

## Embedding employability within Higher Education for the profession of policing

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## Embedding employability within Higher Education for the profession of policing

### Abstract

**Purpose:** The longitudinal research evaluated impact of an employability module, the College of Policing Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP), on students' career aspirations, their confidence and wish to join the police along with the appropriateness of the module. This will inform the implementation of employability as part of the College of Policing managed Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF).

**Design/methodology:** A three-year longitudinal research study used mixed methods across four points in time to evaluate the impact on students studying the employability module.

**Findings:** The research suggests that the employability focused CKP was useful as an introduction to policing, it developed interest in the police and enhanced the confidence of learners applying to join. Lessons learnt from the CKP should be considered during the implementation of the PEQF.

**Research limitations/implications:** The ability to generalise findings across different groups is limited as other influences may impact on a learner's confidence and employability. However the implications for the PEQF curriculum are worthy of consideration.

**Practical implications:** As the police service moves towards standardised higher educational provision and evolution of policing as a profession, lessons can be learnt from the CKP with regards to the future employability of graduates.

**Originality/value:** Enhancing the employability evidence base, focusing on policing, the research identified aspects which may impact on graduates completing a degree mapped to the PEQF. The research is therefore of value to Higher Education and the Professional Body for Policing.

**Paper type:** Research paper

**Keywords:** Employability, Police Higher Education, PEQF, CKP

## Introduction

The notion of embedding employability within a curriculum is primarily focused on the teaching, and the associated student learning, across a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to support both the graduate's initial employment and their future career development (Pegg et al., 2012). The skills required by a police officer are many and varied and include good communication, leadership, teamwork, the ability to make decisions, work using their own initiative etc. Many of these skills are embedded with a higher education degree, for example, the Quality Assurance Agency (2014) detail how a graduate with an honours degree should be able to evaluate evidence from a range of sources, make decisions in complex situations and communicate these effectively, whilst taking responsibility for their work. Christopher (2015) argues that higher education can play a vital role in educating new police officers to deal with such dynamic demands and complexities of modern policing. Although Tibby (2012) reports how research measuring the long-term impact of strategies addressing the support provided for student employability is limited.

Reflecting on the introduction of the pre-employment Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) launched in 2013, with its eventual withdrawal as a qualification at the end of 2019, the professionalisation of the police service has now been intrinsically mapped by the College of Policing to a framework embedded within higher education (Brown et al., 2018). The resulting Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) intends to steer the development of the knowledge and skills of employability required by new police officers across England and Wales.

## Methodology

A three-year longitudinal mixed methods research study focused on 28 students at a University who elected to study the employability focused Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) as an option module on a BSc (Hons) Crime and Investigation degree programme. The CKP curriculum content is prescribed by the National Professional Body for Policing, The College of Policing. The module is taught within the University over 26 weeks and consists of a minimum of 200 hours of student learning, which includes 78 hours of lecturing. The aim of the research was to evaluate the impact of this employability focused module on the students' career aspirations, particularly if it affected their confidence and desire to apply to join the police service as an officer along with the appropriateness of the higher educational module in terms of short and medium term benefits for the students as graduates. This in turn may impact upon the implementation of future employability focused modules designed as part of the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF).

There were four stages to the research, all of which were optional to the participants. The first stage was the completion by all 28 participants of an

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3 initial questionnaire before they commenced studying the one-year module  
4 embedded at level five on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications  
5 (FHEQ) which formed part of a three-year full-time honours degree. After  
6 gaining informed consent, the self-administered questionnaire established  
7 what learners expected from the module and their career aspirations.  
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9  
10 In the second stage, 26 weeks later on completion of the module, 28 learners  
11 completed questionnaires, which included the opportunity to include written  
12 responses. These questionnaires explored the student's career aspirations  
13 and identified if they had gained knowledge and understanding to assist them  
14 gaining their future employment.  
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16  
17 In stage three, one year later on their graduation, a short questionnaire was  
18 completed by 25 participants, three weren't completed, identifying their career  
19 aspirations at that moment and how what they had learnt might help them  
20 achieve their ambitions.  
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23 In stage four, a year after the students had graduated, telephone interviews  
24 were conducted with four participants who had consented to be contacted 12  
25 months after graduation in order to ascertain if they were employed by the  
26 police service and if the CKP had assisted them in gaining their chosen  
27 career. This was followed up by short semi-structured interviews with three  
28 serving special constables from across North East Police Forces establishing  
29 their perceived value of a taught, employability focused CKP to policing.  
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31  
32 This three-year longitudinal research project collected data at set points in  
33 time from a convenience sample of students, graduates and special  
34 constables (university graduates from a separate cohort, who had different  
35 experiences of the CKP, in addition to experience of the workplace as a  
36 volunteer). The internal validity of the research is good. However, the external  
37 validity enabling the findings to be reproduced and generalised more widely  
38 across different sample groups is limited due to different educational  
39 programmes taught at different levels across universities, colleges and private  
40 providers.  
41

42  
43 The researchers are very aware of bias, for example through the selection of  
44 certain participants across a range of stages, design of the questionnaire and  
45 leading questions during the interviews. The researchers have endeavoured  
46 to minimise such effects by, for example, enabling all 28 students studying the  
47 CKP at the university to self-select at each point whether or not to take part in  
48 subsequent stages of the research, piloting the questionnaire, using  
49 impartiality whilst following a script of questions when conducting the  
50 interviews, in order to establish a professional distance and to restrict the  
51 possibility of researcher bias (Blaikie, 2007).  
52

53  
54 An issue with low response rates in terms of stage four, is that there is a  
55 greater likelihood of non-response bias, in terms of estimates of outcomes, as  
56 there is a lower representation of the original sample group. However, this  
57 does not necessarily mean the sample itself would be biased (Gilbert and  
58 Stoneman, 2016).  
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5 The findings from the research are informative to the wider community.  
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## 8 **The present** 9

10 As austerity impacted on the police, the service as a whole across the 43  
11 police forces in England and Wales, has questioned the opportunities for cost  
12 savings by enabling elements of the complex policing curriculum to be taught  
13 within the higher education, further education and training environments prior  
14 to an application for employment as a police officer. Although estimations vary,  
15 Nottinghamshire Police (2012) suggest that the average costs of recruiting  
16 and training a new police officer is just under £13,000, with additional annual  
17 all in salary costs of just over £30,000. Durham Constabulary (2015) propose  
18 that a special constable costs slightly over £1357 to train based on specific  
19 class sizes. Even with varying estimations, a reduction in the training time  
20 required before a new police officer, or for that matter a special constable,  
21 becomes a deployable resource, could result in significant cost savings.  
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24 The College of Policing, reviewed the police services initial training  
25 curriculum, identifying subject matter which could be taught prior to  
26 employment. As a result of the review, in 2013 The College of Policing  
27 introduced the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP). This qualification  
28 was designed to provide students with both knowledge and understanding of  
29 a number of core policing themes including public safety, protecting the  
30 vulnerable and supporting victims, crime reduction, gathering information and  
31 intelligence, ethics, evidence based policing etc., (College of Policing,  
32 2017<sup>(a)</sup>). The CKP was designed as a level 3 award on the Regulated  
33 Qualifications Framework (RQF) requiring both taught and independent study  
34 (ibid.). Both the delivery and assessments being regulated through the  
35 College of Policing's approved provider scheme for educational  
36 establishments. The College of Policing (2017<sup>(b)</sup>) suggest that successful  
37 completion of the CKP has a number of cost benefits to the police service as  
38 whole including a reduction of up to 10 weeks on initial officer training for  
39 those recruited, which as a result provides an operational policing resource for  
40 the service much quicker. There is however no guarantee that those students  
41 who successfully complete the award will gain employment within the police  
42 service.  
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46 The development of employability is becoming a central function of  
47 universities driven by a number of external factors including those that are  
48 both political and economic (McCowan, 2015). Pegg et al., (2012) emphasise  
49 how important it is for higher education providers to develop the skills of  
50 employability within their graduates. **In light of this it can be seen the inclusion  
51 of the CKP was an appropriate way** to embed employability within an  
52 academic curriculum focusing on policing.  
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54 The CKP is currently being taught within a number of higher education  
55 institutions utilising the FHEQ. The CKP qualification has been mapped at  
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3 levels four or five of the FHEQ, so that students gain both the employability  
4 focused CKP award and academic credits towards their degree level study.  
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6 As the CKP was being introduced, Stevens (2013) Independent Police  
7 Commission report endorsed the ideas of Winsor (2012) to establish the  
8 police as a profession, whilst also recommending some quite controversial  
9 changes such as the professional recognition of police officers who should  
10 work, and be held accountable to, a set of recognised standards. Brown et al.,  
11 (2018) rightly suggests that in order to support the notion of a profession,  
12 modern officers not only require an understanding of academic underpinning  
13 theories but also the context of practice, linked to expected standards of  
14 policing and an ethical code. Although, Becher (1990) suggests that it is  
15 always difficult to link both theory and practice together within programmes for  
16 professionals in a way which complement each other. Stevens (2013) also  
17 proposes the raising of the qualifications required to enter the policing  
18 profession and requiring the College of Policing to both review and ensure the  
19 enhancement of police training.  
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22 With a focus on establishing the police service as a profession, during 2016  
23 the College of Policing completed a wide consultation in relation to the  
24 development of a qualifications framework for the police which would operate  
25 in partnership with higher education. The consultation also included the  
26 opportunities for the recognition of existing police staff expertise along with  
27 the development of initial entry routes to the police service through student  
28 funded undergraduate programmes, degree apprenticeships and graduate  
29 conversion courses for existing graduates. Paterson (2011) identifies how  
30 police professionalism and the associated organisational reform, can be  
31 enhanced by establishing effective collaborations between the police service  
32 and higher education. Christopher (2015) highlights how the police service  
33 should have confidence that higher education can meet the needs of training  
34 and educating future police officers.  
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37 The National Police Chiefs Council (2018) recognises that the wide range of  
38 approaches and inconsistency of practice relating to police education and  
39 training across England and Wales is negatively affecting the professionalism  
40 of the service as a whole. As a result, the PEQF, launched in late 2016,  
41 directly links to the higher education sector aiming to further develop the ethos  
42 of policing as a profession. The PEQF, although initially focused on police  
43 officers as the largest number of the police workforce, will then be extended  
44 to include police staff and other roles such as special constables. It is hoped  
45 that those completing study linked to the PEQF will be equipped to think  
46 differently by utilising an evidence based approach to policing practice. As  
47 Sherman (2013) highlights, an evidence based approach enables police  
48 officers to make decisions not based on theory but actually from good  
49 research of what works in practice. Also graduates will possess the ability to  
50 utilise some of the core academic skills such as research, critical thinking,  
51 enquiry, innovation, communication, collaboration and decision making. This  
52 in turn will link directly to the College of Policing (2017 (c)) core competencies  
53 as required across the service. As Bittner (1980) suggested some time ago,  
54 police officers who have studied within higher education will be better  
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3 equipped to deal with the sometimes complex and sophisticated needs of  
4 policing. This is supported by Christopher (2015) who argues that  
5 contemporary policing continues to be both complex and demanding, with  
6 partnerships between the police service and higher education enabling the  
7 development of reflective policing professionals.  
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## 10 Findings

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12 On commencing their studies, of the 28 participants (21 female, 7 male), just  
13 over 40% (10 female, 2 male) aspired to be police officers, with a slightly  
14 higher percentage (9 female, 5 male) unsure of their future career within  
15 policing (Pepper and McGrath, 2015). After completing the CKP, 64% of those  
16 studying the CKP (13 female, 5 male) returned the questionnaire, with just  
17 over 44% of participants (6 female, 2 male) aspiring to be police officers, with  
18 just over 38% (5 female, 2 male) still unsure of their future career within  
19 policing (ibid.,). Nearly 90% of respondents participants (11 female, 5 male)  
20 report an increase in confidence in applying for the police service, with slightly  
21 over 10% (2 female) being unsure if completing the CKP increased their  
22 confidence (Pepper and McGrath, 2015).  
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25  
26 One year later graduating following a three-year BSc (Hons) Crime and  
27 Investigation degree (including the CKP in their second year), of the 28 initial  
28 participants who studied the CKP, 25 participants (18 female, 7 male) once  
29 again completed a questionnaire. At this time, just over 58% (8 female, 6  
30 male) of participants aspired to be police officers, with slightly under 33% (8  
31 female) still undecided and unsure of a future policing career. Interestingly, of  
32 those responding slightly fewer than 50% (9 female, 3 male) reported applying  
33 to join the police service at the time of the data collection. One question  
34 specifically asked about alternate careers considered by participants at the  
35 point of graduation. Participants reported the military police, crime scene  
36 investigation, HM revenue and customs and the prison service. When asked  
37 about outcomes of the CKP, 100% of participants (18 female, 7 male)  
38 reported an increase in personal confidence in the event of applying to join  
39 the police service. Interestingly, when asked the main benefit of completing  
40 the CKP only 60% (5 male, 10 female) reported an increase in subject  
41 knowledge.  
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44 At this time all participants were asked to indicate their willingness to  
45 participate in a further follow-up interview twelve months later.  
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47 A year after graduating four of the original participants who consented to be  
48 contacted were interviewed. Attempts had been made to follow up all those  
49 who had earlier indicated willingness for further involvement, the sample size  
50 being reduced by some participants withdrawing from further engagement,  
51 others having changed contact details thus preventing further communication.  
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54 Whilst acknowledging the somewhat reduced sample size, the interviews  
55 revealed that one of the participants had applied and been accepted by the  
56 police service with a start date in the near future, a second was in the initial  
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3 stages of the recruitment process, a third had applied and been unsuccessful  
4 and the fourth had decided on an alternate career away from policing. All four  
5 interviewees found some aspects of the CKP useful in applying for either the  
6 police service or an alternate job, with one commenting that it gave them a  
7 good knowledge base for interview and a second recommending others  
8 should definitely study the CKP. One respondent did comment how they didn't  
9 enjoy studying the volume of course work taught within the CKP.  
10

11 The three special constables questioned with regards to their thoughts on the  
12 CKP **and its usefulness** to them as a volunteer, were also graduates.  
13 Interviewee 1 (male) hadn't studied the CKP within their course, interviewee 2  
14 (male) studied the CKP at university and interviewee 3 (female) studied the  
15 CKP with **both a private provider as part of their initial specials training (not**  
16 **accredited by higher education) and also within their university course.** The  
17 interviewees commented:  
18

19  
20 Interviewee 1

21 "If that [the CKP] was available when I was taking option modules, it would  
22 definitely have been a choice that I would have looked into carefully, because  
23 you can see its beneficial with the role you wanna go into".  
24

25  
26 Interviewee 2

27 "With things like the CKP, you tend to just spend, just one or two lectures on  
28 it, ..... obviously when you are with the police **[undergoing specials training]**  
29 you do a whole weekend or two weekends covering a subject"  
30 "It [the CKP] sort of makes you realise what you need to know, the important  
31 parts you need to revise and which bits, that I am not going to say put by the  
32 wayside, but you are going to use less commonly"  
33

34  
35 Interviewee 3

36 "They **[the two versions of CKP course studied]** were totally different, it was a  
37 totally different experience altogether"  
38 "The initial one that I done with being a special was a four hour webinar once  
39 a week"  
40 "What we had at University was a taught session, but then a knowledge check  
41 ... what they normally do in training"  
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44 **Insert figure 1.**  
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## 49 **Discussion and the future of police education**

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51 The small scale longitudinal research project suggests that completion of the  
52 CKP embedded within a higher education degree may have had influence on  
53 learners by increasing their confidence to make applications to join the police  
54 service at that moment in time. However, with the confidence of learners  
55 continuing to increase as they completed their degrees, it becomes unclear if  
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3 the increased confidence can be fully attributed to the CKP or other external  
4 factors such as their continued **skills development as part of their career-**  
5 **related** studies.

6  
7 The research also suggests that **studying** the CKP increases the number of  
8 individuals aspiring to join the police service, **particularly during** the final year  
9 of their studies, so again there may well be external factors affecting the  
10 learner's responses. However, after graduating the small sample involved in  
11 the research all felt the CKP had been useful to them when applying for jobs.  
12 **The comment referring to the high quantity of work within the CKP was also**  
13 **reflected upon by a special constable. Of the three special constables**  
14 **questioned, one who had studied the CKP thought it was beneficial to them**  
15 **and their volunteering whilst highlighting the differences in how a module is**  
16 **taught within a university setting compared to police training, one special**  
17 **constable, who had not studied the CKP, thought it would have been**  
18 **beneficial to have had opportunity to study it as part of their course,** and the  
19 third highlighted the great differences in delivery methods between two  
20 different CKP providers.  
21  
22

23 The research suggests that the CKP is useful as an introduction to policing, it  
24 develops an interest in the police service and at least start to develop the  
25 confidence of learners in their own ability to apply to join the service. There  
26 may however be much wider influences which impact on a learner's interest,  
27 confidence and employability. The volume of material taught during the CKP  
28 and the lack of opportunities for work experience is a concern highlighted.  
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31 By implication, a much longer and well-constructed higher educational  
32 programme, which goes far beyond the CKP as an 'Introductory module',  
33 could do much to develop a pool of future police officers to join the profession  
34 of policing. Larson (1990) suggests a profession can be structurally defined as  
35 a link between both knowledge and professional practice, set within a  
36 hierarchical education and occupational system. Such a definition of a  
37 profession would seem to fit this model of police higher education. The  
38 research also goes some way to support the National Police Chiefs Council  
39 (2018) who suggest that the introduction of the PEQF will provide a formal  
40 standard of education, which will assist in building a profession and assurance  
41 to the public and the other professionals with whom the police service works  
42 on a multi-agency basis.  
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44

45 **The College of Policing will phase out the CKP as a qualification by 2020, by**  
46 **which time the PEQF will be established within the police service, offering a**  
47 **portfolio of three entry routes for the police constable (College of Policing,**  
48 **2018<sup>(a)</sup>). None of the routes appear to incorporate opportunity for Recognition**  
49 **of Prior Learning (RPL) for those who have studied the CKP, although there is**  
50 **potential for recognition of practical skills development by those having also**  
51 **undertaken the voluntary role of special constable.**  
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54 The first route is a College of Policing approved and licensed, individual  
55 student funded undergraduate pre-join knowledge-based programme **the Pre-**  
56 **Join Degree in Professional Policing.** The licensed programme would take a  
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3 learner three years' full-time study to complete a specifically named honours  
4 degree. On completion of the degree, graduates need to apply to join the  
5 police service.

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7 The second, a **degree apprenticeship** (called the Police Constable Degree  
8 Apprenticeship) leads to a named honours degree. **Degree apprenticeships**  
9 are funded by either single or collaborations of police forces who recruit new  
10 officers who are then paid to work, complete training and study within higher  
11 education over their three years' probation to be confirmed as a police officer.  
12 Numbers for this route to employment and a degree are bound to be limited,  
13 **but the opportunities and benefits to both the individual learner and the**  
14 **partner organisations involved, in this largely workbased learning, are high.**  
15 Both of these routes will lead to the learner graduating with a level six honours  
16 degree in Professional Policing.

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19 Finally, there is a graduate conversion course, **the Degree Holder Entry**  
20 **Programme**, for existing graduates of any academic discipline enabling them  
21 to study a set curriculum mapped to the PEQF. **Once recruited to the police**  
22 **service**, Graduates will study this curriculum over **a period of two years** to  
23 equip them **for their role**.

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26 **The curriculum for each route is similar in terms of the knowledge elements,**  
27 **to ensure a common level of learning is achieved, including the topic of**  
28 **Evidence-Based policing.**

29  
30 The common theme throughout is that new 'qualified' police officers will be  
31 graduates and they will have studied a standard curriculum through to level  
32 six on the FHEQ. Brown et al (2018) discusses how the PEQF can only be  
33 effective to continue to develop the profession of policing, if it can itself evolve  
34 as required and be informed by a wide range of research methods  
35 underpinned by academic theory.

36  
37 It must however be acknowledged that it is very unlikely that all graduates  
38 through these educational routes will be recruited, or retained, by the service  
39 as new police officers. **Crawford et al (2016) identify that 11% of officers who**  
40 **resigned from the police service had less than 2 year's experience, whilst also**  
41 **noting that resignations generally were associated with stronger employment**  
42 **markets and hence potentially better employment conditions.** As the research  
43 into the CKP suggests, whilst studying there is an increased interest in joining  
44 the police service as an officer. It is therefore imperative that those entering  
45 the programmes of study understand the importance and transferability of  
46 their graduate level skills to other non-police officer roles within the police  
47 service and beyond.

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49  
50 Although those teaching such higher educational programmes have a great  
51 deal of professional knowledge, arguably such a knowledge base helps define  
52 the profession, there are obviously differences in the focus of academics and  
53 those teaching the practical elements (Becher, 1990). In order to embed the  
54 importance of both education and training, Wood and Tong (2009) emphasise  
55 the need for effective work-based support in order to maximise the learning  
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3 opportunities. The best way to embed such studies being a merging of both  
4 academic and employability focused learning (McCowan, 2015). When  
5 researching students studying professionally accredited **Royal Institute of**  
6 **Chartered Surveyors** (RICS) courses, Poon and Brownlow (2015) identify  
7 the importance of enabling learners to apply their new knowledge and  
8 skills in practical situations, these could be real or simulated, such  
9 practical applications of learning being particularly important where there  
10 is a defined career outcome for the study. Both students and employers  
11 also acknowledge the value of work-based experiences as a means of  
12 enhancing employability (Tibby, 2012). The College of Policing (2018<sup>(b)</sup>)  
13 themselves acknowledge the value of learners gaining practical  
14 professional experience as special constables whilst studying the three  
15 year full-time licenced degree in Professional Policing.  
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17  
18 **Degree apprenticeships** will, by their nature, facilitate such exposure to the  
19 workplace. However, this is far more challenging for those students who enroll  
20 on the three year full-time honours **pre-join** degree in professional policing. As  
21 forces will not be in a position, either in terms of resources or finances, to  
22 support large numbers of special constable recruitment. Tibby (2012) reports  
23 how in some sectors there are limited opportunities for work experience. As a  
24 result alternate options for volunteering within the wider criminal justice  
25 community should be explored and acknowledged as assisting in the  
26 development of employability appropriate for policing in a multi-agency  
27 context. Such work experiences will also assists in the embedding of the new  
28 knowledge and skills so many of those involved in the CKP research found of  
29 value in building their confidence.  
30

31  
32 Wood and Tong (2009) also suggest that one of the challenges to educating  
33 and training police officers within a university setting, is the ongoing need to  
34 abstract learners from the workplace, in the case of the higher degree  
35 apprenticeship, the suggestion is that this should be in the region of 20% of  
36 the time. However, recruiting new officers from a pool of individuals who have  
37 completed a self-funded, College of Policing approved honours degree,  
38 removes the need for officer abstraction and should mean that with additional  
39 workbased support the individuals should become operational resources  
40 much quicker and forces will save money on officer education. It is in this  
41 arena that future longitudinal research should be focused when measuring the  
42 impact of the PEQF on the police officer workforce.  
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## 47 **Conclusion**

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49 **It is suggested that, although beneficial to those aspiring to join the police**  
50 **service, the CKP was only** an initial step evolved by the professional body for  
51 the police service, The College of Policing, as an educational programme to  
52 meet the needs of the service. This **concept** has now evolved much further to  
53 encompass a full honours degree in professional policing mapped to the  
54 PEQF, a positive step in the evolution of policing as a profession.  
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3 The small scale longitudinal research project suggests that employability  
4 focused modules, such as the CKP, assist not only in the development of  
5 interest in roles within policing but in the development of an individuals  
6 confidence in their ability to apply for such a role. The research, although  
7 limited, indicates that the knowledge acquired through their studies assists  
8 individuals in gaining their employment. Consideration should also be given to  
9 providing learners with some experience of the broader criminal justice  
10 workplace **in order to provide a context for the learning, and to enhance**  
11 **understanding of workplace opportunities available in this sector.**  
12

13  
14 There were concerns raised over the volume of work to be covered by  
15 learners completing the CKP, hopefully **the anticipated** three-year degree with  
16 opportunities for the development of knowledge, understanding and skills for  
17 policing will address this concern.  
18

19 The Quality Assurance Agency (2014) suggest that a honours degree should  
20 equip graduates to enable them to complete appropriate professional training.  
21 Whilst acknowledging that there are different policing priorities and needs  
22 within police forces, it is imperative that the approach to police education and  
23 training is standardised across the whole service. Honours degrees mapped  
24 to the PEQF appear to be an appropriate way forward.  
25

26 Poon and Brownlow (2015) identify the importance of the employer being  
27 involved in the design of the curriculum as well as their involvement in the  
28 whole teaching process including lectures, visits and work based  
29 experiences. Andrews and Russell (2012) identify that a recurring theme from  
30 their research into employability was the ability to predict the future needs of  
31 employers. As such it is imperative that the PEQF continues to be reviewed  
32 and updated in partnership between the police service and higher education  
33 in order to provide an evidence base ensuring the most appropriate  
34 professional education and training to meet the needs of a policing profession.  
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39 Recommendations:

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41 **Whichever route of higher educational study is chosen; it is imperative that**  
42 **opportunities for exposure to the workplace are embedded within the**  
43 **curriculum in order to provide a context for learning and prepare learners for a**  
44 **role in the police service.**  
45

46 **The National Policing Curriculum has been developed by the College of**  
47 **Policing to ensure required knowledge is contained within the course of study**  
48 **(Pre-Join Degree in Professional Policing or Police Constable Degree**  
49 **Apprenticeship). Those involved in its delivery must design learning**  
50 **programmes which ensure a balanced content, avoiding an overload of**  
51 **information, whilst incorporating learning for the real world of policing.**  
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54 Further research is crucial to the evolution of the PEQF to measure its impact  
55 on the development of the police as a profession and the employability of  
56 students.  
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## **Embedding employability within Higher Education for the profession of policing**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** The longitudinal research evaluated impact of an employability module, the College of Policing Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP), on students' career aspirations, their confidence and wish to join the police along with the appropriateness of the module. This will inform the implementation of employability as part of the College of Policing managed Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF).

**Design/methodology:** A three-year longitudinal research study used mixed methods across four points in time to evaluate the impact on students studying the employability module.

**Findings:** The research suggests that the employability focused CKP was useful as an introduction to policing, it developed interest in the police and enhanced the confidence of learners applying to join. Lessons learnt from the CKP should be considered during the implementation of the PEQF.

**Research limitations/implications:** The ability to generalise findings across different groups is limited as other influences may impact on a learner's confidence and employability. However the implications for the PEQF curriculum are worthy of consideration.

**Practical implications:** As the police service moves towards standardised higher educational provision and evolution of policing as a profession, lessons can be learnt from the CKP with regards to the future employability of graduates.

**Originality/value:** Enhancing the employability evidence base, focusing on policing, the research identified aspects which may impact on graduates completing a degree mapped to the PEQF. The research is therefore of value to Higher Education and the Professional Body for Policing.

**Paper type:** Research paper

**Keywords:** Employability, Police Higher Education, PEQF, CKP

## Introduction

The notion of embedding employability within a curriculum is primarily focused on the teaching, and the associated student learning, across a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to support both the graduate's initial employment and their future career development (Pegg et al., 2012). The skills required by a police officer are many and varied and include good communication, leadership, teamwork, the ability to make decisions, work using their own initiative etc. Many of these skills are embedded with a higher education degree, for example, the Quality Assurance Agency (2014) detail how a graduate with an honours degree should be able to evaluate evidence from a range of sources, make decisions in complex situations and communicate these effectively, whilst taking responsibility for their work. Christopher (2015) argues that higher education can play a vital role in educating new police officers to deal with such dynamic demands and complexities of modern policing. Although Tibby (2012) reports how research measuring the long-term impact of strategies addressing the support provided for student employability is limited.

Reflecting on the introduction of the pre-employment Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) launched in 2013, with its eventual withdrawal as a qualification at the end of 2019, the professionalisation of the police service has now been intrinsically mapped by the College of Policing to a framework embedded within higher education (Brown et al., 2018). The resulting Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) intends to steer the development of the knowledge and skills of employability required by new police officers across England and Wales.

## Methodology

A three-year longitudinal mixed methods research study focused on 28 students at a University who elected to study the employability focused Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) as an option module on a BSc (Hons) Crime and Investigation degree programme. The CKP curriculum content is prescribed by the National Professional Body for Policing, The College of Policing. The module is taught within the University over 26 weeks and consists of a minimum of 200 hours of student learning, which includes 78 hours of lecturing. The aim of the research was to evaluate the impact of this employability focused module on the students' career aspirations, particularly if it affected their confidence and desire to apply to join the police service as an officer along with the appropriateness of the higher educational module in terms of short and medium term benefits for the students as graduates. This in turn may impact upon the implementation of future employability focused modules designed as part of the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF).

There were four stages to the research, all of which were optional to the participants. The first stage was the completion by all 28 participants of an

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2  
3 initial questionnaire before they commenced studying the one-year module  
4 embedded at level five on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications  
5 (FHEQ) which formed part of a three-year full-time honours degree. After  
6 gaining informed consent, the self-administered questionnaire established  
7 what learners expected from the module and their career aspirations.  
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9  
10 In the second stage, 26 weeks later on completion of the module, 28 learners  
11 completed questionnaires, which included the opportunity to include written  
12 responses. These questionnaires explored the student's career aspirations  
13 and identified if they had gained knowledge and understanding to assist them  
14 gaining their future employment.  
15

16  
17 In stage three, one year later on their graduation, a short questionnaire was  
18 completed by 25 participants, three weren't completed, identifying their career  
19 aspirations at that moment and how what they had learnt might help them  
20 achieve their ambitions.  
21

22  
23 In stage four, a year after the students had graduated, telephone interviews  
24 were conducted with four participants who had consented to be contacted 12  
25 months after graduation in order to ascertain if they were employed by the  
26 police service and if the CKP had assisted them in gaining their chosen  
27 career. This was followed up by short semi-structured interviews with three  
28 serving special constables from across North East Police Forces establishing  
29 their perceived value of a taught, employability focused CKP to policing.  
30

31  
32 This three-year longitudinal research project collected data at set points in  
33 time from a convenience sample of students, graduates and special  
34 constables (university graduates from a separate cohort, who had different  
35 experiences of the CKP, in addition to experience of the workplace as a  
36 volunteer). The internal validity of the research is good. However, the external  
37 validity enabling the findings to be reproduced and generalised more widely  
38 across different sample groups is limited due to different educational  
39 programmes taught at different levels across universities, colleges and private  
40 providers.  
41

42  
43 The researchers are very aware of bias, for example through the selection of  
44 certain participants across a range of stages, design of the questionnaire and  
45 leading questions during the interviews. The researchers have endeavoured  
46 to minimise such effects by, for example, enabling all 28 students studying the  
47 CKP at the university to self-select at each point whether or not to take part in  
48 subsequent stages of the research, piloting the questionnaire, using  
49 impartiality whilst following a script of questions when conducting the  
50 interviews, in order to establish a professional distance and to restrict the  
51 possibility of researcher bias (Blaikie, 2007).  
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53  
54 An issue with low response rates in terms of stage four, is that there is a  
55 greater likelihood of non-response bias, in terms of estimates of outcomes, as  
56 there is a lower representation of the original sample group. However, this  
57 does not necessarily mean the sample itself would be biased (Gilbert and  
58 Stoneman, 2016).  
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5 The findings from the research are informative to the wider community.  
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## 8 **The present** 9

10 As austerity impacted on the police, the service as a whole across the 43  
11 police forces in England and Wales, has questioned the opportunities for cost  
12 savings by enabling elements of the complex policing curriculum to be taught  
13 within the higher education, further education and training environments prior  
14 to an application for employment as a police officer. Although estimations vary,  
15 Nottinghamshire Police (2012) suggest that the average costs of recruiting  
16 and training a new police officer is just under £13,000, with additional annual  
17 all in salary costs of just over £30,000. Durham Constabulary (2015) propose  
18 that a special constable costs slightly over £1357 to train based on specific  
19 class sizes. Even with varying estimations, a reduction in the training time  
20 required before a new police officer, or for that matter a special constable,  
21 becomes a deployable resource, could result in significant cost savings.  
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24 The College of Policing, reviewed the police services initial training  
25 curriculum, identifying subject matter which could be taught prior to  
26 employment. As a result of the review, in 2013 The College of Policing  
27 introduced the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP). This qualification  
28 was designed to provide students with both knowledge and understanding of  
29 a number of core policing themes including public safety, protecting the  
30 vulnerable and supporting victims, crime reduction, gathering information and  
31 intelligence, ethics, evidence based policing etc., (College of Policing,  
32 2017<sup>(a)</sup>). The CKP was designed as a level 3 award on the Regulated  
33 Qualifications Framework (RQF) requiring both taught and independent study  
34 (ibid.). Both the delivery and assessments being regulated through the  
35 College of Policing's approved provider scheme for educational  
36 establishments. The College of Policing (2017 <sup>(b)</sup>) suggest that successful  
37 completion of the CKP has a number of cost benefits to the police service as  
38 whole including a reduction of up to 10 weeks on initial officer training for  
39 those recruited, which as a result provides an operational policing resource for  
40 the service much quicker. There is however no guarantee that those students  
41 who successfully complete the award will gain employment within the police  
42 service.  
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46 The development of employability is becoming a central function of  
47 universities driven by a number of external factors including those that are  
48 both political and economic (McCowan, 2015). Pegg et al., (2012) emphasise  
49 how important it is for higher education providers to develop the skills of  
50 employability within their graduates. In light of this it can be seen the inclusion  
51 of the CKP was an appropriate way to embed employability within an  
52 academic curriculum focusing on policing.  
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55 The CKP is currently being taught within a number of higher education  
56 institutions utilising the FHEQ. The CKP qualification has been mapped at  
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3 levels four or five of the FHEQ, so that students gain both the employability  
4 focused CKP award and academic credits towards their degree level study.  
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6 As the CKP was being introduced, Stevens (2013) Independent Police  
7 Commission report endorsed the ideas of Winsor (2012) to establish the  
8 police as a profession, whilst also recommending some quite controversial  
9 changes such as the professional recognition of police officers who should  
10 work, and be held accountable to, a set of recognised standards. Brown et al.,  
11 (2018) rightly suggests that in order to support the notion of a profession,  
12 modern officers not only require an understanding of academic underpinning  
13 theories but also the context of practice, linked to expected standards of  
14 policing and an ethical code. Although, Becher (1990) suggests that it is  
15 always difficult to link both theory and practice together within programmes for  
16 professionals in a way which complement each other. Stevens (2013) also  
17 proposes the raising of the qualifications required to enter the policing  
18 profession and requiring the College of Policing to both review and ensure the  
19 enhancement of police training.  
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22 With a focus on establishing the police service as a profession, during 2016  
23 the College of Policing completed a wide consultation in relation to the  
24 development of a qualifications framework for the police which would operate  
25 in partnership with higher education. The consultation also included the  
26 opportunities for the recognition of existing police staff expertise along with  
27 the development of initial entry routes to the police service through student  
28 funded undergraduate programmes, degree apprenticeships and graduate  
29 conversion courses for existing graduates. Paterson (2011) identifies how  
30 police professionalism and the associated organisational reform, can be  
31 enhanced by establishing effective collaborations between the police service  
32 and higher education. Christopher (2015) highlights how the police service  
33 should have confidence that higher education can meet the needs of training  
34 and educating future police officers.  
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37 The National Police Chiefs Council (2018) recognises that the wide range of  
38 approaches and inconsistency of practice relating to police education and  
39 training across England and Wales is negatively affecting the professionalism  
40 of the service as a whole. As a result, the PEQF, launched in late 2016,  
41 directly links to the higher education sector aiming to further develop the ethos  
42 of policing as a profession. The PEQF, although initially focused on police  
43 officers as the largest number of the police workforce, will then be extended  
44 to include police staff and other roles such as special constables. It is hoped  
45 that those completing study linked to the PEQF will be equipped to think  
46 differently by utilising an evidence based approach to policing practice. As  
47 Sherman (2013) highlights, an evidence based approach enables police  
48 officers to make decisions not based on theory but actually from good  
49 research of what works in practice. Also graduates will possess the ability to  
50 utilise some of the core academic skills such as research, critical thinking,  
51 enquiry, innovation, communication, collaboration and decision making. This  
52 in turn will link directly to the College of Policing (2017 (c)) core competencies  
53 as required across the service. As Bittner (1980) suggested some time ago,  
54 police officers who have studied within higher education will be better  
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3 equipped to deal with the sometimes complex and sophisticated needs of  
4 policing. This is supported by Christopher (2015) who argues that  
5 contemporary policing continues to be both complex and demanding, with  
6 partnerships between the police service and higher education enabling the  
7 development of reflective policing professionals.  
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## 10 Findings

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12 On commencing their studies, of the 28 participants (21 female, 7 male), just  
13 over 40% (10 female, 2 male) aspired to be police officers, with a slightly  
14 higher percentage (9 female, 5 male) unsure of their future career within  
15 policing (Pepper and McGrath, 2015). After completing the CKP, 64% of those  
16 studying the CKP (13 female, 5 male) returned the questionnaire, with just  
17 over 44% of participants (6 female, 2 male) aspiring to be police officers, with  
18 just over 38% (5 female, 2 male) still unsure of their future career within  
19 policing (ibid.,). Nearly 90% of respondents participants (11 female, 5 male)  
20 report an increase in confidence in applying for the police service, with slightly  
21 over 10% (2 female) being unsure if completing the CKP increased their  
22 confidence (Pepper and McGrath, 2015).  
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26 One year later graduating following a three-year BSc (Hons) Crime and  
27 Investigation degree (including the CKP in their second year), of the 28 initial  
28 participants who studied the CKP, 25 participants (18 female, 7 male) once  
29 again completed a questionnaire. At this time, just over 58% (8 female, 6  
30 male) of participants aspired to be police officers, with slightly under 33% (8  
31 female) still undecided and unsure of a future policing career. Interestingly, of  
32 those responding slightly fewer than 50% (9 female, 3 male) reported applying  
33 to join the police service at the time of the data collection. One question  
34 specifically asked about alternate careers considered by participants at the  
35 point of graduation. Participants reported the military police, crime scene  
36 investigation, HM revenue and customs and the prison service. When asked  
37 about outcomes of the CKP, 100% of participants (18 female, 7 male)  
38 reported an increase in personal confidence in the event of applying to join  
39 the police service. Interestingly, when asked the main benefit of completing  
40 the CKP only 60% (5 male, 10 female) reported an increase in subject  
41 knowledge.  
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44 At this time all participants were asked to indicate their willingness to  
45 participate in a further follow-up interview twelve months later.  
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47 A year after graduating four of the original participants who consented to be  
48 contacted were interviewed. Attempts had been made to follow up all those  
49 who had earlier indicated willingness for further involvement, the sample size  
50 being reduced by some participants withdrawing from further engagement,  
51 others having changed contact details thus preventing further communication.  
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54 Whilst acknowledging the somewhat reduced sample size, the interviews  
55 revealed that one of the participants had applied and been accepted by the  
56 police service with a start date in the near future, a second was in the initial  
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3 stages of the recruitment process, a third had applied and been unsuccessful  
4 and the fourth had decided on an alternate career away from policing. All four  
5 interviewees found some aspects of the CKP useful in applying for either the  
6 police service or an alternate job, with one commenting that it gave them a  
7 good knowledge base for interview and a second recommending others  
8 should definitely study the CKP. One respondent did comment how they didn't  
9 enjoy studying the volume of course work taught within the CKP.  
10

11 The three special constables questioned with regards to their thoughts on the  
12 CKP and its usefulness to them as a volunteer, were also graduates.  
13 Interviewee 1 (male) hadn't studied the CKP within their course, interviewee 2  
14 (male) studied the CKP at university and interviewee 3 (female) studied the  
15 CKP with both a private provider as part of their initial specials training (not  
16 accredited by higher education) and also within their university course. The  
17 interviewees commented:  
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19  
20 Interviewee 1

21 "If that [the CKP] was available when I was taking option modules, it would  
22 definitely have been a choice that I would have looked into carefully, because  
23 you can see its beneficial with the role you wanna go into".  
24

25  
26 Interviewee 2

27 "With things like the CKP, you tend to just spend, just one or two lectures on  
28 it, ..... obviously when you are with the police [undergoing specials training]  
29 you do a whole weekend or two weekends covering a subject"  
30 "It [the CKP] sort of makes you realise what you need to know, the important  
31 parts you need to revise and which bits, that I am not going to say put by the  
32 wayside, but you are going to use less commonly"  
33

34  
35 Interviewee 3

36 "They [the two versions of CKP course studied] were totally different, it was a  
37 totally different experience altogether"  
38 "The initial one that I done with being a special was a four hour webinar once  
39 a week"  
40 "What we had at University was a taught session, but then a knowledge check  
41 ... what they normally do in training"  
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44 **Insert figure 1.**  
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## 49 **Discussion and the future of police education**

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51 The small scale longitudinal research project suggests that completion of the  
52 CKP embedded within a higher education degree may have had influence on  
53 learners by increasing their confidence to make applications to join the police  
54 service at that moment in time. However, with the confidence of learners  
55 continuing to increase as they completed their degrees, it becomes unclear if  
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3 the increased confidence can be fully attributed to the CKP or other external  
4 factors such as their continued skills development as part of their career-  
5 related studies.  
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7 The research also suggests that studying the CKP increases the number of  
8 individuals aspiring to join the police service, particularly during the final year  
9 of their studies, so again there may well be external factors affecting the  
10 learner's responses. However, after graduating the small sample involved in  
11 the research all felt the CKP had been useful to them when applying for jobs.  
12 The comment referring to the high quantity of work within the CKP was also  
13 reflected upon by a special constable. Of the three special constables  
14 questioned, one who had studied the CKP thought it was beneficial to them  
15 and their volunteering whilst highlighting the differences in how a module is  
16 taught within a university setting compared to police training, one special  
17 constable, who had not studied the CKP, thought it would have been  
18 beneficial to have had opportunity to study it as part of their course, and the  
19 third highlighted the great differences in delivery methods between two  
20 different CKP providers.  
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23 The research suggests that the CKP is useful as an introduction to policing, it  
24 develops an interest in the police service and at least start to develop the  
25 confidence of learners in their own ability to apply to join the service. There  
26 may however be much wider influences which impact on a learner's interest,  
27 confidence and employability. The volume of material taught during the CKP  
28 and the lack of opportunities for work experience is a concern highlighted.  
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31 By implication, a much longer and well-constructed higher educational  
32 programme, which goes far beyond the CKP as an 'Introductory module',  
33 could do much to develop a pool of future police officers to join the profession  
34 of policing. Larson (1990) suggests a profession can be structurally defined as  
35 a link between both knowledge and professional practice, set within a  
36 hierarchical education and occupational system. Such a definition of a  
37 profession would seem to fit this model of police higher education. The  
38 research also goes some way to support the National Police Chiefs Council  
39 (2018) who suggest that the introduction of the PEQF will provide a formal  
40 standard of education, which will assist in building a profession and assurance  
41 to the public and the other professionals with whom the police service works  
42 on a multi-agency basis.  
43  
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45 The College of Policing will phase out the CKP as a qualification by 2020, by  
46 which time the PEQF will be established within the police service, offering a  
47 portfolio of three entry routes for the police constable (College of Policing,  
48 2018<sup>(a)</sup>). None of the routes appear to incorporate opportunity for Recognition  
49 of Prior Learning (RPL) for those who have studied the CKP, although there is  
50 potential for recognition of practical skills development by those having also  
51 undertaken the voluntary role of special constable.  
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54 The first route is a College of Policing approved and licensed, individual  
55 student funded undergraduate pre-join knowledge-based programme the Pre-  
56 Join Degree in Professional Policing. The licensed programme would take a  
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3 learner three years' full-time study to complete a specifically named honours  
4 degree. On completion of the degree, graduates need to apply to join the  
5 police service.  
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7 The second, a degree apprenticeship (called the Police Constable Degree  
8 Apprenticeship) leads to a named honours degree. Degree apprenticeships  
9 are funded by either single or collaborations of police forces who recruit new  
10 officers who are then paid to work, complete training and study within higher  
11 education over their three years' probation to be confirmed as a police officer.  
12 Numbers for this route to employment and a degree are bound to be limited,  
13 but the opportunities and benefits to both the individual learner and the  
14 partner organisations involved, in this largely workbased learning, are high.  
15 Both of these routes will lead to the learner graduating with a level six honours  
16 degree in Professional Policing.  
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18

19 Finally, there is a graduate conversion course, the Degree Holder Entry  
20 Programme, for existing graduates of any academic discipline enabling them  
21 to study a set curriculum mapped to the PEQF. Once recruited to the police  
22 service, Graduates will study this curriculum over a period of two years to  
23 equip them for their role.  
24

25 The curriculum for each route is similar in terms of the knowledge elements,  
26 to ensure a common level of learning is achieved, including the topic of  
27 Evidence-Based policing.  
28

29 The common theme throughout is that new 'qualified' police officers will be  
30 graduates and they will have studied a standard curriculum through to level  
31 six on the FHEQ. Brown et al (2018) discusses how the PEQF can only be  
32 effective to continue to develop the profession of policing, if it can itself evolve  
33 as required and be informed by a wide range of research methods  
34 underpinned by academic theory.  
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37 It must however be acknowledged that it is very unlikely that all graduates  
38 through these educational routes will be recruited, or retained, by the service  
39 as new police officers. Crawford et al (2016) identify that 11% of officers who  
40 resigned from the police service had less than 2 year's experience, whilst also  
41 noting that resignations generally were associated with stronger employment  
42 markets and hence potentially better employment conditions. As the research  
43 into the CKP suggests, whilst studying there is an increased interest in joining  
44 the police service as an officer. It is therefore imperative that those entering  
45 the programmes of study understand the importance and transferability of  
46 their graduate level skills to other non-police officer roles within the police  
47 service and beyond.  
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49

50 Although those teaching such higher educational programmes have a great  
51 deal of professional knowledge, arguably such a knowledge base helps define  
52 the profession, there are obviously differences in the focus of academics and  
53 those teaching the practical elements (Becher, 1990). In order to embed the  
54 importance of both education and training, Wood and Tong (2009) emphasise  
55 the need for effective work-based support in order to maximise the learning  
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3 opportunities. The best way to embed such studies being a merging of both  
4 academic and employability focused learning (McCowan, 2015). When  
5 researching students studying professionally accredited Royal Institute of  
6 Chartered Surveyors (RICS) courses, Poon and Brownlow (2015) identify  
7 the importance of enabling learners to apply their new knowledge and  
8 skills in practical situations, these could be real or simulated, such  
9 practical applications of learning being particularly important where there  
10 is a defined career outcome for the study. Both students and employers  
11 also acknowledge the value of work-based experiences as a means of  
12 enhancing employability (Tibby, 2012). The College of Policing (2018<sup>(b)</sup>)  
13 themselves acknowledge the value of learners gaining practical  
14 professional experience as special constables whilst studying the three  
15 year full-time licenced degree in Professional Policing.  
16

17  
18 Degree apprenticeships will, by their nature, facilitate such exposure to the  
19 workplace. However, this is far more challenging for those students who enroll  
20 on the three year full-time honours pre-join degree in professional policing. As  
21 forces will not be in a position, either in terms of resources or finances, to  
22 support large numbers of special constable recruitment. Tibby (2012) reports  
23 how in some sectors there are limited opportunities for work experience. As a  
24 result alternate options for volunteering within the wider criminal justice  
25 community should be explored and acknowledged as assisting in the  
26 development of employability appropriate for policing in a multi-agency  
27 context. Such work experiences will also assists in the embedding of the new  
28 knowledge and skills so many of those involved in the CKP research found of  
29 value in building their confidence.  
30

31  
32 Wood and Tong (2009) also suggest that one of the challenges to educating  
33 and training police officers within a university setting, is the ongoing need to  
34 abstract learners from the workplace, in the case of the higher degree  
35 apprenticeship, the suggestion is that this should be in the region of 20% of  
36 the time. However, recruiting new officers from a pool of individuals who have  
37 completed a self-funded, College of Policing approved honours degree,  
38 removes the need for officer abstraction and should mean that with additional  
39 workbased support the individuals should become operational resources  
40 much quicker and forces will save money on officer education. It is in this  
41 arena that future longitudinal research should be focused when measuring the  
42 impact of the PEQF on the police officer workforce.  
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## 47 **Conclusion**

48  
49 It is suggested that, although beneficial to those aspiring to join the police  
50 service, the CKP was only an initial step evolved by the professional body for  
51 the police service, The College of Policing, as an educational programme to  
52 meet the needs of the service. This concept has now evolved much further to  
53 encompass a full honours degree in professional policing mapped to the  
54 PEQF, a positive step in the evolution of policing as a profession.  
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3 The small scale longitudinal research project suggests that employability  
4 focused modules, such as the CKP, assist not only in the development of  
5 interest in roles within policing but in the development of an individuals  
6 confidence in their ability to apply for such a role. The research, although  
7 limited, indicates that the knowledge acquired through their studies assists  
8 individuals in gaining their employment. Consideration should also be given to  
9 providing learners with some experience of the broader criminal justice  
10 workplace in order to provide a context for the learning, and to enhance  
11 understanding of workplace opportunities available in this sector.  
12

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14 There were concerns raised over the volume of work to be covered by  
15 learners completing the CKP, hopefully the anticipated three-year degree with  
16 opportunities for the development of knowledge, understanding and skills for  
17 policing will address this concern.  
18

19 The Quality Assurance Agency (2014) suggest that a honours degree should  
20 equip graduates to enable them to complete appropriate professional training.  
21 Whilst acknowledging that there are different policing priorities and needs  
22 within police forces, it is imperative that the approach to police education and  
23 training is standardised across the whole service. Honours degrees mapped  
24 to the PEQF appear to be an appropriate way forward.  
25

26 Poon and Brownlow (2015) identify the importance of the employer being  
27 involved in the design of the curriculum as well as their involvement in the  
28 whole teaching process including lectures, visits and work based  
29 experiences. Andrews and Russell (2012) identify that a recurring theme from  
30 their research into employability was the ability to predict the future needs of  
31 employers. As such it is imperative that the PEQF continues to be reviewed  
32 and updated in partnership between the police service and higher education  
33 in order to provide an evidence base ensuring the most appropriate  
34 professional education and training to meet the needs of a policing profession.  
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#### 38 Recommendations:

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41 Whichever route of higher educational study is chosen; it is imperative that  
42 opportunities for exposure to the workplace are embedded within the  
43 curriculum in order to provide a context for learning and prepare learners for a  
44 role in the police service.  
45

46 The National Policing Curriculum has been developed by the College of  
47 Policing to ensure required knowledge is contained within the course of study  
48 (Pre-Join Degree in Professional Policing or Police Constable Degree  
49 Apprenticeship). Those involved in its delivery must design learning  
50 programmes which ensure a balanced content, avoiding an overload of  
51 information, whilst incorporating learning for the real world of policing.  
52

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54 Further research is crucial to the evolution of the PEQF to measure its impact  
55 on the development of the police as a profession and the employability of  
56 students.  
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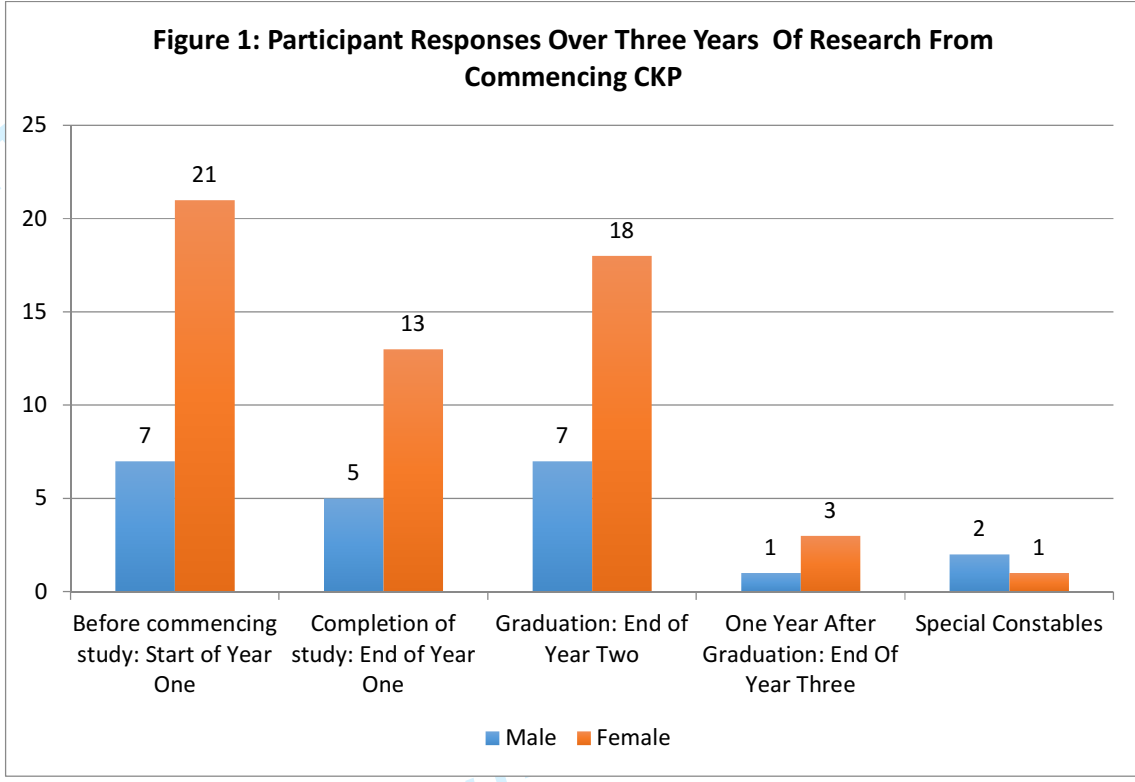
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