



Partnership Working

18 months ago, the Home Office stated that each police force needed to deliver the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) to for student officers based on the 22 National Occupational Standards.

The IPLDP is designed to provide new police officers' training entirely in the force and community where they will be working. It is intended to foster greater community engagement, and to give new officers better understanding of the communities they will be policing.

The programme has been developed in partnership between the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Association of Police Authorities (APA), 'executive services' for the programme provided by Centrex, Skills for Justice and the police staff associations.

IPLDP involves work-based assessment of student officers' performance against 22 National Occupational Standards. Some forces, like Leicestershire, work with local colleges and universities to provide an accredited qualification at the end of this training, based on those occupational standards.

The Home Office, Skills for Justice and Centrex are working together to develop this and other qualifications for the police service with the aim of being able to guarantee that any officer joining the service will achieve a minimum level of qualification on completion of their initial training that is nationally recognised, and which can be counted towards further and higher qualifications both within and beyond the police service.

Central Authority have agreed the national minimum qualification (NMQ) for student officers is the NVQ level 3 and 4 in Policing. A national minimum qualification will support the drive towards workforce modernisation, professionalisation of the police service, introduction of professional registers, and career progression. It will also promote the police force as a learning organisation.

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Forces have had the opportunity to adopt different approaches to IPLDP. Craig Baker, who has spent 22 years in the police force, in a mix of both uniform and plain clothes roles, became the project lead for IPLDP work 18 months ago at Leicestershire Constabulary. The Chief Constable there wanted IPLDP to produce students that would be change makers, people of Influence, focussed on performance, personally accountable and willing to challenge.

Craig's approach began by identifying the potential methodologies available to them based on a cost/benefit analysis. There were 3 viable options, all at similar costings. The Chief Constable decided that facilitating this training through a Higher Education institution would suit Leicestershire's needs the most appropriately as the trainees would experience diverse community engagement very early on in their training experience by being on campus. This sort of experience would not be possible via the other methods identified and, therefore, De Montfort University (DMU) was awarded the tender in January 2006. Within the first two months, the two organisations had managed to put in place a validated foundation degree for police staff in Leicestershire.

However, one of the main learning points from the process was how the two organisations cultures were at odds with each other in terms of style of learning delivery. Leicestershire Constabulary were used to working to minute detail, taking a line by line approach whilst the university were more outcome based and more flexible at arriving at that outcome as long as it was achieved. Overall this work provided Leicestershire Constabulary with a great opportunity to step back and consider new approaches to learning delivery. Police trainers were working alongside Higher Education lecturers and attained associate lecturer status.

The programme is ongoing and its success will be judged over the next year or so, but early indications suggest that this approach has been of great benefit to Leicestershire Constabulary.

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