



# INSTITUTE OF PRISON LAW

FOUNDED IN 2006

## CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY IN PRISON LAW: 2024/2025

This Distance Learning Course is ideal for anyone with a personal, professional or academic interest in prisons in England and Wales – including prisoners themselves.

The course does not require a legal background, no prior prison law knowledge is required but a good standard of education (Level 2 English) is advised. The course has been devised, written and updated by expert prison lawyers, full terms and conditions of the course applicable to all students are at [prisons.org.uk/terms-conditions](https://prisons.org.uk/terms-conditions) and registration on the course by payment of the course fee explicitly confirms acceptance of each and all of those terms and conditions without exception.

Full details of the course and its accreditation history are shown on [prisonlaw.org.uk](https://prisonlaw.org.uk) the course is fully updated to 2024 and opens to students on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The course consists of eight self-contained Modules and, once registered on the course, students receive the eight modular full texts and the eight modular examinations. These are all delivered by email once registration is confirmed and as research is an important part of the law students need to keep abreast of the latest prison law and policy changes – we make this easy as registration includes **one year complimentary Enhanced Access** to The Prison Oracle website - [prisonoracle.com](https://prisonoracle.com) - which is constantly updated as new updates are issued.

On average, each Module takes 10-15 hours study and ends with a multiple choice examination which must be submitted for marking by email to the address shown at the end of the Module.

Successful completion of the Course leads to the **Certificate of Competency in Prison Law** and allows the Certificate holder to display the Institute's 'Prison Law Qualified' logo on stationary and advertising. **The course must be completed within 12 months of the registrations date.**

The Certificate is gained by successful completion of the eight modular examinations, each with a minimum 80% pass mark; if a student obtains less than 80% in a module they have the choice of resitting it (£29.99 plus VAT) or moving on to the next module – in which case they will be told which questions they answered incorrectly and while they can then continue the course they will **not** be awarded the Certificate or be able to display the logo.

### **FEES:**

**The Course Fee for a member of the public is £999 + VAT (£1198.80)**

**The Course Fee for someone in prison/on probation is £499 + VAT (£598.80)** a 50% discount thanks to a bursary from a benefactor.

**Course Fees include** enrolment/registration, all modular texts and examinations, marking fees (except exam resits), one year complimentary Enhanced Access to [prisonoracle.com](https://prisonoracle.com) and, **while stock lasts**, early bird (first come first served) free copies of the latest editions of **The Prisons Handbook** *the definitive annual guide to the penal system of England and Wales* and **The Prison Law Index** - this is only **while stocks last**, these books are wholly complimentary and are **not** part of the course. The course must be purchased as a single entity, in advance of dispatch and we cannot offer a pay-as-you-learn option.

**COURSE UPDATE (2024) BY: Simon Creighton ([tinyurl.com/4xm6d8ja](https://tinyurl.com/4xm6d8ja)), Solicitor.** Author: **Parole Board Hearings: Law and Practice** (Legal Action Group); **Prisoners: Law & Practice** (Legal Action Group); **Prisoners and the Law** (Tottel); **Indeterminate Sentences** (POUK).

**COURSE DIRECTOR: THANUSAK INTHARAT, BA(Hons), MA(Dist), MBA(Dist.). FRSA.**

**INSTITUTE DIRECTOR: Mark Leech FRSA.**

# THE COURSE

## MODULE 1

**Unit 1: A short history of imprisonment** – from the middle ages to the current day

**Unit 2: The Statutory and Regulatory Framework** – Acts, Rules, Orders, Instructions....

The Prison Act 1952.

The Prison Rules - The Legal Status.

Prison Service Instructions and Orders and Policy Frameworks

The Ministry of Justice and the Prison and Probation Service

Contracted out prisons

Private escorts

The contract document

**Unit 3: The Prison Estate and Population** – What prisons we have, public and private, male, female, young offenders and who is detained in them.

The Structure of the Prison System

The adult prison system

Men's prisons

Local prisons

High security prisons

Special security units and high security units

Close supervision centres

Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder Units

PIPE units

Category B training prisons

Category C prisons

Category D/open prisons

Resettlement prisons

Vulnerable Prisoners' Units

Women's prisons

Mother and Baby Units

Protected Witness Units

Prison Staff

"The role"

Eligibility Requirements:

Prison Management

HMPPS

HMPPS Key Performance targets:

Independent Monitoring Boards

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO)

The Probation Service

**Unit 4: Funding:** How to obtain funding for Prison Law work today – an expert view from a practicing prison lawyer on the how to obtain funding for prison law work – and what mistakes to avoid.

**Unit 5: Overview of Prisoners' Rights 2024;** Access to law; Right to life; Prevention and investigation of prison deaths; Liberty and Release Date calculations; Recall; Prison Offences and Discipline; Regime, Categorization and Allocation; Incentives and Privileges; Contact with the outside world, Letters, Visits and Phone Calls; Contact with Journalists; Health; Religion; Race and Equality.

**Unit 6: Requests & Complaints**

Requests

Complaints

Non-Confidential Complaints

Allocation of the complaint

Response to the complaint

Reserved Subjects

Complaints about members of staff.

Other Avenues of Complaint.

Independent Monitoring Board

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration.

## MODULE 2

**Unit 1 – Sentence Planning & OaSys**

Sentence Planning

OASys: How does it work?

Risk classification

Targeting needs  
Responsivity  
Treatment method  
Programme integrity  
Community-based programmes  
An effective risk needs assessment  
What is OASys in a Nutshell?  
Benefits of OASys  
OASys: Scoring.  
How does OASys arrive at its scores?  
Section 1: Offending information  
Section 2: Analysis of offences  
Section 3: Accommodation  
Section 4: Education, training and employability  
Section 5: Financial management and income  
Section 6: Relationships  
Section 7: Lifestyle and associates  
Section 8: Drug misuse  
Section 9: Alcohol misuse  
Section 10: Emotional wellbeing  
Section 11: Thinking and behaviour  
Section 12: Attitudes  
Section 13: Health and other considerations  
Self-assessment  
Who has an OASys Assessment – and when?

## **Unit 2 – Categorisation & Allocation**

Allocation  
Categorisation  
What are the security categories and what do they represent?  
Category A  
Category B  
Category C  
Category D  
Restricted  
Open  
Closed  
Category A Prisoners  
Definition of Category A  
Definition of Restricted Status  
Criteria Justifying Suitability  
Escape Risk Classification  
Standard Escape Risk.  
High Escape Risk:  
Exceptional Escape Risk:  
Legal Background  
Identification & Reporting in of Potential Category A prisoners.  
Reviews of Provisional Category A and Restricted Status Prisoners  
Reviews Leading Up to Conviction and Sentence  
Escape Risk Classification  
First Formal Review  
First Formal Review Preparation  
Completion of the First Formal Review  
Reviews of Confirmed Category A and Restricted Status Prisoners  
Oral Hearings  
Timings of Annual Reviews  
Annual Review Procedures  
Preparing the Reports  
Disclosure of the Reports  
Local Advisory Panel Consideration  
Initial Category A Team Consideration  
Annual Review Decisions by the Category A Team  
Referral of Annual Reviews to the Director of High Security  
Decisions from the Director of High Security  
Downgrading from Category A or Restricted Status

## **Unit 3 – Incentives and Privileges**

General – policy framework 2024  
Basic Theory: Good behaviour v poor behaviour.  
Local incentive arrangements  
Three levels: basic, standard and enhanced.  
Devising local IEP Schemes

Key earnable privileges  
Privilege levels  
Basic Level  
Standard Level  
Enhanced Level  
Further details of key earnable privileges  
Access to private cash  
Extra and improved visits  
Higher rates of pay  
In-cell television  
Wearing own clothes  
Time out of cell  
Additional Privileges  
Games Consoles and Games  
Management and operation of local IEP Schemes  
Criteria for good behaviour and performance  
Reviews  
Prisoners' in denial of their offence  
Double jeopardy  
Review Boards  
Retention of privilege level on transfer  
Special groups of prisoners  
Unconvicted prisoners  
Immigration detainees  
Foreign national prisoners  
Prisoners with disabilities/particular needs/older prisoners  
Prisoners in Segregation Units  
Safer Custody  
Prisoners who are at risk of suicide or self-harm  
Violent behaviour  
Monitoring

#### **Unit 4 – Prison Work & Pay**

Prison work  
Prison Pay  
Rates of Pay  
General  
Rate of pay for unemployed prisoners  
Minimum Employed Rate for All Prisoners  
Standard Rates of Pay  
Piecework  
Higher Rates of Pay  
Prisoners who are Released on Temporary Licence and those on 'Working Out' Schemes  
Tax and National Insurance Thresholds  
Other liabilities  
Deductions  
Prisoners who are Short-Term Sick  
Prisoners who are Long-Term Sick, or of Retirement Age  
Pregnant Women and Mothers caring for Babies  
Prisoners attending Outside Hospital  
Transfers  
In-Cell work  
Management of the Prisoners' Pay/Earnings Budget  
National Minimum Wage  
Unemployment pay  
Minimum  
Employed rate  
Minimum employed rate  
Short-term sickness  
Long-term sickness and retirement  
Maternity leave or caring full-time for children  
Outside hospital allowance

### **MODULE 3.**

#### **Unit 1: Child Prisoners & Young Offenders**

Basic Principles:  
Prison Service Steps in its Young Person Policy  
Safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people  
Promoting and maintaining good behaviour

Managing challenging behaviour  
 Dealing with complaints and investigations  
 Healthcare  
 Substance misuse  
 Staff selection, process and training  
 Training  
 Effective management and support of staff  
 Reception into custody and initial assessment  
 Induction and further assessment  
 Sentence management  
 The personal officer or caseworker  
 Involvement of the family, supervising officer and outside agencies  
 Communications  
 Provision of a full, purposeful and active day  
 Learning and skills  
 Offending behaviour programmes  
 Physical education  
 Resettlement  
 Providing for unsentenced young people  
 The Howard League: Judicial Review. The Children Act 1989  
 The Children Act 2004  
 Sentences & Places of Detention

## **Unit 2: Women Prisoners**

Introduction – Women prisoners policy framework  
 Some Statistical and Research Information about Women Prisoners  
 Development of the Gender Specific Standards  
 Role of HMPS Women and Young People's Group  
 Women's prisons

- Pre-custody
- Reception and First Night Procedures  
   Induction, Resolving Urgent Issues
- Health: Physical Health, Mental Health, Substance Misuse
- Offender Management, Offender Supervision, Personal Officer Schemes, Allocation
- Decisions and Through the Gate Support
- Supporting Women at Risk of Self-harm
- Day-to-Day living:
  - Incentives and Earned Privileges
  - PE
  - Property and Clothing
  - Hygiene
  - Environment
  - Diet
  - Association Activities
  - Religion and Faith
  - Prison Shop
  - Complaints
- Managing Order in Women's Prisons: Promoting Pro-Social Behaviour, Adjudications and Segregation
- The Pathways to Resettlement
  - Accommodation
  - Education, training and employment
  - Health and Detoxification
  - Drugs and alcohol
  - Finance, benefit and debt
  - Children and families
  - Attitudes, thinking and behaviour
  - Supporting women who have been abused, raped or who have experienced domestic violence
  - Supporting women who have been involved in prostitution
  - Young Women Prisoners
- Older Women Prisoners
- Women Foreign Nations and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
- Women Prisoners with Disabilities
- Indeterminate/ Life Sentence Women Prisoners
- Mother and Baby Units
- Management Issues
- Training of Staff and Volunteers
- Security in Women's Prisons
- *Lifers*
- Categorisation.
- Health Care.
- Pregnancy

**Unit 3: Mother and Baby Units**

**Unit 4: Mental Health and the Prison Service**

**Unit 5: Remand\Civil\FN prisoners\Immigration Detainees**

**Unit 6: Equality & Discrimination**

**MODULE 4.**

- 1 Maintaining order. Intelligence, segregation, and force. Application to the private sector.
- 2 Adjudications. Discipline manual, Article 6 requirements. Procedural fairness. Independent adjudicators.

**MODULE 5.**

- 1 Offending behaviour courses 2024, prison education and courses.
- 2 CCRC.
- 3 Communications; Letters, visits, telephone calls, and computers. Access to the media.
- 3 Racism, discrimination and religious rights.

**MODULE 6.**

- 1 Release regimes, and release date calculation. Tags, HDC, temporary licence
- 2 Licence, Recall and re-offending whilst at risk - see 4.
- 3 The parole system and reconsideration mechanism.
- 4 Risk assessment, offence denial, licence and recall. Recall procedure and hearings.

**MODULE 7**

- 1 Life imprisonment.
- 2 The lifer panels. Representations, procedure and evidence.

**MODULE 8**

- 1 Death in custody. Prevention. Procedures; ACCT (suicide and self harm). Article 2 and investigations. Disclosure and openness.
- 2 Inquests.
- 3 Actions for death, assault, false imprisonment, misfeasance, and negligence.

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Course Enrolment Form is at - <https://prisons.org.uk/enrolment2024.pdf>.