

Literature Review – “What works to reduce violent reoffending?”

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The authors acknowledge the contribution of colleagues from MOPAC to the conduct of the review and production of the final report.

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In their capacity as funders MOPAC reviewed and provided comment on the draft protocol. The views expressed in this report are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of MOPAC. The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest as generally defined.

About MOPAC

The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) is the strategic oversight body that sets the direction and budget for the Metropolitan Police Service on behalf of the Mayor of London. MOPAC is the Police and Crime Commissioning body for London and is required to work in partnership across agencies at a local and national level to ensure that there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime. MOPAC is responsible for developing and delivering the Mayor of London's Police and Crime plan and is also responsible for managing commissioned services to support the delivery of these priorities and objectives. This includes the provision of general and specialist services to victims of crime and a range of programmes focussed on reducing re-offending and crime reduction.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Mayor's Police and Crime Plan identifies reducing violence in all its forms as a key priority for London. Violent crime is a serious issue for London. It inflicts significant harm on victims, devastating families, and traumatising communities. During the life of the current Plan, MOPAC has been tasked with continuing to focus on reducing violent crime and addressing its underlying causes. Progress has already been made. Violent crime in London has continued to fall over the past year.

MOPAC, the Violence Reduction Unit, the Metropolitan Police Service, the wider Greater London Authority Group and key partners including central Government, local Community Safety Partnerships and Safeguarding Children Partnerships are working together to take a public health approach to reducing violent crime. Taking a public health approach involves basing policy and practice decisions on data and evidence; prioritising early intervention and prevention; placing communities and young people at the heart of change; developing immediate and long-term solutions with partners; and evaluating policy and practice to better understand what works.

The focus is on tackling the causes of violence alongside enforcement activity targeting offenders. Working in partnership is a defining characteristic of the public health approach. It is predicated on the assumption that to change behaviour, policy and practice must address the influences and contexts that impact upon individuals at significant points in their life – issues outside the remit of policing alone. For example, school experience, family life, peer groups, other outside influences and opportunities growing up can all influence susceptibility to victimisation or offending.

Objectives

MOPAC commissioned this review to support prison based and community violence reduction interventions, broader research on violent offending and offender management, and strategic assessment of the management of frequent and high harm offending. It considers implications for practice, and applicability of good practice examples to policing and socio-demographic conditions across London.

Primary research question:

What works to reduce violent offending?

Secondary research questions:

1. What offence types and frequency of previous convictions are most predictive of future violence?
2. What works, what's promising and what does not work in reducing violent reoffending?
3. Which agencies are likely to be most effective to deliver these interventions?
4. How applicable is good practice evidence on effective violent reoffending reduction interventions to the policing and socio-demographic context in London?

The review also includes cost benefit analyses where they are reported and discusses the potential for interventions described in the research to be scaled.

Methods

This rapid review set out to identify relevant publications that addressed the key research questions. Pre-specified inclusion and exclusion criteria determined the selection of publications for review. The review protocol was registered on the Open Science Framework¹. Where appropriate, review reporting follows guidelines set out in the 2020 Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement².

Review research questions 1 and 2 were examined using three categories of publications:

- evidence reviews;
- empirical studies; and
- grey literature and descriptive studies including organisational and expert intelligence.

Publications were included if they were: published from 2010 onwards, published in the English language, and conducted in the UK (including devolved administrations), USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Europe. Papers needed to address the population of adult males (aged 26 years and older) in the Criminal Justice System with a history of violent offending.

The review team searched nine online databases. They also conducted supplemental searches with Google Scholar using strict criteria³.

Searches identified 1,179 unique records. After screening on abstract, the review team excluded 1,054 records, identifying 125 for full text retrieval. Of those 125, 16 were excluded as either duplicates or as books or unpublished. Of the remaining 109, the team were able to obtain 107 full texts. A further 69 were excluded on reading the full texts, leaving 38 publications included for data extraction and quality assessment.

The team screened an additional 134 papers (77 grey literature, 24 Ministry of Justice, 30 Home Office and 3 sector expert) resulting in 7 additional included sources.

Of the total of 45 papers, 34 were primary research studies (i.e. reported empirical research), 6 were reviews, and 5 were reports. Table 1, below, summarises the key details using the PRISMA flow chart template⁴.

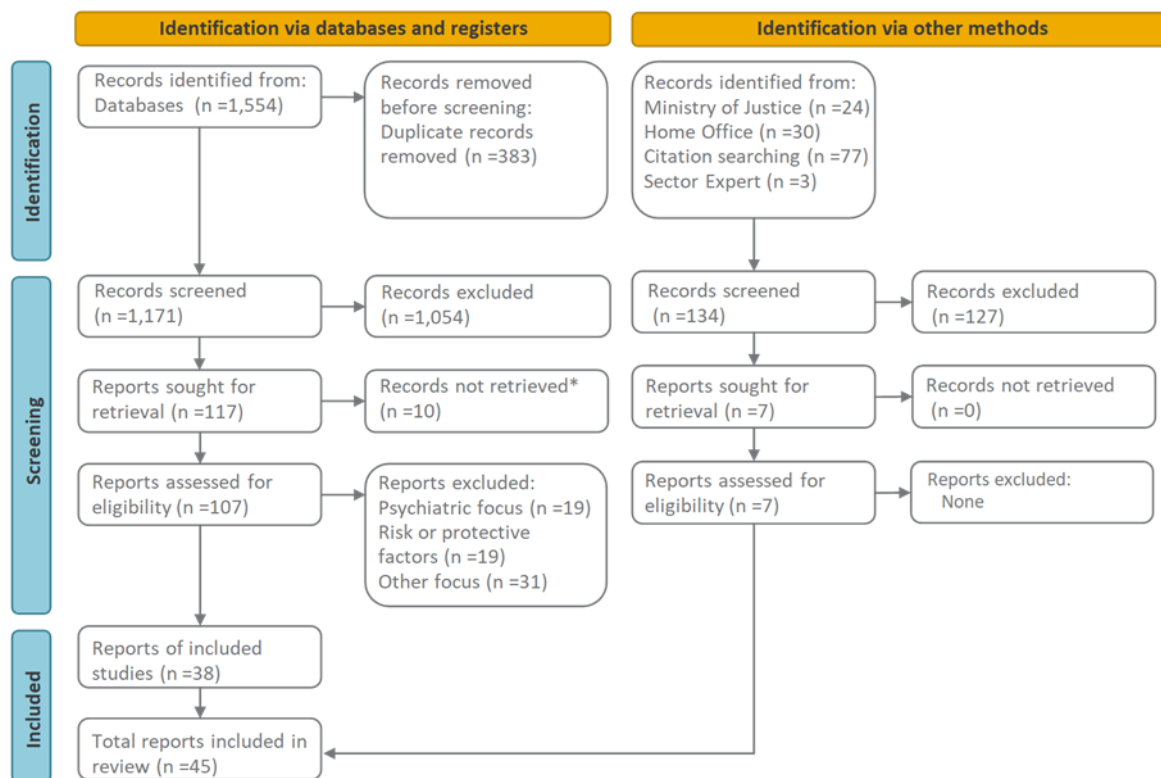
¹ Registration DOI: [OSF Registries | How criminal justice and statutory agencies and partnerships can intervene effectively to reduce the risk of future violence](https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-1011111/v1)

² Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., ... & Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *Bmj*, 372.

³ Haddaway NR, Collins AM, Coughlin D, Kirk S (2015) The Role of Google Scholar in Evidence Reviews and Its Applicability to Grey Literature Searching. *PLOS ONE* 10(9): e0138237

⁴ Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., ... & Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *Bmj*, 372.

Figure 1. The PRISMA flowchart for inclusion of relevant publications that address the key research questions in the rapid review



* Those not retrieved includes books, unpublished work and others unretrievable.

The team extracted data from publications using three standardised forms, one for reviews, one for empirical research and a third for reports. Two members of the research team extracted data from the same ten publications independently then compared results to establish consistency. Post these consistency checks, the same two members of the research team extracted data from the remaining reports independently. Information from all extracted data forms were recorded and stored in our reference management software for later analysis.

The review team did not conduct a meta-analysis of quantitative empirical research papers due to heterogeneity of study design. Consequently, they were not able to conduct standardised tests such as funnel-plot-based methods, to test and adjust for publication bias⁵. However, they did seek to minimize potential publication bias by searching for empirical studies published in grey literature (e.g., theses, etc.).

⁵ Duval, S. & Tweedie, R. (2000). Trim and fill: A simple funnel-plot-based method of testing and adjusting for publication bias in meta-analysis. *Biometrics*, **56**, 455–463.

Results

Quality of primary research studies

The review team assessed the quality of primary (empirical) studies using categories based on the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklists⁶ that cover research design, methodological rigour, data analysis and validity of conclusions. The scale has a maximum score of 14. The team scored 11 of the 34 primary research studies as a 12 or better. Fourteen of the papers scored less than 10. Overall, the team rated the quality of primary research papers as moderate.

Quality of impact evaluations

The team identified 29 primary research studies (out of a total of 34) that reported impact evaluations. The team assessed the quality of the evaluation design using the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (MSMS)⁷.

Of the 29 papers, the team assessed three as a level 4, five as a level 3, 19 as a level 2, and two as a level 1. The majority of impact evaluations did not use robust control groups, so did not provide good evidence of intervention impact. The review team did not rate any empirical intervention studies as a level 5 on the MSMS (a well-designed randomised control trial).

Given that 21 out of the 29 impact evaluations failed to reach higher than a Level 2, overall, the quality of the impact evaluations included in the review might be characterised as relatively weak.

Quality of reviews

The review team identified six review papers, of which three were full systematic reviews and rated as good quality. The team rated the quality of reviews as moderate to good.

Quality of grey literature

The review team included five grey literature sources in the review. The assessment scale, based on the AACODS checklist⁸, has a maximum score of 12. One source achieved a score of 11, three a score of nine, and one a score of 6. Overall, the team rated the quality of grey literature as moderate.

Across all 45 sources, the review team assessed the cumulative strength of evidence against four essential characteristics as described by the Department for International Development (DfID) as medium⁹. The DfID scale describes medium evidence base as: *including moderate quality studies, medium size evidence body, generally consistent, which may or may not be relevant to the specific context. Also covers limited number of high-quality studies.*

⁶Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). *CASP Checklists*. [CASP CHECKLISTS - CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](https://www.casp-uk.net/)

⁷What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth. (2016). *Guide to Scoring Evidence Using the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale*.

⁸Tyndall, J. (2010). *The AACODS checklist*. Flinders University.

[AACODS Checklist.pdf;jsessionid=460074D842978E2544C2584BEAFC639B \(flinders.edu.au\)](https://www.flinders.edu.au/aacods-checklist.pdf?jsessionid=460074D842978E2544C2584BEAFC639B)

⁹Department for International Development (2014). "Assessing the Strength of Evidence" How to Note. London: DfID [Guidance overview: How to Note: Assessing the Strength of Evidence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/assessing-the-strength-of-evidence)

Conclusion

Primary research question:

1. What works to reduce violent offending?
 - Offenders who have served short-prison sentences are more likely to reoffend than those given community or suspended sentences.
 - Holistic interventions addressing multiple needs are most effective.
 - Combining support with sanctions (Integrated Offender Management) is most successful.
 - Reoffending is least likely when rehabilitation programmes include cognitive interventions.

Secondary research questions:

1. What offence types and frequency of previous convictions are most predictive of future violence?
 - Severity of previous violent offences does not predict the likelihood of future violent reoffending.
 - Better predictor of violent reoffending may be to examine processes in the lives of offenders who do not commit further violent offences.
 - Antisocial attitudes, i.e., beliefs that condone, justify, or minimize antisocial and criminal behaviours, predict reoffending among those with convictions for violent offences.
2. What works, what's promising and what does not work in reducing violent reoffending?
 - Public health approaches, i.e. agencies working in partnership to address complex individual offender needs, are generally effective. To that extent, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) approaches work, Restorative Justice approaches are promising, custodial sentences do not work.
3. Which agencies are likely to be most effective to deliver these interventions?
 - The optimum mix of agencies depends on local context, but effective stakeholder engagement as a pre-requisite to the kind of multi-agency working typified by IOM is critical.
 - The quality of relationship between offender and practitioner, and style of delivery is more important than which type of professionals deliver it. Continuity of supervision is critical. Offenders are more likely to complete interventions where they have a small number of supervisors.
4. How applicable is good practice evidence on effective violent reoffending reduction interventions to the policing and socio-demographic context in London?
 - Local circumstances and priorities differ. The essence of effective IOM is the extent to which it is tailored to meet individual offender characteristics and local economic and social context. Evidence on effective approaches is applicable to the London context. The specific elements of effective IOM need to be tailored to local conditions.

Cost benefit analyses:

- There is evidence of a net benefit relative to cost for some interventions with violent offenders.
- Interventions with evidence of net benefit relative to cost include cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), intensive supervision (ISR), and swift-and-certain (SAC) sanctions.
- Financial benefits accrue to restorative justice interventions, although there is evidence to suggest that RJ interventions may be less effective in reducing the risk of reoffending those convicted of violent crimes.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Policy and practice context

The Mayor's Police and Crime Plan identifies reducing violence in all its forms as a key priority for London. Violent crime is a serious issue for London. It inflicts significant harm on victims, devastating families and traumatising communities. During the life of the current Plan, MOPAC has been tasked with continuing to focus on reducing violent crime and addressing its underlying causes.

MOPAC, the Violence Reduction Unit, the Metropolitan Police Service, the wider Greater London Authority Group and key partners including central Government, local Community Safety Partnerships and Safeguarding Children Partnerships are working together to take a public health approach to reducing violent crime. Taking a public health approach involves basing policy and practice decisions on data and evidence; prioritising early intervention and prevention; placing communities and young people at the heart of change; developing immediate and long-term solutions with partners; and evaluating policy and practice to better understand what works.

Working in partnership is a defining characteristic of the public health approach. It is predicated on the assumption that to change behaviour, policy and practice must address the influences and contexts that impact on individuals at significant points in their life: issues outside the remit of policing alone. For example, school experience, family life, peer groups and their influences, and opportunities growing up can all influence susceptibility to victimisation or offending.

MOPAC commissioned this review to support prison based and community violence reduction interventions, broader research on violent offending and offender management, and strategic assessment of the management of frequent and high harm offending. It will consider implications for practice, and applicability of good practice examples to policing and socio-demographic conditions across London.

1.2 Rationale for this review

The aim of the review is to identify effective interventions designed to reduce the risk of violent reoffending amongst adult males.

Several reviews have looked at evidence concerning what works to reduce reoffending¹⁰. This review includes publications that examine the evidence from the UK and internationally.

¹⁰ E.g., Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., & Conlong, A. M. (2011). What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence justice analytical services Scottish government. [What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence \(nls.uk\)](https://www.nls.uk/what-works-to-reduce-reoffending-a-summary-of-the-evidence/)
Beaudry, G., Yu, R., Perry, A. E., & Fazel, S. (2021). Effectiveness of psychological interventions in prison to reduce recidivism: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 8(9), 759-773.
Joliffe, D and Farrington, D (2007) *A systematic review of the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of interventions with violent reoffenders. A systematic review of the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of interventions with violent offenders (cam.ac.uk)*

It considers evaluations of the efficacy of interventions designed to reduce the risk of violent reoffending amongst adult males.

2 OBJECTIVES

This review looks at the implications of evidence on reoffending for practice, and applicability of good practice examples to policing and socio-demographic conditions across London.

Primary research question:

What works to reduce violent offending?

Secondary research questions:

1. What offence types and frequency of previous convictions are most predictive of future violence?
2. What works, what's promising and what does not work in reducing violent reoffending?
3. Which agencies are likely to be most effective to deliver these interventions?
4. How applicable is good practice evidence on effective violent reoffending reduction interventions to the policing and socio-demographic context in London?

3 METHODS

3.1 Protocol registration

The review protocol is registered on the Open Science Framework:

<https://archive.org/details/osf-registrations-ds4c7-v1>

3.2 Study eligibility criteria

The study eligibility criteria were developed in close consultation with the review Advisory Group, made up of representatives from MOPAC and the review team. The Advisory Group recommended that the review include publications produced from the year 2010 onwards.

The Group also suggested that it would also be useful to look at international comparisons. The decision was made to include the following countries: UK (including devolved administrations), US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia and Europe.

The eligibility criteria are specified by the review inclusion and exclusion criteria, and for impact evaluations, the PICO table set out below (Table 3.2). As is standard practice, the PICO table specifies the Population, Interventions, Comparators and Outcomes characteristics of impact evaluations included in the review. Inclusion and exclusion criteria remained as specified in the published review protocol.

Table 3.1.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Date	2010 onwards	Studies published prior to 2010
Language	English	Not English
Country	UK (including devolved administrations), USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Europe.	Papers published in countries outside of those specified for inclusion
Study Type	Selected range of evaluations from the SCIE review guidelines ¹¹ – from RCTs, QEDs and process evaluations, descriptive studies including organisational and expert intelligence. In the first instance we will search for systematic reviews.	Single case study designs
Population	Adult males (aged 26 years and older) in the Criminal Justice System with a history of violent offending.	Studies that include only a small sub-sample of adult males aged 26 or over
Intervention	Interventions, services, tactics, and partnerships aimed at reducing violent offending (excluding intimate partner violence and terrorism)	Specific interventions for services designed for young people aged under 26

¹¹Rutter, D., Francis, J., Coren, E. and Fisher, M. (2010). *SCIE Research resource 1: SCIE systematic research reviews: guidelines (2nd edition)* [SCIE Research resource 1: SCIE systematic research reviews: guidelines](#)

Table 3.2.2 Population, Interventions, Comparators and Outcomes (PICO)

PICO	Definition
Population	Adult males (aged 26 years and older) in the Criminal Justice System with a history of violent offending
Interventions	Interventions, services, tactics, and partnerships aimed at reducing violent offending (excluding IPV/terrorism).
Comparators	Any study that includes an intervention and comparison group, with samples randomly allocated or matched.
Outcomes	Reduced risk of further violent offending. Changes in thinking, attitudes and behaviour including motivation to change, impulsivity, anger/emotional management, willingness to use aggression instrumentally, level of empathy and other psychological risk factors for violence.

3.3 Search strategy

The review team developed the final search string through an iterative process based on output from 12 trial searches. The project Advisory Group provided feedback on each progressive iteration¹².

One author (AG) searched the following databases using the final iteration of the string during the week beginning 20th May 2022:

- Social Policy & Practice (SPP);
- Criminal Justice Abstracts;
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS);
- PsycINFO;
- IBSS;
- Applied Social Science Index & Abstracts (ASSIA);
- Police Bibliographic Database and any data files accessible from police sources;
- Web of Science;
- Social Care Online; Social Services Abstracts;
- Sociological Abstracts.

Supplementary searches were conducted with Google Scholar using strict criteria

Each database was searched initially using the following search string:

¹² Details of string development methodology are available from the lead author on request.

(Intervention or methodology* or outcome* or restorative justice) and (Violent reoffending or ((repeat or recidivism or desistance) and (offend* or aggression or assault*)) or (violen* and (re offen*)) or (violen* and reoffend*)) and (Partnership* or justice or probation or prison* or police* or local authorit* or agenc*) not (Domestic* or terror* or sex*)*

No date or study design restrictions were imposed in the search. The review team searched for papers published in the English language only.

The research team identified most of the relevant grey literature through the Social Policy and Practice (SPP) database, a major source of grey literature. Around 30% of total SPP content is grey literature.

In addition to searching the databases, one author (AG) conducted searched for additional grey literature using the following websites discussed and agreed with the project Advisory Group:

- House of Commons Justice Committee papers;
- Home Office website;
- British Library catalogue;
- Cambridge Institute of Criminology website.

Subject matter expert MF provided sector expertise, reviewing the final list of papers that were included, and highlighting additional material. Resources did not allow for manual searches of relevant journals.

3.4 Study selection

The review team screened the abstracts of all publications identified by the searches. Two members of the team (TM and MA) contributed to screening abstracts. They both screened the same abstracts from the Web of Science database (N=34) to ensure good inter-rater reliability of selection for full text retrieval. They discussed selections until agreed criteria produced complete consensus on selections. From that point they screened abstracts from remaining databases independently, whilst undertaking regular checks to ensure consistent application of inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The project manager (EC) uploaded details of papers selected for full text retrieval on to the team's in-house reference management software and checked for duplicates.

Two members of the review team (TM and MA) screened the same ten full texts, selected at random, to decide on whether they met the criteria for inclusion in the review. They agreed on the outcomes for all ten texts. Should they have disagreed, they would have discussed their respective selection rationales to arrive at a consensus. From that point, they divided the remaining texts equally between them and screened independently.

3.5 Data extraction and quality assessment

The review team used three different data extraction tools depending on type of publication: evidence reviews; empirical research evaluating interventions; and reports.

The team assessed the quality of reviews against eight criteria:

1. Review method;
2. Search strategy;
3. Data collection (sift);
4. Quality appraisal;
5. Data analysis/synthesis (quantitative);
6. Qualitative synthesis;
7. Interpretation and reporting of results;
8. Credibility of conclusions.

The team assessed the quality of primary research studies on seven criteria:

1. Research rationale;
2. Research design;
3. Sampling;
4. Data collection;
5. Data analysis;
6. Interpretation and reporting of results;
7. Credibility of conclusions.

These criteria are based on the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklists that cover eight research designs, methodological rigour, data analysis and validity of conclusions¹³.

In addition, the assessment tool includes the widely used Maryland Scientific Methods Scale to categorise experimental research designs of impact evaluations^{14,15,16}.

The team assessed the quality of grey literature on six criteria:

1. Authority
2. Purpose
3. Publication and format
4. Relevance
5. Date of publication
6. Documentation

¹³ Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). CASP Checklists. <https://casp-uk.net/casp-tools-checklists/>

¹⁴ Farrington, D. P., & Petrosino, A. (2001). The Campbell collaboration crime and justice group. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 578(1), 35-49.

¹⁵ [Guide to scoring methods using the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale \(whatworksgrowth.org\)](#)

¹⁶ [Magenta Book supplementary guide. Government Analytical Evaluation Capabilities Framework.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

The criteria above are based on the widely used AACODS checklist for the evaluation of grey literature¹⁷. The AACODS scale is recommended for the evaluation of grey literature by multiple university library services, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence¹⁸, and the US National Institute of Health¹⁹.

Two review team members (TM and MA) took a random sample of ten papers selected for inclusion and extracted data independently. They weighted the sample to include examples of all three publication types. Quality assessment scores were compared, and an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability (in excess of 80%) achieved. The same two review team members divided the remaining papers equally and undertook quality assessment independently. All assessment data was entered on to the reference management software by EC.

Multiple publications from the same study were treated as separate papers only if post hoc analysis used different data set elements.

3.6 Study design categorisation

This review includes three types of publications:

1. evidence reviews;
2. empirical research evaluating interventions; and
3. reports describing relevant work with offenders.

The quality assessment tool categorises evidence reviews as follows:

Literature review: collates studies that are relevant to a particular topic and summarizes and appraises the research in order to draw conclusions from it. They do not explicitly set out how the studies have been found, included, and analysed.

Quick scoping review: overview of research undertaken on a specific topic to determine the range of studies available.

Rapid evidence assessment (REA): uses systematic review methods to search and critically appraise existing research. They aim to be rigorous and explicit in method and thus systematic but make concessions to the breadth or depth of the process by limiting aspects of the systematic review process.

Full systematic review: includes explicit objectives and studies are chosen on explicit criteria. Searches use electronic and print sources, grey literature, hand searches of journals and textbooks, searching of specialist websites, and use of personal

¹⁷ Tyndall, J. (2010). The AACODS checklist. Flinders University.
https://dspace.flinders.edu.au/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2328/3326/AACODS_Checklist.pdf;jsessionid=460074D842978E2544C2584BEAFC639B?sequence=4

¹⁸ [Appendix 2 Checklists | Interim methods guide for developing service guidance 2014 | Guidance | NICE](#)

¹⁹ [ANNEX 4. SELECTION OF TOOLS FOR APPRAISING EVIDENCE - A Resource for Developing an Evidence Synthesis Report for Policy-Making - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)

contacts. Each study found is screened according to uniform criteria and the reasons for excluding studies clearly documented.

Multi arm systematic review: full synthesis as in a systematic review but with different sub questions looking at distinct types of evidence.

Review of reviews: Only includes existing reviews, preferably systematic, rather than primary studies. Each review should be screened to assess how systematic and comprehensive it is.

The review team use a standard definition of empirical research: based on observed and measured phenomena and deriving knowledge from actual experience rather than from theory or belief²⁰. As such empirical research includes both quantitative and qualitative designs²¹. More specifically, the assessment tool for empirical research papers makes the following distinctions:

Quantitative designs - Experimental (RCT's) Quasi-experimental (e.g., Single group pre and post-test design; Non-equivalent comparison group design; Regression discontinuity design); Non-experimental (no comparison group) (e.g., interrupted time series design - post-hoc survey or before-after surveys; secondary data analysis);

Qualitative designs - Direct observation; participative observation; auto-ethnography; structured/semi-structured/unstructured interviews/ focus groups.

Mixed methods - combinations of the above.

The team's grey literature assessment tool categorises materials on the basis the authority of the authors, relevance to the review questions and extent to which claims made are supported by specific citations.

3.7 Publication bias assessment

The review team did not conduct a meta-analysis of empirical research papers due to the lack of data on robust effect sizes. Consequently, they were not able to conduct standardised tests such as funnel-plot-based methods, to assess and adjust for publication bias across the review. However, they did search for grey literature studies (e.g., theses, etc.) to minimize publication selection bias.

In terms of assessing risk of bias in individual papers, the quality assessment tools used provide the means to assess methodological limitations.

²⁰ [What is Empirical Research and How to Read It - Empirical Research in the Social Sciences and Education - Library Guides at Penn State University \(psu.edu\)](#)

²¹ McGrath, J. E., & Johnson, B. A. (2003). Methodology makes meaning: How both qualitative and quantitative paradigms shape evidence and its interpretation. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 31–48). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10595-003>

3.8 Assessing the strength of evidence

The review team used the data extracted in standardized forms to assess the cumulative strength of evidence identified in the review. They assessed the strength of evidence against four essential characteristics as described by the Department for International Development (DfID)²².

- The quality of individual articles or papers;
- The quantity (number) of papers that make up the body of evidence;
- The consistency of the findings from studies; and
- The context in which the available evidence has been collected: how well the evidence collected in a particular context can be generalised to another.

The DfID approach to assessing the cumulative strength of evidence is particularly well-suited to summarising studies typical of social research. It is informed by both the GRADE framework (designed for assessing the quality of medical evidence)²³ and CASP checklists²⁴.

3.9 Data analysis and synthesis

Of the 45 publications included in the review, 34 reported empirical evaluations of interventions. In such circumstances, Cochrane guidelines specify using a narrative synthesis to report review findings²⁵. The defining characteristic of this method is that it uses text to tell the story of the findings from the included studies.

A narrative synthesis includes four key elements: (i) Developing a theory of how the intervention works, why and for whom; (ii) Developing a preliminary synthesis of findings of included studies; (iii) Exploring relationships in the data; and (iv) Assessing the robustness of the synthesis²⁶.

²² Department for International Development (2014). "Assessing the Strength of Evidence" How to Note. London: DfID. [Guidance overview: How to Note: Assessing the Strength of Evidence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

²³ 16 Guyatt, G.H., Oxman, A.D., Kunz, R., Vist, G.E., Falck-Ytter, Y., Schünemann, H.J. (2008). What is "quality of evidence" and why is it important to clinicians? *British Medical Journal*, 336:995. [What is "quality of evidence" and why is it important to clinicians? | The BMJ](#)

²⁴ Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). CASP Checklists. [CASP CHECKLISTS - CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](http://casp-uk.net)

²⁵ Higgins JPT, Thomas J, Chandler J, Cumpston M, Li T, Page MJ, Welch VA (editors). (2021). *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* version 6.2. Chichester (UK): John Wiley & Sons. [Chapter 15: Interpreting results and drawing conclusions | Cochrane Training](#)

²⁶ Popay, J., Roberts, H., Sowden, A., Petticrew, M., Arai, L., Rodgers, M., Britten, N., Roen, K., & Duffy, S., (2006) Guidance on the conduct of narrative synthesis in systematic reviews: a product from the ESRC Methods Programme. Lancaster University. [\(5\) \(PDF\) Guidance on the conduct of narrative synthesis in systematic reviews: A product from the ESRC Methods Programme \(researchgate.net\)](#)

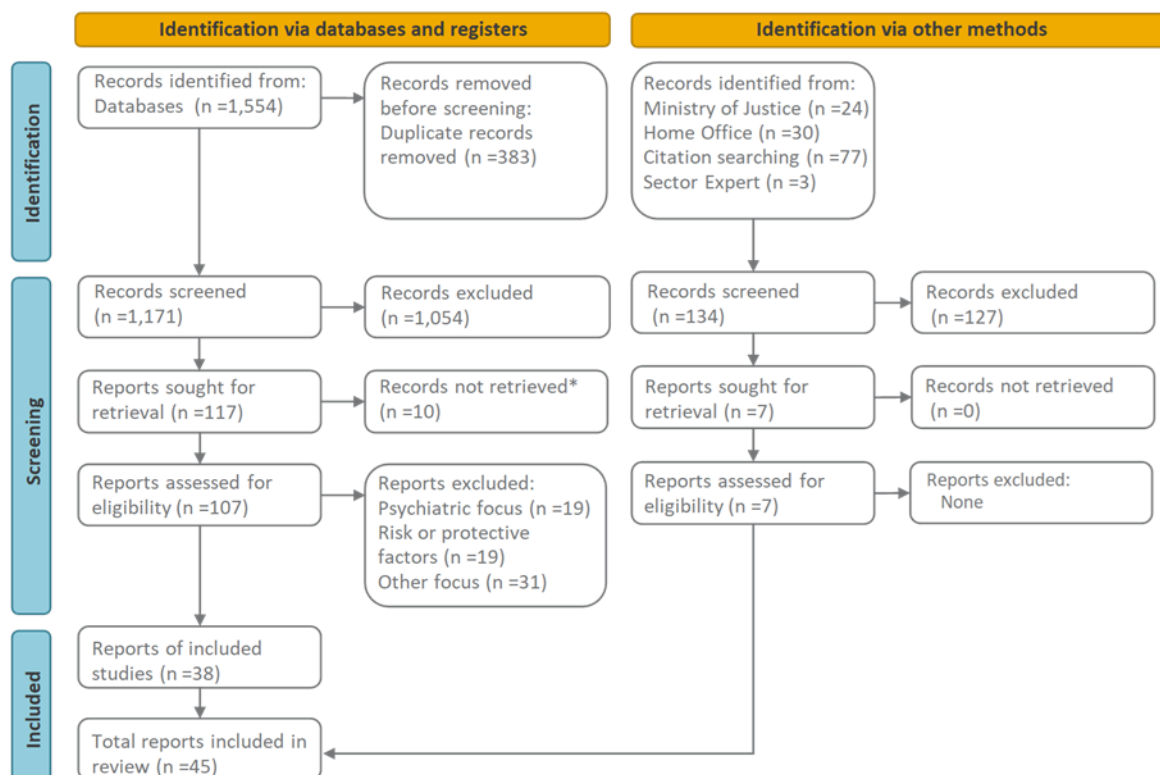
4 RESULTS

4.1 Search Results

Database searching produced a total of 1,554 records, of which 375 were duplicates. The review team screened the remaining 1,179 abstracts of those records using the inclusion and exclusion criteria described in Section 3 of this report, excluding 1,054. Of the remaining 125, the team excluded a further 16 as either duplicates or books, and it was not possible to retrieve 2. On reading the full texts, the team excluded a further 69 texts, leaving 38.

The team identified seven additional references from the grey literature, Ministry of Justice and Home Office sources, and recommendation from the team’s sector expert. A total of 45 texts were included in the final review. The team recorded reasons for exclusion of the 69 full texts (see Appendix 2). Figure 4.1 provides a summary of the search process.

Figure 4.1 The PRISMA flowchart for inclusion of relevant publications that address the key research questions in the rapid review



* Those not retrieved includes books, unpublished work and others unretrievable.

4.2. Characteristics of included studies

Characteristics of included evidence reviews (N=6; listed alphabetically to facilitate identification)

Table 4.2.1. Characteristics of included evidence reviews

Reference (first author and year)	Review type	Search sources stated	Search terms reported	Quality appraisal	Number of papers	Key implications	Quality score (max. 16)
Ashford (2021)	Literature review	No	No	No	Not stated	Limited research into the 'racial fairness' of violence risk instruments. Notions of fairness and its meaning described in the literature are inconsistent and often inaccurate.	5
Beaudry (2021)	Systematic review	Yes	Yes	Yes	29	Modest effects on reoffending for psychological interventions delivered in prison. Trials of therapeutic community interventions and related approaches that facilitate continuity of treatment after prison release should be prioritised. Large RCTs on the effectiveness of psychological interventions in prison are necessary.	14
Graham (2017)	Literature review	No	No	No	Not stated	Current discussions about using electronic monitoring alongside alcohol monitoring. There is limited evidence about effect of electronic monitoring on reoffending and consensus it should be used alongside supervision.	4

Reference (first author and year)	Review type	Search sources stated	Search terms reported	Quality appraisal	Number of papers	Key implications	Quality score (max. 16)
Joliffe (2007)	Systematic review	Yes	Yes	Yes	11	Interventions with violent offenders can be effective at reducing reoffending. Interventions that addressed cognitive skills, anger control, used role play and relapse prevention and had offenders complete homework were most effective. More high-quality evaluations of interventions for violent offenders needed.	14
Sherman (2015)	Systematic review	Yes	No	Yes	10	Restorative Justice Interventions delivered in the way detailed in the 10 included studies (2-3 hour conferences with a specialist) reduce the frequency of detected crime. Good results with violent offenders UK evidence suggests it is cost effective.	13
Wong (2013)	Literature review	No	No	No	Not stated	Violence Reduction Programme (VRP) participants in custodial settings show reductions in violent recidivism and institutional misconduct even when offenders have significant psychopathic personality traits. More robust evaluation required.	3

Characteristics of included empirical studies (N=34)

Table 4.2.2. Characteristics of included empirical studies

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Andersen (2022)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	Norway	58,694 adult offenders	Offenders sentenced to electronic monitoring less likely to reoffend than those imprisoned	14
Ariel (2019)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	US	421 prolific offenders	Offenders given specific deterrence messages less likely to reoffend	13
Ashby (2011)	Quantitative re-offending data	Criminology	UK	81 offenders	Alcohol Treatment Requirements: high completion rate and positive impact on reoffending	7
Baggio (2020)	Standardised attitude questionnaires and recidivism rates	Public Health	Switzerland	Offenders 129 in treatment group, 84 controls	Reasoning and Rehabilitation cognitive programme participants less likely to reoffend	13
Berman (2019)	Standardised attitude questionnaires and recidivism rates	Criminology	Sweden	776 programme participants	One on One cognitive intervention programme participants less likely to reoffend	9
Blatch (2015)	Quantitative reconviction data	Criminology	Australia	2882 prisoners with significant alcohol and drug problems	Improved odds of time to first reconviction by 8 percent and to first violent reconviction by 13 percent, compared to controls.	11

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Bonta (2011)	Recordings of probation officers with clients, and reoffending data	Criminology	Canada	52 probation officers and 185 clients	Clients of probation officers using Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation less likely to reoffend	11
Bosma (2020)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	Netherlands	All male detainees in pre-trial detention October 2010 to March 2011.	Prevention of Recidivism Program decreased likelihood of recidivism but no evidence that tailored treatment responsive to individual needs and risks was most effective	9
Bryant (2015)	Quantitative reoffending data	Government report	England	All MAPPA eligible offenders between 1998 and 2004	Reductions in reoffending since its introduction suggest that MAPPA may be making a positive contribution to managing offenders convicted of serious offences.	8
Clark-Miller (2011)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	US	5134 offenders	Impact of officer continuity on reoffending is dramatic - those who spend time with a few officers on probation far less likely to reoffend than those who spend time with many.	6
Corsaro (2015)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	US	159 gang members rated as high risk of reoffending	Focused deterrence reduced likelihood of lethal violence in New Orleans, a city with high and rising rates of homicide	7

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Dickson (2014)	Secondary analysis of reoffending data	Criminology	New Zealand	67 high risk violent offenders in prison	Good quality release plans—plans to address offenders’ basic needs in the community—are related to reduced rates of recidivism.	10
Duwe (2021)	Quantitative reconviction data	Criminology	US	1,818 persons released in 2018	Intensive supervision of offenders post release significantly reduced reoffending and is cost effective.	12
Ellison (2013)	Quantitative reconviction data	Criminology	UK	400 offenders (329 male)	Housing support as part of IOM had positive impact on general, felony, and violent reoffending.	7
Hamilton (2016)	Confinement, recidivism, treatment, violation, and costs outcomes	Criminology	US	Gp 1 treatment group n=2151. Gp 2 treatment group n=2687. Comparison group n=15,561	Washington State’s swift-and-certain (SAC) policy sanctions all violations of community orders with aim of reducing long term imprisonment. Policy reduces reoffending and is cost effective.	10
Hardy (2019)	Offender Group Reconviction Scale, standardised psychological measures and Alcohol Drug use self-report	Criminology	UK	49 offenders still in prison	CBT intervention showed a reduction in the expectation that alcohol improves sociability, improvements in impulsivity and trait anger (tendency to respond to frustration by getting angry), and increased self-reliance managing alcohol and offending.	7

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Hopkins (2013)	PPO project data on recorded crime and progress and outcomes for a cohort of offenders who accessed the project between April 2006 and March 2008.	Criminology	UK	21 offenders on the Prolific and Other Priority Offender (PPO) programme	Rationale for the PPO programme might be plausible, but doubts over impact on crime and whether it can target prolific offenders effectively.	7
Juarez (2022)	Measures of Criminal Attitudes and Associates (MCAA) and reoffending	Criminology	Australia	2,337 males convicted of violent offences	Following CBT intervention, no clear evidence that within treatment change on any of the MCCA measures predicted violent reoffending specifically.	10
Kennedy (2019)	Qualitative interviews and quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	US	383 offenders on probation in receipt of a restorative justice intervention (RJI)	50% of offenders reported empathic understanding associated with participation in RJ. Recidivism lower in the RJ group than control group over 2-6 years.	11
Larden (2018)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	Sweden	1,124 offenders receiving CBT intervention: Aggression Replacement Training.	Marginal decrease in reconvictions for any recidivism, but not for violent recidivism specifically. The programme, designed for adolescents, may not be effective with adults.	12

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Martin (2010)	Kaplan-Meier survival analysis measure of reoffending after a 6-year follow-up	Criminology	Spain	117 repeat offenders, all high risk.	Group that received social and employment integration had the highest level of delayed recidivism, The difference in reoffending rates within the group that received only social-cognitive training (Reasoning and Rehabilitation programme) was not statistically significant.	9
McDougall (2013)	ADViSOR negative behaviours measure	Criminology	UK	25 MAPPA offenders due for release plus controls	Negative behaviour assessments in prison predicted behaviour post release but did not explain how used to shape probation responses.	7
Mercer (2022)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminology	Australia	92 recently released between 2014-2016 given CBT intervention plus controls	Treatment group had lower rate of violent reoffending. Severity of violent offences was reduced among reoffenders. CBT cost effective because the experimental group spent less time incarcerated.	12
O'Brien (2017)	Violence risk scale, the denial minimisation checklist, victim empathy, motivation, recidivism from police records.	Criminology	Australia	82 adult male violent offenders who attended a prison-based treatment programme	Risk reduction associated with completion, increased motivation associated with reduced likelihood to reoffend. Reducing dynamic risk factors did NOT result in a reduction in recidivism.	9

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Polaschek (2018)	Quantitative reoffending data and risk and protective factor assessments using standardised instruments	Criminology	New Zealand	151 offenders received CBT and alcohol intervention plus controls	Treatment group had lower risk scores on release and higher protective factor scores; less likely to return to prison within a year. 80% of treatment group released early from prison.	9
Robinson (2018)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminal justice	UK	2,509 adult males in the RESOLVE (CBT) custody programme plus matched comparisons	For violent reoffences, no overall significant effect on reoffending. But programme participants less likely to commit a violent reoffence within the first year post release than nonparticipants	12
Sadlier (2010)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminal justice	UK	257 offenders receiving Enhanced Thinking Skills plus controls	The proportion of ETS participants that were reconvicted lower than the comparison group; convicted of fewer offences. No impact on severe offence reconviction rate	11
Travers (2014)	Quantitative reoffending data	Criminal justice	UK	21,373 male offenders aged 18 and over who had attended the ETS programme	Study provides evidence that cognitive skills training reduces reoffending amongst violent offenders but is not as successful with serious acquisitive offenders.	11

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Wallace (2020)	Computer assisted interviews and reconviction data	Criminal justice	US	676 offenders released into the community	Intimate partner relationship quality, not marriage or relationship transitions, predicts lower likelihood of reincarceration.	13
Walters (2017)	General Criminal Thinking (GCT) scale of the Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Styles	Criminal justice	US	219 prisoners completing cognitive behavioural intervention	Prisoners who displayed a drop in GCT scores were significantly more likely to show a reduction in prison misconduct.	12
Willey (2016)	Treatment attendance and reconviction rates	Criminal justice	England	All adults treated for Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) (n = 53,017)	Evidence of an association between AUD and violent offending. Previous studies do show a dose-relationship between alcohol intoxication, AUD severity and violence.	13
Wong (2012)	Qualitative interviews	Government report	England	Forty-two interviews with 26 Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and 16 statutory agency representatives providing elements of IOM	7 discrete challenges to involving the VCS in IOM: Mixed levels of understanding of IOM; Correctly identifying which offenders were in scope for IOM; Slow or absent referral mechanisms; Concerns around risk management; Sharing information at a local level; Raising unsustainable expectations; Competition within the VCS.	7

Reference (first author and year)	Data collection methods	Setting	Country	Sample	Key findings	Quality score (max. 14)
Yesberg (2019)	The Violence Risk Scale VRS, a staff-rated risk instrument designed to measure change in custodial treatment. The Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Re-entry (DRAOR) designed to facilitate the assessment of recidivism risk in the community Reoffending data.	Criminal justice	New Zealand	123 men who completed an intensive treatment programme designed to address reoffending risk factors	Although offenders made statistically significant positive change on the VRS during treatment, the amount of change they made did not significantly predict subsequent rates of recidivism. ⁵⁷	10
Zgoba (2021)	Qualitative analysis of criminal incident cases	Criminal justice and criminology	US	375 prisoners released from New Jersey's prisons plus controls	People released after serving sentences for violent offences frequently display mitigation, as opposed to aggravation. They are less likely to be rearrested than those released after serving sentences for nonviolent offences. The degree of severity of the violence itself has no bearing on the risk of rearrest.	13

Characteristics of included reports (N=5)

Table 4.2.3. Characteristics of included reports

Reference (first author and year)	Area of author expertise	Publication format	Sources cited	Relevance/key implications	Quality score (max. 12)
College of Policing (2022)	Professional body	Online	Yes	Restorative justice (RJ) can be used at all stages of the criminal justice process. RJ is effective in reducing reoffending and enhancing victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system. Victims who participated in RJ conferencing also reported a reduction in post-traumatic stress. In terms of reoffending, research on the effectiveness of indirect RJ – where victims and offenders do not meet – is less conclusive than for RJ conferencing, which involves both the victim and offender. However, victim satisfaction remains high for both forms of RJ. RJ has been shown to be cost-effective, with the reduction in the costs of reoffending outweighing the cost of the RJ intervention.	11
Kemshall (2015)	University Professor	Multi governmental sponsored report sponsored by the European Commission		Interventions shown to be effective in reducing reoffending: RESOLVE, self-change programme, Healthy Relationships Programme, Democratic Therapeutic Community, Control of violence and anger in impulsive drinkers, violence reduction programme. Therapeutic communities - range of life situations where members re-enact and re-experience relationships in the outside world.	8

Reference (first author and year)	Area of author expertise	Publication format	Sources cited	Relevance/key implications	Quality score (max. 12)
Lane (2012)	Home Office report	published report authored by Home Office staff	Yes	IOM - local agencies working together with support from the Home Office, MOJ and Association of Chief Police Officers. It is a strategic framework which brings people together. Key principles: all partners tackle offending together, deliver a local response, offenders face responsibility or face consequences, better use of existing programmes, all high-risk offenders are in scope. Workforce development: needed as IOM means working in new ways and continual evaluation. Implications for practice: local IOM arrangements improve the coordination of agency responses, changes operational and strategic practice, IOM e-learning platform developed in 2011 allows the workforce to respond to these changes.	9
Making every adult matter (MEAM) (2018)	Authored by a consortium of respected charities Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind.	Online, open access	No	Multiple needs includes mental health and substance misuse. MEAM brings together a range of partners to design packages of support. 4 key areas: 1) government needs to commit to tackling the causes and consequences of multiple needs. 2) collaborate - government departments need to work together. 3) challenge- clear expectations of every local area to address multiple needs. 4) invest - flexible investment which allows services to work together. Need joined up policy areas of housing, drugs, offending.	6

Reference (first author and year)	Area of author expertise	Publication format	Sources cited	Relevance/key implications	Quality score (max. 12)
Sapouna (2015)	Justice Analytical Services. Scottish Government.	Online	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desistance highly individualised, so one-size-fits-all interventions do not work. • Those serving short prison sentences have higher rates of reoffending than those serving community sentences. • The way in which individuals are processed by the criminal justice system and partner agencies may alter their likelihood of reoffending. • Cognitive-behavioural programmes most effective for reducing reconviction • Supervision can be an important factor • Offenders' relationships with supervisors, family and friends are critical. • Some promising but mixed evidence for reparative and restorative programmes • Factors outside of the control of the criminal justice system affect reoffending 	9

4.3. Risk of bias within studies

The review team assessed the quality of all included publications on criteria based on the eight Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklists²⁷ that cover research design, methodological rigour, data analysis and validity of conclusions.

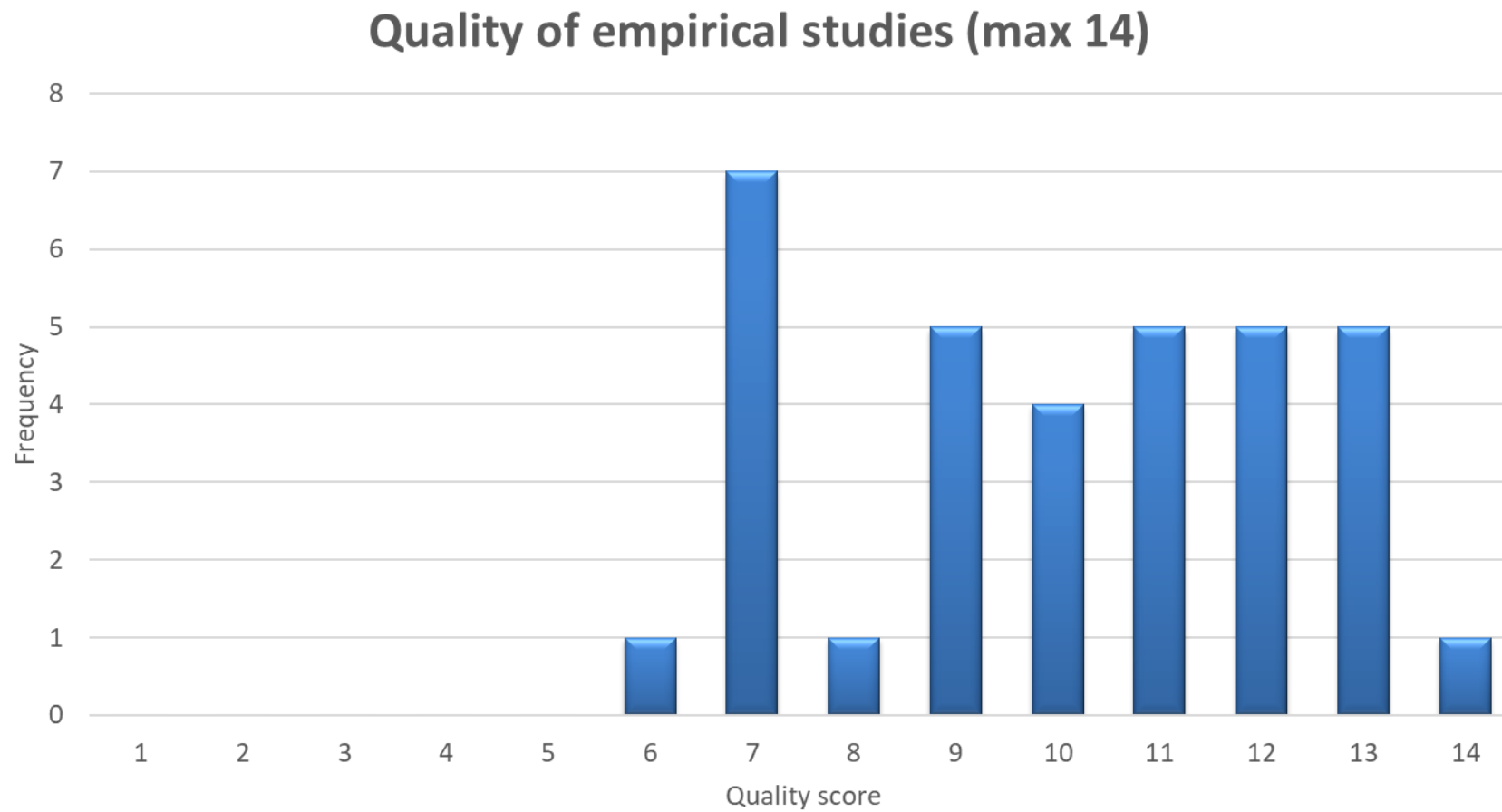
The quality of empirical studies of all designs, as set out above, were assessed on seven criteria:

1. Research rationale;
2. Research design;
3. Sampling;
4. Data collection;
5. Data analysis;
6. Interpretation and reporting of results;
7. Credibility of conclusions.

Empirical studies can receive a maximum score of 14. The figure below sets out the distribution of quality scores across the 34 empirical studies included in the review.

²⁷ Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). CASP Checklists. [CASP CHECKLISTS - CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](https://casp-uk.net/)

Figure 4.3.1 Distribution of quality scores across empirical studies

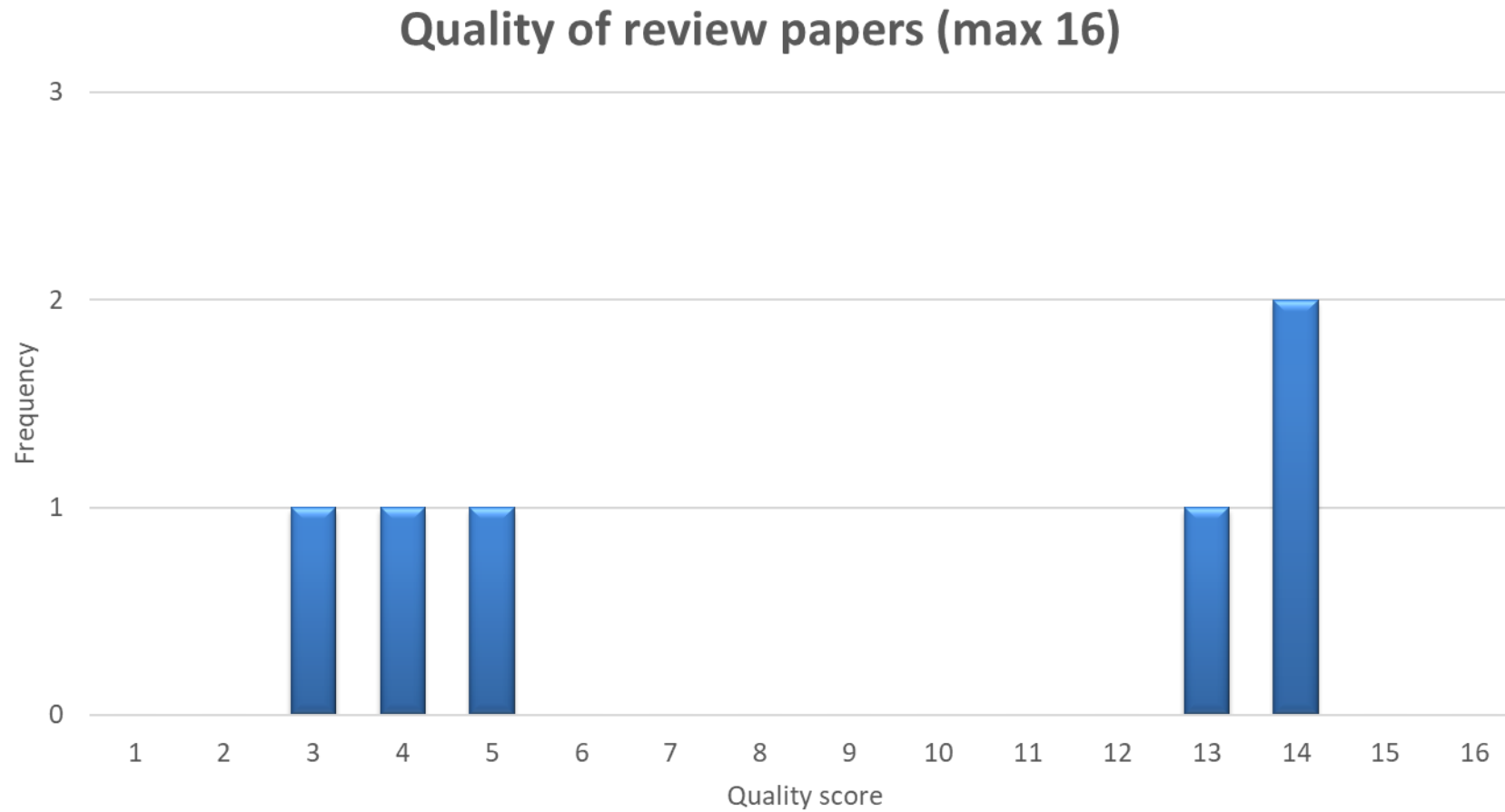


The team assessed the quality of reviews on eight criteria:

1. Review method;
2. Search strategy;
3. Data collection (sift);
4. Quality appraisal;
5. Data analysis/synthesis (quantitative);
6. Qualitative synthesis;
7. Interpretation and reporting of results;
8. Credibility of conclusions.

Review papers can receive a maximum score of 16. Figure 4.3.2 shows the distribution of quality scores across the 6 review papers included in the review.

Figure 4.3.2 Distribution of quality scores across review papers



The team assessed quality of reports on six criteria based on the widely used AACODS checklist for the evaluation of grey literature²⁸:

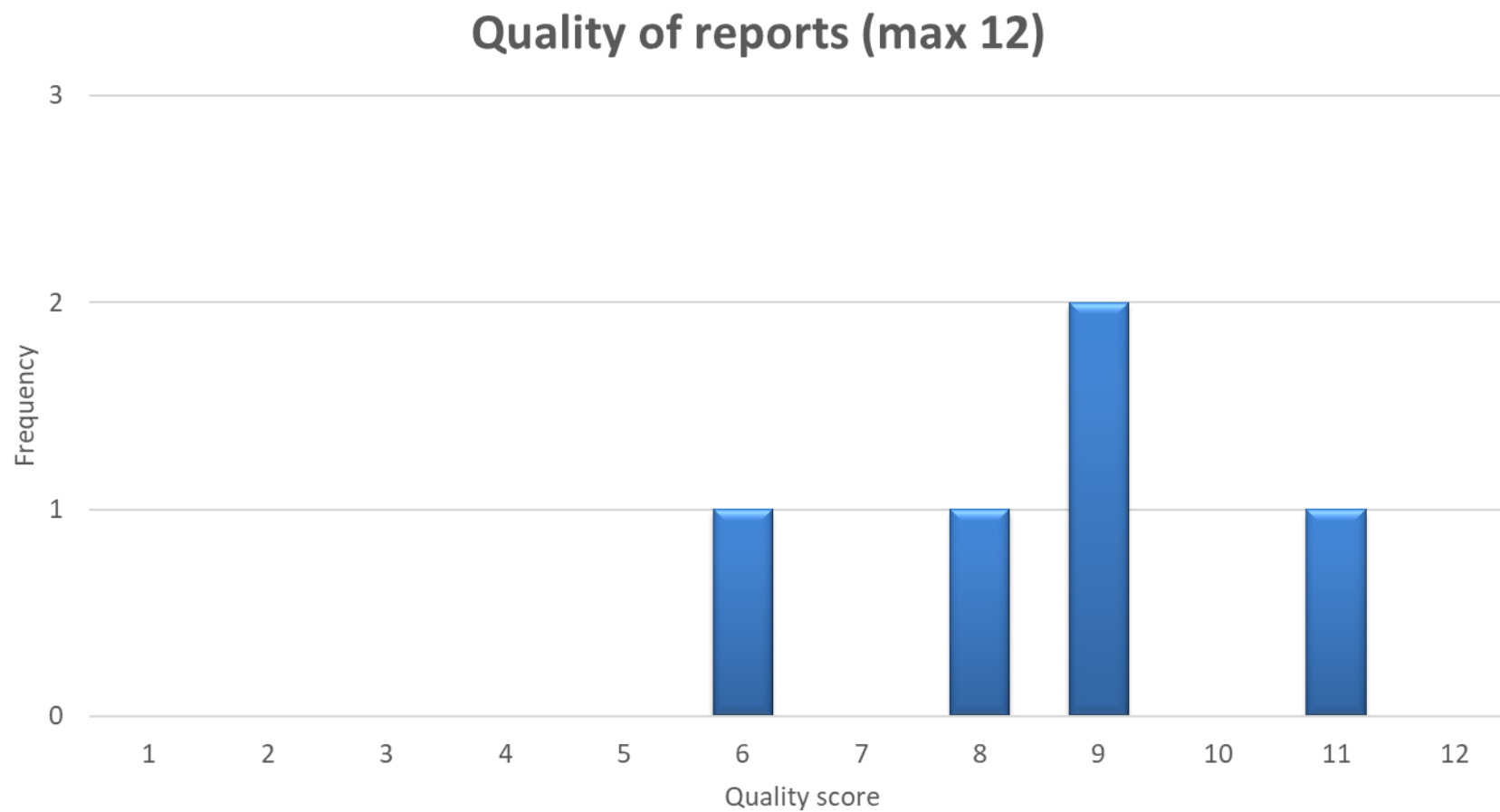
1. Authority
2. Purpose
3. Publication and format
4. Relevance
5. Date of publication
6. Documentation

Reports included unpublished reports from experts working in the field, theses, and dissertations. The review team assessed papers identified from grey literature searches that described empirical research using the seven empirical research criteria.

Reports can receive a maximum score of 12. Figure 4.3.3 shows the distribution of quality scores across the 5 reports included in the review.

²⁸ Tyndall, J. (2010). The AACODS checklist. Flinders University. [AACODS_Checklist.pdf;jsessionid=460074D842978E2544C2584BEAFC639B \(flinders.edu.au\)](https://www.flinders.edu.au/aacods-checklist)

Figure 4.3.3 Distribution of quality scores across reports



4.4. Strength of evidence assessment

The team rated the overall cumulative strength of evidence as ‘medium’. They assessed the quality of papers included in the review to be moderate (although recognising there were a limited number of high-quality studies); they judged the overall size of the evidence body as medium, consistency as generally good, and most papers as covering generally relevant issues.

The review team assessed the cumulative strength of evidence against four essential characteristics as described by the Department for International Development (DfID)²⁹.

- The quality of individual articles or papers;
- The quantity (number) of papers that make up the body of evidence;
- The consistency of the findings from studies; and
- The context in which the available evidence has been collected: how well the evidence collected in a particular context can be generalised to another.

The DfID approach to assessing the cumulative strength of evidence is particularly well-suited to summarising studies typical of social research. It is informed by both the GRADE framework (designed for assessing the quality of medical evidence), and CASP checklists^{30,31}.

The DfID cumulative strength of evidence scale has five levels:

Very strong - High quality body of evidence, large in size, consistent, and closely matched to the specific context of the business case.

Strong - High quality body of evidence, large or medium in size, generally consistent, and matched to the specific context of the business case.

Medium - Moderate quality studies, medium size evidence body, generally consistent, which may or may not be relevant to the specific context of the business case. Also covers limited number of high-quality studies.

Limited - Moderate or low-quality studies, small or medium size body, inconsistent, not matched to specific context of the business case.

No evidence - No studies or impact evaluations exist.

²⁹ Department for International Development (2014). “Assessing the Strength of Evidence” How to Note. London: DfID Guidance overview: How to Note: Assessing the Strength of Evidence - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³⁰ Guyatt, G.H., Oxman, A.D., Kunz, R., Vist, G.E., Falck-Ytter, Y., Schünemann, H.J. (2008). What is “quality of evidence” and why is it important to clinicians? *British Medical Journal*, 336:995. [What is “quality of evidence” and why is it important to clinicians? | The BMJ](#)

³¹ Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). CASP Checklists. [CASP CHECKLISTS - CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](#)

4.5. Synthesis of results

The review has focussed on one primary research question and four secondary questions.

Primary research question: What works to reduce violent offending?

Secondary questions:

1. What offence types and frequency of previous convictions are most predictive of future violence?
2. What works, what's promising and what does not work in reducing violent reoffending?
3. Which agencies are likely to be most effective to deliver these interventions?
4. How applicable is good practice evidence on effective violent reoffending reduction interventions to the policing and socio-demographic context in London?

The review team has also looked at cost benefit analyses where they are reported, and the potential for interventions described in the research to be scaled.

This section of the report considers how the evidence reviewed by the research team reflects on these questions.

What works to reduce violent offending?

The literature identified four key issues in relation to this question of what works to reduce reoffending:

Offenders who have served short prison sentences are more likely to reoffend than those given community or suspended sentences

Several papers addressed the issue of how effective short custodial sentences are when it comes to reducing the likelihood of reoffending. Conclusions reached by a report produced for the Scottish government³² echo implications reflected in much of the available research:

The evidence is still developing, but a number of studies have found that those serving short prison sentences have higher rates of reoffending than those serving community sentences. [p. 13]

A US study looked at the impact of a Washington State initiative known as swift-and-certain (SAC)³³. The SAC approach aims to reduce the numbers of offenders sent to prison for violating the terms of their community sentences. It does that by tying practice to deterrence

³² Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., & Conlong, A. M. (2011). What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence justice analytical services Scottish government. [What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence \(nls.uk\)](#)

³³ Hamilton, Z., Campbell, C. M., van Wormer, J., Kigerl, A., & Posey, B. (2016). Impact of swift and certain sanctions: Evaluation of Washington State's policy for offenders on community supervision. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 15(4), 1009-1072.

principles. Offenders who violate receive immediate sanctions less severe than sending violators to prison. Sanctions are imposed in every case. The approach is based on Hawaii's Opportunity Probation and Enforcement initiative. This study focused on the impact of SAC with regard to supervision outcomes for participants. Results showed that SAC participants spent less time in prison, were less likely to reoffend, and were more likely to engage in treatment programmes. Because offenders spent less time in prison, a cost benefit analysis found the SAC model to provide a net saving relative to cost.

Another high-quality US study looked at how offender intimate partner relationships play a critical role in predicting reoffending³⁴. It explored whether marriage, being in a relationship, and post-release marital and relationship transitions impact reincarceration. Results found relationship quality, (assessed by questions around positive support, trust, and lack of conflict), to be associated with a lower likelihood of reincarceration. The authors concluded that given the damage that incarceration does to social networks, as well as social and financial support, investing in supporting the quality of existing relationships may help to lower reoffending rates, even among serious and violent offenders.

Holistic interventions addressing multiple needs are most effective in reducing reoffending

The weight of evidence for the efficacy of holistic interventions suggests it is probably fair to conclude that in terms of what works, it is the most effective approach to reducing the likelihood of violent reoffending. Offenders typically face multiple challenges including drug misuse, educational deficits, unemployment and lack of housing. Consequently, holistic interventions that address multiple criminogenic needs are more likely to be effective in reducing reoffending³⁵.

A good quality systematic review looked specifically at interventions with violent offenders³⁶. The evidence suggested that interventions with violent offenders were effective both at reducing general and violent re-offending. The authors concluded that the effectiveness of interventions varied considerably depending on both the content and delivery of the intervention. Interventions that engaged offenders for longer periods were more effective in reducing reoffending. Although research indicated a link between intervention length and outcome, evidence was insufficient to establish an optimum duration of engagement. They also found interventions that addressed cognitive skills, anger control, used role play and relapse prevention and had offenders complete homework were more effective than those interventions that did not. Overall, the conclusions seemed to be consistent with what our evidence review has identified as local practices in some Integrated Offender Management services³⁷.

³⁴ Wallace, D., Larson, M., Somers, L., Padilla, K. E., & Mays, R. (2020). Recidivism and relationships: Examining the role of relationships, transitions, and relationship quality in reincarceration. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*, 6(3), 321-352.

³⁵ Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., & Conlong, A. M. (2011). What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence justice analytical services Scottish government. [What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence \(nls.uk\)](https://www.nls.uk/what-works-to-reduce-reoffending-a-summary-of-the-evidence/)

³⁶ Jolliffe, D and Farrington, D (2007) *A systematic review of the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of interventions with violent offenders*. [A systematic review of the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of interventions with violent offenders \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/research-reviews/a-systematic-review-of-the-national-and-international-evidence-on-the-effectiveness-of-interventions-with-violent-offenders)

³⁷ Wong, K., O'Keeffe, C., Meadows, L., Davidson, J., Bird, H., Wilkinson, K., & Senior, P. (2012). Increasing the voluntary and community sector's involvement in Integrated Offender Management. [e-space \(mmu.ac.uk\)](https://www.mmu.ac.uk/e-space/)

Another good quality systematic review looked at the effectiveness of psychological interventions delivered in prison³⁸. Interventions were included if they were psychological (e.g., CBT or mindfulness-based therapy) or psychoeducational (e.g., vocational or educational training). The review reported modest effects. The authors concluded that therapeutic community interventions and related approaches that facilitate continuity of treatment after prison release (so-called through the gate interventions³⁹) are likely to be more effective in dealing with the multiple needs of offenders.

An Australian study looked at the impact of the standardised *Getting SMART* and *Smart Recovery* programmes designed to reduce reconviction rates⁴⁰. A quasi-experimental research design utilised data from 2,343 offenders attending *Getting SMART*; 233 attending *SMART Recovery*© and 306 attending both programmes. Offenders who had attended *Getting SMART* had significantly improved odds of time to first violent reconviction by 13 percent, compared to controls. The authors concluded that the success of the programme was in part a consequence of its mixed methods approach: cognitive-restructuring and motivation sessions followed by alcohol and drug therapy and behavioural change consolidation.

A UK study looked more specifically at the impact of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT)⁴¹ on reoffending⁴². The Peninsula Alcohol and Violence Programme (PAVP) is based on experimental evidence for a causal link between alcohol misuse and violent behaviour⁴³. Treating violent offenders for alcohol misuse, where relevant, is justified on the grounds that it may reduce violent behaviour and therefore re-offending. The study looked at whether a 10-session CBT intervention with offenders still in prison would produce improvements in self-reported alcohol expectancies (predictors of drinking behaviours), aggressiveness, impulsivity, and self-efficacy in managing alcohol use and violent behaviour. Results provided evidence of a reduction amongst offenders in the expectation that alcohol improves sociability, improvements in impulsivity and trait anger, increased self-reliance managing alcohol and offending.

Another Australian study looked at whether measurable changes in offender attitudes brought about as the result of CBT interventions were robustly associated with re-offending⁴⁴. Results showed that higher scores which indicated more severe anti-social behaviour attitudes predicted more reoffending generally. However, as with another study from New Zealand⁴⁵, the results were less conclusive when it came to predicting violent offending specifically. The authors concluded that changes in dynamic risk factors, including

³⁸ Beaudry, G., Yu, R., Perry, A. E., & Fazel, S. (2021). Effectiveness of psychological interventions in prison to reduce recidivism: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 8(9), 759-773.

³⁹ [An Inspection of Through the Gate Resettlement Services for Short-Term Prisoners \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk)

⁴⁰ Blatch, C., O'Sullivan, K., Delaney, J. J., & Rathbone, D. (2016). Getting SMART, SMART recovery© programs and reoffending. *Journal of forensic practice*.

⁴¹ Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a psychosocial intervention approach in which behavioural change is initiated by a therapist helping patients to confront and modify the irrational thoughts and beliefs that are most likely at the root of their maladaptive behaviours.

⁴² Hardy, L., Josephy, K., McAndrew, A., Hawksley, P., Hartley, L., & Hogarth, L. (2019). Evaluation of the Peninsula Alcohol and Violence Programme (PAVP) with violent offenders. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 27(2), 122-129.

⁴³ Willey, H., Eastwood, B., Gee, I. L., & Marsden, J. (2016). Is treatment for alcohol use disorder associated with reductions in criminal offending? A national data linkage cohort study in England. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 161, 67-76.

⁴⁴ Juarez, T., Howard, MVA., (2022). Self-Reported Change in Antisocial Attitudes and Reoffending Among a Sample of 2,337 Males Convicted of Violent Offenses. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(1), 3-19.

⁴⁵ Yesberg, J. A., & Polaschek, D. L. (2019). How does offender rehabilitation actually work? Exploring mechanisms of change in high-risk treated parolees. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 63(15-16), 2672-2692.

anti-social attitudes, addiction and social relationships, were more meaningfully associated with risk of reoffending.

A US evaluation looked at a CBT intervention designed to address criminal thinking styles⁴⁶. The results showed that the intervention led to changes in scores on a General Criminal Thinking scale that predicted reductions in prison misconduct. The study did not consider post release reoffending.

The Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition published a report aimed at developing effective, coordinated approaches to addressing multiple needs implicated in criminal justice outcomes⁴⁷. The coalition is made up of UK national charities Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind. They represent over 1,300 frontline organisations working in the criminal justice, drug and alcohol treatment, homelessness, and mental health sectors. Their report argued that to tackle these multiple and overlapping needs, government should address four key areas: 1) commit to tackling the causes and consequences of multiple needs. 2) incentivise government departments to work together. 3) express clear expectations of every local area to address multiple needs. 4) develop flexible investment models that allow services to work together. The overall message from the report, consistent with other research described in this review, was the urgent need for joined up policy across areas of housing⁴⁸, drugs, and offending.

An evaluation conducted in the UK found that Alcohol Treatment Requirements had a positive impact on reoffending amongst a small group of general offenders⁴⁹. However, the intervention worked best when delivered as part of a 'whole system approach' built on effective interagency working with regard to accessing services for alcohol misuse.

The report for the Scottish Government of what works to reduce reoffending made the point that factors outside the control of the criminal justice system have a direct impact⁵⁰. Those include lack of stable employment, available housing, and community factors such as poor social cohesion. Consequently, effective interventions aimed at reducing risks of re-offending need to involve agencies across government and third sectors working together to support offenders who may face challenges in multiple areas.

A reoffending study conducted in England looked at the impact of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA)⁵¹. Established in 2001 under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, MAPPA was created as an initiative to improve and strengthen monitoring of convicted sexual and violent offenders. Under MAPPA, the Responsible Authority works in cooperation with other relevant agencies to assess and manage the risks presented by some of the most dangerous or high-risk offenders in the community. These include Youth Offending Teams, Jobcentre Plus, Local Education Authorities, Local Housing Authorities, Registered Social Landlords, Social Services, Strategic Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts and NHS Trusts, Home Office Immigration and Enforcement and

⁴⁶ Walters, G. D. (2017). Effect of a brief cognitive behavioural intervention on criminal thinking and prison misconduct in male inmates: Variable-oriented and person-oriented analyses. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 27(5), 457-469.

⁴⁷ MAKING EVERY ADULT MATTER (2018). Multiple needs: time for political leadership. 20. [Multiple-needs-time-for-political-leadership.pdf \(meam.org.uk\)](https://meam.org.uk/multiple-needs-time-for-political-leadership.pdf)

⁴⁸ Ellison, M., Fox, C., Gains, A., & Pollock, G. (2013). An evaluation of the effect of housing provision on re-offending. *Safer communities*.

⁴⁹ Ashby, J., Horrocks, C., & Kelly, N. (2011). Delivering the alcohol treatment requirement: Assessing the outcomes and impact of coercive treatment for alcohol misuse. *Probation Journal*, 58(1), 52-67.

⁵⁰ Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., & Conlong, A. M. (2011). What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence justice analytical services Scottish government. [What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence \(nls.uk\)](https://www.nls.uk/what-works-to-reduce-reoffending-a-summary-of-the-evidence)

⁵¹ Bryant, S., Peck, M., & Lovbakke, J. (2015). Reoffending analysis of MAPPA eligible offenders. *Ministry of Justice*.

Electronic Monitoring Providers. The study concluded that MAPPA may be associated with a four percentage point reduction in proven reoffending by new MAPPA eligible offenders, and a two percentage point reduction in serious reoffending.

Another UK study of MAPPA found that for offenders due for release, negative behaviour assessments in prison predicted post release behaviour including reoffending⁵². However, assessments were not always helpful in understanding how to inform probation responses.

An Australian study looked at whether change in dynamic risk factors and other treatment targets over the course of violent offender treatment was linked with a reduction in violent recidivism⁵³. Treatment did appear to bring about change on outcome measures such as reduction in dynamic risk and minimisation of violence, and increased victim empathy. However, these changes did not translate into reductions in reoffending. The authors concluded that caution is required when considering the impact of change in a restricted range of treatment targets on violent reoffending.

A small Spanish study concluded that repeat offenders receiving social and employment support alongside cognitive training had the highest level of delayed recidivism, i.e., the longest period between release and reoffending. Over 65% of the sample had not returned to prison after a 6-year follow-up⁵⁴.

Combining support with sanctions (Integrated Offender Management) is most successful

A good quality empirical study from the US evaluated an intensive supervision intervention designed to reduced reoffending in both violent offending and offending in general⁵⁵. The Minnesota Department of Corrections introduced the intervention as part of a shift away from determining supervision on offence-based conditions towards using assessments of dynamic risks. The evaluation looked at the impact of intensive supervision on recidivism and, more generally, whether risk-based policies lead to better outcomes in terms of reduced general, felony, and violent reoffending.

Intensive supervised release (ISR) interventions have been in use since the 1980's. Offenders on ISR are subjected to continuous, 24-hour supervision. The model used in Minnesota involves supervision by a team of four to five professionals. ISR usually lasts up to a year. Offenders typically remain on ISR until they successfully complete rehabilitative programmes, or until their post-release supervision orders expire.

A reasonably consistent body of evidence supports the view that intensive supervision is especially effective when paired with treatment. ISR is effective when the program takes a rehabilitative philosophy and incorporates the principles of effective intervention, rather than orienting toward deterrence. That same evidence indicates that control-only intensive

⁵² McDougall, C., Pearson, D. A., Willoughby, H., & Bowles, R. A. (2013). Evaluation of the ADViSOR project: Cross-situational behaviour monitoring of high-risk offenders in prison and the community. *Legal and Criminological Psychology, 18*(2), 205-228.

⁵³ O'Brien, K., & Daffern, M. (2017). Treatment gain in violent offenders: The relationship between proximal outcomes, risk reduction and violent recidivism. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, 24*(2), 244-258.

⁵⁴ Martín, A. M., Hernández, B., Hernández-Fernaud, E., Arregui, J. L., & Hernández, J. A. (2010). The enhancement effect of social and employment integration on the delay of recidivism of released offenders trained with the R & R programme. *Psychology, Crime & Law, 16*(5), 401-413.

⁵⁵ Duwe, G., & McNeeley, S. (2021). The effects of intensive post release correctional supervision on recidivism: A natural experiment. *Criminal Justice Policy Review, 32*(7), 740-763.

supervision programmes are much less likely to have an impact on reoffending relative to those paired with treatment/support.

The Minnesota evaluation found that, for a sample of 1,818 offenders released in 2018, ISR significantly reduced the risk of both general and violent reoffending. However, because of the intense nature of the supervision, ISR significantly increased the risk of offenders being found in breach of their release conditions, and therefore subject to further sanctions.

The increased probability of further sanctions, along with the intensity of supervision required, makes ISR an expensive intervention. However, cost-benefit analysis undertaken as part of this evaluation found, despite the relatively high costs it incurred, ISR was a cost-effective intervention because it reduced reoffending for those with a higher risk of committing serious, violent crimes.

There is not much research into the effects of deterrence messages used in isolation. Deterrence messages in these types of interventions deliver a message of swiftness and certainty of apprehension (and punishment) to groups of chronically violent. The research team found two studies, both conducted in the US. Both found that specific deterrence messages reduced the probability of reoffending, at least amongst high risk, prolific offenders^{56, 57}.

A Canadian literature review looked at evidence for the efficacy of an intervention developed in the 1990s at the Regional Psychiatric Centre in Saskatoon, Canada⁵⁸. The Violence Reduction Programme (VRP) is designed to reduce the risk of violence for individuals with antisocial and/or violent histories. It is based on the principle of integrating risk, need and responsivity (RNR) principles with contemporary clinical and offender rehabilitation techniques⁵⁹. The RNR model has three principles at its core. (1) the risk principle (match the level of service to the offender's level of risk; provide intensive services to higher risk clients and minimal services to lower risk clients); (2) the need principle (target criminogenic needs or the dynamic risk factors functionally related to criminal behaviour such as attitudes and substance abuse), and (3) the responsivity principle (match the style and mode of intervention to the abilities, motivation, and learning style of the offender). Contemporary clinical and offender rehabilitation techniques include cognitive-behavioural, relapse prevention and motivational interviewing approaches. The VRP has been implemented in several prison and forensic mental health hospitals in the UK⁶⁰.

The VRP assumes that for some offenders with entrenched patterns of violence or aggression, behavioural interventions are an effective route to rehabilitation. It is also predicated on the notion that there can be no single, universally effective method of intervention to reduce violence and reoffending because violent offenders are not a heterogeneous group.

The review authors describe the VRP as having been developed using key principles of offender rehabilitation from several theoretical, evidence-based approaches. They include:

⁵⁶ Ariel, B., Englefield, A., & Denley, J. (2019). I heard it through the grapevine: A randomized controlled trial on the direct and vicarious effects of preventative specific deterrence initiatives in criminal networks. *J. Crim. L. & Criminology*, 109, 819.

⁵⁷ Corsaro, Nicholas, and Robin S. Engel. "Most challenging of contexts: Assessing the impact of focused deterrence on serious violence in New Orleans." *Criminology & Public Policy* 14, no. 3 (2015): 471-505.

⁵⁸ Wong, S. C., & Gordon, A. (2013). The violence reduction programme: A treatment programme for violence-prone forensic clients. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 19(5-6), 461-475.

⁵⁹ Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J., & Wormith, J. S. (2010). Does adding the Good Lives Model contribute to crime prevention. *Criminal Justice & Behavior*, 38(7), 735-755. doi:10.1177/0093854811406356

⁶⁰ Wong, S. C., & Gordon, A. (2013). The violence reduction programme: A treatment programme for violence-prone forensic clients. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 19(5-6), 461-475.

- The Psychology of Criminal Conduct and the risk, need and responsivity principles;
- Multisystemic Therapy;
- Aggression Replacement Training;
- Relapse Prevention;
- The Transtheoretical Model of change; and
- Motivational Interviewing.

The programme uses cognitive-behavioural approaches and social learning principles within a relapse prevention model to assist offenders to make changes. It helps offenders identify and modify their cognitions, emotions and behaviours that influence and maintain violence and aggression.

The authors concluded that good quality outcome evaluations with long-term follow-up and control groups indicate that offenders who have received treatment show reductions in violent recidivism and institutional misconduct even when offenders have significant psychopathic personality traits.

However, they also noted that a randomised controlled trial of the VRP would be useful, although likely to be difficult and expensive. Also critical is research to identify the necessary and sufficient components of the VRP for different groups of offenders. The results would enable interventions to deliver only what was necessary to effect positive change and violence reduction. Whilst the authors implied that implementing the VRP can save money, the review did not describe any specific evidence of costs relative to benefits.

The Scottish Government commissioned a review of what works to reduce reoffending more generally⁶¹. It also highlighted the RNR approach as one of the most effective in offender rehabilitation. The authors described it as typically involving targeting the criminogenic needs of offenders, then using cognitive approaches, most commonly cognitive-behavioural therapy to drive behaviour change. Their reading of the evidence suggested it can produce what they describe as 'modest reductions in reoffending'. However, impact is contingent on rigorous implementation combined with support in solving practical problems. Its success lies in its capacity to address the multiple criminogenic needs that play a key role in the likelihood of reoffending.

The review makes the point that the motivation of an offender to participate in rehabilitative programmes is often critical to their success. Interventions are more likely to reduce reoffending where they are appropriately matched to offenders' level of motivation. A strong focus on offenders' strengths and goals can help increase motivation of offenders to complete treatment.

Improving an offender's motivation to change has a significant impact on the success of rehabilitative interventions. Consequently, helping offenders develop prosocial social networks, increasing their sense of agency and self-efficacy, and helping them to develop problem-solving skills can all be effective in reducing reoffending. The research is less clear on the impact on reducing reoffending of employment programmes, alcohol-brief interventions, mental health interventions or holistic resettlement programmes in reducing reoffending. More research is required to investigate their effects. The research covered in the review suggests that while education programmes may contribute to the positive development of offenders, they are unlikely to reduce reoffending on their own. Similarly,

⁶¹ Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., Conlong, A. M., & Matthews, B. (2015). *What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence*. Scottish Government Social Research.

alcohol treatment programmes are more successful when combined with a cognitive component⁶².

Another report produced for the Scottish Government looked at the conditions under which electronic monitoring (EM) might be an effective means of reducing reoffending, monitoring compliance, and reducing the use of prison sentences⁶³. The authors highlighted evidence pointing to a broad consensus that interventions like EM are most effective when used in conjunction with offender supervision. They suggested that social workers have a key role to play in that context. EM needs to be seen as one element of an approach aimed at supporting effective community supervision, social integration, promoting desistance from crime, and improving public protection.

That said, a Norwegian evaluation looked at the impact of EM on reoffending amongst a general offender population⁶⁴. The results showed offenders sentenced to EM were less likely to reoffend than those given custodial sentences.

Reoffending is least likely when programmes include cognitive interventions

A report published by the SOMEK (Serious Offending by Mobile European Criminals) initiative and funded by the European Commission looked at what works with violent offenders⁶⁵. The authors emphasised the importance of using structured, evidence-based risk assessment tools delivered by appropriately trained professionals that take into account both quantitative scores and professional judgements. The results should inform risk management and interventions designed to reduce reoffending. Interventions need to work alongside risk management to monitor and if necessary, restrict behaviour. The most effective interventions are likely to include cognitive behavioural and psychosocial components. The specific content of cognitive interventions is important. That needs to be determined via thorough understanding of context, and consideration of the processes that support desistance from reoffending and enable offenders to lead a pro-social and satisfying life.

The evidence also suggests that decisions about which cognitive approaches to use needs to be determined using structured, evidence-based risk assessment tools delivered by appropriately trained professionals. To enhance the probability of effectiveness in reducing reoffending, these interventions need to be delivered in conjunction with risk management approaches that monitor and, if necessary, restrict behaviour.

The authors concluded that multi-modal approaches combining cognitive behavioural treatments and psychosocial therapies, delivered in a consistent multi-agency way, are likely to be the most effective in reducing the risk of violent reoffending.

On the subject of risk assessment, a literature review, albeit of limited quality, sounded a note of caution⁶⁶. It suggested that risk instruments (particularly those based exclusively on quantitative scores) are disadvantaging already vulnerable populations such as racial

⁶² Polaschek, D. L., & Yesberg, J. A. (2018). High-risk violent prisoners' patterns of change on parole on the DRAOR's dynamic risk and protective factors. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 45(3), 340-363.

⁶³ Graham, H., & McIvor, G. (2017). *Electronic monitoring in the criminal justice system*. Iriss.

⁶⁴ Andersen, S. N., & Telle, K. (2022). Better out than in? The effect on recidivism of replacing incarceration with electronic monitoring in Norway. *European Journal of Criminology*, 19(1), 55-76.

⁶⁵ Kemshall, H., Wilkinson, B., Kelly, G., Hilder, S. (2015) *What works with violent offenders, an overview*. Serious Offending by Mobile European Criminals.

⁶⁶ Ashford, L. J., Spivak, B. L., & Shepherd, S. M. (2021). Racial fairness in violence risk instruments: a review of the literature. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 1-31.

minority groups. The author suggested a need to explore the development of new risk instruments, ensuring risk factors used in assessment instruments accurately reflect the literature on the context and experiences of racial minorities. Very little research has been conducted into the racial fairness of violence risk instruments. The limited research that has been conducted suggests existing notions of racial fairness are often inconsistent and inaccurate.

A good quality evaluation of another cognitive intervention, the RESOLVE programme, looked at the impact on reoffending amongst a sub-group of violent offenders⁶⁷. RESOLVE is a cognitive-behavioural therapy-informed offending behaviour programme that aims to reduce reoffending adult males assessed as being at a medium risk of committing further violent offences. The programme is delivered in prisons prior to offender release.

The study looked at 2,509 offenders who had taken part on the programme. The treatment group was 100% male with an age range from 18 to 69 years old. 74% of those offenders had been convicted of either violent (45%) or robbery⁶⁸ (29%) offences. In terms of reoffending, the study analysed both general reoffending (any offence) and violent specific offences.

Results showed that for all offenders, at both one and two-year follow-up those that had taken part in the programme were significantly less likely to have reoffended, reoffended less frequently and took longer to reoffend than those in a control group.

Amongst a sub-group of violent offenders, the one and two-year results did not provide evidence of any statistically significant impact on violent reoffending. However, the authors argued that results should not be taken to mean the programme had failed to have an effect. They went on to examine the specific effects of RESOLVE on violent offender sub-groups for proven general reoffending and violent reoffending. At one-year follow-up, violent offenders that had completed the RESOLVE programme were significantly less likely to reoffend violently and reoffended violently less frequently than those who had not taken part.

A Swedish study looked at the impact of a specific cognitive intervention, Aggression Replacement Training⁶⁹, that has been shown to be effective with adolescents, but not trialled widely with adult offenders. Results indicated a marginal decrease in reconvictions for general offending, but not violent recidivism specifically. The authors concluded that because the programme was designed for adolescents, it may not be effective for adults without further development.

The National Offender Management Service conducted an empirical evaluation of one specific cognitive intervention, the Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS) programme⁷⁰. The programme was delivered to offenders in prison prior to release. It is a cognitive skills intervention that aims to address issues including impulse control, flexible thinking, values and moral reasoning, social perspective taking, critical reasoning, and interpersonal problem-solving. To that extent, ETS focusses on changing how people reason, not the content of their thoughts or attitudes. The course lasted for 20, two-hour sessions, typically delivered two or three times a week. The programme was accredited for delivery in Her

⁶⁷ Robinson, C., Sorbie, A., Huber, J., Teasdale, J., Scott, K., Purver, M., & Elliott, I. (2021). Reoffending impact evaluation of the prison-based RESOLVE offending behaviour programme. *Ministry of Justice*.

⁶⁸ Under the 1968 Theft Act, a person is guilty of robbery if he steals, and immediately before or at the time of doing so, and in order to do so, he uses force on any person or puts or seeks to put any person in fear of being then and there subjected to force.

⁶⁹ Larden, M., Norden, E., Forsman, M., Langstrom, N., (2018). Effectiveness of aggression replacement training in reducing criminal recidivism among convicted adult offenders. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 28(6), 476-491.

⁷⁰ Travers, R., Mann, R. E., & Hollin, C. R. (2014). Who benefits from cognitive skills programs? Differential impact by risk and offense type. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 41(9), 1103-1129.

Majesty's Prisons in 2000 and was delivered widely in both prison and probation settings until 2010, when it was replaced with an updated cognitive skills intervention, the Thinking Skills Program⁷¹.

The study looked at reconviction rates of 21,373 male offenders aged 18 and over who had attended the ETS programme in prison and had been followed-up for at least two years following their release. Results showed that attending the programme was associated with significantly reduced general reoffending for violent offenders and other non-acquisitive offenders, but not for offenders convicted of burglary or robbery.

The authors concluded that cognitive skills training is one of the best evidenced approaches in terms of its ability to reduce reoffending. Cognitive skills training seemed to be of particular benefit with violent offenders but did not appear to be such a successful approach with serious acquisitive offenders.

The Ministry of Justice also looked at the impact of prison-based ETS on the one-year reconviction outcomes of 257 adult offenders⁷².

Results showed ETS was effective in bringing about a statistically significant reduction in both the reconviction rate and frequency of reoffending in the year following release from custody for 257 participants who completed the programme. A secondary finding of the research was a low adherence to the suitability targeting criteria among those prisoners that actually received the programme over the period. This suggests that the programme was not always administered to the most suitable group of prisoners, which may have limited the effectiveness of the programme in reducing reoffending. The implication for the delivery of the programme is that suitability criteria need to be applied rigorously to produce desired impact.

As noted earlier in this section of the report, the ETS programme has been replaced by the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP). However, the evaluation nevertheless provides more evidence that cognitive-behavioural programmes can work to significantly reduce reoffending among offenders released from prison. For practitioners, although the findings on reduced reconviction rates are encouraging, the results provide some interesting lessons. Analysis suggested a low adherence to the risk, need and responsivity suitability criteria, indicative of the programme not always being administered to the most suitable offenders. Those responsible for selecting programme participants did not apply eligibility criteria rigorously. The fact that a significant reduction in reconviction was found in spite of this finding is consistent with the view that stricter application of the targeting criteria might further enhance the effectiveness of the programme. National Offender Management Service practitioners report that the accuracy of targeting has improved over time, meaning that a similar evaluation of ETS in a later period (post-2008) or TSP might find an even more significant effect.

A Swedish evaluation looked at the impact of the One-on-One cognitive intervention with a range of offenders assessed as medium to high risk of reoffending⁷³. The One-To-One programme comprises sessions that deal with pressing issues, followed by a review of homework tasks from the previous session. The focus is on session-specific content. Sessions end with action plans for the time until the next session. The sessions focus on

⁷¹ Harris, D., & Riddy, R. (2010). *Theory manual for the thinking skills programme (Prepared for the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel)*. London, England: Ministry of Justice

⁷² Sadler, G. (2010). Evaluation of the impact of the HM prison service enhanced thinking skills programme on reoffending. *Outcomes of the surveying prisoner crime reduction (SPCR) sample. England: Ministry of Justice.*

⁷³ Berman, A. H., Gajecski, M., Morien, P., & Priestley, P. (2019). Measuring Psychological Change and Predicting Recidivism Following the Swedish One-to-One Program. *Frontiers in Psychiatry, 10*, 811.

relapse prevention issues throughout. Results found that participants in the programme were less likely to reoffend. The best predictor of non-recidivism was programme completion. Non-completers 64% more likely to re-offend. Significant associations occurred between recidivism and the tests measuring skill improvement over time, chance locus of control pre- and post-program, and attitudes and values (Citizen Scale), partly supporting the theory behind the program.

A Swiss study looked at the impact of another cognitive intervention with violent offenders⁷⁴. It evaluated whether the Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R) program was effective in reducing recidivism, minimising dropout rates, and improving outcomes related to attitudes, behaviours, and personality among people living in prison.

The R&R programme is one of the most used cognitive-behavioural therapies designed to reduce reoffending. It focusses on antisocial offending behaviours and cognitive deficits by developing cognitive and social skills and competencies. A previous systematic review of the R&R program concluded that this therapy was effective in reducing recidivism post release from prison⁷⁵.

Findings from the evaluation showed that offenders in prison for violent offences who attended the R&R programme were less likely to offend post release. The authors concluded that effective psychotherapeutic treatment delivered in custodial settings can promote successful reintegration into society post release. They also noted that because the R&R programme is delivered over 14, 90-minute sessions by prison mental health professionals, it is relatively easy to implement and inexpensive compared to other methods.

An evaluation conducted in Spain looked at the impact of the R&R programme on reoffending amongst people serving sentences for property offences, drug dealing and offences against the person including violence⁷⁶.

It compared a group of inmates who received only social-cognitive training with a group of inmates who also received social and employment integration and with a comparison group who received neither of these interventions.

The results from a six-year follow-up showed that both intervention groups were significantly different from the comparison group. The groups that received social and employment integration or only social-cognitive training were significantly less likely to reoffend than the matched comparison group.

The authors concluded that their results were consistent with the body of evidence supporting use of the R & R programme. However, they also noted that the evaluation suggested delivery of cognitive programmes needs to be sensitive to the social and economic context of the individual offender. A study from the Netherlands came to similar conclusions with regard to the Dutch Prevention of Recidivism Program⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ Baggio, S., Weber, M., Rossegger, A., Endrass, J., Heller, P., Schneeberger, A., Graf, M., Liebrez, M., (2020). Reducing recidivism using the Reasoning and Rehabilitation program: a pilot multi-site-controlled trial among prisoners in Switzerland. *International Journal of Public Health*, 65(6), 801-810.

⁷⁵ Tong LSJ, Farrington DP (2006) How effective is the "Reasoning and Rehabilitation" programme in reducing reoffending? A meta-analysis of evaluations in four countries. *Psychol Crime Law* 12:3-24.

⁷⁶ Martín, A. M., Hernández, B., Hernández-Fernaud, E., Arregui, J. L., & Hernández, J. A. (2010). The enhancement effect of social and employment integration on the delay of recidivism of released offenders trained with the R & R programme. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 16(5), 401-413.

⁷⁷ Bosma, A. Q., Kunst, M. J., Dirkzwager, A. J., & Nieuwebeerta, P. (2020). Recidivism after a prison-based treatment program: A comparison between a treatment and control group using proportional weighting within Strata. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*, 6(1), 95-126.

Finally, an Australian study looked at both the impact on reoffending and the relative costs and benefits of delivering a violence prevention programme⁷⁸. This small pilot study involved 92 male offenders convicted of a violent offence, and 157 matched controls. Recidivism was defined as any conviction for a new offence following release from prison that resulted in a sanction administered by correctional services – this was recorded as either violent or nonviolent.

Results showed no differences between groups in general offending at four-year follow-up. However, VPP participation was associated with a 65% reduction in the likelihood of violent reoffending. The proportion of violent reconvictions among programme participants was a statistically significant less than half that of comparators at 14.8% (n = 12) compared with 33.3% (n = 27).

The authors based the cost–benefit analysis on recidivism outcomes. The total cost to treat the cohort of programme participants released over the 3-year period was around AUS\$1.76 million. The total cost of reimprisonment alone equated to a difference of AUS\$1.9 million between the cohorts. Taking into account elements including police and court costs, community costs and quality of life increments, the cost benefit analyses showed a return to the taxpayer of AUS\$1.13 for every dollar spent. The savings accrued through treating moderate to high-risk offenders more than offset the costs of programme delivery.

Secondary questions

1. *What offence types and frequency of previous convictions are most predictive of future violence?*

A US study looking at options for reducing the prison population noted that policy makers often exclude violent offenders from schemes designed to reduce, or provide alternatives to, custodial sentences⁷⁹. For that reason, interventions designed to reduce reoffending amongst violent offenders have become a priority.

The study examined a sample of 375 offenders convicted of violent crimes released from prisons in New Jersey. Post release outcome data showed violent offenders to be less likely to reoffend than general offenders. They also found that the severity of violent offences for which they were originally imprisoned failed to predict the likelihood of committing further violent crimes.

The authors suggest that public perceptions are often at the heart of this problem. The term violent criminal invariably invokes an image of someone who has no compunction about hurting other people, or indeed someone who enjoys inflicting pain. The term “violence” invokes an image of people who jump out from dark, hidden places, to attack people who are perfect strangers and to hurt them, perhaps gratuitously, to get what they want. These public perceptions are why politicians are often happy to exclude violent offenders from reform programmes.

However, these commonly held public perceptions do not accurately reflect reality. The review provides evidence to show that the victims of violent crimes are often known to perpetrators; violent crime is usually more spontaneous than planned, and that violent crimes typically come about as the result of precipitating sequence of events.

⁷⁸ Mercer, G., Ziersch, E., Sowerbutts, S., Day, A., Pharo, H., (2022). The Violence Prevention Program in South Australia: A Recidivism and Cost-Benefit Analysis Pilot Study. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(1), 20-36.

⁷⁹ Zgoba, K. M., & Clear, T. (2021). A Review of the Reality of Violent Offending and the Administration of Justice. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 32(4), 352-373.

The authors also found that people released for violent offences frequently display mitigation, as opposed to aggravation. They report having committed violent crimes for what they perceive to be reasonable circumstances such as self-defence or trying to de-escalate a tense situation, rather than a deliberate attempt to antagonise. Those released for violent crimes are less likely to be rearrested than those released on nonviolence. The degree of severity of the violence itself has no bearing on the risk of rearrest.

In 2004, the Home Office introduced its Prolific and other Priority Offender (PPO) programme. The programme has three key objectives: (1) to prevent and deter young people from becoming prolific offenders; (2) to catch and convict prolific offenders; and (3) to rehabilitate and resettle prolific offenders⁸⁰. The rationale behind the programme was to target the most prolific offenders to reduce crime, harm to the community and associated criminal justice costs.

An evaluation of the PPO programme published in 2012 looked at the extent to which frequency of prior convictions were predictive of future offending⁸¹.

The authors suggested that national evaluations of the programme did point to overall reductions in re-offending for PPO cohorts. However, most studies were based on short-term measures of reconviction/re-offending, so failed to provide a nuanced understanding of the process of desistance. The study concluded that a better approach to understanding predictors of future offending would be to examine transitional and turning points in the lives of offenders. In other words, looking at desistance as a process rather than a discrete event. This process approach would enable policy to be more nuanced. It would be driven by an understanding how the combination of interventions and external life events might work best to reduce reoffending rather than looking for simplistic predictors like number of previous convictions.

The point is reinforced by an Australian study that looked at the role of anti-social attitudes as a predictor of violent reoffending⁸².

Based on the Risk Need Responsivity (RNR) model of reducing reoffending, research has consistently identified antisocial attitudes as being amongst the most robust predictors of reoffending. The need principle proposes that treatment should target criminogenic needs, or dynamic risk factors that have a causal relationship with likelihood of reoffending. Antisocial attitudes, i.e., beliefs that condone, justify, or minimize antisocial and criminal behaviours, are one of the dynamic risk factors for violent reoffending. The importance of antisocial attitudes in criminal behaviour is consistent with the social learning theory foundations of the RNR model and the critical role of antisocial associates in developing and maintaining such attitudes.

Results show that antisocial attitudes do have predictive validity for reoffending among individuals with convictions for violent offences. The authors suggested that their findings support using dynamic risk factors to predict reoffending and assess individual intervention needs. However, they also cautioned that risk scores may be a better predictor of general antisocial behaviour amongst violent offenders rather violent reoffending per se.

⁸⁰ Dawson P (2005) Early Findings from the Prolific and Other Priority Offenders Evaluation. RDS Home Office Development and Practice Report No. 46. London: Home Office

⁸¹ Hopkins, M., Wickson, J., (2013). Targeting prolific and other priority offenders and promoting pathways to desistance: Some reflections on the PPO programme using a theory of change framework. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 13(5), 594-614.

⁸² Juarez, T., Howard, MVA., (2022). Self-Reported Change in Antisocial Attitudes and Reoffending Among a Sample of 2,337 Males Convicted of Violent Offenses. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(1), 3-19.

2. What works, what's promising and what does not work in reducing violent reoffending?

- Integrated Offender Management approaches, especially those that include a cognitive component, work

Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is an approach that aims to reduce re-offending through local agencies taking a partnership approach to the management of repeat offenders. Part of that approach has involved local and national government engaging with voluntary and community sector (VCS) agencies to seek their support in service delivery⁸³. Evidence suggests that the IOM initiative has been successful in reducing rates of reoffending in a general offender population⁸⁴.

More specifically, the kind of intensive supervision delivered by multiple agencies that lies at the heart of IOM approaches has proven efficacy.

The evidence is consistent with the view that a range of interventions with violent offenders can be effective both at reducing general and violent re-offending. Interventions that engaged offenders for longer periods were more effective; interventions that have a cognitive component addressing issues including thinking skills, anger control, and relapse prevention are more effective than those interventions that did not.

- Restorative Justice approaches are promising

Evidence suggests that restorative justice (RJ) can be effective in reducing reoffending and enhancing victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system^{85,86}. The effectiveness of indirect RJ – where victims and offenders do not meet, but offenders engage in activities such as writing letters to victims and contributing to discussions on how they think their actions have had an impact on victims – is less conclusive. However, victim satisfaction remains high for both forms of RJ. RJ has been shown to be cost-effective, with the reduction in the costs of reoffending outweighing the cost of the RJ intervention⁸⁷.

More research is needed to establish the efficacy of RJ approaches to reducing violent reoffending specifically.

- There is no evidence for the efficacy of custodial sentences

Evidence has shown very clearly that reoffending is more likely where offenders face issues with employment, housing and social relationships. The negative impact that custodial sentences have on all those critical areas perhaps explains evidence that suggests they are not an effective means of reducing the likelihood of repeat reoffending⁸⁸.

⁸³ Wong, K., O'Keeffe, C., Meadows, L., Davidson, J., Bird, H., Wilkinson, K., & Senior, P. (2012). *Increasing the voluntary and community sector's involvement in Integrated Offender Management*. London: Home Office

⁸⁴ Senior, P., Wong, K., Culshaw, A., Ellingworth, D., O' Keeffe, C. and Meadows, L (2011) Process Evaluation of Five Integrated Offender Management Pioneer Areas. Ministry of Justice/Home Office, Research Series 4/11.

⁸⁵ College of Policing (2022) About the process of repairing harm caused by criminal behaviour, including its effectiveness and how it can be used by police. [Evidence briefing | College of Policing](#)

⁸⁶ Kennedy, J. L., Tuliao, A. P., Flower, K. N., Tibbs, J. J., & McChargue, D. E. (2019). Long-term effectiveness of a brief restorative justice intervention. *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, 63(1), 3-17.

⁸⁷ Sherman, LW., Strang, H., Mayo-Wilson, E., Woods, DJ., Ariel, B., (2015). Are Restorative Justice Conferences Effective in Reducing Repeat Offending? Findings from a Campbell Systematic Review. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 31(1), 1-24.

⁸⁸ Sapouna, M., Bisset, C., & Conlong, A. M. (2011). What works to reduce reoffending: A summary of the evidence justice analytical services Scottish government. [What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence \(nls.uk\)](#)

3. Which agencies are likely to be most effective to deliver these interventions?

- Depends on local context, but effective stakeholder engagement is critical.

Evidence for the critical role of stakeholder engagement in the delivery of effective criminal justice interventions is well established⁸⁹. In England and Wales, this approach has been formalised through local integrated offender management (IOM) arrangements⁹⁰. The idea developed from local agencies and partners working together, with support from the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Association of Chief Police Officers.

IOM is typically a locally agreed strategic framework for bringing together different offender-focused programmes and approaches. Its success lies in building coherent, coordinated, multi-agency working. Interventions are planned on the basis a comprehensive understanding of the local crime and offending challenges. IOM then promotes coordination to avoid duplication and maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

The evidence is that the broader the coalition of stakeholder agencies, the more comprehensive the services designed to support offenders are likely to be. The multiple challenges typically faced by offenders post release point to the need for non-criminal justice agencies to be included. Obvious candidates include local government and health services.

Work by the Home Office identified a key role for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations⁹¹. They worked with Clinks, a national membership organisation that supports the work of VCS organisations within the criminal justice system in England and Wales. The project brought together a group of VCS stakeholders in four different local areas, developing processes to successfully map need and target service delivery.

The recurring theme with local stakeholder groups is that their composition will vary from location to location, depending on local context and offender needs.

- Quality of relationship and style of delivery more important than which type of professionals deliver it.

Engaging a range of stakeholders clearly improves the probability that post-release support can meet the needs of offenders. However, success is not just determined by which agencies deliver interventions. Two other factors are critical: the quality of relationships between supervisors and offenders, and the approach to support planning.

A US study looked at effective interventions from the perspective of how delivery was organised rather than which agency delivered them⁹². Results highlighted the critical role of supervision continuity. Offenders were more likely to complete an intervention where they only had a small number of supervisors. Change was disruptive. Having to engage with a new supervisor often undermined the impact of what had already been achieved. The risk of probation failure was reduced when change was introduced later rather than earlier in the process. Early change produced greater disruption and increased likelihood of failure.

⁸⁹ Senior, P., Wong, K., Culshaw, A., Ellingworth, D., O'Keeffe, C. and Meadows, L. (2011) Process Evaluation of Five Integrated Offender Management Pioneer Areas. Ministry of Justice/Home Office, Research Series 4/11.

⁹⁰ Lane, B., & Kangulec, S. (2012). Integrated offender management workforce development. *Safer Communities*.

⁹¹ Wong, K., O'Keeffe, C., Meadows, L., Davidson, J., Bird, H., Wilkinson, K., & Senior, P. (2012). Increasing the voluntary and community sector's involvement in Integrated Offender Management. Research Report 59, London: Home Office

⁹² Clark-Miller, J., & Stevens, K. D. (2011). Effective supervision strategies: Do frequent changes of supervision officers affect probationer outcomes. *Fed. Probation*, 75, 11.

Change was most often brought about by probation officers moving jobs because of discontinuity in funding.

A Canadian study looked at the impact of a training programme for probation officers based on the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation⁹³. Probation officers who undertook training demonstrated significantly better adherence to the RNR principles, with more frequent use of cognitive-behavioural techniques of address offender attitudes and beliefs. The evidence-based principles of the RNR model had a significant impact on the behaviour of probation officers and their clients

Finally, a study from New Zealand looked at the quality of post-release support planning⁹⁴. Results were consistent with other past research: a simple scale measuring the quality of offenders' release plans put together by professionals can reliably predict which offenders are most likely to reoffend.

4. *How applicable is good practice evidence on effective violent reoffending reduction interventions to the policing and socio-demographic context in London?*

One of the key messages to come out of the research into effective IOM is that there is no one size fits all strategy for effective violent reoffending reduction⁹⁵. Good practice is characterised by local agencies working together to deliver a local response, good planning based on a thorough analysis of local context and offender need, a commitment to local workforce development, and funding arrangements that promote continuity of relationships.

Cost benefit analyses

The review team found five papers that reported cost-benefit analyses of interventions designed to reduce the risk of reoffending.

An Australian evaluation paper looked at the relative cost and benefits of a CBT intervention for violent offenders⁹⁶. The authors calculated the cost-benefit ratio of \$1.00 - \$1.13 (AUD). That is, for every taxpayer dollar spent on the treatment intervention a \$1.13 benefit was returned over a 3.8-year observation time frame.

A US study looked at costs versus benefits of intensive supervision (ISR) of offenders classified as being at high risk of committing violent and serious offences⁹⁷. Findings suggested that ISR, at least within the state of Minnesota, was a cost-effective practice that reduces recidivism. The cost of implementing the programme was estimated to be \$8,960,640. The value of crimes avoided was put at \$15,853,455. That produced a cost-benefit ratio of \$1.00 - \$1.77.

⁹³ Bonta, J., Bourgon, G., Rugge, T., Scott, T. L., Yessine, A. K., Gutierrez, L., & Li, J. (2011). An experimental demonstration of training probation officers in evidence-based community supervision. *Criminal justice and behavior*, 38(11), 1127-1148.

⁹⁴ Dickson, S. R., & Polaschek, D. L. (2014). Planning to avoid risk or planning for a positive life: The relationship between release plan valence and reoffending. *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, 58(12), 1431-1448.

⁹⁵ Lane, B., & Kangulec, S. (2012). Integrated offender management workforce development. *Safer Communities*.

⁹⁶ Mercer, G., Ziersch, E., Sowerbutts, S., Day, A., Pharo, H., (2022). The Violence Prevention Program in South Australia: A Recidivism and Cost-Benefit Analysis Pilot Study. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(1), 20-36.

⁹⁷ Duwe, G., & McNeeley, S. (2021). The effects of intensive postrelease correctional supervision on recidivism: A natural experiment. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 32(7), 740-763.

A second US study evaluated Washington State's swift-and-certain (SAC) sanctions for violations of community orders intervention⁹⁸. SAC interventions aim to reduce the number of offenders returning to prison for community sentence violations through close supervision and prompt sanctions. Findings provided evidence of significant cost savings for SAC participation. The amount spent on implementing the SAC programme relative to the costs of supervision and recidivism at follow-up produced a cost-benefit ratio of 1-16, indicating a \$16 return on investment for every dollar spent on SAC participants.

Finally, two review paper examined the relative costs and benefits of restorative justice (RJ) interventions^{99, 100}. The first, a good quality systematic review, presented evidence from the UK suggesting a net benefit relative to cost for RJ interventions. Seven evaluation studies reported relative net benefits of between 3.7-1 and 8.1 -1 in terms of savings made due to crimes prevented relative to the cost of delivering RJ interventions.

The second paper, a report from the College of Policing, identified two reviews that included cost-benefit analyses. One review estimated a cost-benefit ratio of 9-1 (£9 saved for every £1 spent)¹⁰¹. Another put the figure at between £1.20 and £14 saved per pound spent, depending on where in the criminal justice process the RJ intervention was administered¹⁰².

⁹⁸ Hamilton, Z., Campbell, C. M., van Wormer, J., Kigerl, A., & Posey, B. (2016). Impact of swift and certain sanctions: Evaluation of Washington State's policy for offenders on community supervision. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 15(4), 1009-1072.

⁹⁹ Sherman, L.W., Strang, H., Mayo-Wilson, E., Woods, D.J., Ariel, B., (2015). Are Restorative Justice Conferences Effective in Reducing Repeat Offending? Findings from a Campbell Systematic Review. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 31(1), 1-24.

¹⁰⁰ College of Policing (2022) About the process of repairing harm caused by criminal behaviour, including its effectiveness and how it can be used by police. [Evidence briefing | College of Policing](#)

¹⁰¹ Shapland, J., Atkinson, A., Atkinson, H., Dignan, J., Edwards, L., Hibbert, J., ... & Sorsby, A. (2008). Does restorative justice affect reconviction? The fourth report from the evaluation of three schemes.

¹⁰² Strang, H., Sherman, L. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., Woods, D., & Ariel, B. (2013). Restorative justice conferencing (RJC) using face-to-face meetings of offenders and victims: Effects on offender recidivism and victim satisfaction. A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 9(1), 1-59.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary of findings

The team identified a total of 45 publications for inclusion in the review. They included 37 publications in the analysis of the primary research question of what works to reduce violent reoffending. The team has cited 16 papers identified in the review in the discussion of the four secondary research questions.

Publications describing empirical investigations of intervention impact came from the UK (11), the US (9), Australia (4), New Zealand (3), Sweden (2), and one paper each from Norway, Switzerland, Canada, the Netherlands, and Spain. The review also included findings from six evidence reviews and five reports.

Interventions subjected to empirical impact evaluation included cognitive programmes, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, violence risk assessments, and various recidivism prevention programmes based on the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RND) model. Study samples were either adult violent offenders, or general offenders. Investigators collected data through both qualitative and quantitative methods. The review team assessed the quality of empirical papers using a standardised form based on the eight Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklists¹⁰³ that cover research design, methodological rigour, data analysis and validity of conclusions. The standardised form included the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (MSMS) used to assess the design of experimental intervention impact assessments.

The quality of evidence gleaned from intervention impact evaluations was medium to strong. Whilst 16 studies achieved quality score of 11 or higher (out of a possible 14), nine failed to score higher than eight.

The evidence identified a range of interventions with violent offenders that can be effective both at reducing general and violent re-offending. Interventions that engaged offenders for longer periods were more effective; interventions that have a cognitive component addressing issues including thinking skills, anger control, and relapse prevention are more effective than those interventions that did not.

The most rigorous included study examined the impact of electronic monitoring (EM) post release. Conducted in Norway, the authors found offenders sentenced to EM in the community were less likely to reoffend than those given prison sentences. However, other research on EM commissioned by the Scottish Government suggested it worked best when used in conjunction with offender supervision. The report noted that social workers (or Probation Officers in England and Wales) have a key role to play. EM works best when treated as one element of an approach aimed at supporting effective community supervision, social integration, promoting desistance from crime, and improving public protection.

Other evaluations generally supported the capacity of cognitive based programmes to have a positive impact on reoffending. Papers also found evidence for the positive effects of relationship building: interventions aimed at reducing rates of reoffending were more likely to succeed when offenders were able to build a trusting, long-term relationship with support workers.

¹⁰³Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (n.d.). *CASP Checklists*. [CASP CHECKLISTS - CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](https://casp-uk.net)

Of the more general approaches to intervention delivery, the use of (a) multi-disciplinary teams; and (b) planning based on the Risk-Need-Responsivity model were effective in reducing re-offending. Results found that offenders supported by specialist teams offering intensive services based on rigorous needs assessments were less likely to re-offend.

Many local authorities have adopted multi-agency approaches to delivering criminal justice interventions. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) approaches, especially those that include a cognitive component, work well to reduce reoffending amongst both violent and general offender populations.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is an approach that aims to reduce re-offending through local agencies taking a partnership approach to the management of repeat offenders. Part of that approach has involved local and national government engaging with voluntary and community sector (VCS) agencies to seek their support in service delivery. It is the kind of intensive supervision delivered by multiple agencies that lies at the heart of IOM approaches that has proven efficacy.

The review team identified six review papers, three of which they rated as good quality. One high-quality full systematic review of interventions with violent offenders designed to reduce reoffending looked at evidence from 11 different impact studies. The review concluded that interventions with violent offenders effective at reducing re-offending addressed cognitive skills and anger control, used role play and relapse prevention and had offenders complete homework. The authors also concluded that more high-quality evaluations of interventions for violent offenders are needed.

The review team cited 16 publications relevant to the discussion of the secondary research questions. Findings highlighted evidence for the efficacy of both IOM and Restorative Justice approaches. Evidence consistently supported the key role of local stakeholder engagement. However, several papers emphasised the dangers of taking a one size fits all approach to developing effective IOM. Local circumstances and priorities differ. To tackle violent reoffending successfully, it is important that areas use their knowledge and understanding of local context, allied to robust offender needs assessments, to provide offenders with consistent, regular support provided by a stable, well-trained workforce.

The review team identified five relevant reports. Four came from England, one from Scotland. The review team assessed these papers using a standardised instrument based on the widely used AACODS checklist to evaluate grey literature. Quality was generally good, with all but one scoring eight or over on a 12-point scale.

The best quality report came from the College of Policing. It examined the role of RJ approaches in reducing reoffending generally. It concluded that RJ conferencing with both victims and offenders can reduce the likelihood of reoffending and enhance victim satisfaction. It also found evidence to suggest the cost of delivering RJ approaches is outweighed by the savings accrued through reduced reoffending and quality of life improvements for victims.

A second good quality report, produced for the Scottish Government, reinforced many of the issues highlighted by the impact evaluations included in this review. It noted that research evidence shows that short prison sentences are not an effective means of reducing reoffending, cognitive behavioural programmes are most effective in reducing reoffending, and that relationships with supervisors, family and friends are critical.

A report from the Home Office looked in detail at good practice characteristics of local IOM services. It stressed the key role of workforce development. For IOM to work effectively, it needs professionals who can continually adapt through adopting new ways of working informed by continual evaluation. Local IOM arrangements should focus on improving the coordination of local agency responses, continually developing operational and strategic practice, and using staff training and development to enable the workforce to respond to change.

Finally, five papers included in the review reported cost-benefit analyses of interventions designed to reduce the risk of reoffending. Results indicated a net gain of benefits relative to costs for some interventions with violent offenders. Those interventions included cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), intensive supervision (ISR), and swift-and-certain (SAC) sanctions. Other evidence suggests similar financial benefits accrue to restorative justice interventions, although the review also found evidence to suggest RJ interventions are less effective with violent offenders relative to the general offending population.

5.2 Discussion of findings

The review has identified several critical issues regarding the effective delivery of interventions designed to address violent reoffending within the adult male population. Much of the evidence we have synthesised comes from research conducted with the general offender population. Of the 45 papers included in the review, just 13 looked specifically at reoffending amongst those previously convicted of violent offences. Consequently, the discussion of review findings needs to begin with some observations regarding the similarities and differences between the two groups of offenders.

Crime statistics show reoffending amongst those convicted of violent crimes is comparatively low relative to other offender groups. For example, government figures for January to March 2020 show that 25% of those convicted of violence against the person reoffended, compared to 45% of those convicted of theft¹⁰⁴.

Like most offenders, those who commit violent crimes tend to be male and under the age of 35. Crime figures have consistently shown that rates of offending fall significantly once offenders reach their late twenties or early thirties. Neither the quantity nor quality of research as to why people desist from crime as they age is sufficient to be definitive. However, it is reasonable to assume that developing social ties through stable employment and marriage plays an important role in the process.

The primary research question for the review was what works to reduce violent reoffending. Research from both violent and general offender populations highlights the critical role played by offender thinking styles. Those who stop offending tend to be more psychologically resilient. Critically, they have higher levels of self-efficacy. That is, they believe in their capacity to change their behaviour. They have a sense of control over not just their own behaviour, but over levels of motivation, and capacity to influence social situations. Levels of self-efficacy predict the amount of effort people are prepared to put into changing their behaviour, and the degree of tenacity they display when faced with challenges.

¹⁰⁴ [Proven reoffending statistics: January to March 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-january-to-march-2020)

Other predictors of desistance include the formation of strong social bonds, a developing awareness of the negative consequences of crime, and for some individuals the development of a good relationship with a supervisor and attendance at a rehabilitative programme.

Armed with that knowledge, it becomes clearer why short prison sentences are not very effective as a means of reducing violent reoffending. Around 60% of those released after serving prison sentences of less than or equal to 6 months, reoffend¹⁰⁵. The evidence reviewed has shown that prison sentences are not only instrumental in disrupting social ties developed through work and personal relationships, they also have the capacity to engender feelings of powerlessness that can serve to reinforce poor self-efficacy.

Conversely, it also helps explain why research suggests reoffending is least likely when rehabilitation programmes include cognitive interventions. Particularly effective are the kind of cognitive behavioural interventions designed to address thinking skills and offenders' sense of their capacity to change.

The four secondary research questions addressed by the review help explore how to create the conditions under which interventions designed to reduce reoffending are most likely to be effective.

A key issue here is to broaden the focus on reoffending to include consideration of not only which interventions work, but also the processes that can optimise their effective delivery. The question becomes not just 'what works'. It involves consideration of evidence on how, why, and under what conditions interventions might be expected to work.

This shift towards examining more dynamic factors marks something of a departure from more traditional 'what works' reviews. Reviews often focus on static factors such as offence types or previous convictions to predict reoffending. Examining more dynamic influences involves taking a more individualised approach to understanding how risk of reoffending is linked to offender needs, and how effective support can create tailored solutions to meet those needs. The approach reflects the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation that evidence has shown to be effective in reducing reoffending.

Evidence supports the view that holistic interventions designed to identify and address multiple offender needs are most effective. Critical to their success is the involvement of multiple stakeholders with the capacity to bring specialist expertise to the process. For that reason, evidence has shown that Integrated Offender Management (IOM) approaches are effective in reducing violent reoffending. Having a locally agreed strategic framework for bringing together different offender-focused programmes and approaches enables service coordination and maximises the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

The range of agencies required to provide effective support for offenders inevitably depends on local conditions. There is no one size fits all solution for IOM approaches. What is critical are the conditions under which agencies and the professionals that work in them provide offender support. Evidence consistently points to two key predictors of success: the quality of relationships between offenders and supporting professionals, and the way in which professionals deliver interventions. The consistency and quality of intervention delivery makes a difference.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

Ensuring professionals have both the necessary skills to deliver interventions, and the time to build relationships with offenders creates its own challenges. Services must be financed in a way that enables stakeholders to limit staff turnover, and to provide effective continuous professional development.

The last of the supplementary questions for MOPAC concerned the applicability of evidence concerning good practice to the policing and socio-demographic context in London. Good practice evidence strongly advocates for a multi-agency, individualised, risk-based approach to providing support for offenders that includes cognitive components. That same evidence shows that effective interventions need to be tailored to reflect local need, social conditions, and service delivery landscapes. To that extent, the evidence on good practice is both relevant and applicable to the policing and socio-demographic context in London. It also highlights the potential value of piloting and evaluating proposed new approaches and interventions.

5.3 Strengths and limitations of the review methods

This was a rapid review of the evidence on effective interventions for reducing reoffending rates in adult violent offenders.

The focus has been on adult males (aged 26 years and older) in the Criminal Justice System with a history of violent offending. The rapid review was commissioned to summarise the current evidence on effective interventions for reducing reoffending rates amongst adult male offenders.

The review team conducted comprehensive searches of all the relevant databases and identified a large number of potentially relevant publications. Having screened these citations on title and abstract, the team retrieved all 45 of the full texts selected.

We conducted searches of relevant websites for grey literature but acknowledge that there may be some reports we might have missed. We did not conduct a meta-analysis of empirical research papers due to the lack of robust data on effect sizes. Consequently, we were not able to conduct standardised tests such as funnel-plot-based methods, to test and adjust for publication bias. However, we did seek to minimize potential publication bias by searching for empirical studies published in grey literature (e.g., theses, etc.).

Time restrictions mean the rapid review methodology has recognized limitations compared with a full systematic review. The experienced team conducted rigorous critical appraisal of all included publications. However, as is usually the case with rapid reviews, they double coded only a sample of publications. Again, as is common with rapid reviews, the team used narrative synthesis to produce a largely qualitative descriptive summary of data.

5.4 Strengths and limitations of available evidence

5.4.1 Methodological limitations and clarity in reporting

As discussed elsewhere in the report, the literature used to inform analysis of both primary and secondary research questions has methodological limitations. Regarding research

question one, our quality appraisal procedures highlighted the quality of papers included in the synthesis as moderate to good. Around half of the empirical impact evaluation papers could reasonably be described as high-quality studies.

The evidence synthesised in the examination of the supplementary research questions relied more heavily on reports and sources of grey literature. Quality assessments showed around half of the publications included in the analysis were scored as good quality. We interpret that as indicating a level of quality that might typically be expected of this type of material.

5.4.2 Coherence and relevance of data

In general, the level of fit or coherence between the data and the research question analyses were good. The findings for primary question one seem broadly relevant to the London context faced by MOPAC. The key theme regarding the efficacy of interventions based on multi-agency cooperation, cognitive interventions, robust analysis of dynamic risks and positive relationship building was consistent across studies. That said, there remain limitations. The quality and volume of empirical evaluations mean that whilst the case may appear compelling, it could benefit from being reinforced by more robust evidence.

The coherence of themes running through analysis of the supplementary questions were also consistent. It is hard to argue that there is no case for the potential efficacy of contextual approaches to managing offenders through cognitive based interventions.

The research evidence also highlighted the key role played by the nature of relationships between criminal justice professionals and offenders. Approaches that recurred included cognitive based interventions, restorative justice interventions, the value of stakeholder engagement, partnership work with voluntary sector specialists, taking a risk-need-responsivity (RNR) informed approach, and evaluation practice.

Overall, the team rated the consistency and coherence of the evidence body as generally good, and most papers to cover issues generally relevant. Differences in study populations, i.e., violent versus general offenders, are inevitable given the nature of criminal justice research. However, the team concluded that differences in populations did not seriously compromise the interpretation of findings.

5.4.3 Adequacy of the data and gaps in available data

Overall, the data identified was sufficient to claim reasonable degrees of confidence in our knowledge of what works when it comes to interventions effective in reducing violent reoffending in adults. It is worth noting however that the available data did not allow the review team to conduct any meta-analyses or to identify specific interventions supported by a robust body of evidence of efficacy.

The review team had hoped to find more evidence that addresses the issue of how culturally acceptable risk assessment procedures are. More remains to be done to address this issue. There was also a gap of knowledge around the extent to which we understand the cultural and social relevance of interventions for different population subgroups.

5.5 Recommendations for research

The review has looked at interventions designed to reduce reoffending rates amongst adult offenders. Evidence has shown how violent offenders often have complex social and personal needs. These needs often fall outside of the sphere of influence typically associated with the criminal justice system.

The review has highlighted several gaps in research:

- An evidence base on how culturally acceptable risk assessment procedures are;
- Understanding the cultural and social relevance of interventions for different population subgroups;
- Data on prevalence, severity, and life course of risks;
- Routine and robust evaluation of interventions for adult violent offenders;
- Offender perspectives on the efficacy of interventions in impact evaluations;
- Improved understanding of the process of desistance from offending;
- How the delivery of criminal justice support services can promote the development of effective personal relationships between professionals and their clients;
- Understanding the processes that underpin the effective delivery of cognitive interventions; and
- Understanding of how issues of process have an impact on the delivery of services through local multi-agency collaborations.

5.6 Conclusion

The purpose of the review was to look at interventions designed to reduce reoffending rates amongst adult violent offenders.

In that context, the review focussed on one primary research question looking at evidence for the efficacy of interventions, and four supplementary questions looking broadly at potential barriers and facilitators of effective intervention implementation.

We found publications providing empirical examination of the following interventions and approaches:

1. Custodial sentences for offenders
2. Holistic interventions addressing multiple needs of offenders
3. Relationship building
4. Multi-agency approaches
5. Combining support with sanctions
6. Cognitive interventions
7. Integrated Offender Management
8. Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation

The quality of evidence regarding intervention impact evaluations was medium to strong. Sixteen studies achieved quality score of 11 or higher (out of a possible 14), nine failed to score higher than eight.

The review team cited 16 publications relevant to the discussion of the secondary research questions. They described evidence for the efficacy of both IOM and Restorative Justice approaches. Local stakeholder engagement of the type supported by IOM approaches was found to be effective. Local areas manage violent reoffending successfully by building collaborative services based on knowledge and understanding of local context, robust offender needs assessments, and the provision of consistent, regular support provided by a stable, well-trained workforce.

A key message in both the research and professional literature concerned the efficacy of considering the role of dynamic factors rather than relying exclusively on static predictors of future offending. Given the weight of evidence supporting the benefits of this approach, the review noted the need for more evidence concerning processes that underpin desistance.

In terms of what intervention elements offenders find helpful, we found gaps in the availability of qualitative research with violent offenders that might inform practice. What was clear however, was that offenders often put a high value on the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with support professionals. That can present something of a challenge to current funding models of multi-agency collaborations that can compromise the need for continuity and consistency in relationships. Criminal justice professionals can often struggle to find the time needed to develop trusting and consistent relationships.

The review highlighted several critical gaps in research, including a lack of understanding of how culturally acceptable risk assessment procedures are, the cultural and social relevance of interventions for different population subgroups, and how services can nurture effective personal relationships between professionals and their clients

6 REFERENCES

[ANNEX 4. SELECTION OF TOOLS FOR APPRAISING EVIDENCE - A Resource for Developing an Evidence Synthesis Report for Policy-Making - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Appendix 2 Checklists | Interim methods guide for developing service guidance 2014 | Guidance | NICE](#)

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Included papers

- Andersen, S. N., & Telle, K. (2022). Better out than in? The effect on recidivism of replacing incarceration with electronic monitoring in Norway. *European Journal of Criminology*, 19(1), 55-76.
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Appendix 2: Excluded papers

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
1	Appleby, Louis., Roscoe, Alison., Shaw, Jenny., (2015). Services for released prisoners should address the many causes of reoffending. 2(10), 853-854.	Other	discussion piece, we have accessed original paper it describes
2	Baker, V., Johnson, D., Oluonye, S., (2013). Resettle: A significant new step in an emerging pathway that manages risk and addresses need in high-risk personality disordered offenders on their release into the community. Special Issue: Treatment Programmes For High-Risk offenders., 19(5-6), 449-460.	Psychiatric focus	focus on PD only not general population of violent offenders
3	Balbuena, Lloyd., Mela, Mansfield., Wong, Stephen., Gu, Deqiang., Adelugba, Olajide., Tempier, Raymond., (2010). Does clozapine promote employability and reduce offending among mentally disordered offenders?. 55(1), 50-56.	Other focus	mental health and employment focus, not violent reoffending
4	Batastini, AB., Hoeffner, CE., Vitacco, MJ., Morgan, RD., Coaker, LC., Lester, ME., (2019). Does the Format of the Message Affect What Is Heard? A Two-Part Study on the Communication of Violence Risk Assessment Data. Journal of Forensic Psychology Research and Practice, 19(1), 44-71.	Risk or protective factors	focus on communicating risk
5	Bengtson, S., Lund, J., Ibsen, M., Langstrom, N., (2019). Long-Term Violent Reoffending Following Forensic Psychiatric Treatment: Comparing Forensic Psychiatric Examinees and General Offender Controls. Frontiers in Psychiatry, 10,	Psychiatric focus	compares violent forensic psychiatric patients with the general population of violent offenders
6	Blakeborough, Laura., Richardson, Anna., (2012). Summary of the findings from two evaluations of Home Office Alcohol Arrest Referral pilot schemes (Research report 60) .	Young offenders	sample cohort young offenders
7	Bruce, M., Crowley, S., Jeffcote, N., Coulston, B., (2014). Community DSPD pilot services in South London: Rates of reconviction and impact of supported housing on reducing recidivism. Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health, 24(2), 129-140.	Psychiatric focus	focus on offenders with PD diagnosis and housing

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
8	Butler, Tony., Schofield, Peter W., Greenberg, David., Allnutt, Stephen H., Indig, Devon., Carr, Vaughan., D'Este, Catherine., Mitchell, Philip B., Knight, Lee., Ellis, Andrew., (2010). Reducing impulsivity in repeat violent offenders: An open label trial of a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor. 44(12), 1137-1143.	Psychiatric focus	focus on offenders with psychiatric diagnosis
9	Cale, J., Burton, M., (2018). Factors Associated with Breaches of Home Detention and Returns to Custody Post-Home Detention in South Australia. Current Issues in Criminal Justice, 30(1), 35-56.	Risk or protective factors	risk factors of offending
10	Camp, Jake., Joy, Kerry., Freestone, Mark., (2018). Does "Enhanced Support" for Offenders Effectively Reduce Custodial Violence and Disruption? An Evaluation of the Enhanced Support Service Pilot. 62(12), 3928-3946.	Psychiatric focus	intervention aimed to reduce violence in prison aimed at those with PD diagnoses
11	Cantos, AL., Goldstein, DA., Brenner, L., O'leary, KD., Verborg, R., (2015). CORRELATES AND PROGRAM COMPLETION OF FAMILY ONLY AND GENERALLY VIOLENT PERPETRATORS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE. Behavioral Psychology-Psicologia Conductual, 23(3), 549-569.	Other focus	comparing perpetrators of domestic abuse
12	Chang, Z., Lichtenstein, P., Langstrom, N., Larsson, H., Fazel, S., (2016). Association Between Prescription of Major Psychotropic Medications and Violent Reoffending After Prison Release. Jama-Journal of the American Medical Association, 316(17), 1798-1807.	Psychiatric focus	correlation between psychotropic drugs and reoffending in a large data set, not an intervention and focus is on psychiatric diagnosis and treatment
13	Cochran, JC., Mears, DP., (2017). The Path of Least Desistance: Inmate Compliance and Recidivism. Justice Quarterly, 34(3), 431-458.	Other	Predicting recidivism not an intervention
14	Coid, JW., Yang, M., Ullrich, S., Hickey, N., Kahtan, N., Freestone, M., (2015). Psychiatric diagnosis and differential risks of offending following discharge. International Journal of Law and Psychiatry, 38, 68-74.	Psychiatric focus	Compare risk factors of those with psychiatric diagnosis to those without

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
15	Connell, C., (2016). Forensic occupational therapy to reduce risk of reoffending: a survey of practice in the United Kingdom. <i>Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology</i> , 27(6), 907-928.	Psychiatric focus	focus on psychiatric patients and occ therapists views
16	Cracknell, M., (N/A). The resettlement net: 'revolving door' imprisonment and carceral (re)circulation. <i>Punishment & Society-International Journal of Penology</i> ,	Other	discussion of the impact of Offender Rehabilitation Act and different perspectives, not about reoffending
17	Dandawate, A., Kalebic, N., Padfield, N., Craissati, J., Taylor, P.J., (2019). Remorse in psychotic violent offenders: An overvalued idea?. <i>Behavioral Sciences & the Law</i> , 37(5), 579-588.	Psychiatric focus	focus on psychiatric patients and whether they show remorse
18	Dickens, Geoffrey L., Laura E O'Shea., (2017). Use of the HCR-20 for violence risk assessment: views of clinicians working in a secure inpatient mental health setting. 19(2), 130-138.	Psychiatric focus	risk assess psychiatric patients for violence
19	Eisenberg, MJ., van Horn, JE., Dekker, JM., Assink, M., van der Put, CE., Hendriks, J., Stams, GJJM., (2019). Static and Dynamic Predictors of General and Violent Criminal Offense Recidivism in the Forensic Outpatient Population: A Meta-Analysis. <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> , 46(5), 732-750.	Psychiatric focus	predicting offending in psychiatric patients
20	Evans, Elizabeth., Jaffe, Adi., Urada, Darren., Anglin, M. Douglas., (2012). Differential outcomes of court-supervised substance abuse treatment among California parolees and probationers. 56(4), 539-556.	Other focus	drug and alcohol intervention but only 7% of sample treated for alcohol. Majority for illegal drugs and offences related to illegal drug use.
21	Fazel, S., Wolf, A., (2015). A Systematic Review of Criminal Recidivism Rates Worldwide: Current Difficulties and Recommendations for Best Practice. <i>Plos One</i> , 10(6),	Other	compare recidivism data between countries not what works

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
22	Fazel, S., Chang, Z., Fanshawe, T., Langstrom, N., Lichtenstein, P., Larsson, H., Mallett, S., (2016). Prediction of violent reoffending on release from prison: derivation and external validation of a scalable tool. <i>Lancet Psychiatry</i> , 3(6), 535-543.	Risk or protective factors	prediction and risk factors
23	Fowler, Sherry Lynn., (2020). Use of gang member social media postings to detect violent crime. 81(11-A), No-Specified.	Young offenders	young gang violence
24	FREESTONE, MARK C., (2017). EXTERNAL TRIGGER FACTORS FOR VIOLENT OFFENDING: Findings From the U.K. Prisoner cohort study.	Risk or protective factors	about risk factors - stable and dynamic and triggers for violence
25	Fulton, Lorena., (2017). Improving outpatient service delivery for criminal offenders with serious mental illness: An appreciative action research inquiry. 77(12-A(E)), No-Specified.	Psychiatric focus	focus on severe psychiatric diagnosis not reoffending
26	Geddes, Louise., (2012). In Search of Collaborative Public Management: The prolific and other priority offender programme. 14(7), 947	Other	case study methodology - description of one organisation and focus on management not offending
27	Hancock, Megan., Tapscott, Jennifer L., Hoaken, Peter N. S., (2010). Role of executive dysfunction in predicting frequency and severity of violence. 36(5), 338-349.	Risk or protective factors	prediction and risk factors based on cognition
28	Heffernan, R., Ward, T., Vandavelde, S., Van Damme, L., (2019). Dynamic risk factors and constructing explanations of offending: The Risk-Causality Method. <i>Aggression and Violent Behavior</i> , 44, 47-56.	Risk or protective factors	theoretical critique of risk models
29	Higgs, T., Olver, ME., Nunes, K., Cortoni, F., (2020). Risk relevance of psychometric assessment and evaluator ratings of dynamic risk factors in high-risk violent offenders. <i>Legal and Criminological Psychology</i> , 25(2), 219-236.	Risk or protective factors	accuracy of psychometric tests in risk assessment

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
30	Hogan, Nancy L., Lambert, Eric G., Barton-Bellessa, Shannon M., (2012). Evaluation of CHANGE, an Involuntary Cognitive Program for High-Risk Inmates. 51(6), 370	Young offenders	criteria for programme that offender is under age of 26
31	Howard, PD., Dixon, L., (2013). Identifying Change in the Likelihood of Violent Recidivism: Causal Dynamic Risk Factors in the OASys Violence Predictor. Law and Human Behavior, 37(3), 163-174.	Risk or protective factors	risk assessment
32	Howden, Sharon., Midgley, Jayde., Hargate, Rebecca., (2018). Violent offender treatment in a medium secure unit. 20(2), 102-111.	Psychiatric focus	focus on those with psychiatric diagnosis
33	Jacobs, LA., Ashcraft, LE., Sewall, CJR., Wallace, D., Folb, BL., (2022). Recidivism in Context: A Meta-Analysis of Neighborhood Concentrated Disadvantage and Repeat Offending. Criminal Justice and Behavior, 49(6), 783-806.	Other	correlation between socioeconomic disadvantage and reoffending
34	Johnstone, Lorraine., Cooke, David J., (2010). PRISM: A promising paradigm for assessing and managing institutional violence: Findings from a multiple case study analysis of five Scottish prisons. 9(3), 180-191.	Risk or protective factors	evaluation of risk tool
35	Jolliffe, Darrick., Cattell, Jack., Raza, Annabelle., Minoudis, Philip., (2017). Evaluating the impact of the London Pathway Project. 27(3), 238-253.	Psychiatric focus	Exclude focus on diagnosis of PD
36	Kennedy, Alistair ., et al., (2012). Evaluation of Alcohol Arrest Referral pilot schemes (phase 1) (Occasional paper 101) .	Young offenders	age group is young offenders
37	Klepfisz, G., Daffern, M., Day, A., (2017). Understanding protective factors for violent reoffending in adults. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 32, 80-87.	Risk or protective factors	comparison of psychometric tests in risk assessment
38	Klepfisz, G., O'Brien, K., Daffern, M., (2014). Violent Offenders' Within-Treatment Change in Anger, Criminal Attitudes, and Violence Risk: Associations with Violent Recidivism. International Journal of Forensic Mental Health, 13(4), 348-362.	Risk or protective factors	protective factors in risk assessment

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
39	Klepfisz, G., Daffern, M., Day, A., Lloyd, CD., Woldgabreal, Y., (2020). Latent constructs in the measurement of risk and protective factors for violent reoffending using the HCR-20(v3) and SAPROF: implications for conceptualizing offender assessment and treatment planning. <i>Psychology Crime & Law</i> , 26(1), 93-108.	Risk or protective factors	protective factors in risk assessment
40	Klinge, C., (2019). MEASURING CHANGE: FROM RATES OF RECIDIVISM TO MARKERS OF DESISTANCE. <i>Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology</i> , 109(4), 769-817.	Other	focus on best methodology to measure change not intervention itself
41	Kopak, Albert M., Dean, Lucy V., Proctor, Steven L., Miller, Lauren., Hoffmann, Norman G., (2015). Effectiveness of the rehabilitation for addicted prisoners trust (RAPt) programme. 20(4), 254-261.	Other focus	intervention for drug misuse and offending related solely to illegal drug use
42	Larden, M., Hogstrom, J., Langstrom, N., (2021). Effectiveness of an Individual Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Serious, Young Male Violent Offenders: Randomized Controlled Study With Twenty-Four-Month Follow-Up. <i>Frontiers in Psychiatry</i> , 12,	Young offenders	youth offending only
43	LARKIN Peter., JAHODA Andrew., MacMAHON Ken., (2013). The Social Information Processing Model as a framework for explaining frequent aggression in adults with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities: a systematic review of the evidence. 26(5), 447-465.	Other focus	focus on people with diagnosis of learning disability
44	Lehmann, RJB., Neumann, CS., Hare, RD., Biedermann, J., Dahle, KP., Mokros, A., (2019). A Latent Profile Analysis of Violent Offenders Based on PCL-R Factor Scores: Criminogenic Needs and Recidivism Risk. <i>Frontiers in Psychiatry</i> , 10,	Other focus	categorises offenders based on psychopathic traits
45	Leshem, R., van Lieshout, PHHM., Ben-David, S., Ben-David, BM., (2019). Does emotion matter? The role of alexithymia in violent recidivism: A systematic literature review. <i>Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health</i> , 29(2), 94-110.	Risk or protective factors	alexithymia as a risk factor not an intervention
46	Lloyd, CD., Hanby, LJ., Serin, RC., (2014). Rehabilitation Group Coparticipants' Risk Levels Are Associated With Offenders' Treatment Performance, Treatment Change, and Recidivism. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> , 82(2), 298-311.	Other	group dynamics as a factor for success or failure of an intervention

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
47	Lovett, Nicholas., Xue, Yuhan., (2022). Rare homicides, criminal behavior, and the returns to police labor. 194, 172-195.	Other	retrospective correlation between police presence and homicides
48	Low, K., Day, A., (2017). Toward a Clinically Meaningful Taxonomy of Violent Offenders: The Role of Anger and Thinking Styles. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 32(4), 489-514.	Other	categorising violent offenders
49	McCahill, Michael., Finn, Rachel L., (2013). The surveillance of 'prolific' offenders: Beyond 'docile bodies'. 15(1), 23-42.	Young offenders	mainly young offenders and all under 29
50	McCracken, Katie ., et al., (2012). Evaluation of Alcohol Arrest Referral pilot schemes (phase 2) (Occasional paper 102) .	Young offenders	wrong demographic, young people, often one off arrests
51	Moulden, Heather M., Mamak, Mini., Chaimowitz, Gary., (2020). A preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of dialectical behaviour therapy in a forensic psychiatric setting. 30(2-3), 141-150.	Psychiatric focus	focus on those with psychiatric diagnosis
52	Compendium of reoffending statistics and analysis (Statistics bulletin) . (2010).	Other	reoffending stats from 2013
53	Polaschek, Devon L. L., Bell, Rebecca K., Calvert, Susan W., Takarangi, Melanie K. T., (2010). Cognitive-behavioural rehabilitation of high-risk violent offenders: Investigating treatment change with explicit and implicit measures of cognition. Special Issue: Current Directions At the Juncture of Clinical and Cognitive Science., 24(3), 437-449.	Risk or protective factors	how best to assess implicit and explicit cognitive risk post treatment rather than evaluation of treatment itself
54	Prescott, JJ., Pyle, B., Starr, SB., (2020). UNDERSTANDING VIOLENT-CRIME RECIDIVISM. Notre Dame Law Review, 95(4), 1643-1698.	Other	discussion piece, US specific and discusses different recording between states.
55	Querengasser, Jan., Bulla, Jan., Hoffmann, Klaus., Ross, Thomas., (2018). Predictors of re-offending in German substance-abusers in legal detention: A prospective population-based cohort study. 29(2), 337-350.	Psychiatric focus	specialised forensic drug addiction in psychiatric hospital

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
56	Segal, Steven P., Rimes, Lachlan., Hayes, Stephania L., (2019). The utility of outpatient commitment: Reduced-risks of victimization and crime perpetration. 56, 97-104.	Psychiatric focus	focus on psychiatric diagnosis
57	Shniderman, Adam B., Solberg, Lauren B., (2015). Cosmetic psychopharmacology for prisoners: Reducing crime and recidivism through cognitive intervention. 8(3), 315-326.	Other focus	discussion of medications as intervention
58	Skeem, J., Lowenkamp, C., (2020). Using algorithms to address trade-offs inherent in predicting recidivism. Behavioral Sciences & the Law, 38(3), 259-278.	Other	prediction
59	Taylor, CJ., (2016). The Family's Role in the Reintegration of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals: The Direct Effects of Emotional Support. Prison Journal, 96(3), 331-354.	Other	predicting offending based on family support
60	Ternes, Marguerite, PhD., Helmus, L Maaïke, PhD., Forrester, Trina, MA., (2019). How Are Temporary Absences and Work Releases Being Used With Canadian Federal Offenders?. 19(1), 24	Other	description of absences from prison
61	Tew, J., Atkinson, R., (2013). The Chromis programme: from conception to evaluation. 19(5-6), 415-431.	Other focus	focus on offenders with psychopathic traits
62	Trood, MD., Spivak, BL., Ogloff, JRP., (2021). A systematic review and meta-analysis of the effects of judicial supervision on recidivism and well-being factors of criminal offenders. Journal of Criminal Justice, 74,	Other focus	focus on driving offences
63	Ullrich, S., Coid, J., (2011). Protective Factors for Violence Among Released Prisoners-Effects Over Time and Interactions With Static Risk. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 79(3), 381-390.	Risk or protective factors	protective factors not intervention
64	Viljoen, JL., Vincent, GM., (N/A). Risk assessments for violence and reoffending: Implementation and impact on risk management. Clinical Psychology-Science and Practice,	Risk or protective factors	risk assessment and accuracy

Ref no.	Reference	Exclusion category	Notes on exclusion
65	Viljoen, JL., Cochrane, DM., Jonnson, MR., (2018). Do Risk Assessment Tools Help Manage and Reduce Risk of Violence and Reoffending? A Systematic Review. <i>Law and Human Behavior</i> , 42(3), 181-214.	Risk or protective factors	literature review on value of risk assessment
66	Viljoen, JL., Jonnson, MR., Cochrane, DM., Vargen, LM., Vincent, GM., (2019). n Impact of Risk Assessment Instruments on Rates of Pretrial Detention, Postconviction Placements, and Release: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. <i>Law and Human Behavior</i> , 43(5), 397-420.	Risk or protective factors	risk assessment in pre-trial detention
67	Weizmann-Henelius, G., Putkonen, H., Rissanen, T., Eronen, M., Webster, CD., (2019). Exploring a new structured professional judgment measure (impulsivity measure related to violence) after an average follow-up of 10 years: A study of Finnish offenders. <i>Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health</i> , 29(1), 57-68.	Risk or protective factors	accuracy of risk assessment
68	YATES Kathy F., et al., (2010). Psychiatric patients with histories of aggression and crime five years after discharge from a cognitive-behavioral program. 21(2), 167-188.	Psychiatric focus	psychiatric focus
69	YOUNG Susan., CHICK Kay., GUDJONSSON Gisli., (2010). A preliminary evaluation of reasoning and rehabilitation 2 in mentally disordered offenders (R&R2M) across two secure forensic settings in the United Kingdom. 21(3), 336-349.	Psychiatric focus	psychiatric focus

Exclusion Category	Count	%
Psychiatric focus	19	28%
Risk or protective factors	19	28%
Young offenders	7	10%
Other focus	9	13%
Other	15	22%
All	69	100%