

# Fairer prisoner incentives to encourage rehabilitation

- Evidence shows incentives more effective at improving behaviour
- More flexibility for Governors to meet local challenges
- Latest measure to drive offender rehabilitation

The new Incentives Policy Framework will provide overall consistency while giving Governors greater flexibility to tailor programmes that address the specific situation in their prison.

Among the new initiatives is the removal of the low 'entry' level of privileges which was felt to effectively punish new prisoners and create an adversarial relationship with staff from the outset.

The revised scheme has been developed following consultation with prison Governors and other stakeholders. It is built on [evidence that shows](#) positive reinforcement is much more effective at shaping behaviour than punishment, while also encouraging lasting behavioural change and rehabilitation.

For those who don't follow the rules or engage, however, a strict system of adjudications ensures that Governors are able to act swiftly. Punishments range from the removal of privileges to harsher measures such as prosecution and additional prison time.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

This new framework gives Governors the tools to set clear behavioural standards for prisoners – enhancing their ability to maintain stability while steering offenders away from a life of crime.

Under the changes being introduced, the new system also:

- Retains the three privilege levels: basic, standard and enhanced, but removes 'entry level', which Governors say is bureaucratic and penalises prisoners who are new – setting up an adversarial relationship with staff from the outset
- Emphasises that staff should consistently use verbal reinforcement for good behaviour and challenge poor behaviour outside formal reviews
- Requires Governors to immediately review prisoner incentives after single serious incidents of bad behaviour with a strong presumption that such incidents lead to downgrade
- Gives Governors the freedom to increase the amount of time out of cell for recreational activities or exercise alongside education and work programmes
- Prisoners that behave well and engage in meaningful activities such as

education and employment programmes could receive privileges such as more time in the gym or additional visits

- Establishes local 'incentive forums' – comprised of staff and prisoners – to review the fairness and effectiveness of the policy locally, delivering on recommendation 24 of the Lammy Review
- Will retain sensible limitations on Governors' freedoms, so that, for example, no paid-for TV channels or other inappropriate incentives are permitted.