

Policing Education  
& Qualifications  
Framework: Innovations  
in Access and Widening  
Participation



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# What we will cover

- Police Education & Qualifications Framework (PEQF) overview
- Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)
- Step Up to Policing
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

# Police Education & Qualifications Framework (PEQF) Overview



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# PEQF

- Introduced by College of Policing in 2017 - [Policing education qualifications framework \(PEQF\) | College of Policing](#)
- Professionalisation of Policing and standardisation of entry routes and training programmes
- All new recruits must be degree-qualified
- Staffordshire University one of the first HEIs to develop and deliver PEQF programmes
- Partnership with 4 regional forces; Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia, West Midlands
- First delivered June 2019, currently over 2,000 students on-programme
- Three entry routes – Pre-Join Degree, Degree-Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) & Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)

# Three Entry Routes

## Pre-join Degree

- BSc (Hons) Professional Policing
- Validated by College of policing
- Candidates attend university of their choice and complete 3-year degree
- Upon graduation, candidates can apply to any police force (England and Wales) without the need to complete additional qualifications

# Three Entry Routes

## Degree-Holder Entry Programme (DHEP)

- Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice (Level 6)
- Candidates apply directly to the police force of their choice and must pass police recruitment process and be offered a job before being placed on the course
- Funded by the police
- Candidates must already hold a degree qualification – any subject (some degrees more appropriate than others)
- 2-year programme of on-the-job training combined with university study
- Upon completion, candidates are fully qualified to independently carry out the role of a police officer

# Three Entry Routes

## Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship

- Degree Apprenticeship (Level 6) / BSc (Hons) Professional Policing Practice
- Candidates apply directly to the police force of their choice and must pass police recruitment process and be offered a job before being placed on the course
- Funded by the Apprenticeships Levy
- Academic entry requirements – GCSE Maths and English grade C/4 or above (or Level 2 Equivalent), Level 3 qualifications equivalent to 64 UCAS points or above
- 3-year programme of on-the-job training combined with university study
- Upon completion, candidates achieve a Degree qualification and are fully qualified to independently carry out the role of a police officer

# Widening Access

- PEQF opens up access to degree study for an entire profession
- Innovation in Apprenticeships – bulk delivery
- Digital innovations to maintain delivery throughout Covid-19
- Initial concerns from police partners that requirement of entry qualifications would negatively impact the number of applications – RPEL/ Step Up to Policing innovations
- Drive by police forces to diversify their workforce – innovations in partnership working to achieve this



# Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning: RPEL



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# Traditional Apprenticeship RPEL vs. recruitment RPEL

- RPEL, RPL or APEL is often used to consider exemption from learning
- Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) is widely used across the HE sector to:
  - Evaluate an applicant's suitability to a degree programme based on the applicant's life experience, work experience and previous study, mapped to Level 3 learning outcomes.
  - Adopt a fair approach to recruitment to enable a diverse applicant pool and widen opportunity for underrepresented candidates.
- Entry requirement onto the PCDA: Level 2 Maths & English and Level 3 equating to 64 UCAS points
- Widening Participation Agenda

# How Staffordshire University are applying RPL/RPEL

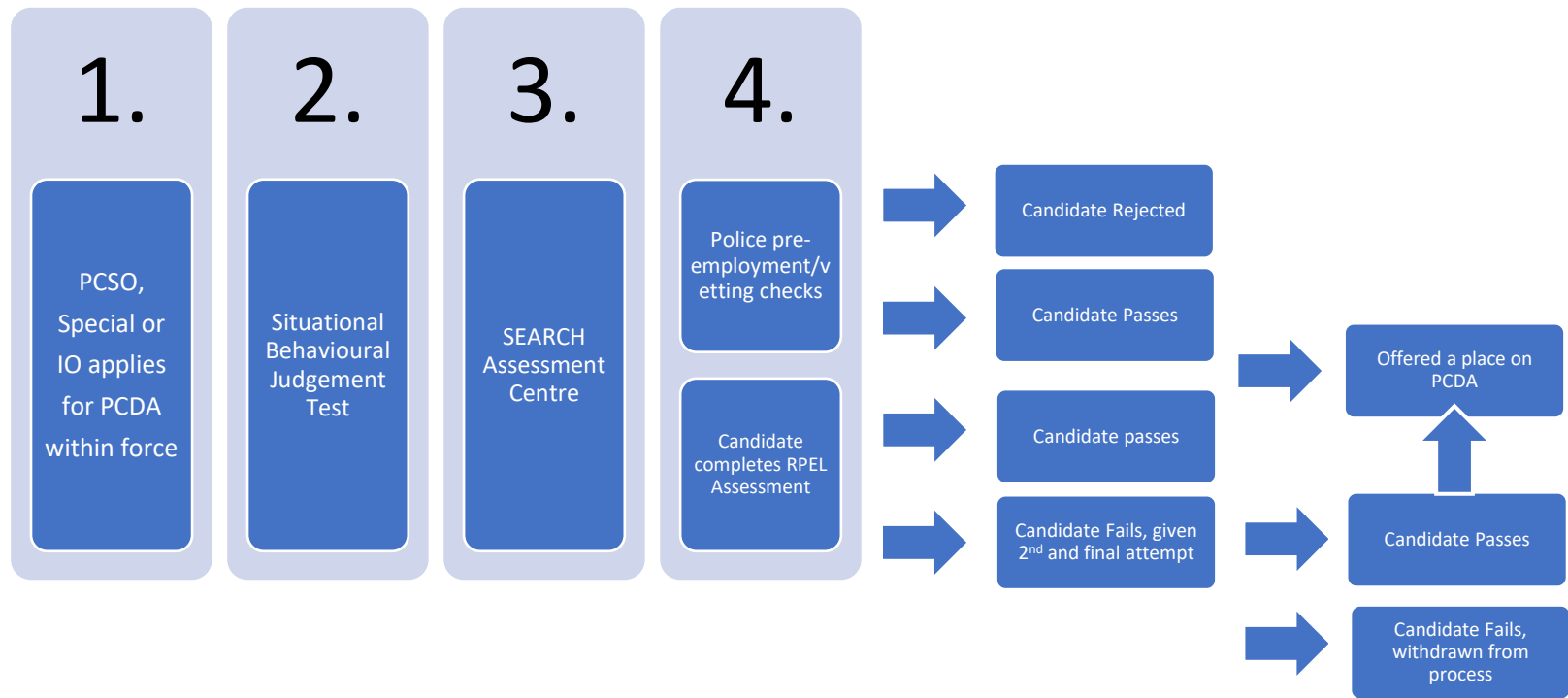
- Assessment of non-standard Level 3 qualifications at application stage

“Credit for learning which has been gained from an uncertified course (or where the certificate is in respect of attendance only) should be claimed through the RPEL route.”

University of Westminster

- Academic RPEL Assessment:

1. 1000-word assignment on policing related topic/issue
2. Candidate has 2 weeks to complete assignment and return via email
3. RPEL assignment marked within 10 working days
4. Outcome delivered to force



# Outcome and Development of RPEL

- Overall, the pass rate was 92%:
  - Unsuccessful (1) student decided to withdraw, so the reduction in pass rate was due to this and not poor academic performance at level 3.
- Current pilot of RPEL assignment available to PCSO's (who have served a minimum of 18 months in role) and Specials who have passed IPS with less than 32 UCAS points
- Current development in collaboration with our regional forces of RPEL assessment available to external candidates with extensive experience in related profession or discipline:
  - Military Services
  - Emergency Services
  - Probation Services
  - Custodial Services
- EIA revealed that limiting RPEL to internal candidates, and/or related professions, may limit the opportunities for enhancing diversity of applications.
- Consideration of online platform such as Blackboard could be used in the future to administer RPEL process.
- Recognition of RPEL assessment by other HEIs

# Step Up to Policing



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# Step Up to Policing

- Pathway to PCDA or UG Policing courses for candidates with less than 64 UCAS points
- Entry criteria – GCSE/ Level 2 Maths and English Grade C/4 or above, age 18+
- Similar to the Staffordshire University Step Up to HE course with more policing-specific content
- Develops academic skills in a policing context
- Distance-learning course
- 10 weeks delivery, 1 day a week
- 2 assessments - 15 minute recorded powerpoint presentation, 1000 word essay
- Collaborative recruitment with free places for force candidates and fee-paying places advertised on University websites
- First cohort April '21, 14 students, all passed
- Current cohort 10 students
- Future cohorts November '21, March '22
- Student Feedback & EDI Monitoring - initial results
- Future plans - Recognition of Step Up Programme by other forces/HEIs

Equality, Diversity &  
Inclusion



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# Equality Diversity and Inclusion

- Statistics show that the Police force diversity is improving however it still has a long way to go.
- Staffordshire University have and continue to support the police forces in creating avenues and resources for wider participation
- Working with underrepresented groups so that they are informed and supported in making their choices to enter into a career of policing.

## How and what we are doing

- Targeted workshop events both online and face to face across the region have been undertaken.
- Collaborative open question and answer sessions with university staff, current officers and recruitment teams within the forces have given the public opportunities to gain vital information and to allay fears and uncertainties around the recruitment processes.
- A force initiative called Step In has been developed into a digital platform

# Step In to Policing

- Step in is an initiative started by one of our partner forces which did run as a face to face process
- Step In helps anyone under the Equalities Act that identifies as Black, Asian or minority ethnic group, LGBT+ or consider themselves to have a disability.
- The support system that Step In provides can cover any or all of the below:
  - Help with your application form
  - Support with the assessment centre
  - One-to-one support throughout to provide advice and guidance - at every step of the recruitment process.
- The University was approached by this partner force to support with how the step in initiative can continue during the pandemic.
- During these uncertain times the University saw the opportunity that digital resources and platforms can create to support with the ongoing process and initiatives.
- The university began to work and adapt an online resource to create the digital Step In to policing platform.

# The Platform

The platform's main two key features – It allows 24/7 access to content and information as well as a video feedback function

How it works:

1. Applicants are given access to the Step In platform.
2. They have a force-determined amount of time to complete the scenario exercises.
3. Scenarios aim to develop skills in critical thinking, situational judgement, statement taking, public speaking, problem-solving and digital skills
4. Feedback is given to each candidate and they can then move onto the next exercise.

Benefits

1. The platform can be accessed via any device connected to the internet – including an app for phones and tablets
2. Built in screen reader to support with learning needs
3. Video feedback and support

# Feedback

The final exercise asks the candidates for feedback on how they've found the course. We want to shape the future of Step In around what works for those who need the support.

"I found it extremely useful and challenging"

"Practicing with these online assessments has given me a good insight into what you're looking for from a police officer and a good insight into how I'll be assessed."

"It has helped me to prepare, better understand and feel more comfortable coming up towards the assessment."

"I would 110% recommend that you continue to do this."

"I would like to thank you so much for giving us this opportunity."

"I didn't think it would be so enjoyable when it was suggested." "It's a great preparation tool."

# Future Developments

- Monitoring the impact of RPEL / Step Up Programmes on diversity and inclusion
- Expanding Step In programme to be used by other forces
- Looking for opportunities for additional outreach programmes