

Irish Probation Journal

Call for Papers 2026



Special Issue: The Purposes of Probation

In recent years, probation in Ireland, both North and South, has been the focus of increasing attention. This is reflected in policy and practice developments and a growing body of research. These shifts have been influenced by wider changes in the criminal justice system and the profile and needs of those under probation supervision. In Northern Ireland, innovations such as the Enhanced Combination Order (ECO) have adapted existing community sentences to provide more intensive interventions. In the Republic of Ireland, the Integrated Community Service Order (ICO) has emerged in response to similar needs. These developments reflect a broader re-examination of probation's purpose, scope, and effectiveness. As in other jurisdictions with long-established probation services, questions are being asked about ***what probation is for and what it should be?***

Traditionally associated with rehabilitation, probation has also taken on a more prominent public protection role. Balancing these dual aims, supporting desistance and rehabilitation while ensuring community safety, presents ongoing challenges for services and practitioners alike. Probation operates within complex systems, working alongside other criminal justice and community-based agencies. Situated in communities, important questions include:

- How does probation work *with* and *for* communities?
- How can probation meaningfully engage with service users and other stakeholders to shape its practices and priorities?

Themes and Areas of Interest

This special issue invites original papers, practice reflections, and commentaries that explore the ***purposes of probation*** in contemporary contexts. We particularly welcome contributions that address (but are not limited to):

- The evolving aims and purposes of probation in Ireland and beyond
- Balancing rehabilitation, desistance, and public protection
- Probation's role in and relationship with communities
- Co-production and service user participation in probation practice
- Innovations in probation policy, practice, or research
- Comparative and international perspectives on the purposes of probation
- Ethical, practical, or organisational challenges in delivering probation services

Submissions may focus on **Northern Ireland**, the **Republic of Ireland**, or **international contexts**. We welcome both empirical and conceptual papers, as well as shorter practice-based or reflective contributions.

Submission Information

Submission deadline: 31st May 2026

Manuscript length:

Full-length papers: up to 8,000 words

Practice notes/commentaries: up to 2,500 words

Submission format: Manuscripts should follow the Irish Probation Journal's author guidelines

Key Dates

Submission deadline: 31st May 2026

Notification of acceptance: June 2026

Publication date: Autumn 2026

Submission and enquiries: Please submit papers or direct any queries to:

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