



# Careers in YorkYOT: getting started.

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## ***What kind of jobs are available?***

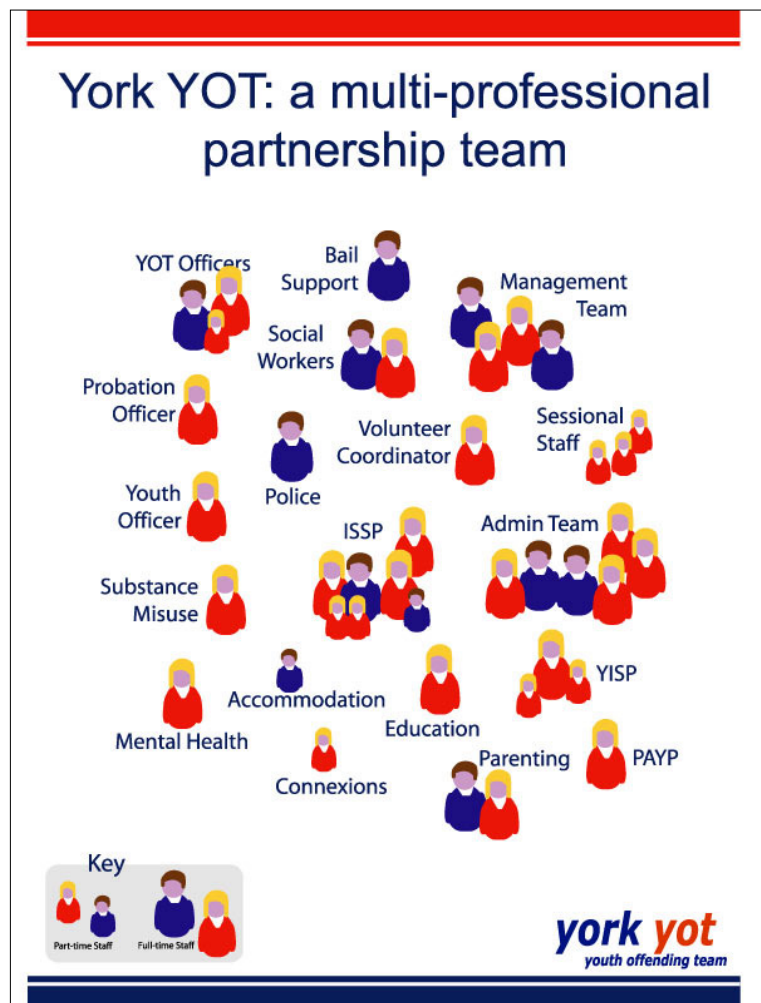
The YOT is a multi-professional, multi-agency team with staff employed by half a dozen different employers. So it is quite unlike most services that have a single employer, a single career structure, a single route for getting on to the ladder, getting trained and so on. And it is a **true multi-agency team**, with all these staff physically housed under one roof.

This makes it seem fairly complicated compared with most services, but it's also a great strength to have **seconded and partnership staff** from such a variety of backgrounds in addition to the Council:

- Police
- Probation
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Health
- Foundation Housing
- Crime Reduction Initiatives (First Base)

**The largest single employer is City of York Council**, but even then staff come from a wide variety of departments:

- Youth Offending
- Social work
- Education Welfare
- Youth work
- Connexions



Of course each employer has its own career structure too, its own professional qualifications and so on.

Seconded and partnership staff may be recruited specially through general advertisement, giving people a chance to come directly into the YOT or they may be recruited internally from existing staff.



*If you want to work with young people in trouble with the law, you might want to consider it as part of a career in social work, youth work, substance misuse work, police, probation, health and so on.*

YorkYOT employs youth justice staff through the City of York Council, including administrative staff and managers.

**Administrative staff** are crucial to our success and are considered full members of the team. It is vital that they understand the business we are in and how they contribute. We take great pride

in the fact that a number of administrative staff have worked as volunteers in their own time in face-to-face contact with young people and some have gone on to become youth justice workers. Administrative staff contribute to all areas of the YOT's work but also have particular areas of responsibility where they can make a distinct contribution to the successful and smooth running of services.

**YOT workers** of one kind or another are the largest single group of staff. Everyone is a specialist:

- YOT Officers (or 'Case Managers') have a caseload of perhaps twenty or more young people. These young people will be on some form of formal supervision, as part of a sentence of the Courts. There can be nothing casual about this work as National Standards have to be met, detailed assessments and plans made, interventions recorded and delivered. Case management refers to the fact that each young person will need the services of other specialists in the YOT or elsewhere, so keeping the whole plan going needs one principal worker. YOT Officers are likely to have to work in Youth or even Crown Courts.
- We have 'qualified' and 'unqualified' YOT officer posts. The difference is that some posts are expected to take on work with different levels of responsibility for different kinds of work. Broadly-speaking qualified YOT officers would take on a greater amount of higher risk cases, with more complex and demanding needs.
- YOT Officers are crucial in motivating and energising young people and their families, maintaining a balance between the formal requirements and a style that engages youngsters and families. These are the staff that specialise in specific and detailed work about offending behaviour and positive alternative activities.

YISP Keyworkers (Youth Inclusion & Support Panel) fulfil similar functions, but with younger children who show signs that they are at risk of getting into trouble with the law. So this work is not a compulsory part of a sentence of the Courts but still needs to be very structured.



The Bail Support officer does a lot of work in and around the courts making sure that youngsters who are going through the courts get the direction and support they need to stay out of trouble.

Parenting staff organise and deliver individual and groupwork programmes of work with parents of children at risk – frequently the child will be supervised by the YOT at the same time.

- YOT Project and Support workers fulfil a variety of roles: they may provide a particular kind of support, like helping young people find and keep employment; or they may work on particular projects, like groupwork or reparation activity.

### ***Where are these jobs advertised?***

**Seconded & Partnership** posts may be advertised internally within existing staff first, and/or advertised in whatever local or national journals etc that employer normally uses.

The posts may be part of a larger advertisement amongst other jobs offered by that employer, and will therefore use that employers logos, housestyle and so on. The fact that it is a YOT post may not be highly prominent and the YOT's logos may not appear.

**YOT worker posts** may be advertised internally within the City of York Council first, and/or in the local daily newspaper (the 'York Press'). From time to time other journals may be used to attract particular skills or experience. Increasingly we find it effective just to advertise through the City of York Council system and that is where prospective applicants are advised to look out:

Advertisements will be placed on the following websites:

- The Council's website [www.york.gov.uk](http://www.york.gov.uk)
- on [www.sector1.net](http://www.sector1.net)
- on the North Yorkshire partnership's web portal 'North Yorkshire Working Together' [www.oneplacenorthyorks.com](http://www.oneplacenorthyorks.com)

### ***What about qualifications?***

It will be clearly stated in the application pack whether a post requires a specific qualification – for any particular post there may be a range of qualifications from different professions that can be treated as equivalents.

The benchmark is usually the Diploma in Social Work or Diploma in Probation Studies, but we try to be flexible and allow candidates to offer equivalents, for example through combinations of relevant degrees and NVQs.



**Partnership employers** use their own qualification requirements in negotiation with the YOT. Pay and grading, codes and conditions are determined by the employer and not the YOT

**YOT workers** can take advantage of the national Youth Justice Qualifications Framework. Information about these is best found using the link:

<http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/Getinvolved/Careers/NQF/> .

### ***What about other requirements?***

In all YOT posts you will need to demonstrate relevant experience and skills, from relevant paid or voluntary work.

For practitioner posts you will have to be able to work within a formal justice environment as well as have a sensitive understanding of the developmental needs of children and young people. You will need to be able to work within a specialised database as well as use standard software packages for producing letters, reports and so on. A good standard of formal written English is needed for reports. You will need to work flexible hours.

You will need a satisfactory enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check for **any** post with the YOT, and we apply the Vetting and Barring Scheme. We can accept people with convictions. Generally we make individual judgements rather than having a rigid set of rules, considering whether someone is safe to work with children, whether they are likely to follow appropriate standards of conduct and so on. What someone has done with their lives as a result of having previously got into trouble may even be an asset. We just want to make sure that people really have put their difficulties behind them and moved on.

You don't have to have been a volunteer to get a job in the YOT – but it really can help you if you have been a consistent and committed volunteer who has started getting some real hands-on experience this way. We will take into account relevant experience from a range of settings, not just volunteering for the YOT.

### ***How should I apply ?***

- We only accept applications in response to an advertisement – we never accept speculative CVs. Please don't copy and paste a CV into an application form – experience tells us it does not work either for you or for us. We are looking for you to give us a personal and tailored account of why you are the person for this particular job. CVs rarely achieve this.
- We want to know about your experience, what you have learned from it and how it makes you the person for the job. It's not enough just to tell



us all about your last job! We want to know what you would be like in the job you're applying for.

- Make sure you use the information we supply (job descriptions and so on), and do some background research – the Youth Justice Board, City of York Council and YorkYOT websites are good places to start.
- Follow the instructions that come with the form. If you don't, your application is likely to get no further than first base.
- References are always required. Employers' references should give details of the relevant head of service or department – and then the line manager who is most likely to write the reference. Some employers insist on going through HR/Personnel – always check first, to save time and effort. It isn't always possible for you to discuss your application with referees first – but give it careful thought: surprise isn't always the best policy.
- Make sure your application is well-organised, and accurately written in good quality but straightforward English. These are skills needed for the job, so we're looking for evidence of them in your application.
- All selection processes involve a conventional interview but they also usually include a brief exercise or task, maybe a presentation. You should expect to be interviewed by service users (e.g. parents, young offenders, or victims). The processes are designed to be relevant to the particular job –to give you the chance to be at your best, and to give us the chance to choose the best person available.

### ***What are the career entry jobs?***

The main career entry jobs into YOT work tend to be:

- Administration
- YISP Keyworker
- YOT Officer (unqualified)
- YOT Project/support worker

Most YOTs have a similar range of jobs, although the job titles will vary.



### ***How can I gain experience as a volunteer?***

To volunteer for work in the YorkYOT go to our web pages for more information [www.york-yot.org.uk](http://www.york-yot.org.uk).

To volunteer for YOT work in North Yorkshire start with: [www.ny-yjs.org.uk](http://www.ny-yjs.org.uk).

For general information about volunteering and working in youth justice see the Youth Justice Board website: <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/GetInvolved/>

### ***Equal Opportunities in recruitment and employment of staff***

YorkYOT believes that only by achieving equal opportunities employment practices can we:

- find and develop the best available staff to work with our young people,
- offer the best and fairest service to young offenders, their families, victims and the communities of York,
- care for our staff fairly and well.

YorkYOT works within the equal opportunities and diversity arrangements of the City of York Council but we also work to the equivalent standards and expectations of our partner agencies.

### ***And finally ... ..***

Remember that YorkYOT is not the only one! YorkYOT works in the area covered by the City of York Council. You might also want to think about North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service, which covers the North Yorkshire County Council area.

There are 15 YOTs altogether in the Yorkshire & Humber region.

Different YOTs do use slightly different titles and their structures are not identical, for all sorts of reasons. A full national list is available on the Youth Justice Board website, with relevant contact details: <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/Youthoffendingteams/Contactdetails.htm>. Most have websites that can be found using any search engine.

