

From inwardly gazing to outwardly reflecting: The changing nature of student police officer training

Judith Oliver
Senior Lecturer Police Studies
April 2009

The Role of the Modern Police Officer

High levels of skill supported by depth of conceptual and contextual understanding are needed if those working in the justice sector are to meet the challenges of keeping our community safe in the increasingly complex world (Randall 2005).

- John Randall. Skills for Justice Chairman.

In the past

Police Officer Probationary Training Programme

Residential

Drill

Legislation

Procedure

Insular

Insufficient community involvement

Learning the ropes from experienced officers



Drivers for Change.

Training Matters (2002) Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary review of the training of probationary constables concluded that:

- 'Police recruit training not fit for purpose'
- Lack of Community involvement across the training programme.

Recommended

- Local, non-residential training delivery
- Emphasis on Community engagement
- More rigorous assessment
- More reflective practice.

Development of Neighbourhood Policing Teams

2004 Initial Police Learning and Development Programme



Integrating the 22 National Occupational Standards (NOS) designed to ensure professional competency as a police officer AND demonstrate an understanding of the often complex issues encountered in the community they serve.



Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

National Occupational Standards

(Skills for Justice)



- Outline key competencies and knowledge necessary for certain job roles.
- When coupled with an assessment strategy, they provide clear guidelines for the assessment of competence in a specific job role against nationally agreed standards of performance.

Marsden, S. (Ed) (2007) *Practical Policing Skills*. (2nd ed). Exeter: Law Matters Publishing. Pg 7

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

The Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP)



- Specified structure for the two year probationary period.
Can be localised.

Phase 1

Induction

Phase 2

Initial Training

Classroom based but may have community placement and role plays

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Phase 3

Accompanied Patrol. Work with Tutor Constable. Assessed against set criteria (Police Action Check Lists)

Phase 4

Independent Patrol. Part of regular police team. Deal with policing incidents as they occur.

Phase 5

Confirmation of appointment as a police constable

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Delivered as:



Foundation Degrees

- Pre-service
- In-service

NVQ route

Level 3 and 4

All must be mapped against the NOS.



Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Student Officer Learning Assessment Portfolio (SOLAP)



Record of achieving the 22 NOS which underpin elements in the role profile of a Student Police Officer based on the Integrated Competency Framework (ICF)
Is a form of reflective journal.



Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

West Yorkshire Approach to Training



- "The whole training process supports the Home Office's desire to professionalize the service and its training. By working in partnership with the University of Huddersfield we are seeking to give officers a better awareness of broader social issues and address criticism that police training is historically inward looking. It also helps the service address the requirement for more rigorous assessment and promotes a deeper understanding as well as affording students an opportunity to achieve an appropriate level of qualification as recognition for all the work they've done, i.e. a Foundation Degree in Police Studies."

<http://www.bishopgarth.com/learningExtended.html#further>

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

The Foundation Degree in Police Studies.



- Students attend University for 6 weeks. Support is offered throughout the 2 years by email, telephone or face to face tutorials

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

University Course Structure



Year 1

- Learning Process and Professional Development (20 credits)
- Understanding Social and Community Issues (20 credits)
- Equality, Diversity and Rights (20 credits)
- Legal and Organisational Frameworks 1 (20 credits)
- Practice-Based Learning 1 (40 credits)

Year 2

- Legal and Professional Framework 2 (20 credits)
- Professional and Community Partnerships (20 credits)
- Assessment, Advice and Support (20 credits)
- Practice-Based Learning 2 (60 credits)

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Educational Aims



- Understand and engage with the community
- Enforce the law and follow relevant procedures
- Respond to human and social diversity
- Position themselves in the relevant role inside their organisation
- Understand and exercise appropriate professional standards and ethical conduct
- Develop a personal development plan to take them forward in their chosen career in pursuit of life long learning
- Exercise qualities of professional judgement and decision making
- Understand those basic principles and concepts of social sciences and law which inform and influence the environment in which they operate

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Learning Processes and Professional Development

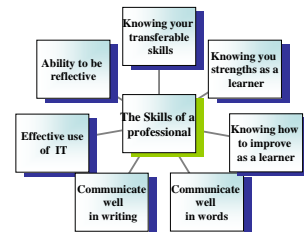


Combination of e-learning and face to face teaching

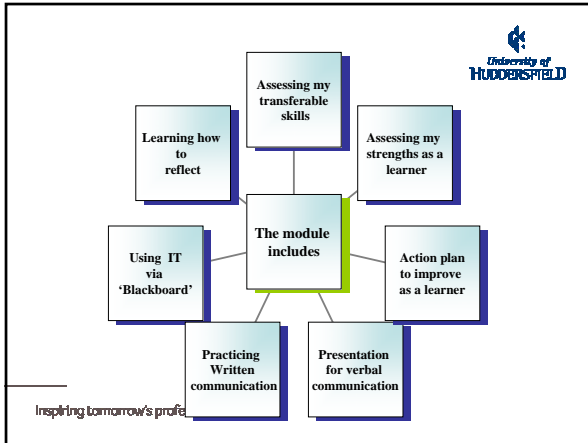
Considers the topics of:

- Being a professional
- Values and Beliefs
- Learning as an adult
- Learning Styles
- Reflection
- Life Long Learning/Continuous Professional Development

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



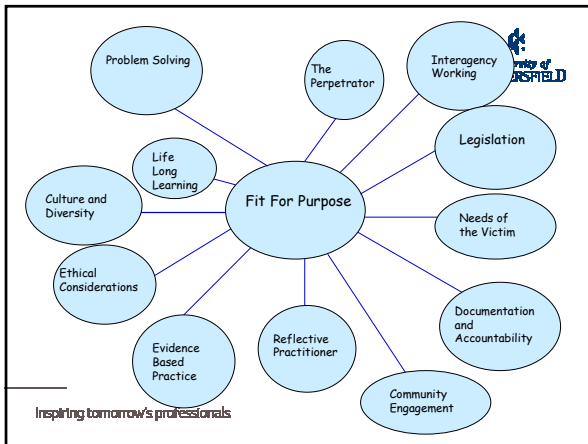
Linking to other modules

Throughout the 2 years the students are required to reflect on real life experiences either within the informal setting of the lecture room or within the more formal structure of an assessed piece of work.

The SOLAP requires the officer to consider their actions and experiences and provide a reflective account of their practice. This is the evidence which will determine their competence with regard to the NOS.

University of HUDDERSFIELD

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



In conclusion

- Police officer education has adopted a more local approach to help officers embed themselves in and become aware of the concerns of their local community in all its diversity (Merritt 2007)
- Officers, throughout their careers, need to be able to reflect on their actions and issues, determine best practice, identify learning points and develop action plans.

Merritt, J. (2007) *Law for Student Police Officers*. Exeter: Learning Matters.

University of HUDDERSFIELD

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals