



College of
Policing

college.police.uk

BetterProfessionals[™]
forBetterPolicing

Developing and delivering an education qualification framework for policing

The College of Policing response to the consultation

December 2016



deliverer

police constable

8675

e
iceship

© College of Policing Limited (2016)

This publication (excluding all images and logos) is licensed under the terms of the Non-Commercial College Licence v1.1 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence visit http://www.college.police.uk/Legal/Documents/Non_Commercial_College_Licence.pdf

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available for download at <http://www.college.police.uk/qualifications>

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at contactus@college.pnn.police.uk

Contents

Foreword	03
1. Introduction	04
2. Executive summary	06
3. The consultation, College of Policing response, and next steps	08
4. Public consultation respondent characteristics	09
5. Consultation findings	10
5.1 Overall view of proposals	10
5.2 Proposal 1: Establishing a qualifications framework for policing, working in partnership with the higher education sector to set minimum education levels by practice or rank	11
The College's response to proposal 1	13
An education qualification framework for policing	14
5.3 Proposal 2: Developing opportunities for existing officers and staff to gain accredited and publicly recognised qualifications equivalent to their level of practice or rank	17
The College's response to proposal 2	18
5.4 Proposal 3: Developing initial entry routes which involve self-funded undergraduate programmes, police force-funded graduate conversion programmes for graduates in other disciplines and degree apprenticeships	20
The College's response to proposal 3	21
Appendix 1: Consultation questionnaire responses	23
Appendix 2: List of organisations responding to the consultation	26
Appendix 3: Level 3 and 6 descriptions	28
Appendix 4: Comparison of academic/education levels 5 and 6	29
Appendix 5: PEQF consultation questions	32

Foreword



The nature of police work has changed significantly. Cyber-enabled crime, and the need for officers and staff to investigate and gather intelligence online and via information technology, has increased. Protecting vulnerable people has rightly become a high priority for policing. Officers and staff now spend more of their time working to prevent domestic abuse, monitor high-risk sex offenders and protect at-risk children.

We recognise that the strengths of policing include its accessibility as a career to people of all backgrounds and it being a vocation. We want to preserve these strengths while ensuring that the increasingly complex activities undertaken by those working in policing are properly recognised. It is also important to promote consistent and high standards of service for the public.

The proposals laid out in the consultation undertaken earlier this year explained how the Policing Education Qualifications Framework will allow the recognition and accreditation of the skills and experience of those working in policing. The consultation also described how the work will raise education standards and establish the foundations of the policing profession.

The response rate to the consultation was one of the highest ever received by the College and I am grateful to all who took the time to provide feedback. I was particularly pleased to see so many respondents volunteering to take part in additional focus groups to help shape these proposals further.

Having considered this feedback, we have amended the proposals to better reflect the wishes of our members and other stakeholders. The College Board has considered these updated proposals and agreed that the College should take them forward, subject to some additional work to ensure implementation timescales are realistic and achievable.

We will continue to engage across policing and beyond to ensure these proposals are delivered to the benefit of our members, the wider service and the public.

Alex Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

1 Introduction

The College of Policing was established in 2012 as the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. The College supports all those working in policing with developing the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust. The College has three complementary functions:

- **knowledge** – we develop the research and infrastructure for improving evidence of ‘what works’
- **education** – we set educational requirements to assure the public of the quality and consistency of policing skills and we facilitate the academic accreditation and recognition of our members’ expertise
- **standards** – we draw on the best available evidence of ‘what works’ to set standards in policing for forces and individuals.

In February 2016, the College proposed introducing a Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). The PEQF is seen by the College as a key step toward establishing policing as a profession and is intended to support the professional development of those working in policing.



Consultation and engagement on the proposals with members and key stakeholders were important in helping to develop and inform our approach. A public consultation was conducted between 2 February and 29 March 2016 that sought views on establishing an education qualification framework that would introduce a national, standardised framework of recognised and accredited qualifications in England and Wales.

The consultation sought views on proposals that would have initial implications for police officer ranks and thereafter would address specialist and policing-related staff roles – primarily those for which no equivalent framework exists outside policing and where a formal externally accredited qualification is considered necessary. Specifically, the consultation presented three key proposals:

1. Establishing a qualifications framework for policing, working in partnership with the higher education (HE) sector to set minimum education levels by practice or rank.
2. Developing opportunities for existing officers and staff to gain accredited and publicly recognised qualifications equivalent to their level of practice or rank.
3. Developing initial entry routes which involve self-funded undergraduate programmes, police force-funded graduate conversion programmes for graduates in other disciplines and degree apprenticeships.

The consultation resulted in 3,045 individual responses and 52 responses from organisations. 47 respondents participated as volunteers in focus groups to discuss responses in more detail.

This paper presents the key findings of the consultation and outlines the College's response and next steps regarding each of the proposals.

2 Executive Summary

The consultation found the majority of respondents, just under two thirds, agreed there should be a national framework of accredited qualifications. In contrast, just over half disagreed there should be minimum qualifications to obtain roles. Nearly three quarters of respondents in policing were interested in gaining accreditation. While the majority supported national consistency in entry routes, respondents' views were mixed regarding the proposed options, and the qualification levels relevant to constable and superintending ranks. Just under half were in favour of the proposals overall, compared to just under a third who were opposed and just over a fifth undecided.

Concerns raised included:

- specific concerns regarding the potential impact on achieving a representative police service through limiting access to some candidates
- perceptions that experience and practical skills were more important indicators of having the necessary skills for policing than a degree
- perceived disadvantages for some officers regarding increased financial and time commitments to achieve educational qualifications.

The findings from the consultation activity were discussed with the College of Policing Board and revised proposals were developed on this basis. These were presented to and agreed by the College Board in September 2016. The appropriate timing for implementation was agreed to need further work in consultation with chief officers and others.

The updated proposals are outlined in more detail in this paper and include important changes intended to mitigate the concerns expressed by respondents. The changes include:

- a revised version of the framework that draws more heavily on a model of apprenticeships, offering a sound educational approach as well as an attractive funding mechanism for most forces and individuals
- a significant change in emphasis to work-based learning as the main route to achieving education levels, with these levels required for confirmation in post, and not as a prerequisite to appointment or promotion as previously proposed

- qualifications provided through learning programmes which support individuals through work-based professional development of knowledge, skills and competencies as they perform the new role
- developing a PC degree apprenticeship that has the potential to broaden applications and attract people who may not have previously considered a career in policing – the opportunity to earn while learning and have a degree qualification fully funded presents the opportunity for a diverse range of potential applicants
- recognising the need to engage forces to agree and define an appropriate timescale for full national implementation of the proposals.

The consultation found majority support for proposals regarding existing officers and staff. The College will take these forward by creating mechanisms to support serving officers and staff in gaining recognition for previous learning and experience and achieving accredited qualifications. The College will also continue to engage and consult with policing and partner stakeholders throughout this programme of work and wider implementation of the framework.

3 The consultation, College of Policing response, and next steps

The public consultation asked 12 specific questions, see **Appendix 5**. Responses could be made through an online questionnaire published on the College website or in writing to the College. Feedback was welcomed from individuals and organisations.

In addition, four focus groups explored views expressed on the proposals in greater depth. The groups were composed of 47 respondents, all of whom were or had been police officers or staff. The participants were all volunteers who had indicated in their response to the public consultation that they would be interested in being involved in further discussions about the proposals.



4 Public consultation respondent characteristics

Individual responses

- There were 3,045 responses from individuals to the consultation, although not all respondents answered all questions. The numbers and percentages presented in this paper refer to those responding to each individual question, rather than to the consultation as whole. Percentages have been rounded throughout the document and may not always equal 100.
- Just over three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) were serving police officers. The next largest group were police staff (17 per cent).

Organisational responses

- 52 organisations responded to the consultation: 40 via the online questionnaire and 12 submitted a written response.
- A number of forces sent joint responses. Email submissions did not follow the questionnaire format and the amount of information included in each email varied considerably. This meant it was sometimes difficult to gauge the level of support for the individual consultation questions. It was, however, possible to establish the level of support for each of the three proposals.
- Responding organisations included 24 police forces, 5 offices of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC), 7 policing stakeholders, 14 higher education institutions (HEIs) and 2 'other' organisations.



5 Consultation findings

Overall view of proposals

- Those in favour of the proposals overall made up the largest proportion of the respondents (46 per cent). A third (32 per cent) were opposed and just over a fifth (21 per cent) were undecided.
- The majority of organisations responding across the consultation were in favour of the proposals (38 out of 52). One organisation (a force) was opposed, and the remaining 13 were undecided, offered mixed views or were unclear in their response. Of the 24 police forces that responded, 19 were in favour, one was opposed and four were undecided, offered mixed views or were unclear in their response.
- Overall, 11 out of the 14 HEIs were in favour, two were undecided and one provided mixed or unclear views towards PEQF overall. Four HEIs felt that the proposals should go further and that external accreditation for existing officers should be mandatory.
- HEIs expressed the view that cognitive reasoning, problem solving and analytical skills, which arise out of degree-level qualifications, would provide the modern-day constable with the skills to deal with the complex and challenging nature of policing. A view that accreditation could renew the confidence of officers to conduct their roles effectively in an era of intense accountability was also offered. They noted that accreditation was an important part of any professional body and would make policing comparable with other professions.

Proposal 1: Establishing a qualifications framework for policing, working in partnership with the higher education sector to set minimum education levels by practice or rank

Qualifications at national level 6 are relevant to the constable role

- Individual respondents had mixed views on whether the level 6 description is relevant to the role of constable. 42 per cent of all respondents agreed, compared with 48 per cent who disagreed. The remaining 10 per cent were undecided. See **Appendix 3** for the level 3 and 6 descriptions used in the consultation.
- Written feedback raised concerns from some respondents in relation to whether a degree was a good indicator of having the necessary skills for policing, the importance of experience and practical skills and the potential impact on workforce diversity.
- Participants in the focus groups felt the complexity of modern policing and decision making justified the relevance of the level 6 qualification. Participants in one group, however, thought that response officers, or those policing the night-time economy, were operating at level 3.
- The majority of policing organisations completing the online questionnaire were in agreement (15 agreed, four disagreed and seven undecided). 13 of 19 forces agreed with the relevance of the statement, with only one opposed.

Qualifications at national level 7 are relevant to the superintendent role

- Individual respondents had mixed views on whether the level 7 description was relevant to the role of superintendent, with 45 per cent of respondents agreeing, 36 per cent disagreeing and 18 per cent undecided. Among the small proportion of superintendents who responded, there was a strong level of support, with 24 out of 30 agreeing the description was relevant, five disagreeing and one undecided.
- Where there was disagreement, written feedback suggests this was because respondents felt the superintendent's role should be based on practical experience in policing in a variety of roles over several years and that a degree is not needed to do the superintendent job.
- The focus groups did not explore the relevance of the level 7 statement in the same depth as that for constables, but when mentioned, there was general agreement that superintendents were operating at level 7.
- The majority of policing organisations completing the questionnaire were in favour (15 out of 26), including 13 out of 19 forces. Three policing organisations (including one force) were opposed and eight were undecided.

There should be minimum education qualification levels for each rank or level of practice in policing

- Just over half the individual respondents disagreed with the statement that there should be minimum education qualification levels for each rank or level (56 per cent), while one third agreed (33 per cent) and 11 per cent were undecided.
- Similar concerns around the importance of practical experience and diversity were raised by individuals providing written feedback.
- These views were echoed in the focus groups, where there was some uncertainty about the relevance of degree-level qualifications for policing.
- Although most organisations completing the questionnaire were in favour (14 out of 26), six organisations disagreed and six were undecided. Written responses raised questions around how the proposal would work in practice and, in particular, how the ranks between constable and superintendent would fit in the framework.



The College's response to proposal 1

The College recognised the lack of support for minimum education qualification levels for each rank or level of practice in policing. The College has therefore proposed a revised PEQF which specifies the minimum education levels that will be required for confirmation in post at each organisational level or rank. This change represents an important shift in emphasis from the original proposal that qualification should be a prerequisite to appointment or promotion. The only exception would be to require a level 7 qualification as a prerequisite for entry to the Strategic Command Course (SCC).

Each respective qualification now represents the learning programme that will support individuals in gaining the knowledge, skills and competencies required to perform the new role. With the exception of the pre-join degree in policing, the cost of all required learning will be met by the police force, with no expense incurred by the individual.

There were split views among individual respondents to the consultation about the relevance of level 6 qualifications to the role of police constable, with stronger support from forces and other policing stakeholders, including chief constables. Taking into account the support for qualifications as professional development rather than prerequisites for entry, and the shift in the proposals to match, the College determined they should continue to develop educational requirements that meet the level 6 standard.

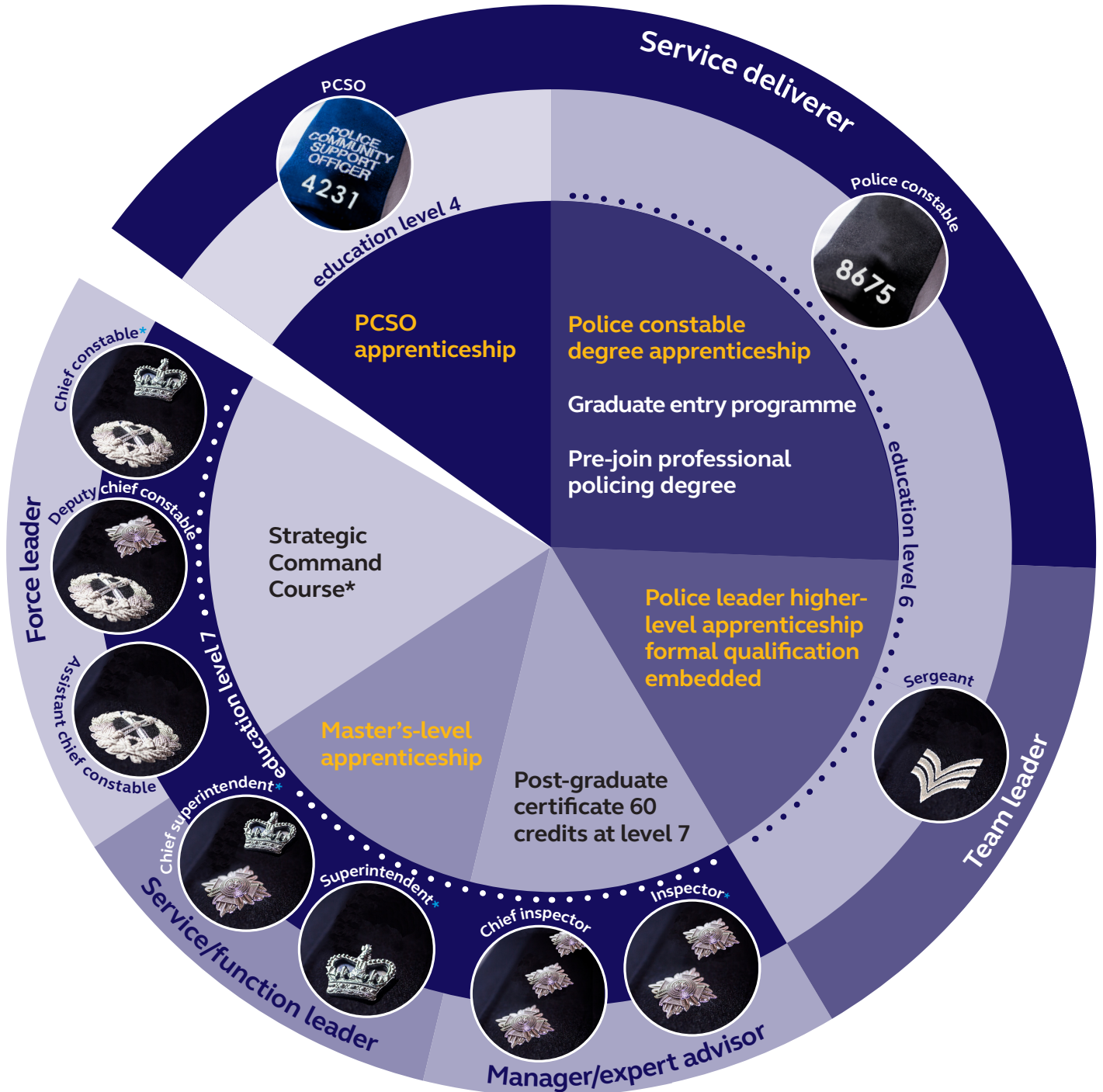
Accounting for the concern around impact on diversity, apprenticeships also feature heavily in the revised proposal, as the model offers a sound educational approach as well as an attractive funding mechanism for forces and individuals. The enhanced use of degree and higher level apprenticeships also mitigates concerns expressed that the costs incurred to obtain qualifications might affect policing's ability to secure a diverse and representative workforce. It thus encourages engagement from individuals who might otherwise be unable to afford education at the proposed levels.

The planned introduction of the government apprenticeship levy from April 2017, announced post-completion of this consultation, also now carries implications for the effective use of police funds and resources. The PEQF offers opportunities for forces under financial pressure to maximise the use of apprenticeships and associated qualifications at key organisational levels.

Any qualifications related to specialist and/or policing-specific staff roles will be considered and developed in due course.

The proposed framework has been aligned with activity being conducted as part of the Leadership Review on organisational structure. This indicates it is possible to define five broad levels within a police force – from force leadership through to service deliverer. The 'names' or descriptive titles of the five organisational levels, as indicated in the below diagram, are reflective of need to be relevant for and inclusive of police officer and police staff roles. The current police rank structure and associated educational level and qualifications have therefore been aligned to these five organisational levels.

An education qualification framework for policing



* The minimum prerequisite qualification eligibility for appointment to chief officer role will be level 7 master's. For all other roles, the level signifies the education standard/qualification achieved on completing the education programme required for confirmation in post.

* Direct Entry route ■ Apprenticeship

This framework will be expanded on to incorporate police staff and specials at a later date, to reflect everyone working in policing.

In summary, the PEQF will:

- Require all new constables to hold a level 6 degree qualification by the end of their probationary period. This can be achieved via one of three designated routes: pre-entry (via a professionally oriented degree), completing a conversion programme for graduates in other academic disciplines or successfully completing the PC degree apprenticeship.
- Support all newly promoted sergeants in successfully completing a 12-month higher level apprenticeship (with a professional level 6 leadership and management-focused accredited qualification embedded) in order to be confirmed in post following promotion. This approach will replace the existing level 4 qualification that forms stage 4 of the National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) for sergeants.
- Support all newly promoted inspectors in achieving a post-graduate certificate (level 7) qualification with a core focus on leadership and management in order to be confirmed in post following promotion. As above, this approach will replace the existing level 5 qualification that forms stage 4 of the NPPF for inspectors.
- Support all newly promoted superintendents with completing a master's apprenticeship (level 7) in order to be confirmed in post.
- It will become a requirement to hold a level 7 qualification as a prerequisite for entry to the SCC. The SCC will be reviewed and there is potential for the revised programme to have credits towards a professional doctorate programme (level 8).



Next steps

The College will introduce the revised qualifications framework for policing, working in partnership with the HE sector to set education levels by practice or rank.

On 28 September 2016, the College of Policing Board formally approved the education levels and qualifications as outlined. The Board requested that further modelling and consultation should take place with chief constables and police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to explore what a reasonable timeframe for implementation might be, given the workforce planning, cost and infrastructure implications and challenges for forces.

We recognise that implementing the full proposals will necessitate considerable further activity in several key areas and over a protracted period of time. Examples of this include developing new qualifications, providing support to forces and HE partners to enable them to establish and develop effective partnerships, for forces to be able to consider and review approaches to workforce planning and resourcing and for negotiating and amending any relevant police regulations.

The College will continue to engage the police service and partners in the above work and in developing appropriate qualifications at each level in order to support forces in their transition to the new model of working.

The first qualifications (linked to the PC degree apprenticeship) are planned to be available from April 2018 for forces seeking early adoption.

Although originally proposed for 2020, the College will conduct further engagement with forces before confirming the indicative date by which all will be required to have implemented all elements of the framework.

Proposal 2: Developing opportunities for existing officers and staff to gain accredited and publicly recognised qualifications equivalent to their level of practice or rank

There should be a national, standardised framework of recognised and accredited qualifications for policing

- Overall, there was strong support from individual respondents. Around two-thirds (64 per cent) agreed there should be national framework of recognised and accredited qualifications for policing, 23 per cent were opposed and 13 per cent were undecided.
- Individuals providing written feedback supported the opportunity for officers to achieve publicly recognised and accredited qualifications and felt that a formalised, clear structured path is necessary for progression and development in policing. Those who disagreed suggested that having qualifications is not/ should not be used as an indicator of having the right skills for the job.
- Policing organisations responding by questionnaire were also in favour (24 out of 26) of a national, standardised framework for recognising and accrediting policing. They raised some concerns about funding accreditation, however, and possible absence from the workplace to study.

The College should develop a non-mandatory mechanism by which officers and staff can be externally accredited for their existing skills and expertise

- A majority (71 per cent) of individual respondents thought that the College should develop a non-mandatory accreditation mechanism, with 16 per cent disagreeing and 14 per cent undecided.
- There was also strong support from policing organisations (23 out of 26), with several commenting that accreditation was a vehicle for acknowledging the skills and abilities of serving officers.

Interest in gaining externally recognised accreditation

- A majority (74 per cent) of officers, staff and special constables reported that they would be interested in gaining externally recognised accreditation, with 15 per cent disagreeing and 12 per cent undecided.
- The written feedback suggested that respondents felt having recognition of their skills and experience would be beneficial. Some, however, felt this opportunity would not be relevant to them as they already had a degree or recognised professional qualification. There were also concerns about costs and funding for qualifications.
- While there was strong interest in accreditation within the focus groups, time and cost were also seen as factors that might limit take up.

The College's response to proposal 2

This proposal received the most positive reception from respondents to the public consultation, reinforcing feedback received from those officers and staff signing up for membership of the College as soon as it became possible, who wanted opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications.

Many officers and staff who provide an excellent service throughout their policing career and develop high-level skills and competencies leave with very little to show for it in terms of externally recognised and transferable qualifications.

This proposal introduces a means for serving officers and staff to gain accreditation for previous learning and experience in the form of academic credits that could be used as recognised prior learning (RPL) to a nationally consistent level toward academic qualifications offered by HEIs.

While it is likely that individuals will need to complete further work in order to achieve a qualification, this work to establish the recognition of RPL will form an important step in making it possible.

Next steps

Work has already commenced to progress this proposal and the College is working in close partnership with HE partners to develop a nationally agreed matrix of level and credit values for all learning programmes within the National Policing Curriculum (NPC) that are considered eligible for RPL in an HE context.

The initial priority will centre on allocating indicative level and credit values for sergeant and inspector qualifications, followed by other key accredited programmes (eg, the current diploma in policing) prior to considering other major NPC programmes that are not currently accredited.

The agreed levels and credits will be presented in a directory of available education opportunities covering all core police officer and staff roles, to be published from April 2017. This will also outline the level and number of credits that may be given in respect of on-the-job experience.

Further information in the directory will include details of HEIs offering qualifications, together with guidance on how to access such opportunities and any available funding sources, as well as a standard application process.

The College will initiate further work to explore funding opportunities to support those in the existing workforce who choose to achieve these qualifications.

Proposal 3: Developing initial entry routes which involve self-funded undergraduate programmes, police force-funded graduate conversion programmes for graduates in other disciplines and degree apprenticeships

There should be multiple entry routes into policing at constable level

- Overall, individual respondents had split views as to whether there should be multiple routes into policing. 45 per cent agreed, 40 per cent disagreed and 15 per cent were undecided.
- Written feedback suggested that those who disagreed had concerns about the effect on workforce diversity and felt that all recruits should go through one training route, regardless of education.
- These concerns were also reflected in the focus groups, where there were positive views on the degree apprenticeship but reservations towards both alternative degree entry routes.
- A majority (23 out of 26) of policing organisations agreed that there should be multiple entry routes into policing at constable level, however, views were mixed as to whether this would increase or decrease workforce diversity. In relation to degree entry, some forces and policing organisations used their feedback to emphasise the need for any level 6 qualifications to have a substantial practical and vocational element.

Entry routes should be consistent across all forces

- There was strong support for entry routes to be consistent across all forces, with 90 per cent of all individual respondents agreeing, 5 per cent disagreeing and 5 per cent undecided.
- Written comments reflected strong agreement that consistency is needed across all forces and suggested that consistency would make forces more professional, maintain standards, support a fair recruitment process and support officers with moving between forces.
- The majority (23 out of 26) policing organisations also agreed. There were some concerns that the proposals could make recruitment more difficult and that consistent entry routes could reduce forces' flexibility to recruit quickly if all recruits required a degree.

The College's response to proposal 3

This proposal received a split response through the public consultation, although there was strong support for national consistency. Engagement with forces showed existing multiple initial entry routes into policing, one of which was already set at level 6 (Police Now). There was also support during the consultation for apprenticeship schemes.

Since the consultation, the government has announced the new apprenticeship levy. The College, as the professional body, agreed to coordinate the development of an apprenticeship option for entry into policing. A comprehensive consultation with the employer group confirmed level 6 as the appropriate apprenticeship level for police officers. In June 2016, having been briefed on these developments and the initial consultation findings, the College of Policing Board approved the early development of a degree apprenticeship for police constables. More recently, the College Board has agreed the standard for the multiple entry routes should be set at a consistent educational standard, ensuring police officers reach level 6 qualification.

The College has been working with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (latterly) and the Department for Education (currently) and forces in the employer-led Trailblazer group, now comprising 37 Home Office forces, to develop the degree apprenticeship.

As identified earlier, the College recognises concerns that requiring potential applicants to self-fund a degree before they can join could deter potential applicants and may particularly disadvantage those from low-paid backgrounds.

The degree apprenticeship entry route not only mitigates such concerns, but also has the potential to broaden applications and attract people to a career in policing who may not have previously considered it. The opportunity to earn while learning and to have a degree qualification fully funded presents an appealing option for a diverse range of potential applicants.

Developing the degree apprenticeship inevitably also informs the associated degree specification on which a national entry level pre-join professional policing degree might be based. The College of Policing will maintain ownership of the core content of the degree specification in order to ensure national consistency in delivery and offer reassurance that appropriate quality assurance principles are in place. We will also be collaborating with partners to develop a graduate programme for candidates holding non-policing degree qualifications at level 6 to offer police specific learning.

Next steps

Further detailed engagement and consultation with forces is planned prior to full implementation of this proposal.

For reasons outlined above, working with forces and HE partners on developing a degree apprenticeship for police constables remains our initial priority. We are currently working with our partners to develop the relevant standard and assessment requirements and are planning events to support the introduction of this entry route, intended to be available from April 2018.



Appendix 1 Consultation questionnaire responses

1. Respondent characteristics

Individual responses

Table 1. Professional background of the respondents

Professional background	N (%)
Police officer	2302 (76%)
Police staff	513 (17%)
Other	223 (8%)
No answer entered	7 (0%)
Total	3045 (100%)

Table 2. Length of service of respondents (officers and staff only)

Length of service	Officers N (%)	Staff N (%)
0 - 4 years	153 (7%)	111 (22%)
5 - 9 years	335 (15%)	138 (27%)
10 - 14 years	606 (26%)	133 (26%)
15 - 19 years	444 (19%)	44 (9%)
20+ years	735 (32%)	80 (16%)
Prefer not to say	15 (1%)	3 (1%)
Total	2288 (100%)	509 (100%)

Table 3. Ethnicity of respondents (officers and staff only)

Ethnicity	Officers N (%)	Staff N (%)
White	2099 (95%)	469 (95%)
All other ethnic groups	114 (5%)	24 (5%)
Total	2213 (100%)	493 (100%)

Table 4. Age of respondents (officers and staff only)

Age	Officers N (%)	Staff N (%)
Under 18	1 (0%)	4 (1%)
18 - 24	33 (1%)	28 (6%)
25 - 34	495 (22%)	123 (24%)
35 - 44	925 (40%)	98 (19%)
45 - 54	765 (33%)	158 (31%)
55+	35 (1%)	83 (16%)
Prefer not to say or no answer provided	35 (2%)	14 (3%)
Total	2289 (100%)	508 (100%)

Table 5. Current highest level of education qualification of respondents (officers and staff only)

Level of education	Officers N (%)	Staff N (%)
Master's and above	262 (11%)	70 (14%)
Full degree (eg, BA, BSc)	673 (29%)	169 (33%)
Foundation degree (combined academic study and workplace learning)	103 (5%)	23 (5%)
Diploma	228 (10%)	62 (12%)
Certificate	135 (6%)	30 (6%)
A-level	389 (17%)	76 (15%)
GCSE	383 (17%)	60 (12%)
None	35 (2%)	8 (2%)
Prefer not to say	75 (3%)	9 (2%)
Total	2283 (100%)	507 (100%)

Organisation responses

Table 6. Organisational responses by type (questionnaire and email responses)

A number of police forces submitted joint responses. This meant that, while 24 forces are represented in the figures, this came from 17 responses to the consultation. One response included under 'police forces' was a joint submission from a constabulary and OPCC.

	Overall	Police forces	OPCCs	Policing stakeholders	HEI	Other
Online questionnaire	40	19	4	3	13	1
Emailed responses	12	5	1	4	1	1
Total	52	24	5	7	14	2

Appendix 2 List of organisations responding to the consultation

Name of organisation	Sector	Submitted
Constabulary		
Avon and Somerset	Force	Emailed
Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire	Force	Online
British Transport Police	Force	Online
Cheshire Constabulary and the PCC for Cheshire	Force	Emailed
Civil Nuclear Constabulary	Force	Emailed
Cumbria	Force	Online
Derbyshire	Force	Online
Humberside and South Yorkshire	Force	Online
Kent	Force	Online
Lancashire	Force	Online
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire	Force	Online
Metropolitan Police Service	Force	Emailed
Norfolk and Suffolk	Force	Online
North Wales	Force	Online
South Wales	Force	Emailed
Surrey and Sussex	Force	Online
The City of London	Force	Online
Police and crime commissioners		
Dorset PCC	PCC	Online
OPCC for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	PCC	Online
OPCC for Northamptonshire Police	PCC	Online
OPCC for West Yorkshire	PCC	Emailed
South Yorkshire PCC	PCC	Online

Policing stakeholders		
Essex Police Federation	Policing Stakeholder	Online
Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales	Policing Stakeholder	Online
Police Scotland	Policing Stakeholder	Online
Police Now	Policing Stakeholder	Emailed
National Crime Agency	Policing Stakeholder	Emailed
London Assembly Police and Crime Committee	Policing Stakeholder	Emailed
Police Federation of England and Wales	Policing Stakeholder	Emailed
Higher education institution		
Bournemouth University	HEI	Online
Institute of Policing University of Chester	HEI	Online
Liverpool Centre for Advanced Policing Studies	HEI	Online
London Metropolitan University	HEI	Online
Nottingham Trent University	HEI	Online
Open University	HEI	Emailed
Plymouth University	HEI	Online
Staffordshire University	HEI	Online
The Training Foundation	HEI	Online
University of Brighton	HEI	Online
University of Central Lancashire	HEI	Online
University of Gloucestershire	HEI	Online
University of Lincoln	HEI	Online
University of South Wales, Police Sciences	HEI	Online
Other		
Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission	Other Public Sector	Emailed
Police Actions Lawyers Group	Private Sector	Online

Appendix 3 Level 3 and 6 descriptions

	Level 3	Level 6
Problem solving	Apply established approaches to solving well-defined problems and show emerging recognition of the complexity of associated issues	Apply transferable skills and problem-solving strategies to a range of situations and to solve complex problems and exercise personal judgement in a range of situations
Personal responsibility and decision making	Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring some self-directed activity with broad guidance and evaluation and responsibility for quality of output	Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility and decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts

Adapted from QAA (2014) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards*. Gloucester: QAA.

Appendix 4 Comparison of academic/education levels 5 and 6

LEVEL 5 CRITERIA	LEVEL 6 CRITERIA	COMMENTS – why 6 not 5
<p>Foundation degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study • ability to apply and evaluate key concepts and theories within and outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, applying those principles in an employment context • knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study 	<p>Bachelor’s degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a systematic and conceptual understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquiring current and detailed knowledge of their discipline (University Qualification & Level Descriptors, appendix 2, June 2015) • an ability to select and apply appropriate techniques of analysis and enquiry within their discipline • conceptual understanding that enables the student to critically engage in and comment upon particular aspects of current statutory regulations, research, contemporary issues, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline 	<p>An analysis and comparison of level 5 to level 6 demonstrates that the key skills deemed necessary for the PC role clearly fit the level 6 profile. The highlighted text in the level 6 column indicates where the differentiation and higher-level skills associated with level 6 are evident.</p> <p>Policing increasingly requires its professionals to think critically, reflect and deliberate effectively, exercise judgement, solve complex problems, challenge accepted norms, contribute to the evolving evidence base, work with a high degree of autonomy, communicate effectively and make decisions independently.</p> <p>The criteria in level 6 match those requirements, while level 5 only partially meets those requirements and falls short in a number of key areas.</p> <p>The following examples illustrate the differences and highlight why level 6 is the appropriate level:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences their analysis and interpretations based on that knowledge. <p>Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select and use a range of subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills, enabling problem-solving strategies in the field of study and in generating ideas • effectively communicate information and arguments in a variety of forms and apply key techniques of the discipline effectively • reflect on personal and/or workplace experience in the light of recent scholarship and current statutory regulations (where appropriate). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an appreciation of complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity in their discipline(s) • the ability to manage their own learning and professional practice (as appropriate). <p>Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critically review and evaluate concepts and evidence from a range of sources • apply transferable skills and problem-solving strategies to a range of situations and to solve complex problems • exercise personal judgement in a range of situations appropriate to their programme of study • communicate solutions, arguments and ideas clearly in a variety of forms • critically reflect and analyse personal and/or workplace experience in the light of recent scholarship and current statutory regulations. 	<p>Level 5 refers to ‘some personal responsibility and decision making’, whereas level 6 descriptors refer to ‘exercising initiative and personal responsibility’ and to ‘decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts’. This is an important difference – a PC will need to exercise initiative, take full (not some) personal responsibility and make decisions independently in complex and unpredictable contexts. It is therefore paramount that we equip and prepare officers to be able to operate at this higher level.</p> <p>There is a much stronger and appropriate focus in level 6 on critical analysis, enquiry, research and advanced scholarship which will be essential in ensuring that officers can undertake research, review the evidence of ‘what works’ and operate with a high degree of professional discretion. A level 6 qualification is thus necessary to facilitate and embed the evidence-based approach to policing advocated by the College.</p> <p>In terms of problem solving, level 6 criteria refer to an ability to solve complex problems. Police officers will be faced with complex problems and in challenging circumstances. Level 5 criteria only refer to enabling problem-solving strategies. This is not sufficient for the role. PCs will need to be able to apply their knowledge and skills to solve complex problems in challenging and unpredictable contexts.</p> <p>The National Policing vision 2020 states that by 2020 ‘policing will be a profession...’</p>
---	---	---

<p>And will normally have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and life requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and decision making and determining and achieving personal outcomes • the ability to undertake appropriate further learning of a professional or equivalent nature. 	<p>And will normally have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and life requiring exercising initiative and personal responsibility, decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts and the ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional nature. 	<p>A level 6 qualification aligns policing more closely to other professions and is the level of qualification generally associated with professional status. Police officers and staff will increasingly work alongside professionals from social services, probation, environmental health, the CPS, and the NHS. These professions have introduced level 6 qualifications as part of modernising and developing their profession in recognition of the increasing complexity of the work involved.</p> <p>Setting the standard at level 6 will help professionalise the service and future proof police education and training to meet the future challenges and increasing complexity of policing.</p>
---	---	--

Appendix 5 PEQF consultation questions

Introduction

The College of Policing is seeking views on its proposed introduction of a Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). This framework will allow the existing skills of police officers and staff to be accredited by a trusted external academic provider and shape the future development of entry routes into policing.

The document ‘Policing Education Qualifications Framework: Consultation’ explains the reasoning behind the introduction of a PEQF. You can download this document from the College website by clicking the link below.

This questionnaire offers the opportunity for respondents to contribute views that will shape its development of the PEQF. The College welcomes views from anyone with an interest in this area including those within policing, academia and the public.

The College will analyse all feedback from this consultation before publishing a consolidated response on its website, but will not reply to respondents on an individual basis. The feedback received will inform our decisions on any future development and implementation of the proposals.

Thank you for your feedback.

You can download the document here: <http://www.college.policing.uk/peqf>

Background questions

Are you responding to this consultation as:

- an individual? **Go to route A**
- on behalf of an organisation? **Go to route B**

Route A – individual respondent

Before we take you to the consultation questions, it would be helpful to know a little about your background.

This information will help us develop a better understanding of the views of different groups.

A1 Which of these categories best describes your background?

- police officer **go to question A1a**
- police staff **go to question A1b**
- special constable **go to question A1c**
- higher or further education staff **go to question A1d**
- member of the public **go to question A1e**
- other [specify] **go to question A2**

A1a1 How long have you been a serving police officer?

- 0-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 20+ years
- prefer not to say.

A1a2 What is your current rank?

- police constable
- sergeant
- inspector
- chief inspector
- superintendent
- chief superintendent
- chief officer
- prefer not to say.

A1b How long have you worked as a member of police staff?

- 0-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 20+ years
- prefer not to say.

A1c1 How long have you been a special constable?

- 0-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 20+ years
- prefer not to say.

A1c2 Are you considering a career as a regular police officer?

- Yes **go to question A1c3**
- No **go to question A2**

A1c3 Would the requirement to study for a degree before becoming a regular police officer have an impact on your decision to proceed with an application?

- Already have a degree qualification or equivalent
- Requirement for a degree would make a career in policing more attractive
- Requirement for a degree would make a career in policing be less attractive
- No impact/effect.

A1d Please describe your current involvement with policing as a higher or further education professional, eg, do you teach current serving officers and staff? Do you study areas such as policing or criminology, etc?

A1e1 Are you considering a career in policing?

- Yes **go to question A1e2**
- No **go to question A2**

A1e2 Would the requirement to study for a degree before joining the police service have an impact on your decision to proceed with an application?

- Already have a degree qualification or equivalent
- Requirement for a degree would make a career in policing more attractive
- Requirement for a degree would make a career in policing be less attractive
- No impact/effect.

A2 What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+
- prefer not to say.

A3 What is your ethnic group?

Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background:

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other white background.

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background.

Asian/Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background.

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background.

Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group, please describe.

A4 What is the current highest level of education qualification you have achieved or are studying towards?

- master's and above
- full degree (for example BA, BSc)
- foundation degree (combined academic study and workplace learning)
- diploma
- certificate
- A-level
- GCSE
- none
- prefer not to say.

Route B – organisational response

Before we take you to the consultation questions, it would be helpful to know a little about your organisation. This information will help us develop a better understanding of the views of different groups who respond to this consultation.

B1 What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?

B2 What sector is your organisation based in?

- policing **go to Core consultation questions**
- higher or further education **go to B2a**
- other public sector **go to B2b**
- private sector **go to B2b**
- third sector/charity **go to B2b**
- other (please specify) **go to B2b**

B2a Please briefly describe your organisation's current involvement with policing as a higher or further education provider.

B2b Please briefly describe your organisation's current involvement with policing.

Core consultation questions

You will now be asked for your views on the College's key proposals as set out in the paper 'Policing Education Qualifications Framework: Consultation.' You can download this document from the College of Policing website by clicking on the link below.

We are interested in whether you agree or disagree with the key proposals, as well as understanding the reasons for your views. The survey includes 12 questions, with opportunity to provide comments with your answers. It should take between 10 to 20 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your interest in this consultation, we appreciate your feedback.

You can download the document here: <http://www.college.police.uk/peqf>

Proposal 1 – The establishment of a qualifications framework for policing.

Qualifications at national Level 6 (equivalent to graduate) suit employment requiring people to apply knowledge, transferable skills, problem-solving and personal judgement in complex and unpredictable contexts.

(Adapted from UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2014))

1.1 This description is relevant to the constable role.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Please provide any further comments you may have below:				

Qualifications at national Level 7 (equivalent to master's) suit employment requiring high level specialist knowledge and the creation of original responses to complicated and unpredictable problems and situations.

(Adapted from UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2014))

1.2 This description is relevant to the superintendent role.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Please provide any further comments you may have below:				

1.3 There should be minimum education qualification levels for each rank or level of practice in policing.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Please provide any further comments you may have below:				

Proposal 2 – The development of opportunities for existing officers and staff to gain accredited and publicly recognised qualifications equivalent to their level of practice or rank.

Professions support their members and help assure the public that discretion is exercised appropriately by setting clear conditions of membership, including meeting an educational standard verified by nationally recognised qualifications. Policing does not currently set education levels for roles or ranks which reflect the skills and knowledge required to meet current and future challenges.

2.1 There should be a national, standardised framework of recognised and accredited qualifications for policing.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any further comments you may have below:

2.2 The College should develop a non-mandatory mechanism by which officers and staff can be externally accredited for their existing skills and expertise.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any further comments you may have below:

[2.3 is to be answered police officers, police staff or special constables only]

2.3 I would be interested in gaining externally recognised accreditation for my existing skills and expertise if I had the opportunity.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any further comments you may have below:

Proposal 3 – Entry routes.

3.1 There should be multiple entry routes into policing at constable level, for example: via vocationally focused degrees, graduate conversion courses, or higher level apprenticeships.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	-----------	----------	-------------------

Please provide any further comments you may have below:

3.2 Entry routes into policing should be consistent across all forces.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	-----------	----------	-------------------

Please provide any further comments you may have below:

Overview – the education qualifications framework for policing.

4.1 Overall, how would you describe your opinion of the proposals to develop an education qualifications framework?

Strongly in favour						Strongly opposed
1	2	3	4	5	6	

4.2 Please outline any other issues you would like raise about the proposals, along with any ideas for action the College could take in relation to these issues.

4.3 If relevant, please outline the main benefits you think an education qualification framework will offer policing, along with any ideas for action the College could take to maximise these benefits.

4.4 Please outline any further information you think people might find helpful in relation to the consultation proposals.

Final screen

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation. If you have any further comments you would like to make about the consultation, please provide them below.

About the College

We're the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. Our purpose is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust.

college.police.uk



Follow us

@CollegeofPolice #betterpolicing

college.police.uk/qualifications