The Experiences of LGBTQ+ Professionals Working in Criminal Justice Organisations

Supervisors: Dr Matthew Jones, Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL)

The project aims to identify how LGBTQ+ individuals manage their professional gender and sexual identities within the criminal justice sector.

A body of literature has emerged that has identified how LGBTQ+ police officers manage and draw upon their gender identities in professional settings (e.g. Jones & Williams, 2015, Jones, 2015). This literature identifies the historical resistance of the police to LGBTQ+ employees on the grounds of cultural resistances within police organisations, but highlights how this has significantly improved over the last two decades due to a mix of internal and external factors. Particularly this new body of work highlights how post-millennial police officers now feel able to openly disclose their gender and sexual identities in the workplace and often draw upon them to enhance professional relationships and the service that they deliver.

Despite this nuanced insight into the professional experiences of LGBTQ+ Police officers, little is known about the professional experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals working in other criminal justice organisations e.g. Prisons, Probation, Criminal Courts and Crown Prosecution.

Applicants are encouraged to think independently and creatively in terms of how this topic could be addressed. However the project is likely to explore in relation to each organisation:

- Histories and key developments
- Organisational structures and cultures
- Inclusion and identity negotiation
- Professional networks
- Service delivery and professionalism

This project is inter-interdisciplinary in nature – drawing upon perspectives from Criminal Justice Studies, Organisational Studies, Sociology (including Gender and Sexualities Studies) and Law.

It is intended that the research will be a qualitatively driven mixed-method study.

Applicants are invited to outline how they would approach this topic as part of the selection process. As previously stated, please think creatively in terms of your proposed focus and research design.

About the supervisor:
Dr Matthew Jones is a Senior Lecturer and Teaching Director within the Open University Business School’s Centre for Policing Research and Learning. He is an interdisciplinary social scientist with expertise in policing; organisational studies, professional identities and contemporary intersections between sexualities, crime and criminal justice.
References:

