Unified Tiering Model
Staff
Frequently Asked Questions
May 2021
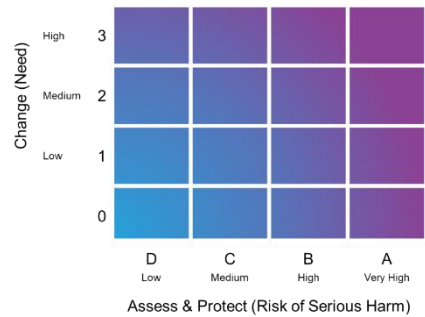
Version	Update	Owner	Date
1.0	Probation Staff Frequently Asked Questions Version 1.0	Daniel Blaxill	31/03/21

The Unified Tiering Model Staff Frequently Asked Questions is a live document and will be updated to address staff queries regarding the Unified Tiering Model.

Responses are grouped under key themes to support teams. If a question is not addressed in this document, please speak with your manager and your query will be escalated via Performance & Quality to daniel.blaxill@justice.gov.uk. Thank you.

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1. Reason for change

1.1. Why are we introducing the Unified Tiering Model?
The Unified Tiering Model is designed to support a mixed caseload of low, medium and high risk people on probation, as set out in the Target Operating Model and the Probation Service's vision to assess, protect and change.

1.2. How does tiering link with sentence management?
Tiering allocates staff resource to provide core sentence management functions.

1.3. How does the Unified Tiering Model differ from our current Tiering Model?
The Unified Tiering Model continues to reflect public protection as captured in nDelius. The difference is the introduction of OASys criminogenic needs to reflect people on probations' change.

1.4. When will the Unified Tiering Model go live?
The Unified Tiering Model launches for the National Probation Service on 4 May 2021; it will also be incorporated into our current Workload Management Tool (WMT). CRC cases will be migrated to our Unified Tiering Model and current WMT in June 2021.

1.5. Who developed the Unified Tiering Model and what processes were involved to ensure it is fit for purpose?
The Unified Tiering Model was developed by a Tiering Working Group formed of subject matter experts, probation practitioners, analysts and digital colleagues. The team undertook rigorous review and testing for a wide range of cohorts to ensure that the Unified Tiering Model is fit for purpose. The model was presented to Trade Unions and scrutinised and approved by the Probation Reform Programme's governance body.

1.6. What consideration has been given to Equalities?
The Unified Tiering Model is designed to consider individual needs and statutory responsibilities. The Unified Tiering Model includes additional needs to support our Women's strategy, in line with research completed by the HMPPS data science team. Additionally, the Unified Tiering Model was tested to consider the impact on a wide range of cohorts of people on probation. The Unified Tiering Model is intended to be flexible, so when further evidence become available, it can be easily updated in line with evolving research on ethnicity, people with protected characteristics and others.

1.7. How will staff benefit from the Unified Tiering Model?
The Unified Tiering Model is an enabler for the delivery of the Probation Reform Programme's Target Operating Model, to deliver the Unified Model and to reflect the demand for risk management and change work in sentence management.

1.8. How will the Unified Tiering Model support our future workforce design?
As well as the Workload Management Tool (WMT), the Unified Tiering Model will also drive workforce planning and forecasting future staffing requirements.

1.9. What support is there for probation practitioners?
As well as the Unified Tiering Model Staff Guidance Document, there have been targeted briefings for Performance and Quality team/s, to ensure that all staff have the support they need to successfully transition to our Unified Tiering Model. The Unified Tiering Model is intended to reflect sentence management and, as such, will underpin probation practitioner training.

2. Digital Development of the Unified Tiering Model

2.1. What digital development has been undertaken to ensure that the Unified Tiering Model is fit for purpose?

Digital development has created an automated calculation of a new tier by using information from nDelius and OASys. The development of the Unified Tiering Model has followed Digital's approach:

  I.   Discovery: user research to understand user's needs
  II. Alpha: developing and testing prototypes with small user groups
  III. Private Beta and Public Beta: developing and testing on a larger scale; making a working test version available to a limited user group
  IV. Live and ongoing evaluation: continual iteration and improvements based on user feedback

2.2. Where will I see the tier of cases?

The Unified Tiering Model will be clearly presented in nDelius as outlined below. The Unified Tiering Model will also be presented in the Workload Management Tool (WMT).

2.3. What are the inputs for the Unified Tiering model?

The Unified Tiering Model draws information from nDelius and OASys. Further information may be found in the Unified Tiering Model Staff Guidance Document.

2.4. Will there be a manual override function for the Unified Tiering Model?

There is no manual override, as this tool relies on data in nDelius and OASys to calculate the tier. The Unified Tiering Model's digital design is intended to support future development to enable it to evolve in line with emerging evidence and to provide a consistent view of caseload.

2.5. How will CRC areas manage that do not currently use OASys?

A workaround for Day 1, 26 June 2021, has been developed for those CRC areas that do not currently use OASys. A one off upload of criminogenic need information is planned.

2.6. What do you do when OASys is not available?

When a new assessment is completed, or if there has been an OASys within 55 weeks, the Unified Tiering Model will calculate the tier based on this information. If this information is not available, the case will default to change tier 2. This is intended to support the work required for an initial assessment. Cases are intended to be reviewed in line with national standards; this will be reflected in the need and the tier.

3. Unified Tiering Model and the WMT

3.1. How will the Unified Tiering Model impact the Workload Measurement Tool (WMT)?
Caseload data is transferred every weekday to the Workload Measurement Tool (WMT). The associated points are dependent on sentence and tier. Each sentence and tier have a set allowance within the Workload Measurement Tool (WMT), which will be updated for the Unified Tiering Model.

The [Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) User Guidance](#) and [WMT FAQ](#) may be accessed via EQuiP; the Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) FAQ will be updated in line with the Unified Tiering Model. Please see the WMT in EQuiP.

Note: the Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) User Guidance includes details of other activities as well as sentence and tier – e.g., PAROM1.

3.2. How have the Unified tiering WMT points been developed?
A phased approach will be adopted to consider weightings. For the launch on 4 May 2021, the current NPS Interim Tiering Model has been applied to ensure minimal change, maintaining continuity and reducing disruption for staff and people on probation. Workload Measurement Tool (WMT) points are presented below:

Unified Tiering Model – WMT Points

Tier	COs and SSOs	Post Release Licence	Pre-release COM
A3	206	219	75
A2	158	175	60
A1	146	163	59
A0	110		
B3	146	161	59
B2	115	132	48
B1	102	119	47
B0	72		
C3	79	77	30
C2	63	65	24
C1	50	52	23
C0	35		
D3	51	51	17
D2	41	43	14
D1	29	31	13

D0	29		

Note: work is planned to update the weightings to better reflect understanding of the unified caseload later this year (2021).

4. Operational Use

4.1. How will my cases change their tier – do I have to do something?

Tiering is a fully automated digital service which will calculate a new tier whenever a business event happens, such as an activation of a new nDelius flag, a review of OASys, etc.; these events will update the tier in real time.

4.2. The tiering model does not include all the flags / registrations in nDelius – why not?

Flags and registrations should be used in line with current guidance. These flags often appear in combination – e.g., victim of domestic violence and vulnerability. In the development of the Unified Tiering Model we have tried to avoid double counting for tiering, but we will continue to monitor the use of flags / registrations to ensure that tiering accurately reflects the demands on probation practitioners in line with emerging 'what works' research.

4.3. As the Unified Tiering Model is dynamic and the digital solution updates nDelius in real time could this result in frequent reallocation between grades?

The design of the Unified Tiering Model is intended to reflect that people on probation's change need evolves, and we expect to see more need at the start of sentence and release. However, as change requirements are addressed, it is not anticipated that the case will be reallocated. The longer term ambition is that probation practitioners will hold a mixed caseload and thus lessen reallocation. In the shorter term, the impact of reallocation on staff and people on probation will be supported by the use of the POD model.

4.4. Is the Unified Tiering Model drawing Integrated Offender Management (IOM) from the register in nDelius as there can be varying levels of IOM intervention?

To reflect that IOM cases are held by both Probation Officers (POs) and Probation Service Officers (PSOs), IOM is considered as a factor on the change axis. As a result, IOM cases will be presented as higher change need, but will be spread in line with public protection.