

1. The qualifications and standards

<p>Assessment Team:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Due to the current economic situation many Centres find that there have been changes within the assessment teams. Some centres have found that assessors who are Police Officers have been returned to front line policing duties and have been required to carry out assessment of candidates in addition to these duties. This has put some strain on assessors and meant that they may not have had the same amount of time to commit to assessing candidates as they previously had done. Almost all centres have seen a reduction in their assessors and verifiers as the organisations in which the centre sits have had to make cuts and streamline activities. Despite these issues, external verifiers have seen ongoing support for candidates and commented: '<i>Contact time and support from assessor was excellent.</i>' (EV Report) and candidates in interview have commented: '<i>she was provided with excellent support throughout this time.</i>' (Candidate comment)</p> <p>The majority of assessors and verifiers within centres are still qualified with the appropriate qualifications however centres are taking the opportunity presented by the assessment strategy that allows assessors and verifiers to be trained rather than qualified in their respective roles. This has not made any obvious impact on the quality of the assessment process.</p> <p>All candidates have received an induction into the requirements of the qualification. This usually takes place during the taught phase of their training programme and is also revisited when they meet their assessor for the first time.</p> <p>Candidates are being advised about relevant policies and</p>
--------------------------------	--

	<p>procedures including the Centre Appeals Policy although EV's have not reported any appeals during the year. It is apparent that any issues with assessment decisions are resolved at an early stage between assessor and candidate without the need for a formal appeal being made.</p>
<p>Resources:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Centres are providing assessors and verifiers with the necessary resources to carry out the assessment function. Candidates are also provided with access to computers where assessment is completed on-line or portfolios where these are preferred. Digital recorders are provided by centres to facilitate the recording of various aspects of the assessment process.</p> <p>Centre documentation with which to record assessment decisions or other forms of evidence is available to all involved in the assessment process.</p> <p>Centres are using a variety of approaches to e-portfolios and e-assessment systems. Some are commercially purchased systems, bespoke systems provided by external organisations or secure in house computer based evidence storage systems. EV's are often provided with remote access to these systems to enable up front sampling if necessary and are generally able to navigate them in order to sample and audit trail the assessment and verification process. Centres have had to ensure that the system they use is secure and virus free in order to protect organisational systems and the data stored on them.</p> <p>There are still centres producing paper based portfolios. These are now more streamlined with product evidence being retained in the workplace although there are still examples of photocopied evidenced in portfolios when signposting of that evidence would suffice.</p>
<p>Candidate Support:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Candidates interviewed by external verifiers during visits indicate a satisfaction with the assessment process and support they receive. Candidates have usually been very happy with the ongoing and effective support from their assessors whilst recognising that assessors have other demands on their time and skills, particularly due to reorganisation of assessment and verifier teams.</p> <p><i>'She said that she had had a really positive assessment experience. She was very happy with the support she had received from her assessor.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'I have had regular contact with my assessor who works on my shift. He had given me some good advice and guidance to get me through.'</i> (Candidate)</p>

	<p>Assessment planning is a regular activity with some candidates and assessors meeting every 4 / 5 weeks to review and plan further assessment. External Verifiers have seen support for candidates by Internal Verifiers including interviewing them about their assessment experience.</p>
<p>Assessment and Verification:</p>	<p>Findings: External Verifiers saw that assessors are using a wide range of assessment methods throughout the assessment process. Observations were being used on a regular basis and EVs have seen an increase in this method of assessment over the years. In addition to observations, effective use is being made of witness testimony, examination of product evidence and professional discussion. It has been seen that less reliance is being placed on candidate statements which has allowed the candidate to focus on their development as a Police Officer. Discussions with assessors have shown there is an increasing awareness of holistic assessment and its benefits for assessors and candidates alike with assessors seeking opportunities to observe candidates carrying out a policing activity that covers a number of units.</p> <p>Centres continue to take the opportunity presented by the assessment strategy for the Policing qualifications to evidence the knowledge aspects of the qualification prior to the assessment process taking place. This is done by a range of means such as examination, knowledge checks, written work and observed role plays. Assessors are still confirming knowledge during assessment activities whilst not formally recording that checking process. Centres are also training assessors to the required standard rather than qualifying them with a relevant qualification. This is allowed by the assessment strategy and does not appear to impact on the quality of the assessment process.</p> <p>Internal verification is taking place both formatively and summatively in the majority of centres with there being a range in the percentage that centres sample. Organisational reorganisation has impacted on some centres to the point that interim sampling is difficult and not as frequent as it had previously been.</p> <p>External Verifiers found that the internal verification itself was generally robust and effective.</p> <p><i>'The internal verification at this centre is regular and rigorous.'</i>(EV report)</p> <p><i>'Sampling of assessment decisions is both formative and summative and in line with the centre plan. The centre samples all assessors, candidates, units and assessment</i></p>

	<p><i>methods over time.’(EV Report)</i></p> <p>Discussions with assessors indicate that they are supported by internal verifiers who were carrying out observations of them working with candidates and providing feedback as to their performance. Candidates are also being interviewed by Internal Verifiers to establish their assessment experience. Reports seen by EV’s showed that the majority of candidates were satisfied with the assessment process and the support they had received.</p> <p>Internal Verifiers are holding standardisation meetings. Due to the nature of some organisations this is being done in a range of ways including face to face meetings, email standardisation and the verifiers meeting assessors at their place of work to discuss assessment practice.</p>
<p>Management Systems and Records:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Due to the nature of the organisation Policing Centres sit in, they tend to have effective recording systems in place to support the assessment process. There are established HR systems to record candidate details and their progress, achievement and certification. A number of the on line systems used by Centres allow assessors and candidates to track their achievement with an ‘at glance’ percentage achievement view of how far a candidate has progressed through the qualification and where there are gaps in their evidence.</p> <p>All centres have relevant policies in place to support the assessment process including access to assessment and appeals procedures. There have been no reported appeals against assessor decisions or practice that have been reported to the Internal Verifier teams. External Verifiers have not been required to become involved in any appeals during the last year.</p> <p>Centres using are using e-portfolios to both store and retain evidence or as an on-line assessment tool for the whole of the assessment process.</p>

<p>Assessment Summary:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>External Verifiers have found that Centres are generally providing a positive and effective assessment process for candidates. The changes and budget restraints affecting Centres and the Police Forces are having a direct effect upon the makeup and numbers of assessment and verification teams and where assessment is taking place. EVs have witnessed a reduction in assessor numbers and a move away from dedicated, centralised</p>
-----------------------------------	--

	<p>assessment teams to assessors moved to front line policing duties. The change in approach has resulted in less full time assessors and with those still assessing fitting their assessment activity in with their front line policing requirements and the inherent demands upon their time. Centres are working hard to manage this process and in the main are doing so successfully. This has been helped with the reduced numbers of student officers recruited and subsequent demands for assessment. As recruitment begins and the assessment demands increase Centres will need to be alert to the demands likely to be placed on already busy assessors.</p> <p>Centres continue to use a range of creative approaches to overcome assessment difficulties to ensure candidates are supported using digital and video recording and the use of on line assessment and evidence storage systems.</p> <p>Centres are generally well organised and managed and meet the requirements of external verification. There have been very few sanctions imposed this year with External Verifiers making some recommendations to improve performance. The majority of Centres delivering the policing qualifications hold DCS status.</p>
--	---

2. Sector Developments

Police Forces, together with the National Police Improvement Agency (Currently NPJA), are looking towards individuals wishing to become a Police Officer acquiring the Certificate in Policing Knowledge prior to joining. This qualification, it is hoped, will provide individuals with a level of knowledge on key legislation and police procedures prior to joining, thereby providing a cost saving for forces. It is likely that the qualification will be delivered by private training providers and universities. There are already a number of universities that provide a foundation degree related to policing and it is likely that this qualification will be included as an optional module within their degree programmes.

After a number of years of either drastically reducing or stopping recruitment Police Forces have started to recruit small numbers of officers. Some of these are from the current numbers of PCSOs and Special Constabulary already employed by forces but there has also been external recruitment. It is likely therefore, that there will be an increase in the number of candidates registered for the Diploma in Policing.