

**The role of the prison officer in Scotland and Norway, and
the extent to which they impact the lives of prisoners**



**A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Science by Research
(MbR) in Criminology and Sociology**

by

Kaigan Denee Carrie

School of Business, Law and Social Sciences

Abertay University

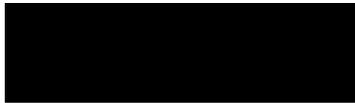
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Declaration

Candidate's declarations:

I, Kaigan Denee Carrie, hereby certify that this thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Science by Research (MbR), Abertay University, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This work has not been submitted for any other qualification at any other academic institution.

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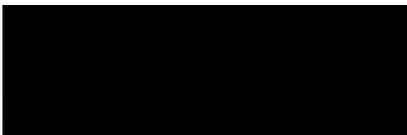


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Supervisor's declaration:

I, Dr William Graham hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Masters by Research in Abertay University and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Signed



Date 25 August 2021

Certificate of Approval

I certify that this is a true and accurate version of the thesis approved by the examiners, and that all relevant ordinance regulations have been fulfilled.

Supervisor Dr William Graham



Date 25 August 2021

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Abstract

Until recently, prison officers have tended to be neglected in research. While they are now receiving attention, little research exists in relation to prison officer training, particularly in Scotland. Scotland tend to look to Scandinavia when implementing change within the prison service and Norway is acclaimed to have one of the best training programmes in Europe. This research examines the role of the prison officer in Scotland and Norway, explores how initial training is constructed and what its purpose is, and investigates the extent to which officers feel this training enables them to impact the lives of prisoners.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with first line managers in Scotland and ex-governors in Norway, and focus groups were held with residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway. Nine interviews took place and four focus groups consisting of eleven participants in total. The participants' experience ranged from less than one year to more than twenty years, and there were male and female contributors.

The analysis found that participants in Scotland feel that the training delivered is not fit for purpose and does not equip them to meet the aims of the SPS and help transform the lives of prisoners. The individuals felt that more training is required in mental health, substance misuse, criminology and interview techniques. The participants felt that a more blended learning approach, similar to the one taken in Norway, would be beneficial. The research found however that without changing the culture which exists within the prison establishments, any alteration in training would likely have little impact. The Norwegian participants felt that the two-year training regime they undertake is fit for purpose but could even be extended due to the amount of information they need to know to impact prisoners' lives.

The SPS have been on a journey and for over two decades have voiced their ambition to professionalise the role of the prison officer. The SPS aspire to mirror Scandinavia to some extent and have a vision for social justice and rehabilitation. While progress has been made through the creation of the direct entry programme for residential officers in 2020, they still have a long journey to achieve their ambitions.

1 Introduction

Over the years, one of the biggest challenges the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) has faced is recidivism; a habitual relapse into crime. In the last decade many reports have been published (Audit Scotland, 2011; Audit Scotland, 2012; Scottish Government, 2011; Scottish Prison Service, 2012; Wilson, 2014), which highlighted that the SPS had to do more in order to positively impact the lives of prisoners and help them to desist from crime. It was a widely held belief that the training delivered by the SPS was not fit for purpose (House of Commons, 2009; The Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers, 2010). In 2013, the SPS published their report, 'Unlocking Potential, Transforming Lives', which set out a new vision and mission for the SPS. The report identified that the training delivered to staff was not sufficient to enable them to meet the goals of the SPS. This transformation required the SPS to tackle the culture which existed and provide their staff with the training and skills required to make them effective agents of change. The report envisioned their staff being recognised as Justice Professionals in the eyes of the public and the wider justice system. A 'professional' in this sense, is an employee considered to have a code of practice by which they must abide (Scottish Prison Service, 2016), prolonged and on-going training and education leading to 'mastery of knowledge' (Tidmarsh, 2021, p.4) and autonomy over their service user centred work. As a result of the report, the Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme (POPP) was developed. Among other things, POPP intended to transform the training delivered to prison officers and enable them to obtain a Diploma as part of their training. In October 2018, despite the Prison Officers Association (POA) advising its members to accept the proposal, it was overwhelmingly rejected (Scott-Moncrieff, 2019).

In 2016 the SPS published their 'Value Proposition' report which highlighted that the limitations referred to in the aforementioned independent reports and the changes envisioned in the 'Unlocking Potential, Transforming Lives' report had not been addressed or effected. The report reiterated that prison officers were not equipped to work to their full potential due to the culture which existed within the SPS, namely where control and command type behaviours were rewarded. It recognised that the framework did not provide prison officers with the leadership and relational skills, and other 'agent of change' tools required to help prisoners desist from crime (Scottish Prison Service, 2016, p.22). Prison officers were recognised to be the best people

placed to unlock the potential within the prisoners. As a result, the initial training delivered to prison officers changed in 2020, whereby individuals were able to apply directly to the role of residential officer and a new training programme was developed. Residential officers used to undergo the seven-week Officer Foundation Programme (OFP) training and receive either one weeks' transitional training – or no training at all – into the residential officer role. However, this development means residential officers now receive twelve weeks training and complete modules over a two-year period. It is thought that this training will be more focussed on rehabilitation as opposed to the OFP training which was predominantly about the maintenance of secure custody (Slokan, 2020).

Although the political arrangement and social settings are different, the SPS often looks towards Scandinavian countries such as Norway when planning or implementing change (Scottish Government, 2015). The Norwegian prison system is considered to be forward thinking, with some of the most humane prisons in the world and a professionalised work force of prison officers. Their prison officer training programme is considered to be one of the best in Europe (ibid). The Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS) have had a two-year prison officer training programme since the 1980s (Bruhn and Nylander, 2014). This was a result of White Paper no.27 which recognised change was required to deal with the problems which existed in Norwegian prisons at the time (Høidal, 2018). As a result, both the initial training and the role of the prison officer changed from being solely a guard, to be considered one of a guard and a social worker. Since 2012, prison officers in Norway obtain a Diploma in Correctional Studies as part of their initial training and since 2019, they have been able to undertake a Bachelor's Degree in Correctional Studies (KRUS, 2021).

Prison officers are considered to be the best people to help transform the lives of prisoners (Bailey-Noblett, 2019; Scottish Prison Service, 2019b) and Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011, p. 85) have found, 'it is part of the 'British tradition' that relationships between staff and prisoners provide the glue which holds prisons together'. Therefore, it is clear that a transformation is required within the SPS and developing the training delivered to prison officers is a fundamental part of that change. While there has been extensive research carried out on the topic of prisons, little research has been carried out in relation to prison officers; to the extent that prison officers feel they are ghosts of penalty and neglected in research (Arnold, Liebling and Tait, 2007; Coyle,

2005; House of Commons Justice Committee, 2009; Jewkes, Crewe and Bennett, 2012; Liebling, Price and Shefar, 2011).

1.1 Research focus

While it has been suggested that little research has been carried out in relation to prison officers, they are gaining attention in relation to their working culture (Arnold, H. Liebling, A. and Tait, S, 2007), the care aspect of their role (Tait, 2008) and the qualities that make an effective prison officer (Matheson, 2016). However, this research intends to contribute knowledge to the gap which exists in the research in relation to the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland and Norway, and how far they feel this training enables them to impact the lives of prisoners. It has been stated that the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland is inadequate (House of Commons, 2009) and isn't fit for purpose (Bailey-Noblett, 2019). The Ministry of Justice (2016) consider it necessary that the training delivered to prison officers is transformed so they are provided with the required skills to have a positive impact on the lives of prisoners and contribute to prisons becoming places of growth and reform. As prison officer professionalisation has been discussed in Scotland for over two decades with little transformation (Audit Scotland, 2011; Audit Scotland, 2012; Coyle, 1991; Howard League for Penal Reform, 2005; Scottish Prison Service, 2013; Scottish Prison Service, 2016), this research allows prison officers an opportunity to voice their opinions on their initial training and the skills they feel they are lacking. As prison officers are the individuals who spend most time with prisoners and are the people best placed to help make a difference, it is important to understand their feelings towards their initial training. This research will assist in filling the gap in the knowledge around their initial training and the training they feel is necessary to make them more effective in their role. It will also provide knowledge on the extent to which prison officers feel they are able to make a difference in prisoners' lives.

1.1.1 Overall aim and research objectives

The overall aim of this research is to fill the gap, which exists in relation to the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland and Norway, and the extent to which they are able to impact the lives of prisoners. Prison officers have voiced that they feel neglected and unappreciated in research (Thomas 1972; Crawley, 2004) therefore this

research gives them a place to voice their feelings regarding their initial training. In particular, this research compares the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland and Norway, which has not been done before in the arena of initial training and views of their ability to assist in unlocking the potential within prisoners and transforming their lives.

The foundation of this research is based on a review of the available literature and via collecting and analysing empirical data. A case study approach was used and serving staff from three prisons, namely Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) A, HMP B and C prison in Norway, participated in this research. The participants comprised residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway, first line managers and a governor in Scotland and previous serving governors in Norway. Chapter Three, titled 'Methodology', provides more in-depth details on the research strategy and techniques used to collect and analyse the data, as well as potential limitations of the study.

In order to achieve the overall aim of this research, the following research questions were framed:

- What is the role of the residential officer in Scotland compared to the role of the prison officer in Norway?
- How is initial training constructed in Scotland and Norway and what is the purpose of this training?
- To what extent do officers feel their initial training enables them to have an impact on prisoners' lives?

The first objective will contribute to the previously identified knowledge gap around the role of the residential officer in Scotland and the prison officer in Norway. To be able to meet the second and third objectives, it is important to first understand the expectations set upon prison officers. The second objective will provide a comparison between the training delivered to prison officers in Scotland and Norway. This is relevant because the SPS often looks towards the NCS when planning and implementing change. As Norway is considered to have one of the best prison officer training programmes in Europe, this will provide an insight into how aligned or dissimilar the training in Scotland is to that in Norway. The third objective will enable prison officers and managers to voice their opinions on the effectiveness of the current training delivered to them. It has been identified that the training delivered to prison

officers in Scotland is inadequate and the SPS highlighted that the current training programme is not enabling prison officers to realise their potential and contribute to transforming the lives of prisoners. This objective will highlight what further training prison officers feel they need in Scotland and will provide insight into whether prison officers and managers in Scotland feel that implementing a training programme similar to that in Norway would be beneficial. Existing literature will be used to answer objectives one and two, along with the empirical data. Objective three is answered with empirical data alone due to the limited literature which exists in this area. As a result of the literature review and the findings of the research, the three objectives were answered and recommendations were made for future action. This is due to the limited research which exists in this area and the changes implemented in 2020 by the SPS in relation to the training delivered to residential officers.

The next chapter, chapter two, will discuss in-depth the literature which exists in relation to the role of the prison officer in Scotland and Norway. The initial training delivered to prison officers and how the SPS and the NCS came to professionalise the role of the prison officer will be considered, along with the importance of their attributes and motivation for the role. Chapter three will detail how this research was carried out. It will explain how the researcher negotiated access to participants, discuss the research strategy used and describe how the data was collected and analysed. Chapter four will explain and examine the results of this research. Chapter five will conclude this research by summarising the findings and conclusions, detail the contribution to knowledge and set out recommendations for future action.

2 Literature review

Within this literature review the role of prison officers in contributing to the reduction of offending will be examined. An analysis of the research that already exists will be carried out to identify any gaps. This will ensure that an original contribution is made in this area. The review will examine the importance of the prison officer role in the lives of prisoners and how well equipped they are to fulfil this role.

2.1 Introduction

The cost to society in Scotland of reoffending is approximately £3 billion a year, and although reoffending has fallen over the last 13 years, the Scottish Government (2019) believes more can be done to reduce this even further, as Scotland's re-conviction rate is 'among the highest in Europe' (Hancock and Raeside, 2009, p.100). The Scottish Prisoner Advocacy & Research Collective (2018) argues that 'it wasn't so many years ago that Scotland faced a profound period of prison crises' yet there has still been much criticism in the media in recent years regarding the prison system and the need for radical change. While most of the research discussed here refers to prisons in England and Wales, much of this is relevant for prisons in Scotland too, as Scotland's prison population has risen sharply since 2017-18, from an annual average of 7,500 prisoners, to 8,200 (Scottish Government, 2020). Scotland also has the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe, while England and Wales have the second (Prison Reform Trust, 2019). There are many factors which may affect an individual's experience in prison. They include other prisoners, prison conditions (including overcrowding) and the culture within the prison. However, their relationship with prison officers is considered to lie at 'the heart of prison life' (Liebling, Price and Shefar, 2011, p.485). Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011, p.205) believe that the prison officer's role is 'complex and cannot be taken for granted', but that positive relationships between prisoners and prison officers help motivate prisoners to desist from crime and address the issues that are holding them back. As prison officers are the people who interact with prisoners the most, it is not surprising the prison officer can have such a profound impact on those in their care. Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin (2007) state that prison research has, in the past, had a tendency to focus on prisoners, however it is important to also study prison officers to gain a better understanding of the impact they have on those in their custody. Tom Eberhardt,

former Governor of D Prison, a medium-security prison situated in Norway (Bastøy Fengsel, 2012), believes that, in order to have a positive impact on the prisoners and help them change, we must first change the prison officers and the culture within the prison (Luna, 2020).

2.2 How the Scottish Prison Service came to professionalise the role of the prison officer

The Scottish Prisons Commission convened in 2007 to 'reconsider Scotland's use of imprisonment in the twenty-first century' (Wilson, 2014, p.192). The Commission (2008) published their report 'Scotland's Choice', setting out a vision to transform the Scottish prison system. The report stated that the work brought them to 'a crossroads where Scotland must choose which future it wants for its criminal justice system' (ibid, p.1).

In 2011 the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) scrutinised its vision, mission and values and it was highlighted that 'the SPS cannot stand still and should maximise its contribution to reducing reoffending' (Scottish Prison Service, 2012, p.9). In July 2012, the Chief Executive of the SPS announced an organisational review following criticism by several audits and independent reviews (Audit Scotland, 2011; Audit Scotland, 2012; Scottish Government, 2011). In 2013, the SPS published the review, 'Unlocking Potential, Transforming Lives' which was underpinned by the theory of desistance (McNeill, 2015). The tagline 'unlocking potential, transforming lives' wasn't only in relation to unlocking the potential of prisoners but of the prison staff too (Scottish Prison Service official). The review highlighted that the progress by the SPS on the care and opportunity aspect for prisoners had been limited and that more action should be taken to effectively reduce the amount of crime which occurs in our society. It also recognised that training delivered to staff was not sufficient to enable them to meet the current or future goals of the SPS. It was thought that reforming the training delivered to staff would professionalise both the staff and the organisation, in the eyes of the public and within the wider justice system (Scottish Prison Service, 2013). The report (ibid, p.79) also highlighted that:

"Residential officers provide support to prisoners within their area of responsibility in a number of different ways – dealing with welfare issues, listening to problems,

encouraging participation in activities and mediating in cases of conflict. This is an essential and valuable aspect of the prison officers' role. Officers have been given little formal or structured training to carry out this vital role. It will be necessary to give prison officers appropriate training and development opportunities to enable them to carry out their work professionally”.

The SPS had identified that an organisational transformation was required, one part of which involved professionalising the role of the prison officer under the Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme (POPP). The need, and want, to professionalise the role of the prison officer in Scotland is not new. Coyle (1991) highlighted the difficulties around professionalising the role of the prison officer in Scotland, noting that in a situation where the main role of the prison officer was the maintenance of security, increasing the professionalism of prison officers ‘would be highly desirable’, (ibid, p.157). Ten years later, the SPS discussed correctional excellence and what it would take to achieve this, stating that, ‘this would necessitate prison officers working in a very different way, with a very different cultural orientation, with very different educational and skill levels’ (Scottish Prison Service, 2001, p.155). They envisioned that the prison officer should carry the same public status as that of a nurse, teacher or social worker. Four years later this was echoed by the Howard League for Penal Reform (2005). Twenty years on, little progress has been made and the SPS have once again put professionalising the role of the prison officer at the forefront of their agenda. POPP intended to ‘transform the role, skills and professionalism of prison officers’ (Audit Scotland, 2019, p.6). Despite the Prison Officers’ Association (POA) strong recommendation to their members of accepting POPP, in October 2018 a rejection result was returned (Scott-Moncrieff, 2019). After POPP was rejected, the SPS did not feel defeated in their ambitions and went back to the drawing board (Scottish Prison Service official).

The corporate plan and the organisational review had envisioned a new direction for the SPS but when the SPS Value Proposition (2016) was published, it was clear changes had not yet been made. The report highlighted that, (ibid, p.22):

“Front-line staff are not enabled to work to their full potential due to the hierarchical system that has traditionally rewarded command and control type behaviour...traditionally, their focus has been on equipping officers to maintain

security, order and decent standards of care. The current framework does not encompass the relational skills, leadership behaviours and motivational ‘agent of change’ toolkit now needed to realise their ambitions”.

The report further acknowledged that prison officers would be the driving force behind unlocking the potential of prisoners and to achieve this would require improving the potential of the prison officer to become Justice Professionals. It was proposed that prison officers would be professionalised through ‘class-leading re-design of training and education’ (ibid, p.8). Five years on from this statement, it is not considered that this vision has been realised when compared to other countries around Europe.

2.3 Organisational and occupational culture within the Scottish Prison Service

As well as the initial training delivered to prison officers, it is imperative to understand the culture which exists as this can impact the way a prison officer carries out their work. The SPS’ Organisational Review (2013) found that there was a need to change the culture which existed within the SPS if they were to achieve their vision and mission. It highlighted that the SPS is, and has long been, change resistant and an alteration in leadership and skills, as well as behaviours and values would be crucial for the SPS to realise its ambitious aims. As well as this, the culture had to be one of continuous improvement as opposed to one that stagnates. Organisational culture “shapes the ‘climate’ (the explicit behavioural characteristics that manifest in the organisation, e.g. the way that staff treat prisoners)” (ibid, p.43) therefore culture, not just developing the training of prison officers, will have a critical impact on prisoners’ experiences and their chances of changing. The review acknowledged that values are also crucial in shifting culture therefore it is important for the SPS to ensure their staff have the right values to enable this change. In 2019 the SPS moved to a values-based recruitment model when recruiting staff, which should assist this change in the long-term (SPS official). It was noted that the SPS had different versions of the organisation’s values and professional standards expected from its staff, therefore it could be ambiguous as to what was expected of staff at different levels. In order for the SPS to manifest this ambitious transformation, staff at all levels have to be focussed on the vision and mission of the organisation and the expectations of all staff must be clear.

Schein (1984, p.3) defined culture as a:

“Pattern of shared basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, it is to be taught to new members of the group as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems”.

Schein (2004) also believes that any social arena that has historic commonalities will have developed a culture and the strength of that culture will be determined by the length of time since creation and the intensity or impact of their shared emotional experiences. This may explain why the SPS found that the culture within the organisation was deeply rooted. Prison staff, and prisoners, have a shared history, in that prisons have existed for a long time and their function has remained the same, albeit rehabilitation and desistance play a more central role now than they did many years ago. The role of the prison officer has not adapted much since its creation, despite efforts from the SPS to change this in recent years (Scottish Prison Service, 2013).

Charman (2017, p.16) states that culture is a ‘socially constructed reality’, and each prison has its own unique culture. The culture is of critical importance as it can have a substantial impact on the prisoners who reside there (Crawley, 2004; House of Commons, 2009; Liebling, 2007). Scott (2012, p.18) described the culture of prison officers as such:

“Prison officer working personalities arise as a result of an officer’s shared experiences and social situation with other colleagues, leading to the development of a common way of interpreting actions and events. Collectively they create an occupational culture which informs ‘the way we do things around here’, determining the construction of what is, and what is not, considered suitable prison work”.

Arnold (2016) argues that prison officer occupational culture manifests from as early as their initial training, where it is ingrained in them that security is the most important part of the job. This leads to loyalty and cynicism becoming core attributes within a prison officer’s identity. This is concerning as the SPS can recruit staff with values that align with the role of the prison officer and provide them with appropriate training, however the culture within the prison can have a profound impact on the way officers

carry out their role. It is therefore important to ensure the culture that exists within prisons is a positive one, where the prison officers believe that the prisoners can change and want to help them do so.

Morrison and Maycock (2021) found in their study of newly recruited prison officers to the SPS, that in their initial orientation week at their establishments, prison officers, particularly those who had been in the service a long time, were very cynical about their role. The newly recruited officers described attempting to resist the negative culture and low morale but were struggling to do so. The study found that these same recruits, later in the research, began to imitate the behaviour of their long-serving colleagues they had previously described as cynical.

Previous research has found that prison officers use a lot of discretion (Liebling, 2000). However, it is suggested that their discretion has eroded over time due to managerial discourse, perhaps influenced by New Public Management (Cockcroft, 2016; Sangkhanate, 2011). This can positively impact the culture which exists within a prison as lots of discretion may enable prison officers to discriminate against or favour certain prisoners (Gariglio, 2019). Crawley (2004, p.11) suggests that it is possible to implement a change, particularly when “sufficient numbers of new staff are transferred en masse from the training college” who are confident enough to develop their own working practices if they disagree with the current ones. This might be true for a small number of newly trained prison officers. However, many prison officers, once trained and go into a prison, inevitably conform to the behaviours and actions of their more experienced colleagues (Kauffmann, 1988; McHugh, Heavens and Baxter, 2008, Morrison and Maycock, 2021). While a radical transformation is required to change the culture, Morrison (2018) believes that training newly recruited prison officers on attitudes, beliefs and values is a necessary part of this transformation. This would assist the new prison officers to affect positive change within the prison rather than conforming to the cultural norms that already exist. This would allow prison officers to put their initial training into practice and effect a more profound change within the prisoners.

Liebling (2011, p.485) identified that, ‘the moral quality of prison life is enacted and embodied by the attitudes and conduct of the prison officers’ and argues that staff professionalism is an integral part of prison life. Some research suggests that most

prison officers themselves have a desire to improve their status and professionalise their role and have a yearning to make a positive impact in the lives of prisoners (Bailey-Noblett; 2019, Thomas; 1972). This is encouraging, as prison officers are considered to be 'the human face of the prison service' (Liebling, Price and Shefar, 2011, p.208) and they have the ability to make the most impact on an individual's time in prison, as they are the people who spend the most time with prisoners. However, the research by Thomas (1972) is dated and the research by Bailey-Noblett (2019) relates to private prisons. There is little known about how far this relates to prison officers in public prisons. Bailey-Noblett (2019, p.197) found that 'trustworthy and empathic relationships' between prison officers and prisoners are key to supporting those in their custody on their desistance journey.

To support prisoner rehabilitation, prison officers' interactions with them must be meaningful and consistent. It is also essential that officers have the skills to address criminal behaviour and promote self-discipline and motivation among prisoners (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, 2019). It is important to understand the role of the prison officer, the training they receive to equip them to carry out their role and their perceptions of their role, as Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011, p. 85) have found, "it is part of the 'British Tradition' that relationships between staff and prisoners provide the glue which holds prisons together". However, according to The Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers (2010), prison officer training has eroded over the last two decades and is inadequate to effectively train officers for the professional work they are expected to carry out. This feeling is shared by the House of Commons (2009) Justice Committee Report which found that the current content of the initial training delivered to prison officers is inadequate to provide them with the skills they require to undertake their role. It is promising to note however, that changes are being made to the initial training delivered by the SPS to prison officers (Slokan, 2020).

2.4 Alternative Models of Prison Officer Training

In Denmark, prison officers are trained for three years. Their training is split between the Training Centre of Probation and Prison Service and a prison. Their learning is a

mix of theoretical, classroom- based work and carrying out the duties of a prison officer in a prison (Council of Europe, 2017).

The prison officer training delivered in Finland lasts for a period of sixteen months. The training is delivered at the Training Institute for Prison and Probation and their practical training is delivered within training prisons. Once a prison officer has completed the sixteen-month training programme, they can apply to complete a Bachelor's degree in Correctional Services (ibid).

The training given to prison officers in Ireland lasts two years and is broken down into four semesters. The first semester is completed within the Irish Prison Service College and the following three semesters are delivered by a higher education institution, Waterford Institute of Technology, in partnership with the prison service. The two-year programme leads to a Higher Certificate in Custodial Care (Irish Prison Service, 2017).

In England and Wales, the training has still been very short at twelve weeks long, ten of which are spent at the Prison Service College (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, 2014). From Spring 2021, all prison officers will have to undertake the twelve to eighteen month Custody and Detention Professional Apprenticeship (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, 2018).

According to Morrison and Maycock (2021, p.4) the SPS as an organisation believe that prisons in Scotland are 'better' than prisons across the border in England and Wales. It is interesting that Scotland is, in essence, on par with England and Wales in terms of the training delivered to their prison officers, despite this self-perception they have. The previous training in England and Wales was longer than Scotland's, albeit by a matter of weeks. Both services have recently increased the length of their training, however prison officers in England and Wales receive a qualification at the end of their training but in Scotland they do not. While initial training delivered to prison officers is only one component of the prison system, Eberhardt (2020, 00:04:07) has highlighted that 'the biggest asset to any prison is its staff'. As a result of this, more should be invested in training them to deliver the tasks expected of them.

In the House of Commons (2009, p.49) Justice Committee Report, Andrew Coyle stated that for officers to only receive 'if they're lucky, 8 weeks' training' and do the job they do, in comparison to the level of training in other countries is, "amazing...but 8 weeks' training is totally inadequate". As research has suggested that prison officers

are the human face of the SPS and the people best placed to make the biggest impact on prisoners' lives, providing training that lasts a matter of weeks in Scotland does appear short particularly when compared to similar countries.

2.5 Role of the prison officer

Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011, p.83) believe that 'it is difficult to define the role of the prison officer, let alone how well they do it'. This is consistent with Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin (2007) who identified that prison officers, their views in relation to the work they do and their relationships with those in their custody, has been poorly documented. Weaver and McNeil (2007) argue that relationships are vital to the process of desistance and that young people in prison can be influenced to change by those whom they respect and whose support they value. This stresses the importance of the role of prison officers in assisting young people in prison through the desistance journey. Matheson (2016, p.24) also discovered that it was crucial to the young people that prison officers treated them with 'humanity and decency' and that they were 'seen as and spoken to on the same level'. However, it can be argued that the same is true of adults in custody, as Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin (2007, p.20) state that 'the officer who maintains an individualised idea of those whom he deals with, and treats them humanely, can have an amazingly positive impact'.

It has been argued, historically, that prison officers have recognised their primary role being to maintain secure custody of those sentenced to imprisonment by the courts, while everything else has been regarded as secondary (Bailey-Noblett, 2019; Coyle, 1986; Pakes and Winstone, 2007; Thomas, 1972). However, prison officers are expected to engage in rehabilitative work with prisoners, and rehabilitation is considered to be a central aim of the prison. Crewe, Liebling and Hulley (2015) highlight the importance of encouraging and humane relationships between prison officers and prisoners, while Nilsen and Bagreeva (2020) state that:

"Of all the resources in prison that have either positive or negative consequences for inmates and affect the recidivism rate, the quality of human capital, the prison staff, is by far the most important".

Beijersbergen *et al* (2015) builds on this as they identified in their study that, where prison officers had an optimistic view of rehabilitation, their relationships with prisoners

were more positive. This emphasises the importance of prison officers and the impact they can have.

Matheson (2016, p.54) found that 'the four main pillars of good prison work are care, consistency, honesty and order'. Prisoners are more likely to trust and confide in officers who are honest with them and provide them with consistent boundaries. These findings are supported by Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011), who found that the best prison officers portrayed quality communication, decision-making skills, integrity and took personal responsibility. It is disappointing then to learn that, fifteen years after Crawley's work was published around initial training, Bailey-Noblett (2019, p.66) also discovered that the initial training delivered to prison officers 'implants that prisoners cannot be trusted, and at all times the prison officer must be watching, listening and questioning the narratives and actions of prisoners'. This research however is in relation to a private prison in Scotland, where training is not delivered by the SPS, therefore conclusions cannot be drawn regarding whether this is also true for prison officers going through initial training within the SPS.

The purpose of the initial training delivered to prison officers is to provide them with the 'knowledge, skills and values' required to carry out their role effectively (Bailey-Noblett, 2019, p.63). Previously, the main duty of a prison officer was secure custody of those in their care. However, the Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers (2010) believe that, over the last twenty years, the prison officer role has evolved from merely being a guard to being varied and multi-skilled, encompassing 'a relatively high level of rehabilitative work with prisoners' (Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin, 2007, p. 147). This is evidenced by the SPS (2019b) who state that residential officers take on a multitude of roles. One key role is to develop and maintain relationships with prisoners, and another is to help prisoners desist from crime by engaging them in rehabilitation initiatives. It is clear that prison officers are expected to carry out multiple roles, including security, keeping order and assisting in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

Prison officers play an important role in the prison system and their role has been described by researchers, as 'highly-skilled' (Liebling, 2011, p.488) and 'complex' (Crewe, Liebling and Hulley, 2015, p.311). Yet, there has been concern around the lack of training provided to prison officers and in turn, their lack of professionalisation

(Russo *et al*, 2018). There has been little research carried out in relation to the training and education delivered to newly recruited prison officers, particularly in Scotland (Bailey-Noblett, 2019; Bruhn, Nylander and Johnsen, 2017).

One nation which attracts attention for its so-called model prisons is Norway (Prison Insider, 2019) where their prisons are commended for being humane and having low re-offending rates. In-depth information on the training and education delivered to prison officers is readily available in research and on The Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy (KRUS) website. The Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS) is considered to be ahead of the SPS in many ways, one of which is the way they train their prison officers. Over the years the SPS have gradually begun to look towards the NCS as part of their ambition to transform the prison service (Scottish Prison Service official).

2.6 Initial training delivered to prison officers in Norway

In Norway, prison officers are highly trained compared to those in Scotland (Inderbitzen, Bates, and Gainey, 2014) and attend KRUS for two years prior to commencing their role within a prison (KRUS, 2014; Nilsen and Bagreeva, 2020). Admission to KRUS is very competitive, with less than 10% of applicants being successful. Prison officers are paid a full-time wage while studying at the academy and they also spend time working in a prison as part of their studies (Abdel-Salam, S. and Sunde, H., 2018).

While training at the academy, prison officers study topics such as an introduction to the role of the prison officer, law and sentencing, ethics, crime and punishment (including possible causes of crime), substance misuse, safety, security and risk-management and community re-integration and social work (KRUS, 2020). In Norway, prison officers are expected to be 'all-round officers', meaning they are responsible for everything that concerns the inmates in their section (Lundeby, 2007, p.1). Arne Nilsen, stated that what sets D Prison apart from other prisons, is the quality of the staff. Nilsen as stated in Nagy (2014) believes;

"You should treat the inmates with the same respect as you treat the governor or your fellow wardens. With the same decency; showing interest, listening, work together as

colleagues...not focusing on the crime, but focusing on the fact that this person in front of you is as much a human being as you are”.

Beijersbergen *et al* (2013) determines that the humane and fair treatment of prisoners by prison staff reduces prisoners' likelihood of transgression in prison, and further re-offending post release. This feeling is shared by Nilsen and Bagreeva (2020) who believe that positive relationships between prison officers and prisoners is a key catalyst in creating positive changes in the behaviour and thinking of prisoners. For this reason, it is crucial that prison officers are trained in building and maintaining positive relationships with prisoners. This further emphasises the importance of prison officers and how their initial training could be crucial to assisting prisoners to desist from crime and turn their lives around.

2.7 Initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland

In Scotland, specifically in prisons run by the SPS, there are two levels of prison officers. Operations officers' duties include patrol, reception, electronic control room, front of house and visits, while residential officers are responsible for fostering effective relationships with prisoners and supporting them to become more responsible citizens (Scottish Prison Service, 2015a). This research concentrates on the role of residential officers. Until March 2020, prison officers in Scotland received, on average, only 6 weeks' training at the SPS College and one weeks' training at a prison establishment. Yet, prison officers are tasked with performing the role of a coach, counsellor, listener and role model. On top of this, they are also tasked with reducing re-offending (Crawley, 2004; Scottish Prison Service, 2016; Scottish Prison Service, 2020; The Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers, 2010). To become a residential officer, prison officers completed the Officer Foundation Programme (OFP), which is the training mentioned above, and received one weeks' transitional training to residential. As of March 2020, residential officers now receive 12 weeks' training. The training at the Scottish Prison Service College (SPSC) includes, but is not limited to; cell certification which ensures the cell is in good working order, defensible decision making, cell searches, escorting prisoners and different types of handcuffing, family strategy which involves visits and the impact of imprisonment on families, good report writing, intelligence awareness and how to

report suspicious activity, health and wellbeing of staff, how to build positive relationships with prisoners, key holding, maintaining security, human rights, substance misuse, trauma informed practice, control and restraint (Slokan, 2020). While the training has been developed and is more rehabilitative and less security based than the OFP, the majority of these classes take place over a half day or full day. These classes are unable to go into too much depth in this short space of time (Scottish Prison Service official). This training is further developed over 24 months, with officers having to complete a number of additional modules, which are currently being developed (Slokan, 2020).

Prison officers in Norway have had to go through two years of training to become qualified since the 1980s (Bruhn and Nylander, 2014). They receive a degree in Correctional Studies and since 2019 have had the option to complete a Bachelor's degree in Correctional Studies (KRUS, 2021). Nilsen and Bagreeva (2020) suggest that the training in Norway should be further developed to include the '12 step principles' they created, which will help 'transform a static security prison into a dynamic organism for change and growth' (ibid, p.377) some of which principles Arne Nilsen developed and implemented during his tenure as Governor at D Prison. They believe implementing each of the 12 steps into a prison will improve rehabilitation and public security. The steps include, but are not limited to, ensuring that loss of liberty is the only punishment suffered, ensuring the values, attitudes and motivations of each prison officer are positive and aligned to the visions of the organisation, adopting the 'principle of normality' inside prisons and giving more responsibility to prisoners. There is suggestion here that Norway can improve still on the training they deliver. This casts light on how far behind Norway Scotland is in terms of training their prison officers in 'a position of great impact and power' (ibid, p.379). A job which can be argued is complex and demanding (Morrison, 2018).

2.8 Prison officers: importance of their attributes and motivations for the role

Nilsen and Bagreeva (2020) argue that the quality of prison officers depends on their motivation for becoming a prison officer and their attitude towards prisoners, and that these qualities are just as important as the skills they acquire through training. They state that prison officers will need 'empathetic skills' (ibid, p. 379) and must be able to

build a relationship with prisoners through communication, but that they must be able to set and maintain boundaries. While initial training is important in training prison officers, character traits tend to be deeply ingrained in an individual. The absence of positive personal attitudes and behaviours from prison officers will have a negative impact in a prison and on the possibility of rehabilitation for prisoners. “For this reason, it is advisable during recruitment, training and employment always to challenge the development of negative attitudes” (ibid, p.379). These beliefs are shared by Bailey-Noblett (2019, p.61) who stated,

“The beliefs, values and culture instilled in prison officers are significant as they provide the basis of their views on the purpose of prison, rehabilitation and supporting prisoners in their care”.

As Liebling, Price and Shefer (2011, p.2) identified, ‘few clear ideas exist about what sort of role the prison officer occupies, what the best prison officer work looks like and what training they should receive’, however, ‘the role of the prison officer is arguably the most important in a prison’ (ibid, p.204). The SPS (2019, p.94) stated that one of their strategic outcomes is to ‘have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time’. Their mission is to ‘provide services which help transform the lives of people in our care so they can fulfil their potential and become responsible citizens’ (ibid, p. 5). Yet, the Ministry of Justice (2016) believe that, in order for prisons to be places of reform, we must provide prison officers with the right kind of training, so they are equipped with the skills required to allow them to make a difference in prisoners’ lives. Arnold, Liebling and Tait (2007) found that it is not possible to comprehend the experiences prisoners endure in prison without a sharper understanding of the prison officer role. It is clear that the prison officer plays a key role in the prison system and that they are best placed to assist prisoners on their rehabilitation journey in prison. Despite this, there has been little research conducted regarding prison officers’ perceptions of their role around assisting prisoners on their rehabilitation journey, particularly in Scotland. The House of Commons Justice Committee (2009, p.6) believe that, ‘a comprehensive review of the role of the prison officer is long overdue’. Forward five years, an organisational review later and the SPS (2014, p2.) mission statement is ‘unlocking potential, transforming lives’. The SPS state they are committed to being an ‘agent of transformational change’ (ibid, p.2) for prisoners in their care and helping them to become law-abiding citizens upon release.

It took a further five years before the initial training was transformed and delivered to newly recruited prison officers. It has been a slow process, but hopefully now the SPS are making progress to ensure newly recruited residential officers have the right training and skills to enable them to carry out their role.

Researchers have found that prison officers remain the 'invisible ghosts of penalty' (Liebling, 2000, p.337) and are neglected in research, with prison officers feeling this way for most of the twentieth century (Arnold, Liebling and Tait, 2007; Coyle, 2005; House of Commons Justice Committee, 2009; Jewkes, Crewe and Bennett, 2012; Liebling, Price and Shefar, 2011). Yet, Liebling, Price and Shefar (2011, p. 205) stated that, 'we can confidently argue that prison officers are finally receiving the research attention they deserve'. This feeling is shared by Arnold (2016) who believes that prison officers are no longer neglected within research. While there have been studies carried out in the last sixteen years with regards to prison officer culture (Arnold, H., Liebling, A. and Tait, S, 2007), care (Tait, 2008) and the qualities that make a 'good' prison officer (Matheson, 2016), there is still a lack of research on the role of the prison officer, how officers perceive their role and the training they receive, particularly in Scotland. The role of the prison officer has been described as 'undefined' (House of Commons, 2009, p.5) and 'unclear' (ibid, p. 13). The aims of this study are to fill the gaps in the research in relation to Scotland.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology which underpins this research. It will describe the research strategy used, explain how the data was collected and analysed and discuss the potential limitations of this research.

3 Methodology

This chapter will discuss the research strategy used, how the data was collected and analysed and the limitations of this research. Based upon the literature review and the lack of previous research carried out, the following questions were framed;

- What is the role of the residential officer in Scotland compared to the role of the prison officer in Norway?
- How is initial training constructed in Scotland and Norway and what is the purpose of this training?
- To what extent do officers feel their initial training enables them to have an impact on prisoners' lives?

3.1 Research Strategy

The research study examined the proposed, most effective training that should be delivered to residential officers in Scotland. It explored how prison officers, first line managers and governors viewed the initial training delivered to residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway. It analysed how effective these individuals felt the initial training was at enabling them to impact the lives of prisoners. A qualitative research design was used, in particular a phenomenologically inspired approach that identifies themes derived participants' responses. This enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of prison officers', first line managers' and governors' perceptions of the research questions. It allowed the researcher an insight into the experiences of these individuals and how they view initial training (Bazeley, 2013; Groenewald, 2004; Neubauer, Witkop and Varpio, 2019).

Qualitative research was viewed to be the most appropriate choice of methodology as this relates to analysing people 'in their natural settings, attempting to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2). This enabled the researcher to investigate the meaning that the prison officers, first line managers and governors assign to their behaviour, actions and interactions within the prison. This approach allowed the interviewees to elaborate in a way that would not be possible with other methods and allowed them to provide their own answers without having to make them fit into limited choice answers provided by the researcher (Groenewald, 2004; Noaks and Wincup, 2004).

A case study approach with an interpretivist epistemology was used to implement the research (Bryman, 2001). This type of approach was chosen as it is 'an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context' (Yin, 2009, p.14). The research involved participants within three prisons and using their experiences to generalise the training delivered to all residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway. However, case studies do have their limitations. As only a limited number of prisons and staff were selected to participate in this research, it could be argued that the data is too generalised. Three prisons were selected between Scotland and Norway, which is a small fraction of the prisons which exist in these countries. Hamel, Dufour and Fortin (1993, p.23) advised that 'the case study has been faulted for its...lack of rigor in the collection, construction and analysis of the empirical materials that give rise to this study'. Case studies are considered difficult to replicate and problems with ethics can arise where the researcher could be selective of the data collected 'that virtually anything he wished could be illustrated' (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p.378). However, Shields (2007, p.13) argues that case studies are 'gold standard' as they include the humane nature of qualitative study.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

This was an exploratory, cross-sectional study which confined the duration of the research to a number of months (Bryman, 2001). A triangulation of data collection methods was to be used, in particular semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observations. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to hold the interviews and the focus groups within the prison establishments. The research involved conducting interviews and focus groups with staff from Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) A, HMP B and C Prison. Several former staff from D Prison in Norway also participated. The interviews and focus groups were conducted via Microsoft Teams and were recorded with the permission of each participant. Recording the interviews and focus groups, then transcribing them afterwards, allowed the researcher to give their full attention to the participants and ensure all information was captured by the researcher. The study addressed the limited nature of the research carried out in relation to prison officers, their initial training and how this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners. Residential officers, prison officers, first line managers and governors were involved, to establish whether the differing roles and grades had

opposing views on the effectiveness of the initial training. Residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway took part in the focus groups whereas first line managers in Scotland and governors in Norway took part in the interviews. One impromptu meeting was held with a governor in Scotland. First line managers and governors were excluded from the focus groups so that the residential and prison officers could provide more authentic answers without the presence of senior figures. The questions asked in the semi-structured interviews can be found at Appendix A and at Appendix B for the focus groups.

A combination of data collection methods increased the validity of the study as the strengths of the semi-structured interviews compensated for the weaknesses of the focus groups and vice versa. Semi-structured interviews are effective because they allow the researcher to go beyond external behaviour, to explore the thoughts and feelings of the participants (Abbott *et al*, 2018). The purpose of the interviews was to allow the researcher to see things from the perspective of the interviewee (Bazeley, 2013). Interviews allowed the researcher to investigate the views of the participants in greater depth than some other methods. Interviewees may be more likely to open up and share their true thoughts and feelings in an interview, as opposed to a focus group. There are however several limitations of semi-structured interviews. The responses by the interviewees may have been distorted due to personal bias or anxiety. Interviews can also be greatly affected by the emotional wellbeing of the participant at the time of the interview. Information provided by interviewees can also be subject to issues with memory recall (Patton, 2002).

Focus groups are useful as the researcher was able to elicit information from several individuals in the same length of time they were able to elicit information from one person in an interview (Flick, 2018) Within focus groups, participants both query and explain themselves, so more in-depth information is provided than may have been extracted from an interview. These interactions provided the researcher with valuable information regarding the extent of consensus and diversity among the participants. This also enhanced the quality of the data as participants were able to provide checks on or correct each other, which enabled the researcher to highlight false or extreme views. Within the focus groups, the researcher was able to draw out comparisons from the participants about their experiences and views. Limitations of focus groups are that the number of questions which can be asked is greatly reduced due to the group

setting. In a one-hour focus group, no more than ten major questions should be asked, so that each question can be explored in-depth and thorough answers can be provided by the participants. Another limitation of a focus group is that participants who understand their viewpoint is a minority perspective, may be reluctant to voice their opinion at the risk of receiving negative responses from the rest of the group (Noaks and Wincup, 2004; Patton, 2002).

The researcher transcribed the interviews to ensure they could be relied upon (Kvale, 1989). The researcher analysed the data by uploading each of the transcriptions into NVIVO12. Fifteen key themes were identified and coded within the transcriptions through the use of an inductive analysis approach. Some of the themes – the role of the prison officer, their initial training and how far this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners – were identified as the research questions emerged. The theme of prison officer professionalisation and motivations for their role emerged through discussions with SPS staff and through existing literature. The rest of the themes emerged throughout the interviews and focus groups. The researcher used NVIVO to group the themes together extract information provided by the participants into each of the themes.

3.3 Negotiating Access to Participants

From their time as an undergraduate student, the researcher had connections with several people who had spent time as governors in Norwegian prisons. These individuals agreed to participate in the research and with these connections the researcher was able to gain access to the governor of C Prison, who consented to three prison officers participating in the research. The researcher wished to speak with more prison officers and contacted D Prison as well. However due to the impact of Covid-19 officers from D Prison were unable to participate. The researcher had a connection within the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), which enabled them gain access to the governors within two prisons in Scotland, HMP A and HMP B. This in turn enabled the researcher to speak with numerous staff in both prisons.

3.4 Study Sites

HMP A accommodates up to 285 low supervision adult male offenders in Scotland. Prisoners within this establishment are serving sentences of 18 months or longer. This prison focuses on providing employment training and enhanced personal responsibility, with the aim of reducing re-offending and helping to re-integrate prisoners back into society (Scottish Prison Service, 2015b).

HMP B is a prison which accommodates up to 630 adult male prisoners. It manages individuals who are on remand, short-term and long-term sentences, life offenders and sexual offenders (Scottish Prison Service, 2015c).

C Prison in Norway only opened in 2010. This prison was the first prison constructed following White Paper no.27 which changed the goals of the Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS) and the way the Norwegian prison system runs today. This was following a difficult period in Norway in the 1980s where their prisons had problems with riots and there was a high level of recidivism (Høidal, 2018). It is a maximum-security prison which can accommodate up to 252 male prisoners. The goal of this prison is to provide prisoners with opportunities to change and desist from crime (ibid).

3.5 Participant Sample

Purposive sampling (Lavrakas, 2008; Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Futing Liao, 2004) was used, with the aim of gathering a range of opinions about the initial training that is delivered to residential officers and prison officers and how far this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners. The interviews and focus groups involved a range of residential officers and first line managers in Scotland and prison officers and governors in Norway. There were male and female participants with a range of experience from less than one year to more than twenty years' experience. Nine interviews were carried out; four in HMP A, three in HMP B and two in Norway with participants whom no longer work in a prison. Four focus groups were carried out; one with four participants from HMP A, two with two participants from HMP B and one with three participants from C Prison. One impromptu meeting was held with a governor in Scotland, also via Microsoft Teams. The individuals' views will be expressed through the following anonymisations; NG1-2 for governors within the NCS, NP1-3 for prison

officers within the NCS, SM1-8 for first line managers and the governor within the SPS and SP1-8 for residential officers within the SPS.

The participants involved had experience working within either the SPS or the Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS). The participants in Scotland are all serving staff and all but one in Norway are serving staff; albeit one no longer works in a prison but still works for the NCS. The person who is no longer employed by the NCS still does some work in corrections, albeit in a different way. Some of the staff who were spoken to are directly involved in helping to train newly recruited prison officers within the prison, either once they have finished their training at the SPSC in Scotland or while training at the prison in between semesters at The Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy (KRUS). Several individuals are involved, or were previously involved, in developing the initial training delivered to prison officers in several countries around the world.

3.6 Limitations

The research only provided the effectiveness of the initial training from the point of view of the prison staff. Prisoners were not asked how well equipped they feel prison officers are to help them transform their lives. Due to the constraints of this research, it would not have been possible to also include prisoners' views. As prison officers are the people who experience the training and implement this in practice, having their views was paramount to this research. The researcher had no control over most of the individuals who participated in the research, with the exception of the governor in Scotland and two previous serving staff in Norway. The officers were either hand-picked by the governors or the governor asked for volunteers. There is a possibility there was some bias in selecting the 'best' staff so the participants may not represent a large number of prison staff. However, as some individuals volunteered, there was a balance of participants who were chosen and participants who volunteered. In the event that the 'best' staff were chosen, this may not be entirely problematic. Staff who wish to do a good job would likely be more forth-coming about their initial training, how it could be improved and to what extent they are able to impact the lives of prisoners. Due to the impact of Covid-19 and the time allowed for this research project, only three prisons participated in this research. The researcher was originally granted permission

to speak with participants in other prisons in Norway but this eventually wasn't possible as a result of the difficulties the prisons faced as a result of Covid-19. The researcher had to contact governors of other prisons in Norway where Covid-19 was not such an issue and request access to participants and this was granted. The researcher was also unable to visit the prisons and conduct the interviews and focus groups face to face and had to quickly switch to an online method. As a result of only three prisons being able to participate, there were no representative views of the wider prison system in Scotland and Norway. However, the training delivered to prison officers is universal across each country so this should limit the impact of the lack of representation from each prison. This method also provided an in-depth insight into the initial training delivered and its impact on a number of people.

Primarily, the researcher was a student without any experience of being inside a prison in any capacity. This enabled the researcher to be objective throughout the interviews and focus groups as she had no experience in this arena. However, the researcher had pre-existing ideas about the initial training delivered to prison officers and the extent to which this enabled them to impact the lives of prisoners. These pre-existing ideas were made up of the researcher's own experience of working in the criminal justice system, namely within the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) and the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP), her contacts within prisons in Scotland and Norway, and of articles and news reports the researcher has read throughout the years. These pre-conceptions could appear problematic, however Charmaz and Mitchell (1996, p.286) state that 'there is merit in audible authorship'. It allows the researcher to explain the whole story, through questioning, querying and learning more about the perceptions of those whose worlds we are researching.

This chapter has detailed the research strategy which was implemented to conduct this research. It has explained how the raw data was collected and the technology which was used to analyse said data. An overview of the limitations of this research was also provided. The following chapter will discuss and examine the results of the research. For the findings from Scotland, the terms residential officer and prison officer will be used interchangeably, depending on how they were referred to by the individuals interviewed but each time they are referring to residential officers.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the results of the case study carried out which is detailed within the methodology at Chapter Three. The research involved conducting semi-structured interviews and focus groups with twenty individuals. First line managers and governors were involved in the interviews while prison officers were involved in the focus groups (questions outlined in Appendix A and B). One impromptu meeting was also conducted with a governor in Scotland.

This chapter will be split into two parts. The first section will discuss the role of the prison officer and perceptions of their role, while the second will discuss the initial training they receive. The key themes that were identified within the interviews and focus groups will be compared to existing research to enable the researcher to answer the aims of this study which were set out in Chapter Three Methodology.

4.2 What is the role of the residential officer in Scotland compared to the role of the prison officer in Norway?

There was a strong consensus among the officers in Scotland that first and foremost, the role of the residential officer is the maintenance of safety and security. It was acknowledged that it is a difficult day when these are not maintained. This aligns with research by Bailey-Noblett (2019), which suggests that prison officers believe their work is primarily to maintain security. While safety and security are paramount in any prison, the SPS (2019) states that the primary role of the residential officer is to support prisoners each day through effective case management and to build relationships with prisoners, while the primary role of the operations officer is the maintenance of security. While not suggesting that residential officers should disregard safety and security as an important part of their role, it is interesting to note that no individual, when asked about their role, mentioned assisting prisoners before talking about safety and security aspects. Most of the officers stated that their role included ensuring prisoners' basic needs were met such as showers, phone calls, medications and food. Setting an example of how people should act and behave through pro-social modelling was identified as a responsibility of the officer too. Interviewee SM2 believed that residential officers have to do things like you'd do in a hotel such as ensuring there is clean laundry and bedding. They stated that:

"[Residential officers] get paid more [than operations officers] and should be doing the more in-depth work with the prisoners, and they do, but they still spend a lot of their time making sure there is clean towels and that kind of stuff". (Interviewee SM2)

One officer said that their role is to make a difference and to break the chain of offending. Two interviewees stated that they are carers, social workers, minders and parents. Another stated that a huge part of the role is to be a mum, dad, granny and grandad and to build positive relationships. This is consistent with prior research which suggested that prison staff view their role as more parental than prison officer (Liebling, 2000).

One participant believes that the residential role is the most important role in the prison. Residential officers are tasked with the responsibility of managing prisoners'

sentence management plans where, as a personal officer, they guide and encourage prisoners through their sentences. SM7 stated that:

“You go against your conscience a lot and against your own morals...it’s unnatural to lock another human being up, it’s unnatural to put somebody in cuffs and drag them”. (Interviewee SM7)

This is consistent with research by Liebling (2004), who identified that a key part of the prison officer role is to observe the suffering of prisoners. A participant in Norway believes that their role is to be around the prisoners, talk to them and correct them when they begin to talk about criminality. NG2 suggested that the role of the prison officer ‘radically changed in the latter part of the 1980s when they went from being just guards to guards and social workers, particularly when compared to other nations. This was part of White Paper no.27 (Høidal, 2018), which altered the role of the prison officer and the education and training provided to them. Individual NG2, in reference to the role of the prison officer, also stated:

“Basically [teaching] human skills, that should be their focus instead of focussing on making sure nothing bad happens and no people seem to escape. It’s easy to run a prison where people are not able to escape...they need to spend time in a system where they have changed and learned how to govern their own lives”. (Interviewee NG2)

It is promising that a number of participants did mention that their role involves working with prisoners to support their individual needs and assisting prisoners to see that they can change the course of their life. However, one officer, SP4, when asked what the purpose of their role was stated ‘to rehabilitate a prisoner but I don’t know if that’s something that we do’. Given that prison officers have been recognised as the best people placed to meet the SPS’ mission of transforming the lives of prisoners by unlocking their potential (Scottish Prison Service, 2016: Scottish Prison Service, 2019a), it is disheartening to hear an officer make this statement. It is however not surprising given that the SPS Value Proposition (2016) acknowledged that prison officers are unable to fulfil their potential as a result of a hierarchical system where the main focus is equipping their front-line staff to maintain custody and order.

4.2.1 Perceptions of the role of the prison officer

A number of staff stated that as a prison officer, they feel like they are a forgotten service, because their work is not seen due to their role being carried out behind walls, away from the general public. This aligns with Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin (2007) who found that prison work was relatively invisible. Fourteen years on, prison officers still agree with this statement, which is unsurprising given that their role and their contribution to rehabilitation, particularly in Scotland, has rarely been included in research (Bailey-Noblett, 2019). Participants suggested that they are never on the same level as the police, firefighters or nurses because their work isn't visible. One individual expressed that they are glad the public are shielded from what prison officers do, as prisoners are taken out of society for a reason.

A large number of those interviewed in Scotland felt it would be difficult to change the public's perception of the prison officer. SP7 in particular stated:

"I don't think people would recognise me as a professional. The public don't understand anything that we deal with and to be honest, I don't think they're interested. They just want them to be locked up and that's it." (Interviewee SP7)

Participants indicated that public perception would not change without the media transforming the way they speak about prisons, as very few positive stories about the prison officer exist. They believe that the problem is that the public have no idea what they do. Some officers indicated that even their family members don't really know what they do, as it's an environment a person will never understand unless they are part of it. Others indicated that they are made to feel like they are 'just' a prison officer, despite the hard work they do. Several officers commented that they feel their job is professional, despite perceptions suggesting otherwise. SP1 stated, "we do a brilliant job, so we do. I think we're really, really underrated with the job we do." A large number of the interviewees stated that they are proud to do the job and would be happy to tell anybody about it, despite how much 'stick' they may get for it. Two participants suggested that they would be 'happy to shout it from the rooftops' while another participant stated that they knew of several colleagues who did not want the public knowing they are a prison officer. It is understandable why some staff wish to keep their job anonymous and why public perception of prison officers may be negative, as

'prison staff rarely get good press' (Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin, 2007, p.31) as identified within these interviews and existing research.

All of the participants interviewed in Norway are proud to do the job they do and they stated that most of their colleagues are too. In the past the public perception of the role also appeared mainly negative however this has changed over the years. One individual, NG1, stated:

*"Throughout the 60s and 70s, especially the 70s and up to the 80s there wasn't that many people that wanted to work in the prisons. It was considered to be kind of a bad job with a lot of bad culture."
(Interviewee NG1)*

Another officer, NP1, confirmed that perception has changed in the course of their employment, stating "I feel like I never have to defend my job anymore because people understand why I'm doing what I'm doing". This officer believes the openness of Norwegian prisons is the cause of this change as some Norwegian prisons allow researchers, TV and media inside to create documentaries among other things. They believe this has allowed the public to see what the role of the prison officer really involves and what they are trying to achieve. In Norway, the role of the prison officer appears to be viewed by the public as a vocation and profession akin to other professions.

4.2.2 Motivation for joining the prison service

To be able to understand the role that the prison officer occupies, it is important to learn about their motivations for applying to the role. Each of the participants were asked what their motivation for joining the prison service was and what continues to motivate them in their role. In Scotland, ten of the interviewees stated that the salary and the stability of the job were what attracted them to apply. This is consistent with findings by Morrison and Maycock (2021) who found that economic pragmatism was one of the main reasons officers applied to the role. A few individuals advised that they applied to gain some experience before applying to becoming a police officer. Participant SM4 stated:

“The only reason I joined at first was for the money. The prison service was the way to go as I doubled my wages...Most of us have failed at our first careers because you don’t come straight from college or from school into the prison service... I quite like the job, I suppose I find it, not so much comfortable but fairly easy.”
(Interviewee SM4)

Prison officers are tasked with the difficult job of helping to transform the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Their job has been described as ‘highly skilled’ (Liebling, 2011, p.488) and ‘complex’ (Crewe, Liebling and Hulley, 2015, p.311). The fact that the job, albeit of a manager instead of a residential officer, has been described as fairly easy, may reinforce the findings set out in the SPS Value Proposition (2016), whereby it was stated that front-line staff are not equipped to meet the care and opportunity aspects of the role. It suggests that some front-line staff may find their job easy because they are merely fulfilling the custody and order elements of the role. Several participants commented on the fact that they applied for the role out of economic pragmatism or that they would be unlikely to secure another job on the same wage with the qualifications they have:

“You don’t see a class of school children and they’re saying ‘what do you want to be when you grow up?’ nobody puts their hand up and says ‘I want to be a prison officer’...for me it was job security, wages, pension, the full shooting match...who wants to work in this environment, really? I’ve grown to love it but it’s not something most people would aspire to.” (Interviewee SP1)

While several interviewees in Norway commented that they were motivated to apply due to job security, a few commented that they wished to work in rehabilitation. Participant NP1 stated:

“I had my mind made up from a pretty early age. I think it was like seventh grade when I decided that’s what I wanted to do but whether it was prison or any other sort of rehabilitation institution...”
(Interviewee NP1)

Interviewee NG2 recognised the importance of an individual’s motivation to apply to become a prison officer. They stated:

“First of all is to find out why do you want to work in a prison? What is the motive for ending up as a prison officer? To work in a place with people who are in that position of being locked up as inmates are, should first of all ask themselves ‘why do I want to work in a place like this?’” (Interviewee NG2)

Prisoners’ experiences are likely to be largely influenced by residential officers, as they are the people that spend most time with prisoners and are responsible for everything that concerns a prisoner’s day. Individual NG2 felt that if a prison has good staff, that will be the best thing about a prison, while if a prison has bad staff, that will be the worst. They also highlighted that prison officers hold power and influence. It is therefore important to understand a person’s motives for applying to the role and how they view prisoners. As NG1 highlighted, it is difficult to train a prison officer not to abuse their power, so it is important to recruit the right individuals from the outset. Several officers in Scotland commented that some residential officers over-use their power which results in breakdown of relationships with prisoners. In November 2019, the SPS began recruiting residential officers using a values-based recruitment approach. This is promising given the information provided by NG2 and the officers in Scotland. This will hopefully ensure that the residential officers recruited to the role have values which match the SPS’ vision and aims. In Norway, the participants felt that their lengthy training programme was responsible for people applying to the role for reasons other than economic pragmatism. Participant NG1 stated:

“When they started to pro-long the education they started to attract new people that want to work in a prison with other motives rather than just having the pay.” (Interviewee NG1)

This was also acknowledged by officer NP3 who stated:

“We see that our force of prison officers are more educated and are choosing this line of work because they want to, not because they have to, and that’s a big difference.” (Interviewee NP3)

A two-year training programme in Scotland would require a lot of commitment and would likely set apart the individuals who are applying because they want to make a difference and those who are seeking monetary gains and stability. Understanding their motivation for applying the role assists in comprehending how they view their

work. It is interesting that, in Scotland, no interviewee stated that they wanted to make a difference in the lives of prisoners. The role is considered to carry a caring aspect as the dual function is security and care. However, the majority of participants were motivated by economic pragmatism. On the contrary in Norway, several officers stated that their motivation for applying was a desire to work in rehabilitation.

4.2.3 Relationships between prison officers and prisoners

Most interviewees said that the relationship between the residential officers and the prisoners varies depending on the prison establishment. Several officers suggested this may be a result of the culture in the prison and the type of establishment. One individual proposed that in closed conditions, residential officers may only see prisoners twice a day when unlocking or locking their cell, so may not develop a relationship with them. This was echoed by another who stated that some residential officers may not even know the name of a prisoner because they see them so infrequently. Participant SP5 commented:

“They’ve been locked away for so long in closed jails that you don’t even know half of them and they’re in for two minutes then they’re away to another hall or...there’s not enough continuity in closed jails.”

(Interviewee SP5)

The ‘us and them’ culture appears much more apparent in closed conditions. One officer commented that prisoners moving from closed to open conditions may not speak to staff for some time until they get used to the culture within the open prison. The same individual suggested this may be because prisoners need staff more in open conditions because they have more privileges to lose such as home leave. There appeared to be a strong consensus that in closed conditions, if a prisoner is talking to an officer, other prisoners may think they are sharing information with them, so there is peer-pressure on them not to interact with staff. Several officers acknowledged that they felt relationships between residential officers and prisoners were generally very good, but that when an incident happens the divide is evident, with officers going to one side and prisoners to the other. The same participants commented on the fact that residential officers, as personal officers, have a duty to guide a number of prisoners through their sentence. They stated that personal officers should regularly be sitting

down with each of their prisoners and talking with them, face to face. However, due to being short-staffed they're not always able to do this and only the basic functions of the role can be met. This prevents quality time being spent and can cause relationships to break down. SM2 stated:

“A big part of building relationships is having a regular group of staff...working day to day with the same prisoners because you know their issues...where there are staff-shortages we put staff wherever we can and it doesn't work as well.” (Interviewee SM2)

There was a strong consensus that the open prison presents a nicer environment for staff and prisoners and that communication between them is better. Individual SP5 felt this was because:

“[Staff] aren't rolling about left, right and centre with prisoners like they are [in closed conditions]...it's not constant opening and shutting doors, bang bang bang, we have a chat with them, they go about their business and we maybe have a chat with them again.” (Interviewee SP5)

It appears that there is a perception in the open establishment that relations between residential officers and prisoners in closed conditions is generally poor. The staff who stated this have previously worked in closed establishments. However, there was a strong consensus from the participants currently working within a closed establishment that relationships between residential officers and prisoners are positive. This suggests that relationships in closed conditions have improved over time, which is consistent with one officer's view that the culture between staff and prisoners has improved over the years. Albeit two officers in the closed environment suggested that some staff don't respect prisoners. The same participants each felt they had very good relationships with prisoners and were there to support them. However, it is recognised that prisoners can turn on a staff member at any time so to always remember that. Two staff stated that relationships with prisoners are fantastic and that their establishment prides itself on having positive relationships with prisoners. One individual, SP1, stated:

“At the end of the day it's still a 'them and us' though, make no mistake...we've got guys I've built up fantastic relationships with but

if push came to shove would take an iron bar across my head.”

(Interviewee SP1)

Another officer stated that relationships in the closed prison are generally very good. They highlighted however that some prison officers don't particularly like working with prisoners and will do their best to sit in the back office. SM3 stated "I can think of some people...they don't want to be a prison officer which to me is strange because why would you work in a prison if you don't want to be a prison officer?". One participant stated that some prison officers flaunt their authority too much to the point it ruins relationships with prisoners. This is concerning and raises questions about the reason these individuals applied to become a prison officer. If a residential officer uses their power in a negative way or doesn't like working with prisoners, it is unlikely their relationships are going to be positive. This will cause difficulty for the residential officer to fulfil one of their functions, which is to help unlock the potential of prisoners and transform their lives. As Liebling (2011, p.485) found, 'the moral quality of prison life is enacted and embodied by the attitudes and conduct of prison officers'.

It is promising to note that so many participants commented on the positive relationships between residential officers and prisoners, as research suggests that these relationships lie at the heart of prison life (ibid) and that prison officers are the people best placed to make a difference in the lives of prisoners (Scottish Prison Service, 2016). However, the emergence of less positive relationships is concerning for these same reasons. It appears that staffing issues can impact on the ability to foster positive relationships between residential officers and prisoners, perhaps along with regimes in some closed establishments resulting in staff rarely seeing prisoners. The culture among prisoners in closed establishments also appears to have a negative impact on relationships with residential officers as communicating may present difficult situations for the prisoner with their fellow inmates. This is troubling given that the House of Commons (2009, p.6) expressed that the collective environment in each prison, coupled with the relationships between prison officers and prisoners are 'enormously important'.

Goffman (1961, p.xiii) developed the theory of a total institution, 'a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally

administered round of life'. It is clear that a prison and its people, whether prisoners or prison officers, fit into this concept. Prison officers talk of their work being hidden and of them being forgotten by society. Some prison officers talk of being unable to trust prisoners and some speak of a culture which exists where prisoners cannot speak to prison officers for fear of backlash from other prisoners. Goffman (ibid, p.7) found that 'staff tend to feel superior and righteous'. While this appears to be a generalised assumption, some interviewees have mentioned that some staff don't respect prisoners.

Similarly, Bailey-Noblett (2019, p.66) found that the initial training 'implants in prison officers that prisoners cannot be trusted'. This is concerning as relationships between staff and prisoners is of critical importance in prisoners' lives and an imbalance does exist because prisoners' lives are controlled by prison officers. This may create a struggle between some prison officers and prisoners and positive relations may be hard to achieve or maintain. It should be noted, however, that this research took place in a private prison establishment which could have been a potentially influencing factor.

The concepts of 'habitus' and 'field' developed by Bourdieu (Chan, 1996; Cockcroft, 2016) can help to explain how culture influences the prison officer and their role. 'Habitus' refers to individual and collective cultures and beliefs in a person shaped by race, gender and class and takes into consideration an individual's personal life outside their work (Cockcroft *et al*, 2018; Heslop, 2011; Reay, 2004). A 'field' is considered a 'specialist domain of practice with their own "logic"' (Heslop, p.333) and was termed by Bourdieu (1993) as a game. Bourdieu (1992, p.127) used the metaphor 'a fish in water' to explain when the habitus matches that of the field or the 'game'. Culture is not monolithic and it varies according to the field (Chan, 1996). There can be many cultures present within one organisation (Cockcroft, 2013) and each prison officer will have their own individual habitus as well as a collective habitus. Heslop (2011, p.334) stated, 'their habitus, as it were, is them and is the sum of all the experiences in their lives so far'. While this was in relation to police officers, it is relevant for prison officers too as they both 'function within the criminal justice arena' (Cockcroft, 2016, p.30). Heslop (2011) found within their research of police officers that the differences between the participant sample impacted on their own experiences and their habitus. This was evident within this research where a male prison officer

with twenty years' experience appeared to have a different habitus to a female officer with one years' experience. If the collective group have a certain view towards prisoners or how things are done, the inexperienced female officer may begin to imitate the behaviours and beliefs of the collective habitus, despite her personal opposing views.

Each prison establishment - the 'field' - also has their own culture. Throughout this research it became clear that HMP A has a different culture to HMP B. The prison officers within HMP A spoke of relations between staff and prisoners being positive. Prisoners are generally better behaved there as they have more to lose, and it is considered appropriate for prisoners to engage with prison officers. Within HMP B however, it was clear that the 'us versus them' culture is much more prevalent. Prisoners tend not to engage with staff for fear of backlash from fellow prisoners. Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2008, p.41) found that 'learning...can change and/or reinforce the habitus of the learner'. If a prison has a traditional masculine culture, like HMP B might, the prison officers may display the knowledge associated with that culture; focussing on the processes, the safety and security, despite their personal habitus and the overall knowledge they have accumulated. In a prison which has a trauma-informed focus, the prison officers may likely display behaviours associated with this, regardless of other knowledge or beliefs they have. This research was conducted using a relatively small sample, therefore the conclusions drawn may not represent the views of the wider establishment or other establishments as a whole. However, it is thought to be important to consider the culture which exists in a prison, as regardless of the values and beliefs instilled in an individual, they can change depending on the collective habitus and field they are in (Morrison, 2018). It is also possible to change the culture which exists in a prison, through alterations in the habitus or the field (Chan, 1996; Cockcroft *et al*, 2018).

According to Sackmann (1991), axiomatic knowledge embodies the beliefs about 'the way things are done' in an organisation. This type of knowledge tends to be held by the strategic players in an organisation, for example, top management. Within the SPS this relates to the Organisational Review (2013) and the emphasis on unlocking the potential within and transforming the lives of prisoners. The organisational review transformed the role and training delivered to residential officers, with new recruits learning about desistance and trauma-informed practice. This represents a change in

the habitus, however there are still problems because the field hasn't changed. Prison officers are returning to their establishments and they're being told to forget everything they learned at the SPSC. There doesn't appear to be any integration between what is learned at the SPSC and what is implemented in practice within the establishments. Participants within this research said that their time at the SPSC was important because it gave them the theoretical knowledge, policies and procedures to prepare them for the establishment. They stated that the establishment was where the learning actually began and learning from their colleagues was crucial. This is consistent with research by Heslop (2011) who found the same in their research with police officers. A learning culture doesn't appear to exist within the prison establishments and therefore the training is not implemented in practice. To diminish this and improve the transition from learning to implementation, there should be better integration between the training at the SPSC and the implementation within the prison. In Norway, there appears to be a learning culture within KRUS and within the prisons, hence why 50% of a new recruit's first year within the prison is spent doing theoretical work.

4.3 How is initial training constructed in Scotland and Norway and what is the purpose of this training?

Prior to March 2020 and for the last twenty-five years or so, residential officers in Scotland have had to become an operations officer first before being promoted to the role of residential officer. Training would last around seven weeks, six of which were at the SPSC and one of which was at the establishment. An SPS official advised however, that the length of the training would often vary depending on the needs of the establishment at the time. Training could vary from six weeks to nine weeks, which was consistent with experiences of the officers interviewed. From March 2020 recruits were able to apply directly to the role of residential officer, whereby they receive twelve weeks' training, eleven of which are at the SPSC and one at the establishment. They are then expected to complete modules over a two-year period. However, the same SPS official expressed concerns that this would not happen. They advised that due to lack of staffing in each establishment, governors would be unable to release these staff back to the SPSC to complete their training. This is concerning, as the SPS have made clear their plans to professionalise the role of the residential officer to enable them to become Justice Professionals and help transform the lives of prisoners in their

care (Scottish Prison Service, 2013; Scottish Prison Service, 2016). This is unsurprising however, as under-staffing appears to have been a problem within the prison system for some time. Participant SM7 stated:

“Staff shortages have been going on since I think 2000. We had a recruitment block and we’ve never really got back to full force. The number of prison officers in uniform seems to fall dramatically year on year. That’s difficult to watch...there is definitely less staff going about prisons than there used to be.” (Interviewee SM7)

All but one of the participants interviewed in Scotland became residential officers through the promotion scheme. The other joined directly as a residential officer and has been through the new training system. In Norway, prison officers have had to attend KRUS for two years since the 1980s and now have the option to do a Bachelor’s degree in Correctional Studies after their initial training.

4.3.1 Initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland

Prior to March 2020 there appeared to be inconsistency in the training delivered to prison officers. The interviewees expressed they had five, six or seven weeks’ training at the SPSC, but all agreed they had one weeks’ training at their establishment prior to attending the SPSC. The majority of the participants felt that the training at the SPSC was too long and should be condensed down, some suggesting to only three weeks. A large number of participants commented that the training at the SPSC was, in their opinion, too classroom based. They felt they sat through PowerPoint presentations and worked through a folder, but that the training did not reflect what the role really entailed once inside a prison. Most of the interviewees commented on the training being generic and a number of them stated that the trainers would often tell them to check back at their establishment how to do a particular thing, as each establishment is different. This reflects the lack of consistency of working practices across institutions.

Most of the officers believe that the training delivered at the SPSC was to fulfil the custody and order part of the role and did not cover the care and opportunity components. The majority of participants stated that the purpose of the training was to teach the recruits the policies and procedures within the organisation, along with

the security aspects of the role, not how to help prisoners in any way. Officer SP8 advised, “[the training] is mainly procedural, how to do a search, a little on equality and diversity saying, ‘here’s what you can say and here’s what you can’t say’”. Most officers stated that the training taught them the role of the operational officer only, teaching them how to conduct a search appropriately, escort prisoners, how to use the cuffs and radios and how visits operate. At the time however, these individuals were being trained for the operations officer role, so this was to be expected. Outside of the operational duties, a few staff mentioned that they received a half day training on how to manage stress. One interviewee, SP2, has been through the new training, which has been developed for direct entry residential officers and was rolled out in 2020. The training lasted twelve weeks and covered operational duties mostly, including front of house, reception and visits. SP2 stated they also learned cell searching and control and restraint. SP2 believes the purpose of the training was ‘to teach the basic knowledge of the job’. Bailey-Noblett (2019, p.60) found that the initial training delivered to prison officers ‘teaches them how to be a prison officer from the prison administration’s perspective’. The findings within this research would appear consistent with that statement. The House of Commons (2009, p.5) stated that, ‘historically, the prison officer was simply a turnkey, required to keep prisoners securely and ensure they behaved in a more or less orderly fashion’. Arguably, a decade on from this statement, the training that is given to prison officers, and now direct entry residential officers, at the SPSC appears to still focus heavily on the above aspects of custody and order with little attention paid to rehabilitation or desistance.

Two interviewees commented that, in the past, the initial training was delivered by principal officers who had been prison officers. Interviewee SM6 said:

“When I was at the College, they were all principal officers that were training instructors, there was no civilian training there. Everything we were taught was from individuals that had actually been there and done it and read the book...they’d been through the system. If you were looking for analogies or examples...you knew these guys were telling you real life stories.” (Interviewee SM6)

Several officers felt this was beneficial as the trainers had ‘been in their shoes’ and previously carried out the prison officer role. They stated that this made the training

feel more real. The training now appears to be carried out by civilian staff who have not previously worked as prison officers and SM6 feels this is a 'let down' in the training. While participants who have not previously worked in the prison officer role likely bring a wealth of transferrable skills and experience to the role of a trainer, it appears the individuals felt the trainers were unable to relate to them because they hadn't experienced the job for themselves. It appears they felt the trainers lacked the ability to be able to provide real-life examples and solutions which would have perhaps better prepared the recruits for commencing their role.

A few interviewees commented on control and restraint training being the most exciting part of their training as they 'got to do something'. Participant SM6 commented that this training has changed over the years which they believe is a 'massive mistake'. They advised that there are three phases to the training, phase three which involves the person being able to 'pick up a shield and go into a full-blown riot with all protective gear on'. All prison officers used to receive this training however they now only receive phase one. SM6 stated that prison officers now have to volunteer to do phases two and three, but there isn't any incentive for staff to volunteer their spare time as it requires them to be away from their family for several days at the SPSC. It was removed from the initial training to become a specialist role however the lack of volunteers means many staff are not trained in this.

4.3.2 Initial training delivered to prison officers in Norway

In Norway, there are two ways to become a prison officer. One way is by doing a four-week course and being considered, as individual NP1 put it, 'a sub'. NP3 stated that:

"The salary is also lower and there are law documents that these prison officers cannot provide to prisoners, but apart from that what they can do is pretty much the same thing". (Interviewee NP3)

The other way to become a prison officer, and the only way to become a permanent member of staff, is to attend KRUS. The training delivered to prison officers in Norway has changed over the years. In the 1970s the training lasted a matter of weeks, however since the 1980s prison officers have had to train at KRUS. Training at KRUS lasts for two years and the new recruits are referred to as students. This training gives the students a Degree in Correctional Services. KRUS have developed a Bachelor's

degree in Correctional Studies which students can volunteer to take once they have completed their compulsory two-year training. The programme takes two years part-time to complete.

All of the interviewees advised that the training comprises six months at KRUS, then one year in a prison setting - 50% of the time is completing practical training as a prison officer and the other 50% is school based at the establishment – followed by a further six months spent back at KRUS doing only theoretical work. Every individual commented that the training involved ‘introduction to the role of the prison officer’ which included professionalism, ethics, law, physical force and report writing. They also study law and crime and punishment. Within the prison they then study introduction part two, security and risk management, environmental work and re-integration which includes work on substance misuse. Back at the academy they study re-integration part two, security and risk management part two and ethics.

Research has suggested that the training delivered to prison officers in Scotland is inadequate to enable officers to carry out the role expected of them (Bailey-Noblett, 2019; House of Commons, 2009; Scottish Prison Service, 2016). In Norway, the module on ‘introduction to the role of the prison officer’ lasts longer than the entire duration of training delivered to residential officers in Scotland. This would suggest that the training is much more in-depth and provides the new recruits with a much larger knowledge base of the role, the people and situations they are going to be dealing with. This is consistent with research by Inderbitzen, Bates and Gainey (2014) who found that prison officers in Norway are highly trained compared to those in Scotland. Even officer NP3, who had spent time working as a prison officer who’d completed the four-week course, before going to KRUS and becoming a permanent prison officer stated:

“Of course there is a difference [between the two training programmes in Norway] between a four- week lightning course and a two-year theoretical and practical education...you learn a lot more, your reflection and knowledge of the job in total is much better”.
(Interviewee NP3)

Several of the officers interviewed, while a prison officer, are also responsible for supervising the students at the academy and in the prison. Each of these staff have

five students that they follow throughout the course of the training year in the prison. They do fifteen shifts with their five students and have fifteen individual conversations with them throughout the year, where NP3 states, 'we connect the dots'. Throughout the year, the students are working alongside experienced prison officers too. As mentioned previously, 50% of the training with the prison is theory based. NP2 stated:

"They work as a normal prison officer 50% of the time...then the school is all about how the learning has developed you know, how to see that reflection between working and the theory. Our job is to make them reflect about everything they do". (Interviewee NP2)

Three of the staff advised that reflection is an essential element of the role of the prison officer. They believe it's important to ask yourself why you're doing everything you're doing and what the consequences of that may be. Also reflecting on how you handled each situation, good or bad, and whether you'd do anything differently next time. This is positive as self-reflection enables an individual to continuously improve their skills and handling of situations, rather than persistently reacting in the same way to each situation.

4.3.3 Scotland's thoughts on Norway's training

Each of the interviewees were told about the training that is delivered to prison officers in Norway. They were not advised that an individual can become a prison officer inside four weeks for two reasons. These are not the prison officers this research focuses on and those prison officers are unable to do all of the duties expected of a prison officer nor do they receive the same salary. The participants fell into two groups. The majority of them felt positively towards the training delivered in Norway, however a few did not. Several mentioned that while they were supportive of the training delivered, they felt it would never become a reality in Scotland due to cost implications. SM4 stated:

"I think it would be a good thing when they're splitting it between the academy and the prison because if you're doing it in smaller chunks then you can put it into practice when you're in the prison and see what works...it's a really good idea...but the funding to me, we struggle to work on the budget we've got as it is." (Interviewee SM4)

This is a difficult and sad reality, whereby The Scottish Parliament (2020) found that the SPS budget reduced by £49.5 million between 2014-15 and 2018-19. It was further reduced by 1.7% for the 2019-20 period.

Another individual, SM2, when asked about a two-year training programme with a degree at the end of it stated:

“I think it would be great to professionalise what we do. A lot of what we do as a prison officer on a day to day basis is that kind of contractual type house-keeping nonsense. It’s a waste of valuable time in my opinion... You’re not going to invest a fortune in me to train me up and give me a degree for me to then go and stand and watch a prisoner push a food barrel up and down a corridor. You want me to be doing that real engagement and interviewing and trying to address the offending behaviour.” (Interviewee SM2)

This is relevant to earlier comments made by participants, whereby they stated that residential officers don’t often have time to do the in-depth work with prisoners due to short-staffing or that the role of the residential officer often involved duties like you’d find in a hotel. This is a similar finding to research carried out by Bailey-Noblett (2019), which discovered that prison officers wish to undertake more rehabilitative work, but have difficulty doing so due to over-crowding and lack of training on how to support prisoners. It is discouraging to hear that residential officers spend a lot of their time doing the work mentioned by SM2. Particularly when the SPS (2016) acknowledged that the residential officer would be the driving force behind unlocking the potential of prisoners and that their primary role is to support prisoners each day through effective case management (Scottish Prison Service, 2019). While it is essential the ‘hotel’ type duties are carried out, it is thought that another role may be better placed to do this when it is acknowledged that residential officers are expected to help unlock the potential of prisoners and transform their lives.

Several staff felt that two years training was unnecessary and that having a degree would not necessarily make a person a better prison officer. Interviewee SP8 stated,

“I’ll see-degree educated staff coming in as prison officers and for want of a better word, laying an egg and leaving a week later. They

come in, do the training at the college, come into the jail, get stage fright and are never seen again.” (Interviewee SP8)

While officer SP8 had negative experiences with degree-educated officers, the training delivered in Norway and the subsequent degree may help diminish the issue mentioned above. In Scotland, the people SP8 refers to, will have a degree in another subject and are given minimal training as a prison officer before being expected to ‘hit the ground running’ in the words of participant SM6. Whereas in Norway, the individuals spend six months at KRUS, before spending one year training in a prison with both practical and theoretical training, then a further six months back at KRUS. The degree they receive is relevant to the job they are about to undertake. It is thought that if similar training was implemented in Scotland, the issue that SP8 refers to would likely diminish. SP7 and SP1 appeared to have negative views towards the length of training and the degree, stating:

“If you’re taking guys for two years and doing that sort of qualification, I think being a prison officer is your life experiences. If you’ve experienced some of the stuff these guys are going through you can build a rapport with them more. But you’re kind of forcing these guys out of the job if you’re putting in these qualifications because some of these guys that might be great prison officers won’t get in. You might have guys that are great at reading textbooks and doing studying but when they get on the job they might not be good at doing the job.” (Interviewee SP7)

“You can be the smartest person in the world but can you deal with 35 angry prisoners wanting to kill you? That’s what makes you a prison officer. The degree itself to me isn’t worth the paper it’s written on. A clever person might not be able to fight with a prisoner.” (Interviewee SP1)

The participants in Norway were asked their thoughts on whether a two-year training programme may prevent some people, who would ordinarily be good prison officers, being successful and whether the individuals who were successful would be good at studying but not necessarily good at carrying out the role of the prison officer. Interviewee NP1 stated:

“My response is that it’s a myth that the people who do good in school don’t do good on the floor basically and that’s based on my experience. We need you to be interested and engaged, listen and want to learn and you want to be curious. Those are the people that do good in school and become good prison officers. I definitely think it’s a myth. The people who do good in school, my experience is that those are the best prison officers as well.” (Interviewee NP1)

Another officer in Norway, NP3, in response to the above stated:

“You never hear that from a person that is good at having long school behind them. You hear that from people who are tired from being at school and who don’t want to learn more about themselves.” (Interviewee NP3)

A previous conversation with an SPS official highlighted that a large number of prison officers in Scotland perhaps have a negative view of education. This may have been developed from their time in school or connected to culture because it has been the norm in prisons to feel negatively towards education. Therefore, this may help explain why some officers have a negative view of the training delivered in Norway.

Participant SM1, in relation to the training delivered in Norway, stated:

“I think it sounds great, if it works then absolutely...you can get £35,000 here with no qualifications. We’ve seen some of the individuals coming in and they’re maybe not best suited to this environment... Seeing if they actually want to do the job or if it is just about the money because you would soon be able to filter that out. If it’s just about the money you wouldn’t do two years. You would have to want to do it so I think it’s a great idea. It would split the people apart of who actually wants to do it and who just want the money and the perks that go along with it.” (Interviewee SM1)

These are interesting and important viewpoints. While a two-year training programme may provide the new recruits the benefit of much more knowledge and experience before being considered fully trained, it would also allow the SPS to filter out the individuals who are applying with the wrong intentions. To be responsible for helping

to unlock the potential of prisoners and transform their lives would likely require a certain level of dedication. The role of the prison officer is one of critical importance (Hawkins, 1976) and is considered by Liebling (2011) to be highly skilled work.

Participant SP1 stated:

"I don't think the prison officer in Norway today is doing anything different, much wholly different, than we are doing, residential staff, right now...would it take two years of training for me to get there? I don't think it would've done...the training at the College and a grounding in the prison itself would do the job just fine...I wouldn't advocate or feel the need for two years' training. I'll tell you something, somebody looking at an advert and thinking 'you need to do two years of training' in this country, very difficult...it probably wouldn't be a bad thing right...ken what, it's up to them, crack on, I'm glad we don't have to do it." (Interviewee SP1)

While SP1 feels the training just now does 'just fine', the role and expectations of the prison officer has been and is changing, as set out in SPS documents (Scottish Prison Service, 2013; Scottish Prison Service, 2016). Bailey-Noble (2019) found that the initial training delivered to prison officers throughout the last 100 years has not been fit for purpose. The SPS Value Proposition (2016) also recognised that prison officers are not equipped with the skills needed to realise the SPS' ambitions. SP1 suggests that it would be difficult to attract individuals to the role if two years' training were required but this may not be true. It may attract a different kind of person to the role, but it would unlikely deter people all together.

The vast majority of officers said they would like to receive training similar to the training delivered in Norway and would be eager to obtain a qualification as well. SP2 advised that they 'think it would be a good thing, learning the criminology side and learning the background of why they're there'. However, they also stated, 'in the job we do, I feel like two years training is a bit excessive'. This statement coupled with the earlier statement by SM2 regarding the hotel-type tasks, suggests that the duties currently carried out by the residential officer in Scotland, are not that which is envisaged by the SPS in their Organisational Review (2013) nor the Value Proposition (2016). If residential officers are mainly focussing on custody and order, then it is

understandable that the interviewees may feel two years is excessive. If however, the residential officers are unlocking the potential of prisoners and transforming their lives by being 'motivational agents of change' (ibid, p.22) then presumably the individuals may not hold this view. Interviewee SM7 held a positive view about the Norwegian training, stating:

"I believe that we should be trained and with a recognised qualification because right now we get nothing. 'You're a prison officer, what do you do?' We do lots of things but we have no qualification and that's annoying." (Interviewee SM7)

SP4 stated 'I definitely do feel their training would be better. Two years training of both practical and at the College, I think that would definitely help'. Officer SP5 felt positively towards the training in Norway and stated, "you'll never see a Norwegian prison on the World's Worst Prison documentaries".

Participant SM5 was supportive of the training delivered in Norway, they stated:

"Of course it's going to be better because we're expected as prison officers to go and sit with somebody and discuss why they've offended or re-offended...the childhood trauma, it's like going back and opening a can of worms. We're not skilled to deal with that but had there been training at [Norway's] level then obviously it gives you a better grounding to sort of go into these areas because it could be quite easy to upset the situation by saying the wrong word." (Interviewee SM5)

Interviewee SM6 had feelings similar to SM5 and stated:

"The more learning you can get, it isn't going to hinder you to do your job... they're going to be more equipped to deal with all sorts of issues...it would put some people off if they had to go to college or university for two years especially if they were the kind of guy who just wanted to open and shut doors and be there with a shield...but at the same time, you would probably get a better calibre of individual who can deal with people's needs." (Interviewee SM6)

4.3.4 Norway's thoughts on Scotland's training

While the majority of officers interviewed in Scotland held positive views about the training delivered to prison officers in Norway, and were eager for a similar implementation in Scotland, the participants in Norway did not feel positively about Scottish training. Each individual in Norway felt that the training delivered to prison officers in Scotland was too short. Every participant was advised about the training delivered to prison officers in Scotland, whereby they received around seven weeks' training, six of which were at the SPSC and one of which was at an establishment. They were advised about the training increasing to twelve weeks for residential officers from 2020. Participant NG1 stated:

“Obviously I think it’s very, very short. I think they probably miss a lot of important stuff they could actually hugely benefit from bringing into the prisons as prison staff...you know the saying ‘what you put in you will get out’, if you put people into a prison staff academy for seven weeks and expect them to do wonders obviously it will fail, no doubt. I think education is important.” (Interviewee NG1)

Individual NG2 stated:

“Holding one of the most important and influential positions in Scotland. When you talk about influence on other people and people who are in deep shit, sorry for my language. People who have been locked up and then we put people in charge of these kinds of institutions without any proper training. It’s disgusting, it’s terrible, it’s 2020.” (Interviewee NG2)

The House of Commons (2009) found that the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland is basic and inadequate. They believed that a greater investment in the initial training delivered to prison officers would have positive, long-lasting effects on the prison service and prisoners. Similarly, the SPS Value Proposition (2016) identified that for prison officers to meet the demands of the role the SPS had to re-design the training and education given to them. Perhaps both comments made by NG1 and NG2 are right, in that we expect prison officers to work with some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society and help them transform their lives with only seven to twelve

weeks training, most of which appears operational. House of Commons (2009) believe this is a difficult task.

Participant NP3 advised:

“It’s important to say that you don’t learn what we do only in books, that’s why we have the education built up like this where you have the theoretical and the working over two years so you can develop over the two years, you know.” (Interviewee NP3)

Interviewee NP1 stated:

“In the States, they get a six-week training programme then they are put out in the establishment. We started asking them ‘why do you do it like this?’ and they were like ‘we were trained this way’. That was their only answer for everything. We kept asking ‘but why? What are your reasons? What are you looking for? What consequences will you get?’ they were stunned because nobody has taught them to think about what they’re doing. Our main focus in Norway is to develop reflective prison officers over time. I think that’s the main difference in what we achieve in my experience.” (Interviewee NP1)

In Scotland, prison officers are being taught the importance of reflection as well. Within the residential training, new recruits are given a session on reflection and they have to keep a workbook journal throughout their 12 weeks’ training which is marked. Once their training is finished, they meet with their manager and a learning and development manager once a month, for six months, to reflect on their learning and identify any training needs (Scottish Prison Service official). It has been recognised that the ability to reflect on one’s practice is a necessary and fundamental skill of all front-line staff; particularly in a profession where staff have legitimate authority to inflict harm or sanctions on others (Copley, 2011; O’Hara, 2011).

Morrison (2019) identified that for reflective thinking to become habitual among prison officers, it should be encouraged within the establishment, particularly in the early stages of employment. It is promising to note that the SPS appear to be doing this which in turn should result in reflective residential officers. However, a governor within

the SPS advised that they feel improvements could be made and reflection could be better integrated into the work of an officer.

In relation to the comment made by NP3, whereby they advised that the role of the prison officer cannot be learned from books, a number of officers in Scotland commented on this when asked about the training delivered in Norway. It was highlighted that they felt the training at the SPSC was completely different to the job itself, that the SPSC could not teach the job itself and that it could only be learned by experiencing the job itself. It appears this is also recognised in Norway and this is perhaps why, as NG2 suggested, Norway appears to have one of the best training regimes in Europe. A training regime that is long enough to allow the new recruits to learn a lot more than in Scotland and allows them to experience both theoretical and practical sides of the role interchangeably, all while still training.

4.3.5 C to D transitional training

Since 2020, new recruits to the SPS have been able to apply directly to the role of residential officer, also known as a D band officer. Prior to this, prison officers joined the SPS as an operations officer, also known as a C band officer, and had to be promoted into the role of residential officer. These officers are responsible for maintaining security within the prison establishment and have limited contact with prisoners. These individuals were asked what training they received to enable them to transition into the residential officer role; a role which requires them to have an abundance of contact with prisoners and help transform their lives.

The majority of the staff stated that the transitional training should consist of one week's training at the SPSC, however the majority of them received no transitional training. The establishments created their own internal training in some cases. They provided the new residential officers with experienced staff they could shadow and ask questions to. A few of the participants acted up into the residential role for some time prior to becoming a residential officer too, so they were trained by acting up. Several of the participants suggested they felt ready for the role without any training because they had acted up previously, but a few suggested they did not. Interviewee SP5 stated:

“You move from C [band] to D [band] and out of necessity you’re on the landing so you’re doing the job straight away and you don’t have time to do the training because there isn’t enough staff.” (Interviewee SP5)

Participant SP3 stated:

“I think going to the College for a short period of time when I became residential would have been beneficial. I didn’t know anything about what you do as a personal officer, like writing reports. If you’re not putting the right stuff in the report that can maybe hold a prisoner back from progressing. As a residential officer you’re so busy on the flat. There’s so many prisoners and nine times out of ten you’re short-staffed so the staff on the flat don’t have time to show you what to do.” (Interviewee SP3)

While all of the officers, with the exception of one, had worked in operations prior to becoming a residential officer, it is concerning a number of them reported receiving no training to transition into this role. It is recognised that the initial training delivered to operations officers – a role with limited prisoner contact - mainly focusses on the security aspects of the role. To expect a person to then transition into a role where they’re tasked with assisting prisoners on their desistance journey, often without training, is a difficult feat. Interviewee SM2 stated:

“Quite often they won’t get their transition training until they’ve already been in post for months which is going back in my case like eighteen months. I’d already been working in a hall for eighteen months by the time I got my training.” (Interviewee SM2)

This was a very similar experience to SP8 who advised that they got their transitional training one year after they’d transitioned into the role of a residential officer. This is concerning given that the role of the prison officer is considered to be complex (Liebling, Price and Shefar, 2011) and residential officers are considered the best placed individuals to unlock the potential of prisoners and transform their lives. This supports the SPS Value Proposition (2016) which found that the training given to prison officers is not sufficient to meet the goals of the SPS.

4.3.6 Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme

The SPS' organisational review highlighted that an organisation-wide transformation was necessary to meet the future goals of the SPS. Part of this transformation involved professionalising the role of the prison officer, under the Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme (POPP). The organisational review recognised that the SPS should strive for prison officers to be more 'professionally recognised and qualified' (Scottish Prison Service, 2013, P.35). POPP was developed as the SPS recognised that the prison officer had the potential to transform the lives of prisoners and reduce recidivism. A requirement of the proposal was that all new recruits after 2020 were to complete a Higher Education Diploma, 60% of which would be practical learning in the job. The modules were to include criminology, criminal justice and penology, engaging with people in custody, operationalising desistance, behaviour change and risk management, and human rights, law and prisons (The Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers, 2018). In 2018, all prison officers who were part of the Prison Officers' Association (POA) were able to vote on POPP.

The direct entry residential officer role is a direct result from the rejection of POPP in October 2018. While the new recruits receive a lengthier training programme than before, they do not work towards a qualification. The modules take place over two years, instead of four years as POPP was going to be. It appears the training delivered as part of the residential training is not as in-depth as the training proposed by POPP, nor does it appear to include as many modules.

The majority of the staff spoken to in Scotland were supportive of the POPP proposal and the changes it would bring. SP1 stated, "how could it not be good? There's nothing bad about it because you're gaining from it". A few participants commented that it would bring a lot of positives with it. SM7 stated:

"I was frustrated [POPP] didn't go through. I believe we should be trained and with a recognised qualification...we have no professional service in the SPS and it should be. It's one of the most highly skilled, I'm more highly skilled as a prison officer than I was as a [other public service profession]." (Interviewee SM7)

Eleven of the officers advised that they would have been eager to undertake the qualification that was on offer, but that it was only to be offered to new recruits. SM3 stated, 'I don't think [POPP] was sold the right way. There wasn't enough clarity or transparency.' SP6 also stated:

"The communication was terrible and [POPP] dragged on. We got an email saying 'here's the new POPP proposal, can you vote now? We've got someone coming in to talk to you about it tomorrow' and the guy comes in and goes 'well I don't actually know much about it'".
(Interviewee SP6)

Officer SP1 stated:

"People didn't fully investigate it I don't think. If they'd really looked at it and read the policies they would have seen this is moving forward a fantastic thing for the Scottish Prison Service...this would have put us on par with other public services." (Interviewee SP1)

Participant SM3 advised that a number of prison officers felt negatively towards POPP because of a culture that exists among them. SM3 stated,

"Prison officers to a certain extent are negative by nature, a lot of them...It's like a trait that everybody's kind of got, 'oh that's going to be rubbish. What are we doing this for? Why do I need to do that?', you know?" (Interviewee SM3)

One potential reason for this negativity's existence, in the opinion of interviewee SP8 is 'because nine times out of ten any changes we've had are generally for the worse'. Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin (2007) found that the culture which exists among prison officers determines how they respond to institutional changes, whether positively or negatively. Therefore, this culture may also have had an impact on how prison officers responded to the POPP proposal.

A Scottish Prison Service official advised that they were shocked to hear that the POPP proposal was rejected by prison officers. This individual felt the proposal was offering so many benefits to prison officers that it couldn't be rejected. It appears that poor communication may have been a contributing factor to the refusal rather than prison officers rejecting the benefits that were on offer. This is disheartening, as POPP

did appear to be a step towards achieving the SPS' vision and mission which was set out in the organisational review (Scottish Prison Service, 2013). While the direct entry to the role of residential officer appears to be a direct result of POPP, it may not deliver the same benefits. For example, residential officers will not work towards a degree. Several officers have commented that, without a degree, they feel their skills gained in the role are not transferrable. As the tag line 'unlocking potential, transforming lives' was also about unlocking the potential of prison officers (Scottish Prison Service official), having a qualification to show they are skilled in the things they do would likely be beneficial.

4.4 Initial training: is it fit for purpose?

4.4.1 Scotland

The majority of the interviewees felt that the initial training delivered to residential officers was not fit for purpose. A number of them felt it required improving if these officers were expected to assist in transforming the lives of prisoners. Most of the staff felt that informal training at the establishment, where the new recruits shadow more experienced staff, was the best training for learning the job. This was not part of their training and instead was created informally by each establishment. When new recruits arrived at the establishment, they were either given a group of people to shadow by their first line manager. SM1 was trained as an operational officer, but line manages residential officers. When asked whether the training delivered to residential officers equips them transform the lives of prisoners, SM1 stated 'no, not at all...the training is not fit for purpose'.

Many participants commented that they didn't think the initial training was orientated towards rehabilitation, nor did it prepare them for actual prison work and how to deal with prisoners. SM2 said:

"I certainly think that if you're looking for staff to deliver an in-depth relationship where they sit down and effectively can almost like be a counsellor or that one-to-one work with the prisoners and build those relationships and understand how to lead that person through their sentence then I think [the training] needs to improve." (Interviewee SM2)

Interviewee SM4 stated:

“We all need further training...It’s cost-effective, well I say it’s cost-effective, it’s low cost but I wouldn’t exactly say it’s effective.”

A number of officers stated that the initial training was very important as it provided new recruits with the necessary groundwork of how to be a prison officer. Interviewee SM2 stated, “it can give you a really basic framework of ‘if you’re in this situation and don’t know what to do, here’s when you press your alarm’”. Participant SM3 did not feel that the initial training at the SPSC was overly helpful. They stated:

“I think what I learned at college...50% of it I forgot about because it didn’t mean anything to me. On the job training helped me more. I don’t know how much of the training at college actually became useful to me...see the things that people deal with in here, with minimum or no training, it’s astounding.” (Interviewee SM3)

While all but one of the participants joined the SPS as operations officers, they each transitioned into the role of a residential officer where they were expected to help rehabilitate prisoners. The majority of these individuals received no training to transition into this role and had to rely on their colleagues to teach them. It is unsurprising then that research has found that the initial training delivered to prison officers is not enabling them to help transform the lives of prisoners (House of Commons, 2009; Scottish Prison Service, 2013; Scottish Prison Service 2016).

Interviewee SP2 joined directly as a residential officer and has undertaken the new training which was rolled out in 2020. When asked about their initial training they stated:

“We learned a lot more operational stuff. It was more ‘this is what you would do if you were in operations not what you’re going to do in the job’. I think because it was the first course of residential they didn’t really know the full aspect of what we needed to learn.” (Interviewee SP2)

When asked if they are to undertake modules over the two-year period as part of the new training for residential officers, interviewee SP2 stated “I think so. I’m not really sure what the modules are, I’ve not heard anything about the modules.” It appears

concerning that the SPS Organisational Review (2013) and Value Proposition (2016) both highlighted that the training delivered to prison officers was not fit to meet the goals of the SPS. They identified that a 'class-leading redesign' of the initial training was necessary (ibid, p.22). Five years on from this statement, the training has been re-developed and now consists of twelve weeks' training as opposed to around seven. However, a new recruit who experienced this training felt it focused on the operations role instead of the residential, that the trainers were not prepared for this intake of new recruits and the officer didn't know anything about the modules they were to undertake. This suggests the training has not been re-designed nor is class-leading. Perhaps it will be difficult for residential officers to unlock the potential and transform the lives of prisoners when they do not appear to receive appropriate training to do so.

The majority of individuals felt that 'on the job' training was more beneficial than training at the SPSC. Several commented that the role of a prison officer could only be learned through experience. These feelings were shared by interviewee SM6 stated:

"I think the learning starts when they come back to the establishment because they've got limited time at the college. They've got so much to learn...I don't think enough consideration is taken for everything else they could be putting in place for that." (Interviewee SM6)

A number of officers felt that the informal mentoring and shadowing they received from their peers at the establishment was how they were trained for the job, not through their training at SPSC. They felt that this type of training was vital to enable them to learn the residential officer role. This is consistent with the Howard League for Penal Reform (2017), who found that shadowing more experienced prison officers was essential in their training of the role. However, individual SP3 felt that this was difficult due to staffing levels. They stated:

"I was only a residential officer for say a couple of months and I was the most experienced member of staff on the flat. I remember highlighting this and being told 'you'll be fine, we have confidence you can do this'. 'That's not like, that's not what I'm saying to you, I'm saying I need experience. I need someone I can learn off of'." (Interviewee SP3)

SP4 also had concerns, stating:

“You could be working with three other people and they’re busy. Some of them aren’t bothered about like, they don’t put a lot of effort in themselves so it’s kind of hard. Managers are always busy too so it’s kind of hard if you’re wanting to do a good job of something and the people you’re working with aren’t bothered about it then it’s kind of hard to learn.” (Interviewee SP4)

It is promising that a lot of the interviewees felt that the informal training in the establishment was beneficial, as there will be many scenarios in a prison that will be individualistic and cannot be trained for. Some participants commented that they would like training similar to Norway, where they spend time learning the theoretical knowledge and time in the establishment learning the practical skills. Experiential learning, whereby real-life situations and the application of theories and concepts are combined, may be the most beneficial way for prison officers to learn (Gentry, 1990). This type of learning enables feedback post experience, which has been found to be essential for effective learning to take place (ibid), particularly when not all crises prison officers deal with can be taught in theory. Melby (2000) found that this type of learning greater assists staff to expand their knowledge and skills as it accelerates their understanding of the job and duties as a whole.

A lot of officers spoke of being told during their initial training that they would learn something different at their establishment. Participant SP6 said:

“The training at the college is very much, understandably, as we’re the only open estate, geared at closed establishments. So you get all that training then you to the open estate and it’s probably the same when you go to closed jails as well you start over again, but certainly when you come here it’s a different ball game from what they’ve taught you at the college.” (Interviewee SP6)

A similar experience was shared by SP5 and SM1. SP5 stated, “I also got told that there was a Barlinnie way, so I was told ‘everything we’ve taught you here, you’ll learn something different at Barlinnie.’” SM1 stated:

“It was very classroom based and there wasn’t a lot of practical activities. It probably wasn’t fit for purpose because they said, ‘but that might not happen at your establishment, check when you get back to your establishment’. It was a bit of a waste of time to be honest.” (Interviewee SM1)

During their initial training, most officers were advised that their establishment may do things a different way. This was apparent when around half of the officers commented that on returning to their establishment, they were told to forget everything they learned at the SPSC. SM6 stated:

“You get the older guys that pull you aside and say ‘right that’s how you’re told to do the job, this is how it really works’ and you go ‘right ok fine’ and it’s good.” (Interviewee SM6)

To tackle the issue whereby new recruits are told that by the SPSC that their establishment may do it differently or told by their establishment to forget what they learned at the SPSC, adopting a similar training regime to Norway may be beneficial. At the SPSC, individuals could be learning the theoretical work which would be relevant regardless of the establishment they work in, then they could learn the practical side of the role at the establishment through experiential learning. They could spend some time in the establishment working on theoretical work, as they do in Norway, reflecting on their practice and learning more about the job all while performing the role.

It is concerning that, despite just having received training on how to do their job, it appears that new recruits may quickly conform to the occupational culture which exists within the establishment, without questioning it. This suggests that no matter what training is delivered at the SPSC, some recruits may disregard everything they’ve been taught and do the job the way their colleagues tell them to. This is consistent with previous research which has found that new recruits inevitably conform to the behaviours and actions of their more experienced colleagues (Kauffman, 1988; McHugh, Heavens and Baxter, 2008; Morrison and Maycock, 2021). During a focus group it appeared an individual, who had been a prison officer for a long time, had influence over a less experienced prison officer, as they would attempt to speak over the officer or correct them. It appeared that it may be difficult to push against the culture

that exists within the establishment. The SPS Organisational Review (2013) highlighted a need to change the existing culture within the SPS. The majority of participants in Scotland felt that in order to make the biggest impact on prisoners and help them desist from crime the initial training delivered to residential officers had to improve. This was with the exception of officer SP1 who felt that the training is fine as it is. The review also highlighted that in order to achieve their vision and mission, the culture within the SPS had to be one of continuous improvement, rather than one that stagnates (ibid). This comment by SP1 suggests that they may possess a change-resistant personality, perhaps due to their length of service in the SPS and that culture being ingrained in them for so long. Individual SP3 commented that a number of staff are due to retire soon which will take a wealth of experience away. Perhaps this will assist with the cultural shift as Crawley (2004) found that implementing a change in culture is possible when sufficient numbers of new recruits finish their training and enter the establishments.

4.4.2 Norway

The viewpoints of the interviewees in Norway are interesting and conflict with some participants in Scotland who stated that the training at the SPSC 'did the job'. Some of them did not feel that a two-year programme, like the one in Norway, would be necessary to learn the job. The majority of officers in Scotland however, commented that the training at the SPSC did not prepare them for the role, particularly when it came to helping rehabilitate prisoners. When the participants in Norway were asked whether their initial training equipped them to impact the lives of prisoners, the following responses were provided:

Interviewee NG2 stated:

"Norwegians, we like to say we have the best prison academy and training in the world. I think it's probably one of the best, yes, but it isn't good enough. It's probably much better than your system and the English one definitely couldn't compare." (Interviewee NG2)

The same individual stated that prisoners begin to change in prison, because prison staff "gradually transfer trust, more freedom, responsibility and not least respect" to the prisoners.

Participant NP1 stated:

“They’ve scratched the surface on a lot of areas. It’s obviously, I mean, it should have been a ten-year programme because you’re learning a little bit about drugs and substance misuse, a little about mental disorders, a little bit about risk management so they are touching the surface.” (Interviewee NP1)

NP3 stated:

“These are big topics they learn and you can only scratch the surface going to school for two years...let’s say a shrink, he has a Master’s degree and calls people in for thirty minutes. He can prepare himself with books all around. We don’t choose when prisoners come to us, they’re around us all the time.” (Interviewee NP3)

NG1 stated:

“I think the training is adequate, I don’t think it is too much or too small. I think there is a lot of important subjects. Between the modules the students are taught at a training prison and working with inmates under supervision which I think is quite good because they can try out whatever they have learned at school...I think in Norway the education and the curriculum in the community college is responsible for delivering well trained and educated prison officers and they are fully capable of doing [rehabilitative] work.” (Interviewee NG1)

It is refreshing to hear that the individuals in Norway felt their training equipped them for their role. The opposing mindsets of some officers in Scotland is interesting however. While some staff within the SPS are interested in developing training similar to Norway (Scottish Prison Service official), the interviewees in Norway still believe their training can improve. This suggests that Norway is much further ahead than Scotland in the development of their prison officer training and highlights how far Scotland still has to go to develop ‘class-leading training’ (Scottish Prison Service, 2016, p.22) when a nation they are looking to for inspiration feel their own training can improve.

4.5 Further training which may enable residential officers to do their job better

The majority of officers had ideas about what training should be implemented to better prepare them for the role and impact the lives of prisoners. A few staff felt the training had to improve but they were not sure what kind of training would assist them. The main themes that emerged among the majority of the participants were that training in mental health and substance misuse, criminology, interviewing techniques and writing personal reports would better equip them to impact the lives of prisoners. The participants in Norway felt that teaching officers to be reflective was paramount to their success in being the best they could be. The governor in Scotland expressed that officers within their prison did reflect on their practice however this could be, and should be, focused on more. Several officers felt that some basic knowledge around law may assist them in their role. Participant SM7 commented:

“If I had an understanding of what Scottish law was...I wouldn’t have to rely on Google because that’s how we learn what these charges on the charge sheets are. If we had an understanding or a catalogue of what these were then it would make my job easier and more fluid. When somebody is talking about the process of going through court we don’t understand what it’s like for somebody from arrest to arriving in prison. Some insight would be good.” (Interviewee SM7)

All residential officers being trained in control and restraint was another topic which emerged. SM6 feels it is a big mistake that this is no longer part of the core initial training. As individual NP1 highlighted, knowing that all of their colleagues are trained to use the riot equipment, they feel safe spending time with prisoners. NP1 also stated:

“You don’t always have to go in on a ten, we always use the least amount of force possible. It’s never about revenge or getting someone back or ‘you’re acting like this so now we’re going to show you, you know.” (Interviewee NP1)

Participant NP3 stated:

“We have guys who light up their cell or are hurting themselves or something like that. We start at a one on that scale, we treat them humanely through the whole process.” (Interviewee NP3)

Bringing back all control and restraint training for prison officers, would likely enable prison officers to foster more meaningful and effective relationships with prisoners as they feel confident in their own and their colleagues’ abilities to handle a difficult situation where these techniques are required.

The majority of the participants commented that it would be beneficial to have establishment specific training. A few of the officers commented that their initial training felt largely ineffective because they were told to check with their establishment how to do certain things or were told their establishment might do things differently than how they were taught by SPSC. One interviewee suggested that having a pack of information which is specific to their establishment may assist. Participant SM4 stated:

“Because the whole prison service goes to the same college, they’re all taught as though it’s a closed establishment they’ll be working in. When you come to an open prison, it’s totally different.” (Interviewee SM4)

Two individuals felt that training in effective communication and how to deal with conflict would be beneficial. They recognised that often, prisoners have had traumatic experiences, and training in how to communicate effectively would assist. Interviewee SM3 stated:

“Training residential officers in how to build and maintain relationships with the prisoners would be good...re-enforcing and showing them ways of dealing with conflict too. Nobody likes dealing with conflict whereas there is so much conflict on a daily basis that dealing with that properly is really important.” (Interviewee SM3)

When conducted inappropriately, conflict can result in negative behaviours and relationship breakdown between prison officers and prisoners. As relationships between the two are considered to lie at the heart of prison life (Liebling, 2011) maintaining positive relationships is key. Teaching residential officers how to manage

and resolve conflict effectively, would likely have a positive impact on relationships, and consequently, a positive impact on prisoners and their time in prison. Several staff felt it would be difficult to teach this type of training at SPSC and would be better taught at the establishment while working with prisoners. These interviewees commented that training like in Norway, whereby the prison officers have a period of training in a prison before becoming a qualified prison officer would be beneficial.

Several officers also commented that the training appears to be tailored towards working with male prisoners as opposed to female prisoners. However, research has identified that female prisoners often have very different needs than male prisoners including more mental health difficulties (Angiolini, 2012; Morash, Bynum and Koons, 1998; Zettler, 2020). One participant had experience working with female offenders. They stated that the majority of these women had mental health difficulties, but the participant was never given any training on mental health. This participant had to seek out their own training in this arena to help equip them to do their job better. This suggests that there should be some tailored training for residential officers who will be working with female prisoners. This would enable residential officers to have the specific knowledge required to better help the prisoners they are working with. Generalised information where prisoners are put into a group and their individualities not recognised will hinder prisoners getting the right help required to transform their lives.

4.5.1 Substance misuse

A large number of participants, including several from Norway, commented that there appears to be a drug crisis in Scotland. Numerous officers in Scotland commented that almost all prisoners in their establishments abused substances. One individual's experience is that some prisoners arrive in prison and do not rely on illegal substances but over time begin to regularly use drugs and come to rely on them to get by. A few officers mentioned that they are given training on drugs, but it is not part of their core training. Several interviewees commented that it would be beneficial to learn more about the triggers of addiction. Two participants said they would like to learn more about the medication prisoners are on and the effects of this, so they know what symptoms to expect and whether a prisoner is reacting in a certain way because of their medication or an illicit substance.

Officer SP6 stated:

“A massive one for me I think is substance misuse. The majority of prisoners I’ve come across are here because they’ve committed a crime to fund their habit or committed while under the influence...I feel like training in that field is lacking massively.” (Interviewee SP6)

Interviewee SM4 stated:

“A lot of officers think that if somebody has had a relapse or had a lapse and fall off the wagon there’s no way back. Actually explaining to officers because obviously if somebody has been trying to change and they fall off the wagon we tend to be a bit punitive on them you know.” (Interviewee SM4)

Participant SM1 stated:

“Training on basic drug and alcohol awareness, what drugs do and what’s the kind of treatment methods for each...prisoners are basically pharmacists. They know absolutely everything about it and they are very much talking at you. There is a very low-level understanding until you’ve been here a while and gotten used to the terminology. When you’re coming straight in you’ve no idea that maybe Naloxone doesn’t work for Benzyl based drugs, it only works for opiate based drugs so even just a basic understanding. Medication, drug withdrawals, alcohol withdrawals, what the plan for that is, how long to expect the withdrawals to last...it would support them a lot easier.” (Interviewee SM1)

The Scottish Government (2008) noted that substance misuse problems among prisoners is highly common. They identified that two significant challenges the SPS face are preventing prisoners getting access to drugs and managing prisoners who have drug addictions. While this was reported many years ago, it is clear the SPS are still tackling problems with substance misuse among many prisoners. Many prisoners in Scotland are using New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), which is having a damaging impact and is contributing to a rise in violence against prison officers (Forward, 2015; HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland, 2019). Providing residential

officers with training on the effects of different drugs and how to potentially counteract these would likely be beneficial. Also explaining to residential officers that a person who is attempting to abstain from substance misuse is in recovery and can relapse, and how best to react to this would likely better assist prisoners as opposed to being punitive on them.

In Norway, student prison officers are taught about substance misuse as part of the re-integration subject. They stated that this was very effective in teaching students about different types of drugs and also why individuals in prison may take drugs. While some prisoners in Norway still abuse substances, the interviewees felt there weren't many in their establishment that did. Participant NP1 stated:

“There’s definitely drugs within the prison premises and anyone can get hold of anything I’m sure but it’s not to the extent where I see it as a problem... None of those, the worst drugs on the market, they never made it to Norway.” (Interviewee NP1)

While Norwegian prisons do not appear to have a problem with substance misuse among prisoners – certainly not to the same extent as Scotland does – their staff are still trained in this area during their initial training. While a few officers in Scotland commented that they were provided with substance misuse training, they stated that it didn't form part of their 'core' or initial training. Given that Scotland's prisons have more of a problem with prisoners abusing substances, perhaps training on this should also form part of their initial training.

4.5.2 Criminology

The majority of participants felt it would be beneficial to receive some training in why a person may offend or re-offend. Most of the officers commented that learning about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and the impacts of this in adulthood during their initial training would have been valuable for when it came to working with prisoners. Research has found a strong link between ACEs and criminality (Scottish Government, 2018) so training in this area would likely benefit residential officers. A few participants stated that training on how to speak to prisoners about traumatic experiences they've had is necessary. Individual SP8 commented 'these are things

we miss out on, it would definitely help us but we don't get anything on them at all.'

Interviewee SM2 stated:

"I think setting the expectation and understanding of where these guys are coming from is something that's quite important for the training. An understanding of the adverse childhood experience type stuff and how it impacts on people. How that then leads to substance abuse problems and how that leads to the petty offending and then that cycle." (Interviewee SM2)

Participant SP6 stated:

"It wasn't that long ago during interviews the first question was asking [prisoners] to go back to their earliest childhood memory. A lot of the times we were dragging up traumatic experiences for them and we weren't equipped in how to deal with that. We were opening up that box and just saying 'thanks for your answers' so training would be beneficial in that sense." (Interviewee SP6)

A number of interviewees commented that this type of training could help them better understand prisoners and why they may be acting a certain way. Particularly if residential officers are considered the best people to help make a difference in prisoners lives, it would be beneficial for them to have a better understanding of what life has been like for these prisoners and how best to assist them forward. A few of the officers voluntarily undertook a HNC in prison studies many years ago. They stated that they were taught criminology as part of that. Each officer who completed this course found it beneficial and felt that all residential officers should learn about this during initial training.

It is appreciated that these topics are vast, and it would not be possible to go into these areas in-depth without increasing the length of the initial training. However, some basic training would likely assist residential officers when communicating with prisoners about previous life experiences. It would also help them understanding the difficulties most prisoners have had and why they may do the things they do.

The SPS has developed trauma-informed practice training for residential officers, so it is positive to note that some of the training these individuals felt would be necessary

will be incorporated into the initial training in the future (Scottish Prison Service official). The new recruits receive a full day session on trauma-informed practice. Residential officers working with women and young people receive one extra week's training on this. This extra training is going to be given to residential officers working with adult males but is in the early preparation stages at present. An SPS official advised that there is a danger of over-training residential officers in this area to the point they may try to diagnose prisoners. While this may be a possibility, officer SP7 highlighted concerns about receiving this training, stating 'an experienced psychologist goes to uni for how many years? Are we trained in bringing up any of that?'. Several other individuals acknowledged that there are specialists within the prison who deal with these things but that they would like basic training so they have a better understanding of prisoners, where they've come from and how they can best assist them.

4.5.3 Interview techniques and report writing

The majority of officers in Scotland felt that training on interviewing techniques and report writing is necessary. A number of interviewees commented that they did not receive training on this and that they learned how to do this by shadowing their colleagues. However, a few officers commented that this has its negatives. It appears some experienced staff are not motivated to teach new recruits these things or are unable to due to short-staffing. Interviewee SM5 felt training on how to do a personal officer report is critical. They stated:

Participant SM5 stated:

“Residential officers are also personal officers so interviewing techniques. How to get the best out of a prisoner and how to do an interview. How to ask more open questions, engage more of a conversation and it's about being deeper than 'how was your last home leave?' 'I went to the cinema' 'right fine'.” (Interviewee SM5)

Interviewee SM6 stated:

“Training around report writing...because how you write a report and how you say something needs to be reflected as to how it actually was. The written word can sometimes not give that sense of emotion

or purpose. So training about how you capture that stuff and write it accurately.” (Interviewee SM6)

The majority of the individuals did not receive training on interview techniques or report writing. All but one of them transitioned into the residential role from being operations officers and as previously mentioned, many of them did not receive this transitional training. The way they learned how to do these things was by shadowing their more experienced colleagues. The officer who joined directly as a residential officer did not feel adequately trained in this area either, stating that their training was mainly based around the operations officer role. An SPS official advised that the residential training which was developed in 2020 includes training on report writing. While there isn't specific training on interviewing techniques, they can learn about motivational interviewing as part of other courses provided by the SPS. It's clear these are important skills to have to enable the residential officers to get the best information from the prisoners and write a report accurately which will support prisoners move forward.

Most of the individuals in Scotland felt positively about the training delivered to prison officers in Norway. They felt implementing similar training in Scotland would be beneficial to new recruits. They felt that the blended learning between the academy, training in the prison and doing theoretical work in the prison, would be valuable. They felt that learning the job would require the theoretical knowledge of the role, along with learning more about how to assist prisoners and carrying out the role itself. Many of them felt that the informal shadowing they received at their establishment was very beneficial, but some staff never received much of this due to short staffing. This is also not formal training, and it was felt that it would be advantageous if this was made formal. It appears that Norway's mix of theoretical training at the academy, then a mix of practical and theoretical training in the prison would enable residential officers to better achieve the aims of the SPS.

The next chapter will conclude the research and will discuss recommendations for future action and explain how this research has contributed to the knowledge in this area.

5 Conclusion

The overall purpose of this research was to address a gap which exists in relation to the initial training delivered to prison officers, particularly in Scotland, where there has been limited research carried out in this area. The research intended to draw on Scandinavian models as a comparator, therefore the initial training delivered to residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway was examined. This is because the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) tends to look to the Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS) when implementing change (Scottish Prison Service official). The research proposed to examine to what extent residential officers and prison officers feel their initial training enabled them to impact the lives of prisoners. This chapter will explain the findings from this research and what this tells us about the training delivered to residential officers in Scotland. It will present conclusions based on these findings and suggest recommendations for future action. As little research exists in this area, a contribution to the knowledge as a result of this research will be explained. This conclusion will demonstrate whether the aims of this research have been met.

This research concluded that the training delivered to residential officers in Scotland is not fit for purpose. Prior to 2020 the training delivered to prison officers was insufficient to enable them to meet the full requirements of their role. The training at the Scottish Prison Service College (SPSC) was short, lasting anywhere from six to nine weeks. After which prison new recruits were expected to 'hit the ground running'. The training delivered to them was mostly procedural, teaching them the 'do's and don'ts' of the job. The research found that prison officers were not taught about rehabilitation, despite one of their main aims being to assist prisoners on their rehabilitation journey. Many of the participants felt that the training in this area was lacking, with one interviewee stating that they weren't sure rehabilitation was something they even did. While the direct entry residential officer training was only introduced in March 2020, one participant undertook this training. They also felt the training was operations based and didn't prepare them for the rehabilitation aspect of their role. This individual was in one of the first cohorts so perhaps there were some teething issues, however, it appears that at this point, the direct entry residential training is not preparing officers to fulfil their aims of helping prisoners to unlock the potential within them and transform their lives.

There was a strong consensus in the research that the training delivered at the SPSC was to teach the basics of the role and that the real learning began when working in an establishment. Many officers asked questions at the SPSC and were told to check at their establishment for the answer as each establishment may operate differently. They were also told at the establishment that they were to forget what they were told at the SPSC. This is consistent with research by Heslop (2011) who found the same with police recruits. However, it appears that integrated learning between the SPSC and the establishments would better assist prison officers to do their job as they would be putting their theory into practice. The participants in Scotland felt this would be the best way for them to learn. The Norwegian participants do learn this way and they each felt this was crucial for effective learning and implementation.

The research found that each prison has its own culture, this is consistent with research by Cockcroft (2013) who found multiple cultures can exist in one organisation and Chan (1996) who found that culture varies according to the field. Within the open prison, relations between officers and prisoners appeared much more positive than in the closed prison. Staff would regularly speak with prisoners and they got to know them well. In the closed prison staff may only see prisoners twice a day so may not even know their name. Prisoners tend not to speak to staff in the closed prison for fear of being labelled 'a grass'. Some of the findings are consistent with Bourdieu's (Chan, 1996; Cockcroft, 2013; Cockcroft, 2016; Heslop, 2011) theory of 'habitus' and 'field'. A participant in the research began to conform to the behaviour of her longer serving colleague, despite having opposing views to a lot of things to begin with. This participant's habitus was changing to match that of her colleague, despite her individual habitus being different. One officer in the research said that their colleagues told them to ignore their SPSC training because 'this is how it's done' and the new recruit conformed without question. The organisational review (Scottish Prison Service, 2013) found that, for the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to meet their vision and aims, the culture which exists within the organisation would need to change. The above examples demonstrate the importance of culture and how it can drastically impact the implementation of the training delivered to prison officers.

The research suggests that the culture within the establishments needs to change in order that the initial training delivered be as effective as possible. No matter how great the training is, if the culture doesn't change and there isn't an integrated learning

approach between the SPSC and the establishments, the training won't be effective. In addition to this, it is critical that the SPS are recruiting individuals with the right values as a person's habitus is created by their collective personal experiences and beliefs. While their habitus can also change because of their colleagues, if the right people are recruited to begin with, the collective habitus will be filled with people with similar values, all working towards a similar goal. Staff need more training in mental health, substance misuse, criminology – including adverse childhood experiences – and report writing. Staff should not have to seek out their own mental health training and complete this in their own time to help equip them to work with prisoners who have mental health difficulties. Staff also need to implement reflective practice into their work so they can look at how something went, whether they used the right tools and how they can do something better in future. Staff feel that even if they had the above training, the issue with staff shortages would prevent them doing their job fully. Staff commented that they are regularly short staffed and the first thing to go when this happens is the rehabilitation element of their role. Improving the culture which exists within the establishments and improving the training may help staff retention, as many staff felt sickness was due to stress as a result of lack of training and poor culture.

The research suggests that changing the initial training and the cultures which exist within the prisons is necessary and the initial training requires improvement. It is felt this could be actioned relatively quickly as the training could be altered in length or content. However, this would be subject to requirement as an SPS official noted that establishments tend to want officers in as quickly as possible to combat short staffing. Changing the culture is going to take some time, however it can be altered and it should be, particularly as the SPS highlighted this themselves in the organisational review (Scottish Prison Service, 2013). The SPS have already moved to a values-based recruitment model which will help with recruiting people with the right values and attitude. Some of the participants stated that a number of individuals are due to retire soon, so this will naturally alter the culture which exists over time.

As has been found from the interviews undertaken in this study, there is support for a longer training period for residential prison officers. The approach used in Norway is thought to be the correct model for initial training for prison officers. While it will likely be more expensive than the training used in Scotland, staff may be less likely to quit because they feel equipped to do the job, not only because of the in-depth training but

because of the blended learning approach. Many interviewees in Scotland commented that a number of staff leave quickly due to the lack of integrated learning and the lack of training. A two-year training programme would likely set apart the people who want to make a difference and the ones who are joining for the benefits. Most of the officers in Scotland joined the SPS out of economic pragmatism, whereas in Norway it was more because they wanted to make a difference or work in rehabilitation. Prison officers in Scotland should also work towards a diploma like in Norway. Many of the participants in Scotland want to work towards a diploma, as they feel they have lots of skills but no qualification to evidence this. One participant felt that they could never get a job elsewhere, on their current salary, due to their lack of qualifications. As 'unlocking potential, transforming lives' also relates to prison officers, enabling them to complete a diploma would enhance their professional status and evidence the knowledge and skills they have built up. Socially and politically, Norway is very different to Scotland, however adopting a similar training model is something that can be done. Even in two years, the participants in Norway felt their training only 'scratched the surface' and another participant felt that you only get out of something what you put into it. Expecting individuals with only twelve weeks' training to help transform the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in society is a big ask. While the initial training that is delivered to residential officers is important and does require further development, without changing the aforementioned culture which exists – which is considered to be of vital importance – the initial training will likely have little impact. Increasing staffing and ensuring more of the right people are recruited will further assist.

5.1 Contribution to the field

As little research has been carried out in this area previously, it is suggested that this Master's level research is an original contribution to the field. There has been little research carried out in relation to prison officers at all, let alone in Scotland. This research has enabled some residential officers, first line managers and a governor in Scotland to voice their opinion on the initial training and explain how far they feel it enables residential officers to impact the lives of prisoners. It has highlighted that the current training is not fit for purpose and shown training needs which staff feel would enable residential officers to do their job much more effectively. It has highlighted how

influential culture is and evidenced how prison officers can conform to, and imitate, their colleague's behaviour even if their own individual habitus is different. It has shown that there is a lack of integration between the learning at the SPSC and this being implemented into the establishments. It has allowed staff to voice their opinion on the training delivered to prison officers in Norway and has shown that staff would be eager to introduce a similar training programme in Scotland.

The research has allowed the participants to comment on the professionalisation of the role and their thoughts on working towards a Diploma level qualification, as set out in the SPS Organisational Review in 2013. The research has found that many of the participants were supportive of the Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme (POPP) but that due to miscommunication it was sold to them in the right manner. Many of the individuals were supportive of obtaining a Diploma for their training to enable them to evidence their skills. It does not appear likely that a Diploma will be likely however, due to the direct entry training which was implemented in 2020 failing to include this. The research has drawn a comparison to the initial training delivered to prison officers in Norway; a country whose penal system is considered to be forward thinking and whom the SPS often looks towards when intending to implement changes.

5.2 Recommendations for future action

While this research has explored the initial training delivered to residential officers in Scotland and prison officers in Norway, and to what extent this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners', only the thoughts of participants from three prisons were included. This research could be re-created on a larger scale involving more participants from more prisons. This research looked at the initial training delivered to residential officers in Scotland. Direct entry into this role has only been available since 2020, therefore only one of the officers involved in this research were able to comment on this training. Every other participant in Scotland had to use their transitional training and their view of the residential officers they line manage to answer these questions. It is recommended that a similar study be carried out from 2022, researching the first cohort of residential officers who have completed their initial training and the further modules over two years. They could be compared again to prison officers in Norway

to investigate to what extent residential officers feel their initial training enables them to impact the lives of prisoners. The comparison with Norway would allow the researcher to explore whether the direct entry to residential officer programme in Scotland enables officers to fulfil their role and impact the lives of prisoners as much as the prison officers in Norway feel their training does.

6 Appendix 1: Focus group questions

Q1. How long have you been a prison officer and what establishments have you worked in?

Q2. What motivated you to become a prison officer/ what continues to motivate you?

Q3. What do you think the purpose of your role is?

Q4. What skills and attributes do you think is essential to be good prison officer?

Q5. What does a 'day in the life' look like for you in your role?

Q6. How would you describe relationships between prison officers and prisoners?

Q7. How would you describe the relationships between prison officers and senior staff in the prison?

Q8. What do you think the purpose of your initial training at the SPSC/KRUS was?

Q9. What did you learn during your initial training?

Q10. What training were you given to transition from operational to residential? (for participants in Scotland only)

Q11. Did you feel equipped to begin work in the prison after this training?

Q12. Do you feel your initial training gives you the necessary skills to be able to make a difference in prisoners lives? If so, why? If not, why not?

Q13. Is there any training you think would have helped you make more of a difference?

Q14. What were your thoughts on POPP? What were your feelings towards the professionalisation of the role and gaining a Diploma? (for participants in Scotland only)

Q15. What are your thoughts on the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland/Norway? (questioned about opposing country's training)

7 Appendix 2: Interview questions

Q1. How long have you worked within the prison service and what roles have you undertaken?

Q2. What motivated you to join the prison service/what continues to motivate you?

Q3. What do you think the purpose of your role is?

Q4. How often do you see prison officers at work in their day to day role? Do you work closely with them?

Q5. How would you describe the relationship between first line managers and residential officers?

Q6. How would you describe the relationship between residential/prison officers and prisoners?

Q7. What do you think the purpose of the residential/prison officer role is?

Q8. What skills and attributes do you think is essential to be good prison officer?

Q9. What does a 'day in the life' of a residential/prison officer look like?

Q10. How important do you think initial training is for the residential/prison officer role?

Q11. To what extent do you think the initial training given to residential/prison officers enables them to make a difference in the lives of prisoners?

Q12. What further training, if any, do you think would be adequate to allow residential/prison officers to further impact the lives of prisoners?

Q13. What are your thoughts on the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland/Norway? (questioned about opposing country's training)

8 Appendix 3: Participation information sheet and consent form



Participant information sheet and consent form

Project title: Prison officer training in Scotland and Norway, and the extent to which this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners (EMS: S3085)

Researcher name: Kaigan Denee Carrie

What is the research about?

We invite you to participate in a research project about the initial training delivered to prison officers in Scotland and Norway, the role of the prison officer and how far officers feel their initial training enables them to impact the lives of prisoners.

Do I have to take part?

This form has been written to help you decide if you would like to take part. It is up to you and you alone whether you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be free to withdraw at any time without providing a reason and without penalty.

What will I be required to do?

You will be required to take part in an interview or a focus group. The interviews and focus groups should last around one hour each. The focus of the interview or focus group will be around the role of the prison officer, the initial training they received and your thoughts on this and whether there is a belief that the initial training enables prison officers to make a difference in the lives of prisoners.

The study of prison officers - particularly their role, their training and how they contribute towards prisoner rehabilitation - has been neglected in research and literature (Coyle 1986; Bennett, Crewe and Wahidin 2008; Jewkes, Crewe and Bennett 2012). The aim of this study to fill this gap in the research.

How will you handle my data?

Your data will be stored in an anonymised form and will only be accessible to Kaigan Denee Carrie email: [REDACTED]@uad.ac.uk. Your data will be stored in Abertay University's secure server, with data fully anonymised at the earliest opportunity (i.e. when data that could identify you is no longer necessary for the purposes of the research). Your responses are treated in the strictest confidence - it will be impossible to identify individuals within a dataset when any of the research is disseminated (e.g. in publications/presentations). Abertay University acts as Data Controller (DataProtectionOfficer@abertay.ac.uk).

Retention of research data

Researchers are obliged to retain research data for up to 10 years' post-publication, however your anonymised research data may be retained indefinitely (e.g., so that researchers engage in open practice and other researchers can access their data to confirm the conclusions of published work). Consistent with our data retention policy, researchers retain consent forms for as long as we continue to hold information about a data subject and for 10 years for published research (including Research Degree thesis).

Consent statement:

Abertay University attaches high priority to the ethical conduct of research. Please consider the following before indicating your consent on this form. Indicating your consent confirms that you are willing to participate in the research, however, indicating consent does not commit you to anything you do not wish to do and you are free to

withdraw your participation at any time. You are indicating consent under the following assumptions:

- I understand the contents of the participant information sheet and consent form.
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research and have had them answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the research (parts of the project or the entire project) at any time without penalty and without having to provide an explanation.
- I understand who has access to my data and how it will be handled at all stages of the research project.

PLEASE INITIAL BOX:	Yes, I do consent	No, I do not consent
I consent to take part in this study conducted by Kaigan Denee Carrie who intends to use my data for further research examining the role of prison officers, their initial training and how far this enables them to impact the lives of prisoners.		
I consent for anonymised quotes/transcripts i) to be used by other researchers (e.g. on a research repository), ii) in published materials or presentations (which may be classed as in the public domain e.g., if disseminated online).		

Signature:

I confirm that I am willing to take part in this research:

PRINT NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

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9 List of abbreviations

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
KRUS	The Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy
NCS	Norwegian Correctional Service
OFP	Officer Foundation Programme
OPP	Office of Public Prosecutions
POPP	Prison Officer Professionalisation Programme
SPS	Scottish Prison Service
SPSC	Scottish Prison Service College

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