, but the victim liaison officer is not a counsellor or advocate and there is a need to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
V 3.02	Are views expressed by victims treated appropriately and in accordance with the victim contact scheme?	We expect victim liaison officers to respect the views and wishes expressed by victims. Where the views or wishes of the victim are not compatible with the constraints of the statutory victim contact scheme, victim liaison officers should explain that to the victim. Victim liaison managers must ensure that victim information is held securely, but that there is sufficient access to information to allow for provision of a continuous service, including when victim liaison officers are on leave, out of the office and, if appropriate, out of hours. Victim liaison unit staff should record information clearly and comprehensively, in such a way that a colleague with no prior knowledge of the case could read and understand the record if necessary. This provides an important basis for effective contact, particularly in cases where there are long periods of non-contact or where the case is transferred between victim liaison officers.
V 3.03	Are victims supported in making a victim personal statement in parole applications?	Victim liaison officers should take all reasonable steps to offer the victim the opportunity to make a victim personal statement for consideration by the Parole Board, where the perpetrator's release or move to open conditions is being considered by the Parole Board.
V 3 S	Does pre-release contact with victims allow them to make	Inspectors recognise that agreeing the conditions of release may not always be able to accommodate all the views and wishes of victims. Legal and policy guidance needs to be

appropriate contributions to the conditions of release?

followed, and a balance needs to be made between the wishes of victims and the need to develop a safe release plan.

Inspectors need to take into account their answers to all the questions in this section, and decide whether the strengths outweigh any deficiencies. We are not looking for perfection, but sufficient communication in the circumstances of the case. Where there are deficits, inspectors will consider their impact in the context of the case. For example, failure to notify a victim about the conditions of release may be enough to lead to a judgement of insufficient.