

<b>Title</b>	<b>Demonstrate tactical decision-making and communication in a prison environment</b>		
<b>Level</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>This unit standard is for people working as officers in a prison environment and covers tactical decision-making and communication.</p> <p>People credited with this unit standard are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– use tactical decision-making processes in a prison environment;</li> <li>– use de-escalation techniques on a prisoner; and</li> <li>– demonstrate knowledge of, and apply, instruction techniques using AWOCA.</li> </ul>
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<b>Classification</b>	Offender Management > Prisoner Management
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<b>Available grade</b>	Achieved
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### Guidance Information

- 1 All performance criteria are to be in accordance with organisational policies and procedures.
- 2 Legislation  
 Corrections Act 2004;  
 Corrections Regulations 2005;  
 Health and Safety at Work Act 2015;  
 and any subsequent amendments or replacements.
- 3 References  
 The Department of Corrections, Policy and Legislation, available at [https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy\\_and\\_legislation](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation)  
 The Department of Corrections, Prison Operations Manual, available at [https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy\\_and\\_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual)  
 The Human Rights Commission, Prison policy, prison regime and prisoners' rights in New Zealand, available at [https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/6414/2550/8365/Young\\_year\\_-\\_Prison\\_policy\\_prison\\_regime\\_and\\_prisoners\\_rights\\_in\\_NZ.pdf](https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/6414/2550/8365/Young_year_-_Prison_policy_prison_regime_and_prisoners_rights_in_NZ.pdf).

#### 4 Definitions

*Anger scale* is listed as annoyed, frustrated, angry, very angry, rage.

*AWOCA* is the acronym used to describe the tactical communication technique used by Corrections staff for instructing prisoners. It includes ASKING or telling a prisoner what to do, explaining WHY it is necessary for the prisoner to comply, giving the prisoner OPTIONS, CONFIRMING that the prisoner understands, and ACTING by taking action. Each step in the AWOCA process is distinct, and no step is used without the prior step having been conducted.

*Body language techniques* refer to the safe body positions that must be used by prison staff when de-escalating prisoners to minimise the target they present to the prisoner. It includes foot position (one foot forward so the officer can easily move forwards and backwards), distance (out of strike range), standing in the triangle (standing to the side of the prisoner), hand position (in front with open palms), and maintaining visual contact and awareness of the prisoner.

*De-escalation* refers to the communication processes used to calm and reduce aggressive behaviour shown by a prisoner which include but are not limited to – active listening, giving feedback that indicates active engagement, asking not telling, use of appropriate tone of voice, paraphrasing, using open questions, agreeing with the statement, and acknowledging the reason for the anger.

*Trifle* refers to non-threatening physical contact.

## Outcomes and performance criteria

### Outcome 1

Use tactical decision-making processes in a prison environment.

#### Performance criteria

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|-------|---|
| 1.1   | Describe factors that must be taken into account when making tactical decisions in a prison.  |
| Range | includes but is not limited to – purpose, parameters of purpose, behaviour of prisoner, intensity of prisoner behaviour.  |
| 1.2   | Identify situational factors influencing tactical decision-making in a prison.  |
| Range | includes but is not limited to – physical surroundings, other prisoners in the immediate vicinity, positioning of self and other officers relative to subject and other prisoners in the vicinity, self-awareness, past experience, weapons, gangs. |
| 1.3   | Describe tactical decision-making options available to prison staff in a conflict situation.  |
| Range | de-escalate, disengage, delay, call back up, instruct and contain, instruct, non-threatening physical contact, planned use of force, spontaneous use of force.  |
| 1.4   | Use decision-making processes and provide a rationale for those decisions for three given scenarios.  |

**Outcome 2**

Use de-escalation techniques on a prisoner.

**Performance criteria**

2.1 Employ body language techniques that serve to de-escalate a prisoner.

Range feet position, distance, in the triangle, hand position, visual contact.

2.2 Employ communication skills that serve to de-escalate a prisoner.

Range active listening, open questions, feedback, asking not telling, reasonable and interested.

2.3 Employ other de-escalation techniques where appropriate to de-escalate a prisoner.

Range may include but is not limited to – reflecting the emotion, paraphrasing, agreeing with the statement, acknowledging the reason for anger.

2.4 Employ relevant techniques continually until prisoner is de-escalated.

**Outcome 3**

Demonstrate knowledge of, and apply, instruction techniques using AWOCA.

**Performance criteria**

3.1 Explain the five elements of AWOCA.

Range Ask, Why, Options, Confirm, Act.

3.2 Use AWOCA techniques to instruct a prisoner using clear, unambiguous, and instructing tone of voice and body language.

Range all techniques must be used in the correct order.

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<b>Planned review date</b>	31 December 2026
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**Status information and last date for assessment for superseded versions**

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	20 May 2011	31 December 2019
Revision	2	19 January 2012	31 December 2019
Review	3	15 September 2016	31 December 2024
Revision	4	25 July 2019	31 December 2024
Review	5	29 July 2021	N/A
Rollover	6	28 April 2022	N/A

**Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) reference**

0121

This CMR can be accessed at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/search/index.do>.

**Comments on this unit standard**

Please contact Toitu te Waiora Community, Health, Education and Social Services Workforce Development Council [qualifications@toitutewaiora.nz](mailto:qualifications@toitutewaiora.nz) if you wish to suggest changes to the content of this unit standard.