

SPSO decision report

Case: 201401224, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: progression
Outcome: upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, told us that the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) were preventing him from progressing within the prison system towards parole by requiring him to do unnecessary courses. The courses in question were agreed by the SPS at a meeting that took account of an assessment that a prison psychologist had carried out. Mr C's complaint was that the assessment was not done properly.

We explained to Mr C that it was for the SPS, not us, to decide what courses a prisoner should undertake. Our role in his complaint, therefore, was to consider whether the psychologist had appropriately followed the relevant guidance.

Our investigation showed that the psychologist had not fully followed the guidance when doing her assessment, so we upheld the complaint. That did not mean, however, that the conclusions of her assessment were wrong - it simply meant she had not fully followed the guidance when assessing Mr C.

However, the SPS themselves had already identified the shortcomings before Mr C complained to us and had put them right by arranging another assessment by a different psychologist. This was then considered at another SPS meeting (where it was agreed that Mr C should do the coursework agreed at the earlier meeting). Therefore, we made no recommendations for further action.