



College of
Policing



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer



Guiding principles for organisational leadership

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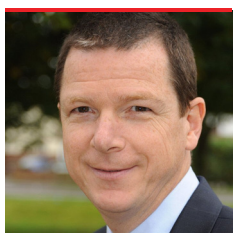
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1 Foreword



In the Leadership Review, published in June 2015, the College of Policing set out the case for change in the way we equip those working in policing with leadership skills and knowledge. Policing faces economic challenges, shifting demographics, rising citizen expectations, rapid technological advances and the arrival of the internet as a social space. Taken together, these trends are driving rapid complexity and change. To meet the challenges ahead, it's more important than ever that the police embed consistent professional practice that is ethically based and informed by evidence.

Leadership sits at the heart of what it means to practise as a professional. The principles set out in this document describe themes that are important to good organisational leadership. Having a common understanding of the principles laid out in this document and how they could be implemented should improve the quality of organisational leadership across the police service. They've been developed in collaboration with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and a wide range of people working across policing. In future, they should be informed by research on 'what works' and supported by examples of good practice. These examples can come from forces and from other public and private sector organisations.

Delivering great leadership is far from the sole preserve of those at the top of the organisation. It exists across all ranks, grades and roles and can be described at different levels: individual, operational, senior and organisational. Alongside these organisational principles the College of Policing is working to support the profession in other ways including establishing a leadership development framework at all ranks and grades, implementing a model of continuing professional development (CPD) and supporting officers and staff in achieving recognition and accreditation of their learning and skills.

Of course, there is no single style of leadership, either individual or organisational, that achieves success. Different leaders handle situations in line with their own style. There are times when leadership crosses with management, so aspects of both are covered in the principles. If we can get the balance right, we'll improve the quality of our service to the public.

It is important to note the principles are not intended to be a check list for forces. The College, NPCC and HMIC will use them to support different ways of working with the police service to understand, develop and display effective leadership. While some forces may share similar needs and practices, differences will also exist. The principles are intended to embrace and support those differences.

The principles provide guidance on what good leadership looks like in an organisation and help forces develop an inspirational and compelling vision for its support and delivery. Ultimately, while the principles are intended to inform how forces approach leadership, it's only forces and leaders themselves who can make them a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Marshall'.

Chief Constable Alex Marshall

2 Introduction

Following the publication of the Leadership Review, these principles were developed through collaboration between the College of Policing, the NPCC and HMIC. The aim was to support police forces by developing a shared understanding of good organisational leadership in a policing context.

To create the principles, the College held a series of engagement events to draw input from those working in policing, particularly in organisational and learning and development roles. We also invited feedback from groups including:

- Police Federation of England and Wales
- Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales
- Home Office
- National Crime Agency
- chief constables
- Chief Police Officers' Staff Association
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
- police and crime commissioners
- Police Foundation
- Unison
- Association of Special Constabulary Chief Officers
- British Association of Women in Policing
- National Disabled Police Association
- National Association of Muslim Police
- National Black Police Association
- National LGBT police network.

The principles are relevant for senior leaders in policing who can determine the basis and structure of leadership in their organisations. They will also be of interest to those who aspire to senior leadership positions.

For all those working in policing, particularly in organisational and learning and development roles, the principles can show what they should expect of their organisation. The principles provide a reference point for national organisations such as HMIC and the NPCC as they support organisational leadership.

Over time, the principles will be supported by a range of examples to illustrate good practice.

3 The guiding principles structure

There are nine **guiding principles** structured across three themes:

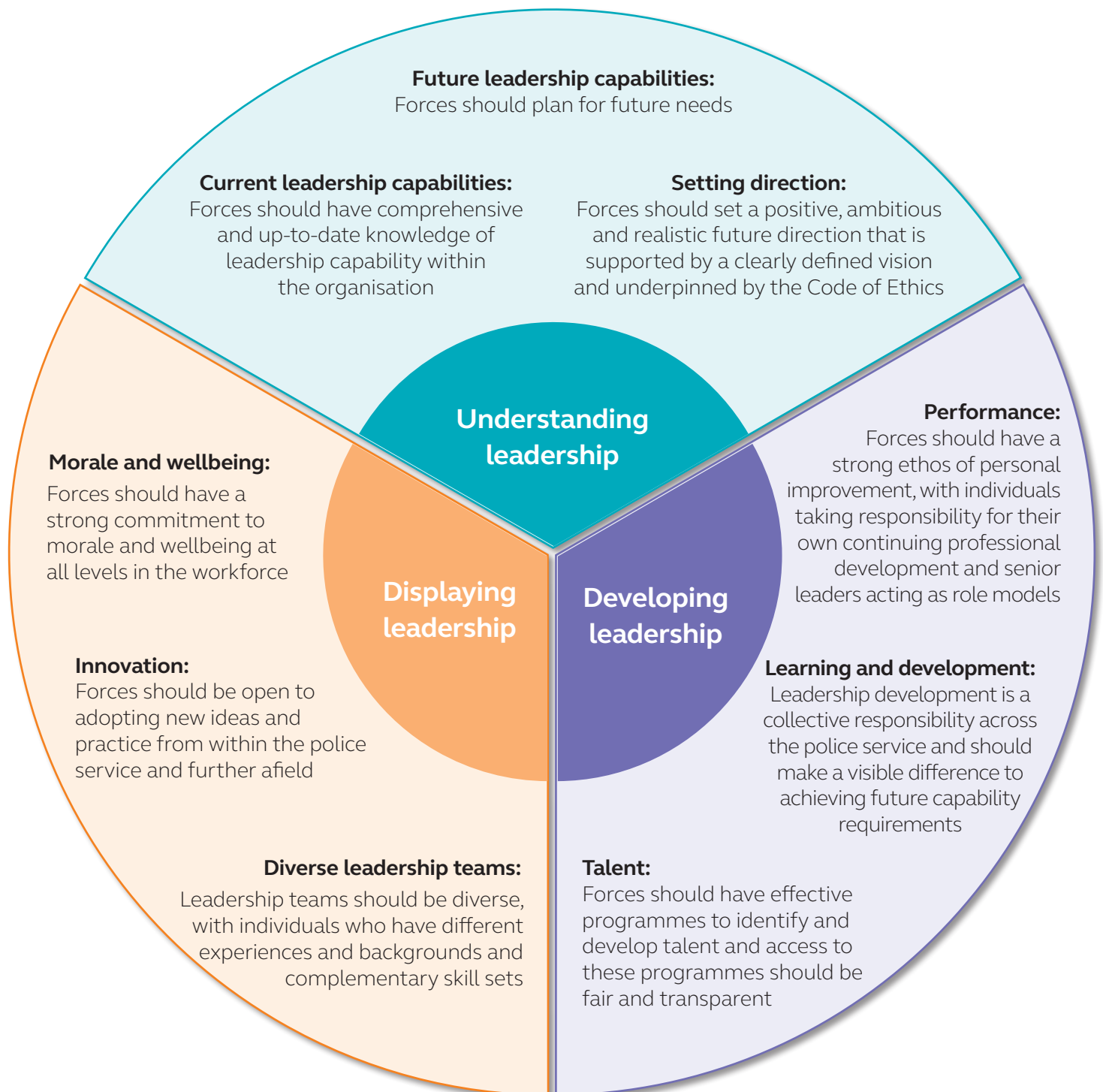
- Understanding leadership
 - Current leadership capabilities
 - Future leadership capabilities
 - Setting direction
- Developing leadership
 - Performance
 - Learning and development
 - Talent
- Displaying leadership
 - Morale and wellbeing
 - Innovation
 - Diverse leadership teams.

For each principle this document describes:

- what is meant by the principle
- what can assist in achieving the principle
- the potential sources of evidence that might illustrate that the principle is being achieved.

The document uses the terms 'should' and 'will' to describe actions that forces can take. Where the document uses 'should', this indicates a suggestion, whereas 'will' is only a description.

Guiding principles for organisational leadership



3.1 Understanding leadership: current leadership capabilities

Forces should have comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge of leadership capability within the force

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Senior leaders should have a clear understanding of expected leadership capabilities, for example, by benchmarking against national standards and data. Senior leaders should ensure that there are fair and effective systems for gathering data on leadership strengths and development needs at each rank and grade.

- These systems include using psychometric and 360° tools at an individual level, and staff survey data at a team and organisational level.
- Performance measures and capability will consider both quantitative and qualitative data.

Forces should use data about leadership capability to improve organisational, team and individual performance. This includes making decisions about appointments to all leadership positions and placing officers and staff across the force. Those leaders should act as role models and should be visible and accessible at all levels, allowing them to share and promote good leadership practice.

More advanced forces will have a number of complementary approaches to developing their understanding of force leadership capability. These approaches can include collaborating to encourage and build understanding of 'what works' in developing leadership capability.

Forces should also plan and assess ways to develop personal, professional and business skills, creating a learning culture in the force.

- Professional skills include command, counter terrorism preparedness or specialisation in crime areas such as cybercrime and child sexual exploitation.
- Personal skills include developing self-awareness, leadership styles, learning from a joint public sector approach to leadership development, organisational development and methods to secure ethical leadership. Forces should also develop an understanding of capabilities in empathy, compassion and emotional intelligence, and how these support future thinking.
- Business skills include highly effective commercial skills, knowledge of information technology and how to exploit it for business benefit, programme and change management and using data to effectively map demand.



Potential sources of evidence

Effective use of diagnostic tools to understand individual, team and organisational effectiveness and areas of development. These tools include psychometric testing, 360° feedback and analysis, staff surveys with a comprehensive follow-up action plan, and a sound understanding of the health and wellbeing of the force through data sources such as surveys and attendance data.

Evidence of highly effective systems that have created an organisational climate which all officers and staff consider to be fair and transparent in relation to assessing leadership capability.

Evidence of organisational failure and how risk is managed. For instance, evidence around the support available to ensure the appropriate level of risk taking.

3.2 Understanding leadership: future leadership capabilities

Forces should plan for future needs

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Forces should have the right skills and knowledge in place to lead beyond organisational boundaries and traditional hierarchies. They should have access to development activities and business improvement models that provide access to opportunities with partners and wider cross-sector groups.

This collaboration will develop the leadership capacity of the whole organisation and improve the skills of leaders operating in complex networks. The College of Policing will support this approach by developing a new model for leadership development and management training.

The College's new leadership development model will be based on a concept of 70:20:10 learning and development (Arets, Jennings and Heijnen 2015, Rosset and Schafer 2007). The model emphasises learning 'on the job' rather than through classroom-based programme attendance.

Development activities could help prepare forces to anticipate the effect of new technology on their work and utilise new systems to their advantage. Activities could also develop knowledge of ethical leadership approaches. This allows the workforce to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and helps senior leaders demonstrate that they welcome challenge.

Working with other forces and cross-sector partners can improve insight into future planning needs. Wider partnership working will require skills of influence and persuasion as well as skills in building and maintaining relationships.

Potential sources of evidence

A description and analysis of relevant future capabilities.

A culture that supports CPD at all levels. A clear strategic and operational workforce plan to recruit and/or develop skills required in the future, such as digital skills and flexible approaches to rapid change.

A link between development activities and future capabilities, including how the force assesses and develops talent.

An understanding of how advanced practitioners (currently being piloted by the College and forces) or other new ways of working/roles are being designed and deployed.

Evidence of planning for future change could involve using structured and well-evidenced models for change and collaborating with other forces and wider cross-sector groups.

3.3 Understanding leadership: setting direction

Forces should set a positive, ambitious and realistic future direction that is supported by a clearly defined vision and underpinned by the Code of Ethics

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Senior leaders should set future direction in collaboration with stakeholders, including the public, in line with the strategic priorities of the police and crime commissioner, and ensure that these are translated into a strongly shared common purpose across and beyond the force. Officers and staff should feel inspired in being part of this future direction and understand the part it plays.

In order for forces to meet future challenges, some approaches should be consistently implemented and evaluated across the whole of the police service. For example, the values articulated in the Code of Ethics should be evident in every force. They should be clearly seen in all recruitment, selection and promotion processes, reflecting a fair and transparent approach. This might include involving other non-policing partners in selection processes.

A shared understanding of the future direction will clearly link to expectations of actions, behaviours and values at all ranks and grades. Forces should also have effective ways to provide challenge, enabling views and opinions to be freely fed upwards with evidence of action.

Potential sources of evidence

A clearly articulated leadership commitment describing the sense of direction and purpose for the force.

A communication and engagement plan that demonstrates that the whole force is involved in understanding and contributing to the future direction and purpose involved, including opportunities to feedback to leaders across the organisation.

The Code of Ethics should be embedded across the force by inclusion in all decision-making processes, including recruitment, selection and promotion. Leaders should be open to external audit, inspection and feedback.

3.4 Developing leadership: performance

Forces should have a strong ethos of personal improvement, with individuals taking personal responsibility for their own continuing professional development and senior leaders being role models

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Leaders have an important responsibility in being role models for improvement and setting and displaying the right standards of behaviour across the force. They should show how their Continuing Professional Development reflects and will benefit the future needs of the force.

A strong ethos of improvement should exist as part of a healthy organisational culture, with well-defined and well-implemented development processes at each rank and grade.

Forces should recognise that improved leadership performance can also lead to improved organisational performance. They should have a clear method to classify and assess performance, role requirements and personal qualities, consistent with force objectives, future direction and leadership culture. This method could include the new competency and values framework.

Forces should also have clear business improvement models to help identify and remove unnecessary bureaucracy, inconsistency and/or duplication and waste.

Forces should move away from a target-driven culture to a more qualitative model which allows individuals to use their discretion, while drawing on an evidence base of 'what works'. They should prioritise meeting the needs of the public over purely numerical targets.

Forces should be able to exhibit evidence of holding regular meetings at all levels to discuss progress towards individual performance objectives and the added value this approach has brought.

Potential sources of evidence

Robust ways of assessing performance.

Up-to-date and comprehensive register of progress towards CPD objectives for the whole workforce.

Evidence of the value of managing performance for individuals and the force.

3.5 Developing leadership: learning and development

Leadership development is a collective responsibility across the police service and should make a visible difference to achieving future capability requirements

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Forces should understand the value of learning and development in contributing towards the force's required capabilities and helping officers and staff develop to meet these goals in a changing environment.

Development opportunities should be well-publicised, easy to access and available for all ranks and grades, according to need. Lateral development through horizontal career pathways that recognise professional expertise independent of seniority will become increasingly important to respond to the changing demands and complexities of police work. The College is working on skills and knowledge criteria for advanced practitioners, which may increase the development options offered.

More advanced forces will exhibit high rates of participation across an array of learning and development opportunities, moving away from a primary focus on classroom based models of learning. Development opportunities should include working with other public or private sector partners, including academic institutions and the College of Policing.

Personal responsibility and a commitment to personal growth should feature in every aspect of leadership development. The force should have specific programmes and tools to support individuals on their journey, resulting in more effective leadership across the organisation.

Leaders should be supported in developing other leaders. All leaders should recognise and prioritise the important role they have in developing others in their force.



Potential sources of evidence

Direct links between development opportunities and future workforce capabilities.

A prioritised force-wide development plan to address force capability gaps and capitalise on force capability.

Effective working with other partners to ensure diversity of thought. Development models that reflect a 70:20:10 approach, with emphasis on learning through 'on the job' development opportunities that are shown to make a difference.

High participation and engagement in a comprehensive and accessible range of development opportunities, across all ranks and grades.

Leaders take an active role in mentoring and coaching others. They help others to develop skills and the confidence to improve themselves and their performance through reflective practice.

CPD plans are used regularly across the workforce to support individual professional growth.

Activities might include action learning sets, drop-in development sessions, master classes, secondments, shadowing, workplace placements and exchanges.

Support for academic qualifications and working with academic institutions.

Feedback from a variety of places, eg, staff associations, trade unions and networks to stimulate continuous improvement.

Regular evaluations of development and leadership opportunities.

3.6 Developing leadership: talent

Forces should have effective programmes to identify and develop talent – access to these should be fair and transparent

What can assist in achieving the principle?

More advanced forces will have a clear definition of what is meant by ‘talent’. They will have put in place systems and processes to identify talent at each rank and grade and attract talent from outside the force. They will have talent management processes to identify where that talent would be of most value.

Talent management activities should include an element of self-assessment, while mentoring and coaching should be central to developing talent within the force.

Forces should assess and overcome barriers to participation and show how diversity is welcomed and exploited to the benefit within the force. Their talent management processes should be open, transparent, fair and understood throughout the force.

Forces should be able to display how they are increasing diversity of thought by building on the capabilities of the existing workforce as well as bringing in people with different experiences and skills and from under-represented backgrounds. This includes those with characteristics protected by the Equality Act, but also from diverse career backgrounds.

Potential sources of evidence

A clear understanding by the force of the type of talent it needs for the future, supporting future capability requirements and succession planning.

Formal management of talent development, which might include a range of programmes and activities that are strengthened by self-assessment and peer and reverse mentoring.

A clear understanding by the workforce of the routes and selection processes to become part of the talent programme.

Diversity of thought through a wide range of experiences, backgrounds and skills in the workforce. Forces might use their BME Progression 2018 action plans as a source of evidence, as well as local initiatives and strategies they have around attracting, recruiting and managing talent.

3.7 Displaying leadership: morale and wellbeing

Forces should have a strong commitment to morale and wellbeing at all levels in the workforce

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Senior leaders should have mechanisms in place to analyse and understand their workforce morale and wellbeing, enabling them to take appropriate actions. They should make this information easily accessible to officers and staff and use it to drive improvements.

This understanding should include causes of long-term sickness, absence rates, prevalence of physical and mental health difficulties, resilience, perceptions of team leadership, attitudes towards change and change management. It should also include an understanding of any significant variations across the force.

Force should use the Public Health England's Workplace Wellbeing Charter – National Standards. More advanced forces will have undertaken an assessment against the charter. They will have training, development and support in place across the force to effectively address health and wellbeing and have considered the link between wellbeing and their employees' conditions of service.

Leaders should be highly visible, using a variety of ways to achieve this. They should regularly engage with the workforce, possibly through focus groups, staff surveys and 'back to the floor' activities. Forces should use technology, potentially including social media, to engage with staff and improve communication at all levels across the organisation. They should then act on what they learn through these channels.

The workforce should feel empowered to challenge leaders, to foster a strong sense of organisational justice. Forces should improve perceptions of leadership and use those perceptions to drive change.

Potential sources of evidence

Actions arising from peer review, independent assessment, focus group outputs, staff surveys, social media, public question and answer sessions/leadership road shows, 360° feedback and team briefings with upward feedback.

Increased staff satisfaction and sense of empowerment, leading to improved workplace morale, lower sickness absence rates and improved productivity including the Police Federation of England and Wales wellbeing survey data.

3.8 Displaying leadership: innovation

Forces should be open to adopting new ideas and practice from within the police service and further afield

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Senior leaders should promote a culture of continuous improvement, always seeking new and different ways of working. They should have mechanisms to encourage innovative ideas and empower staff to implement them wherever possible.

Problem-solving and evidence-based approaches underpin decision-making and are important when considering adoption of new practices.

Forces should make use of learning from within their own organisation as well as from other forces and beyond, including the private, voluntary and academic sectors. They should adopt technology in an agile way, ensuring it is appropriate to an identified problem and is fit for purpose when deployed. Recruitment processes should encourage applicants with different backgrounds and experiences, including returners to policing.

Forces should make use of learning from 'what works' evidence, such as the College's Crime Reduction toolkit, and encourage their workforce to test their own ideas and share and access learning.

Forces should have processes to evaluate the effectiveness, costs and benefits of new ideas. More advanced forces will have a strong culture of learning, be open to effective evaluation and share their knowledge. They should have a system to learn from near misses and mistakes.

Potential sources of evidence

Robust evaluations to assess whether new practices taken from private, public or voluntary sector organisations have added value to the force.

Timely piloting, testing and implementation processes to maximise benefit from new technology.

Demonstration that the force invites and makes effective use of the results of external challenges.

3.9 Displaying leadership: diverse leadership teams

Leadership teams should be diverse, with individuals who have different experiences and backgrounds and complementary skill sets

What can assist in achieving the principle?

Senior leaders should consider team makeup when deciding how an organisation is structured, including multi-agency teams. Diversity and difference within teams is valued and related to complementary skills sets, different professional backgrounds, leadership style and protected characteristics.

More advanced forces should have a broad understanding of diversity in teams and the benefits it brings to the workforce, including decision making. They should have long-term strategic workforce plans to develop a diverse workforce and attract diverse talent. They could use these plans as part of the BME Progression 2018 programme and other workforce strategies.

Forces should evaluate how those with specialist professional backgrounds can contribute to areas that may need to be strengthened, such as change management and information technology.

They should also evaluate the benefits of different leadership styles and how these can make teams as effective as possible. They should have in place support and development mechanisms that increase capability and address gaps.

Forces should recognise the pros and cons of attracting those with similar perspectives, and give consideration to people who are different, have protected characteristics and/or diversity of thought and experience, so that they are viewed as legitimate as possible by their communities and workforce.



Potential sources of evidence

A robust understanding of diversity and difference in terms of experience, background and skills and how this can benefit the force in building more effective and empowered teams.

Use of strategies to bring in talent from outside the force but also promote and develop diversity of talent from within policing. This includes Police Now, direct entry processes or fast track schemes, returners and effective community engagement.

Secondment opportunities are supported to enable internal talent to develop a wider breadth of skills and experience. Forces can also attract secondees or exchanges from other sectors to bring fresh learning and perspectives to the police service.

A detailed understanding of the communities within the force area, including emerging communities, and evidence of the practical steps taken by leaders to engage with these communities.

A strategic workforce plan.

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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.

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