College of Policing

Direct Entry Inspector programme

Three-year evaluation report 2016 – 2019

July 2020

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Executive summary

Background and programme overview

In 2016, the College of Policing (hereafter known as the College) launched a two-year programme to directly recruit new police entrants into inspector rank and prepare them for substantive inspector roles. It was the first such attempt at directly recruiting into this rank and built on learning from the introduction of two other College programmes – Direct Entry Superintendent and Fast Track Inspector – both of which had been introduced in 2014 in response to the **Winsor Review (2011)**[1] recommendations. The Direct Entry Inspector programme has broadly similar key aims to these programmes and was specifically introduced to bring existing, exceptional leaders into the police service, with the intention of having an immediate impact on culture, efficiency and effectiveness by:

- opening up entry to the service to individuals who will bring new perspectives and diverse backgrounds to support the continuous development of policing

- providing a development programme that will ensure programme members are equipped with the necessary skills to be highly competent in the operationally critical role of inspector

- bringing into policing, officers with collective and adaptive leadership skills that will benefit the service and the public.

The programme selection and marketing methods are designed to recruit talented managers from other sectors, with strong leadership potential to progress through the ranks. On joining the programme, successful applicants immediately receive the pay and conditions, as well as wear the insignia of inspector rank. The programme combines College delivered training and on-the-job learning where recruits first work with constables and then rotate through the ranks in three-month blocks. Before graduating and taking up a substantive inspector role, members must pass all programme assessments and meet the same standard as inspectors who have come through the traditional route.

Evaluation overview

The three-year programme evaluation has focused on gathering evidence to explore how well the programme has been meeting its overarching aims[2].

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1   Winsor, T. 2011, 'Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions – Part II' available online at **library.college.police.uk/docs/Winsor-Part2-vol1.pdf**

2   Fieldwork and analysis for the evaluation report was ongoing from programme launch in November 2016 and completed in June 2019. Data, such as number of programme members, is correct as at June 2019.

Five surveys have been completed by three cohorts of the programme, end of programme survey responses have been collected from a sample of line managers and over four hours of interviews with programme members have been conducted, together with analysis of programme recruitment data. Five chief constables and one chief officer from six participating forces were also interviewed at fieldwork end, around perceived programme benefits. Due to the later introduction of the Direct Entry Inspector programme, fieldwork has been more limited compared to the Fast Track Inspector and Direct Entry Superintendent evaluations. As of June 2019, the first cohort have graduated and two cohorts remain on the 24 month Direct Entry Inspector programme. While too early to assess the full potential of a Direct Entry programme of this nature, the three-year evaluation has allowed some important findings and learning to emerge – as highlighted in this executive summary and explained more fully in the main evaluation report below.

Along with the publication of this Direct Entry Inspector programme evaluation, the College has simultaneously published evaluation reports for the Fast Track Inspector and Direct Entry Superintendent schemes. Common learning and findings in relation to all of these programmes are highlighted in a separate 'overview paper'.

Summary of key findings

Profile of programme members

The programme has successfully recruited talented individuals into police management roles. An aim was to bring in individuals from diverse backgrounds and with diverse perspectives. Success, in this respect, is indicated by the range of prior occupations of direct entrants (including roles in: education, marketing, social care and finance) and the fact that the programme (cohorts 1 to 3) recruited nearly double the proportion of women than represented nationally at inspector rank (23 out of 54 programme members compared with 24 per cent nationally[3]). More than half of all survey respondents at the start of the programme fieldwork indicated that Direct Entry was a significant factor in them joining policing. There is room for improvement though, in terms of the programme recruiting individuals from a black and minority ethnic background – currently a similar proportion joining the programme as are represented nationally at inspector rank (three out of 54 programme members compared with 5 per

3   National Statistics Police Workforce England and Wales: 31 March 2019 available online at **gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2019**

cent nationally[4]). However, the proportion of programme members from this demographic group are lower than in national population figures.[5]

Many respondents (31 out of 36) at the start of programme fieldwork had strong prior connections to policing (in terms of work experience, volunteering or through close friends/family). Less than half of respondents (13 out of 35) had seriously considered joining the police/and or had applied to be a constable earlier in their careers. Nearly twice as many programme members (cohorts 1 to 3) had come from public or third sector rather than private sector jobs (34 members compared with 18). Recruiting more applicants from outside the public or third sector, as well as more that would not typically consider a police career or are from a black and minority ethnic background, could require extensive marketing and perhaps a longer time for the scheme to embed. To increase the proportion of individuals who identify with these backgrounds would further the achievements of the programme and contribute to the wider aim of increasing the diversity – of thought and background – in the police service.

Operational competence

The evaluation findings support the concept of being able to directly recruit into inspector rank and highlights the importance of ensuring forces commit to and implement all support requirements outlined by the College. The evaluation indicates that the general programme approach can be effective – essentially a rigorous recruitment and selection process (assessing current skills and ability as well as potential for senior officer ranks), followed by an intensive 24-month period of development and assessment before being confirmed as substantive in role.

As of June 2019, 54 individuals had started a Direct Entry Inspector programme. Only cohort 1 has completed the training and this results in 11 substantive inspectors in post across seven police forces. The second cohort are due to complete the programme in 2020 and the third in 2021.

The combination of on-the-job learning (rotating through the ranks) and work-based assessment, written assignments as well as centrally delivered learning modules and exam, has been shown to be effectual. At the point of scheme completion, cohort 1 respondents felt ready for their substantive inspector positions.

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4   ibid.

5   From the most recent national census figures (2011), 51% of the population of England and Wales was female and 14% were from a BME background. **ons.gov.uk/ peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/2011 censuskeystatisticsforenglandandwales/2012-12-11#ethnic-group**

Potential to bring new skills

The evaluation indicates, from fieldwork with the first three cohorts, that the programme recruits individuals typically with a strong desire to make a difference to people's lives and communities. They are also keen to use their previous experience and skills to support the public and those they work with. Views were more mixed among respondents around how much emphasis had been placed on them utilising skills and knowledge from their previous careers. Forces varied in terms of the extent they facilitated opportunities for programme members to apply their previous skill set in their policing role. There have been examples of programme members bringing a different leadership style or way of thinking to their role. There have also been some initial encouraging findings relating to the first cohort to complete a programme, in terms of challenging cultural norms and creating a more open and inclusive working environment for their teams. A chief constable interviewee valued the emotional intelligence and less institutionalised approach their direct entrants had, and another felt their Direct Entry inspectors had brought a different perspective and freshness to the role. Further research with the early cohorts, when they have been longer in post, would allow them the chance to reflect and look back at what they've achieved, and report on the extent they feel able to use and apply their previous skills.

Many evaluation participants are interested in ongoing career development. Among the first cohort of graduates, some are aspiring to reach senior ranks and apply for promotion, while others want to develop their skills and understanding of the inspector role before they progress. There is interest in pursuing specialisms, such as a detective route, among some programme members.

Programme costs

The cost to the College of designing, marketing, recruiting and delivering the Direct Entry Inspector programme has been £2.75 million for the three years the programme has run (2016–2019 see **Appendix 2**).

Lessons learned for implementation

The Direct Entry Inspector programme is still in its infancy, with only three cohorts having started and one cohort graduating by June 2019. The initial learning from these cohorts can help to inform further programmes and support future implementation.

Force preparation and support – in terms of line managers' support, senior officers' endorsement of the programme, and force commitment to the College requirements (eg, force rotations, work-based assessments and

mentors) has been found to be crucial in ensuring that programme members successfully complete the programme. This is especially important given the challenging nature of the two-year programme in terms of the timescales, volume and rigour of the elements, and assessments required (including: inspectors' exam, work-based assessments, in-force rotations (constable to inspector), and two 2,000–4,000 word written reports), as well as the requirement to learn the roles and regularly move team and location. Where programme members have supportive line managers, clear expectations from the force and visible senior officer endorsement, the programme appeared to be more manageable for members.

Some respondents felt that the programme communication between the College and forces could have been clearer. It varied by force and could lead to some respondents taking on responsibility for their own development on the programme.

Contents

Acknowledgements

1   Background

In 2016, the College launched a two-year programme to directly recruit new police entrants into inspector rank and prepare them for substantive inspector roles. It was the first such attempt at directly recruiting into this rank and built on learning from the introduction of two other College programmes – Direct Entry Superintendent and Fast Track Inspector – both introduced in 2014 in response to the **Winsor Review (2011)[6]** recommendations. The Direct Entry Inspector programme has similar key aims to the Fast Track and Superintendent programmes to:

- open up entry to the service to individuals who will bring new perspectives and diverse backgrounds to support the continuous development of policing

- provide a development programme that will ensure programme members are equipped with the necessary skills to be highly competent in the operationally critical role of inspector

- bring into policing, individuals with collective and adaptive leadership skills that will inspire confidence in officers, staff and the public.

Both the Direct Entry Inspector and Superintendent programmes represent a major break with tradition for policing in England and Wales. Apart from a senior officer recruitment scheme for the Metropolitan Police Service in the 1930s[7], police officers in England and Wales have traditionally been required to start their careers at constable rank. The introduction of the Direct Entry schemes triggered high profile debate – with articles and discussions on the schemes featuring in both police-specific and mainstream online and print media, as well as on social media platforms.

The new programmes (Direct Entry and Fast Track) were in accord with an aspiration set out in the College's **'Leadership Review' (2015)**[8] to enable more flexible entry, exit and re-entry into the service. The review described this as a way for policing to more easily draw in external talent and skills (in tune with Winsor's ambitions for Fast Track and Direct Entry), but also to better enable serving officers to gain outside experience and allow policing to offer greater career flexibility – with potential appeal to members of the existing workforce, as well as new recruits.

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6   Winsor, T. 2011, 'Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions – Part II' available online at **library.college.police.uk/docs/Winsor-Part2-vol1.pdf**

7   ibid. page 104.

8   College of Policing, 2015, 'Leadership Review: Recommendations for delivering leadership at all levels', available online at **college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/Promotion/the-leadership-review/Documents/Leadership_Review_Final_June-2015.pdf**

In its document **'Policing Vision 2025'**[9], the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) supported the implementation of the College Leadership Review – including acknowledgement that changes were needed around the way people entered, left and re-entered the service and noting 'many individuals now have different work and career aspirations and needs'. The document also emphasised the importance of achieving greater diversity within the police workforce, as well as attracting appropriately skilled individuals to meet future requirements. While the document did not explicitly refer to the new Direct Entry and Fast Track schemes, it helped articulate a strategy for workforce reform and one that fitted with testing new entry routes.

1.1. Overview of the Direct Entry Inspector programme

Like Fast Track inspectors and Direct Entry superintendents, Direct Entry inspectors are selected through a national recruitment process but are then employed by a participating force. The Fast Track and Direct Entry programmes consist of training modules delivered by the College and in force rotations at constable, sergeant and inspector ranks.

Both Direct Entry programmes aimed to recruit successful managers from other sectors, with strong leadership potential to progress to senior ranks. They were recruited at their target rank and immediately placed on that salary scale. This approach is different to the Fast Track Inspector scheme, which recruited at constable level based on assessed leadership and management potential. The Fast Track programme was originally launched for both serving constables and external applicants, but Direct Entry inspectors effectively replaced Fast Track external – meaning that, for inspector level, the focus for external recruitment became solely on those with management level career experience.

There have been three cohorts of Direct Entry inspectors (one each year since programme launch in November 2016) with a total of 54 people having started a Direct Entry Inspector programme as at June 2019. The first cohort graduated from the programme in January 2019, with 11 successful graduates now in substantive inspector roles, spread across seven forces. The second cohort are due to graduate in January 2020 and the third cohort in January 2021.

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9   National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), 2015, 'National Policing Vision 2025', available online at **npcc.police.uk/documents/ Policing%20Vision.pdf**

Table 1: Start dates of each cohort and number of cohort members

Cohort number	1	2	3
Year programme commenced	2016	2017	2018
Number who started the programme	17	20	17
Number who graduated from the programme	11	–	–

2   Evaluation overview

2.1 Aims and research questions

An important role for the College is the promotion of 'evidence-based policing' – the concept that all decisions, policies and procedures in policing should be based on the best available evidence. In keeping with this, the College was clear from the outset (when the concept of Direct Entry and Fast Track was first raised) that any new routes into policing would need to be evaluated. Hence, in 2014, when the Home Secretary instructed the College to develop and deliver a Fast Track Inspector scheme and a concurrent Direct Entry Superintendent programme, the College also agreed to evaluate the new programmes and produce five-year evaluation reports – which would be shared with Parliament. Following the introduction of the Direct Entry Inspector programme in 2016, the College agreed to include this scheme in the original evaluation and produce a three-year evaluation report – which would also be shared with Parliament. Publication was planned for November 2019, but was delayed due to the December 2019 General Election and pre-election period publishing restrictions for public bodies.

The evaluation specification for the Direct Entry Inspector programme was developed by the College and designed to mirror the approach for evaluating the Direct Entry Superintendent and Fast Track schemes. It was understood that only one cohort would have graduated by this date and have only been in their substantive role for six months and hence, the strength of findings would be weaker than for the Fast Track and Direct Entry Superintendent schemes. It has always been acknowledged that only tentative findings would be possible for the Direct Entry Inspector programme by 2019 and that there would be limited findings on operational competence and return on investment.

The original intention of the Direct Entry inspector evaluation was to follow similar research questions to the Direct Entry Superintendent programme and has done so in terms of: the profile of programme members, their operational competence, and potential to bring in new skills and apply them in policing. However, timescales of reporting have meant that the following questions, in particular: 'What rank and role did those on the Direct Entry Inspector programme progress to after the programme was completed, and what barriers did the individuals encounter?' and 'What are the perceived benefits of the programme?' have not been addressed in the research. As a result, the evaluation focuses more on the potential to bring new skills and thinking, and lessons learned for implementation.

The evaluation sought to understand the following four broad areas: the profile of programme members (including demographic background), competence of programme members, potential to bring new skills and lessons learned for implementation. A short description of the research questions and how the evidence has been gathered for each area, and how it supports wider considerations of the programme aims is outlined below.

- **Profile of programme members** – which police forces took part in the Direct Entry Inspector programme? What are the professional and demographic backgrounds of the programme members? (This supports the assessment of whether aims are being met to bring in talented applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds and with varied external experience and skills.)

- **Operational competence**[10] – has the Direct Entry Inspector programme attracted, recruited, trained and graduated people who are operationally competent as inspectors and are they demonstrating effective leadership?[11] (This supports the assessment of whether the programme is successfully preparing members for substantive roles and by implication, whether directly recruiting into inspector roles can work.)

- **Potential to bring new skills** – what new skills and thinking did programme members bring with them when they joined? What extent have they been able to/encouraged to use them to the benefit of the force and what have the barriers been? (This supports the assessment of whether the anticipated benefits have been realised in the roles that programme members have completed on the programme and post-graduation.)

- **Lessons learned for implementation** – what helped to facilitate programme members' effective integration into the service? How can the observations be used to provide indications as to how the programme can help recruit and develop talented future leaders for the service? (This supports the assessment and understanding of how the scheme should be implemented and the learning that can be drawn from it.)

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10 Operational competence will be defined through the national assessment strategy. If programme members have passed the assessment they will be deemed to be operationally competent.

11 See **Appendix 1**, for a description of programme learning objectives and particularly those relating to 'attitudes and behaviours' for an understanding of what was meant by 'effective leadership' for the purposes of the programme

2.2 Fieldwork and analysis

The research was conducted in-house by College researchers – all members of the Government Social Research (GSR) profession and, as such, bound by the **Civil Service Code**[12] (and its core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality) as well as the professional standards set out in the specific **GSR code**[13], which have been designed to ensure quality, rigorous social research and analysis for government. Further details on research governance to support an objective assessment are provided in **Appendix 3**.

The evaluation was designed to capture evidence from a range of sources to address each research question. The sources included standard management information, captured as 'business as usual', through College programme monitoring – primarily initial recruitment data and in-programme assessment data. In addition to this, the evaluation gathered data through surveys and a set of interviews with cohort 1 graduates six months after they completed the programme, as well as a survey with a small number of their line managers. **Table 2** provides an overview of which methods were used for collecting data from the various cohorts. More detail on the evaluation method, example survey questions and topic guide for the graduate interviews can be found in **Appendix 3**.

The programme costs have been calculated using the College's auditable accounts for the three years the programme has been run (since 2016). They include all associated costs of implementing the programme, including: marketing, recruitment, design and delivery, and administration and staffing of the programme. The full methodology and breakdown for the programme costs can be found in **Appendix 2**.

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12 **gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code**

13 **gov.uk/government/publications/the-goverment-social-research-code-people-and-products**

Table 2: Data collection methods, response rates and cohorts

Research method	Focus of fieldwork	Respondents/ programme members[14]	Cohort	Year of fieldwork
First survey (cohort members)	Experience of College module, previous police connections and motivation for joining.	11/17	1	2017
Final survey – end of programme (cohort members)	Readiness, barriers and facilitators for inspector role. Use of previous skills and programme improvements.	5/11		2019
Final interviews (cohort members)	Experience of Direct Entry programme: support, readiness, making a difference and using skills.	6/11		2019
Final survey to line managers/ mentors	Experience of Direct Entry programme: members' differences and programme improvements.	4/11[15]		

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14 At the time fieldwork took place.

15 Programme members were asked to provide their line managers' details for invitation to the survey.

Research method	Focus of fieldwork	Respondents/ programme members[14]	Cohort	Year of fieldwork
First survey (cohort members)	Experience of College module, previous police connections and motivation for joining.	15/20	2	2018
Second survey – final work-based assessment phase (cohort members)	Experience of the programme: positives and negatives, force and College support.	9/17		2019
First survey (cohort members)	Experience of College module, previous police connections and motivation for joining.	6/17	3	2019
Interviews with chief constables/ chief officer	Experience of programme and perceived benefits.	6	–	2019

All 11 cohort 1 programme graduates were invited to take part in a one-to-one confidential interview. In total, six out of the 11 graduates were interviewed (each interview lasted around 40 minutes to an hour) six months after they completed the programme. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and (as with the open text survey responses) coded by key themes. The aim was to draw out common views, where perceptions of different individuals corroborated each other, as well as insightful exceptions. An example of an interview topic guide and an online survey is provided in **Appendix 3**.

All programme members were invited to take part in the programme surveys via email, which supplied them a link to the web-based survey platform. However, not all members chose to complete them, hence the difference in response rates across the surveys. The first cohort received two surveys, one at the beginning and one at the end of the programme. After their graduation, a survey was also

sent to a self-selected sample of cohort 1 line managers (programme members were asked to provide their line managers' details for invitation to the survey). Cohort 2 received two surveys, one at the beginning of the programme and one after the completion of their final work-based assessment phase. Cohort 3 started their programme towards the end of the evaluation period, and received one survey at the beginning of their programme. The survey responses are reported by individual survey questions throughout this paper. As a result, there is variation in the reported response rate.

At fieldwork end, five chief constables and a chief officer from six participating forces were interviewed about their perceptions of the programme and particularly, whether and how they thought it had already benefited their force. Between them, the forces involved in the fieldwork had recruited 31 Direct Entry inspectors (out of 54 programme members, cohorts 1 to 3)[16].

In addition to the evaluation surveys and interviews, a separate implementation phase review was conducted alongside the evaluation by the programme team. This gathered end of module feedback from programme members on the learning programme, including satisfaction with content and delivery style, and whether members felt learning objectives were being met. The evaluation has focused on more overarching questions than were looked at for the implementation review, which has been used by the programme team to modify the modules over the course of the programme cycle.

2.3 Limitations of the research

The fieldwork for the Direct Entry inspectors' evaluation has placed more reliance on surveys and less on resource-intensive one-to-one interviews and focus groups, compared with the Direct Entry Superintendent and the Fast Track Inspector programmes. This was based on a recognition that few would have completed a Direct Entry Inspector programme by the evaluation publication date, limiting the extent to which the evaluation could say anything other than whether the cohort members have become substantive inspectors. While fieldwork and analysis were conducted and triangulated; it was acknowledged that it would not be possible to design an evaluation that would enable conclusive answers to the same research questions which were used in the Direct Entry Superintendent programme, particularly in relation to 'return on investment'. The nature of the programme created unavoidable constraints on the type of evaluation that could be undertaken.

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16 The interviews gathered chief constable/officer feedback and views on all of the Fast Track/Direct Entry schemes. Sampling focused on selecting forces with the most programme participants (as the chiefs would be in the strongest position to comment on programme experiences) ensuring all schemes were well covered.

Key limitations are described in more detail in **Appendix 3** and are related to the following:

- Limited availability of objective measures – the nature of the programme and its aims made only a few objective measures possible (primarily demographic/recruitment data).

- Small cohort numbers – limiting the opportunity to look for common trends in the data and limiting what data could be reported, given the risk of identifying individuals.

- The relatively short timescale of the evaluation – limiting the opportunity to learn from members' post-graduation experiences, including those around progression within the service.

- Lack of comparison group – comparing with traditionally promoted inspectors, in a comparison group study, was not possible given the broad nature of the programme aims.

- Consistency of administrative data – data collected for the purpose of recruitment and assessment could suffer from potential weaknesses such as: misreporting, different recording methods and sample errors.

Stronger evaluation conclusions could, potentially, become more feasible if the programme was rolled out on a larger scale and/or in a more targeted manner (for example, recruiting with more specific, measurable outcomes in mind, or recruiting more members into an individual force to have greater likelihood of discernible group impact). Follow-up fieldwork with graduated programme members, for example, in five-year periods, could also enable stronger statements around potential scheme benefits.

3   Findings

3.1 Profile of programme members

3.1.1 Overview

This section provides details on the numbers of Direct Entry Inspector programme members – how many joined, how many had graduated and how many had left prior to graduation by June 2019. Descriptive data on the demographic characteristics and the professional backgrounds of programme members is provided, as well as information on force participation and members' progression.

3.1.2. Programme members: numbers

A new cohort of Direct Entry inspectors was recruited each year from 2016, with 17 joining in the first year, 20 in 2017 and 17 in 2018 (54 in total) – see **table 1** (page 15).

As of June 2019, one cohort had reached the end of the programme within the evaluation reporting period, with 11 members from cohort 1 graduating in January 2019[17]. There were 34 programme members who remained on the Direct Entry Inspector programme as at June 2019 (one in cohort 1 – due to re-sit their inspectors' exam, 16 in cohort 2 and 17 in cohort 3). Nine programme members had left the scheme prior to graduation (from cohorts 1 and 2). Of the nine, five had not reached the required standard in all the programme assessments and four left for personal reasons[18].

Programme cohort sizes[19] were largely determined by the number of participating forces and the number of spaces they made available each year (see **Appendix 4** for more detail), which has coincidentally happened to be similar to that set out in the **Winsor Review**[20].

As at June 2019, 21 forces had recruited at least one Direct Entry Inspector programme member. A quarter of programme members had joined the MPS

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17 Demographic characteristics on cohort 1 graduates are not reported due to small numbers which could identify individuals.

18 To protect the privacy of individuals, commentary on the reasons for leaving the programme, prior to scheme completion, is not included in this report.

19 In the 2011 Winsor Review, which first called for the introduction of a Direct Entry scheme, it was suggested that such a programme could have an annual intake of around 20 new members each year. This was not based on precise modelling and was not presented as a target for the Direct Entry Inspector programme that launched five years later.

20 Home Office, October 2013, 'Direct Entry into the Police, Government Response' available online at **assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/249824/Direct_entry_consultation_-_governement_response.pdf**

(13 out of 54), six joined West Yorkshire, four Thames Valley and four GMP. A further 17 forces recruited between one and three cohort members each[21].

3.1.3 Programme members and applicants: demographics

The programme (cohorts 1 to 3) recruited nearly double the proportion of women than are represented nationally at inspector rank (23 out of 54 members compared with 24 per cent[22]). Three out of 54 programme members were from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background, which is similar to the representation of BME inspectors nationally (5 per cent of all inspectors are from a BME background[23]). However, the proportion of programme members from these demographic groups are lower than in national population figures[24]. More details are provided in **table 3** below.

The lower success rate of applicants from a BME background in the recruitment and selection process was monitored throughout the evaluation period. Methods to attract and support applicants from under-represented groups (including positive action such as: 'meet the police' events, held around the country during recruiting periods) have been in place and developed since programme launch, and adjustments to the recruitment and selection process have also been made (see **Appendix 1** for further details) but differentials in pass rates have remained and continue to be monitored.

All of the six chief constable/officer interviewees (at fieldwork end) indicated that they had been interested in the programme as a way to improve diversity in leadership ranks. Three indicated that they were interested in improving visible diversity in terms of increasing the representation of candidates from a BME background. The figures around BME recruitment to the programme had not been as successful as the chief officers had hoped for, in terms of widening the diversity at inspector rank in their force.

Most chiefs also explained that they were interested in the programme supporting diversity and inclusion in a wider sense, beyond visible diversity, and more around different perspectives and backgrounds generally.

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21 See **Appendix 4** for full force breakdown.

22 National Statistics Police Workforce England and Wales: 31 March 2019 available online at **gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2019**

23 ibid.

24 From the most recent national census figures (2011), 51% of the population of England and Wales was female and 14% were from a BME background. **ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/2011censuskeystatisticsforenglandandwales/2012-12-11#ethnic-group**

Table 3: Direct Entry inspector demographics: applicants and programme members/national figures

Demographic group	Proportion/number of:			
	Programme applicants (cohorts 1 to 3)	Programme members (cohorts 1 to 3)	All inspectors England and Wales	National population (Census data 2011)
Black and Minority Ethnic background	12% (426 out of 3,559)	3 out of 54	5% (260 out of 5,555)	14%
Female	35% (1,305 out of 3,709)	23 out of 54	24% (1,327 out of 5,555)	51%

Over half of programme members across the three cohorts (33 out of 54) were aged 30–40 and 14 of the 54 were aged 20–29. Over a third (24 out of 54) of programme members had an undergraduate degree or NVQ level 5 qualification and a similar proportion (22 out of 54) had a postgraduate degree as their highest academic attainment (Masters or PhD); the other eight members either preferred not to say or had A levels/NVQ level 3 qualifications as their highest academic attainment. Eight of the 54 programme members who joined reported having a caring responsibility.

Over half of programme members came from a public or third sector background (34 out of 54) and a third (18) came from the private sector. The 54 programme members previously worked in a range of different areas. Nine programme members worked for the government or a local authority, eight worked for the police, six worked in finance and the same number in the armed forces, five worked in education and the same number were in health. At least one programme member (but less than five) described themselves as working in the following areas at the time they applied to the Direct Entry scheme: retail, security, aviation, tourism, support services, insurance, entertainment, consultancy, training and self-employed.

To protect the identities of individuals, reporting on demographic data that applies to less than five programme members has been restricted. For this reason, data is not being reported on sexual orientation, disability and where English is not the first language.

3.1.4 Motivations for joining the programme

Over half of respondents to the first survey (21 out of 35 – all cohorts) would not have considered joining at constable rank at this stage in their career, but over a third (13 out of 35) would have considered it.

The majority of survey respondents (33 out of 36) had considered becoming a police officer prior to finding out about the Direct Entry programme, and of those 33, nearly half (16) had seriously thought about and/or applied to be a constable.

The majority of survey respondents from the three cohorts (31 out of 36) had strong prior connections with policing (defined as having worked or volunteered for the police before, having close friends and family that have worked for a police force or having worked in a field closely connected to policing).

Respondents from the three cohorts reported wanting to make a difference to peoples' lives and communities. The challenge of the role and varied nature of the day-to-day work was an attraction, as well as being able to use their previous skills and managerial experience in a policing environment. Some were also motivated to join by the opportunities in policing and the chance to impact on organisational change. Interviews with a sample of cohort 1 programme members (n=6) supported the survey findings.

'It [policing] was something I wanted to do when I was younger and just never got round to it.'

'[…] saw this programme come up and yes, it sounded good… something that would challenge me and be a good opportunity.'

'It was a way of demonstrating management skills in a totally different arena where focus on real situations was imperative.'
Programme members

3.1.5 Progression

It was recognised when the evaluation specification was developed that there would be little or realistically, no opportunity, within the three-year evaluation timeframe, for cohort 1 members to progress into senior roles having only been substantive inspectors since January 2019.

In terms of the roles programme members had moved into post-graduation, follow-up interviews with six graduates found them in the following range of inspector roles: four in duty or patrol inspector roles, one was training to be a detective and the other had moved into an offender-focused role.

Programme members who were interviewed (n=6) had mixed feelings about their progression in the police. One interviewee aspired to reach a senior rank, and one was interested in preparing themselves for the next rank by working with their force to gain the experience and training needed for promotion – such as acting up and public

'I don't want to be promoted,
I would far rather spend a fair
amount of time as an inspector.'

'I'd like to get to the top spot if I
could. I've very much got a plan. I'd
like to give it my best shot and be
as senior as I could.'

'[…] the motivation to continue
my career in this area and the
opportunities that policing can
afford me was a huge motivating
factor for joining DE.'
Programme members

order training. For some, their focus was on gaining experience as
a substantive inspector and then re-assessing their career plans in
the future. Another interviewee was interested in exploring different
specialisms in their force and while they were not ruling out a move
into something else in the future, they were not currently looking to
move on. Most respondents did not explicitly mention rising to a chief
officer role as one of their motivations for joining the police or Direct
Entry programme, but many referred to the opportunities available
within the service and their ambition to use their previous experience.

3.2 Operational competence

3.2.1 Overview

Successfully passing programme assessments has been considered
the measure of operational competence for the programme and
evaluation. In addition to this though, perception evidence gathered
through evaluation interviews with a sample of programme
members six months after they completed their programme
(n=6), as well as surveys with them (n=5), and a sample of their
line managers (n=3) and a workplace coach (n=1), provides an
extra source of data to explore this issue. On balance, it supports
the concept that the Direct Entry Inspector programme delivers
operationally competent inspectors at the point of graduation.

As of June 2019, only one Direct Entry inspector cohort had
graduated and been in a substantive inspector role for six months.
Despite the completed fieldwork, the findings are drawn from a
limited and potentially skewed data set. Therefore, they can only
be considered as suggestive and not reflective of all programme
members. Response rates have varied across the programme
surveys and the evaluation is unable to report on the readiness felt
for inspector roles from members who did not respond. Aside from
the small sample of line managers who completed a survey, the
evaluation has not collected the views of line managers. Unlike the
Direct Entry Superintendent and Fast Track Inspector programmes,
the evaluation did not collect substantial feedback from workplace
coaches or mentors.

3.2.2 Number of recruits and graduates

Cohort 1 finished the programme and graduated in January 2019, with
11 members taking up substantive inspector roles. They were deemed
operationally competent, having passed all programme assessments.

Five other cohort 1 members left prior to scheme completion and as of June 2019, one member remained on the programme and was due to re-sit their National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) Step 2 exam in autumn 2019.

The programme requires members to pass the NPPF Step 2 knowledge-based exam within two attempts. The NPPF Step 2 exam is the same exam that those seeking promotion from sergeant to inspector, through the traditional promotion route, must pass (as part of the assessment process) to reach the rank of inspector. Direct Entry programme members who do not pass the exam (after two attempts) must leave the programme and may, potentially, be able to join as constables in their force. Of the five members who left from cohort 1, one failed the first attempt at the exam and resigned prior to re-sitting and the remaining four did not pass the exam on the second attempt. Of those four, one member left the police and the three others either are in a constable role or have applied to move into one.

The pass rate (for first attempts) for both cohorts 1 and 2 was higher than the national average for those sitting the NPPF Step 2 exam as part of their assessment process for promotion from sergeant to inspector – with a combined (cohort 1 and 2) pass rate of 62 per cent[25] compared to the national average of 43 per cent. A similar proportion of cohort 1 and 2 did not pass the exam on the first attempt.

3.2.3 Perceptions of operational readiness

All cohort 1 programme members (who were interviewed n=6 or surveyed n=5) post-graduation, felt that the programme had prepared them for their substantive inspector roles. Survey respondents overwhelmingly agreed they felt confident in terms of their operational, as well as leadership and management abilities, to do the role. There were more mixed views among cohort 2 (survey respondents n=9/17) in terms of how prepared they felt for their inspector rotation, although the members on this cohort are still on the programme and it is not known how they will feel when they come to graduate.

'I felt able to go into force and go solo, and to be a duty inspector. I feel I had everything I needed.'

'[…] I think the programme did equip us, in that sense, quite well in terms of the knowledge and the expectations and the best practice, nationally.'
Programme members

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25 Twenty one out of 34 programme members passed on their first attempt (cohorts 1 and 2).

'Less institutionalised – and willing to view issues through a different lens.'

'[…] brings a fresh and different perspective to leadership. They seem very well equipped to deal with the pressures of the role, compared to their peers.'
Line managers

3.2.4 Leadership approach

All line managers who responded to the follow-up survey for cohort 1 (n=3) stated, to varying degrees, that their Direct Entry graduate brought a different approach to the role, particularly in terms of their approach to leadership. All the line managers described their Direct Entry inspector as having a different leadership style to that typically seen in force at inspector rank. The words that were used were 'transformational', 'inclusive and open'. The line managers also found their Direct Entry inspectors to be more willing to seek help, empower their team members and display a high level of emotional intelligence, which contributed to their leadership approach.

3.2.5 Performance on the job

There was limited data collected on the programme members' performance 'on the job', but one line manager did report on this in their six month post-graduation survey. The line manager reported that their cohort member took on extra work compared to peers at the same rank and they thought their graduate worked at a higher operating capacity.

Some of the cohort 1 graduates were earmarked for development opportunities and their forces were working with them to ensure they were either using their previous skills or working in an area they could develop them. For example, one graduate was moving to a new role later in the year, which had been identified as a good development opportunity for them. Another had been moved to their current role because their force needed someone to take charge of the area. While being selected for the role was seen as an endorsement of their ability, the graduate did not feel that the role would give them the front-line experience they needed nor was it using any of their previous skill set. Another graduate felt a senior officer in their force was very keen for them to be promoted, but they felt they needed time to be established in the inspector role.

'I've been put into a role because they need somebody here, and they think I can grip it, which is great they think I can grip it.'
Programme member

3.2.6 Changing perceptions

When the Direct Entry schemes were introduced, some individuals held negative views about the programmes – **section 3.3.4** looks at the experiences of programme members' reception in force. Feedback from evaluation surveys and post-graduation interviews has included first and second-hand accounts of individual officers having their

'The feedback I got… "We were expecting the devil. Actually, you came in, you were pragmatic, you were humble, you wanted to learn from us, you were personable and you've done really well with that."'

'Once people got to know you, they're absolutely fine. There is an initial perception of, they're testing you.'

'There's a few people that are obviously quite negative about the scheme, and that's fine. That's always going to come with it.'
Programme members

'Whilst the persons who undertook Direct Entry in my force have given a good account of themselves on the scheme and I am personally very happy to count them as colleagues, there was not a need for this scheme and it is counterproductive.
It has caused consternation amongst those officers who have worked hard and shown themselves capable of promotion but who have been overlooked.'
Line manager

negative preconceptions of the programme overturned by meeting or working with a direct entrant, and seeing how competent and effective they were in role.

One member reported they had received positive feedback from colleagues across the ranks who had found their ideas refreshing and felt they were a real benefit to the team. Another member also reported receiving complimentary comments in their latest 360-degree exercise from their colleagues. There was a recognition from programme members that their sphere of influence was usually limited to their teams and colleagues, but once they had built these relationships, it often filtered through to others and could help to de-mystify preconceived perceptions about the programme and those on it.

Some feedback was more mixed – a line manager and mentor who responded to the post-graduation survey were supportive of their graduate and their abilities in their role, but questioned the principle of the programme and were critical of its existence in policing.

3.3 Potential to bring new skills

3.3.1 Overview

When the evaluation specification was designed, it was always known that only the programme costs would be known; and it would be too early to comment meaningfully on the return on investment of the programme in terms of the perceived benefits. Ultimately, the programme was about bringing in talented individuals with the intention of them progressing to more senior ranks above inspector where, it was hoped, they would positively benefit policing. The potential for cohort members to bring new skills and apply their existing experience has been mainly covered in the fieldwork for cohort 1 programme members. More insightful exploration of utilisation of skills and return on investment will be possible when Direct Entry inspectors have had time to progress further into their policing careers – for example, to see what proportion have stayed in policing; whether and how they move through the ranks; and what difference they are thought to be making – by themselves and with those they work with. Even then, it is unlikely that strong 'return on investment' statements could be made. Unavoidable limitations with the evaluation approach were described in **section 2.3** and similar would apply to attempting detailed cost benefit analysis in the future.

3.3.2 Using pre-existing skills and making a difference

The findings in this area suggest that most respondents (who have taken part in fieldwork) felt they had been able to use some pre-existing skills – to a varying extent – on the programme and once they graduated. Offering a different perspective, challenging norms and asking why things were done in their current way, as well as encouraging others to do the same, were perceived as the main differences that respondents felt they had brought. One of the chief officer interviewees described the direct entrants as bringing in a freshness of an external person working in policing, they had a different perspective which was a useful aspect to have in the force. Another chief interviewee was impressed by the business background some of their direct entrants had.

'I encouraged people to call me by my name and they could wander into my little office area and speak to me about anything, whereas I think in some areas of the police, that hierarchical structure means that the inspector is an important person and you don't go and bother them.'

'I think my ability to communicate effectively both with the public and colleagues internally has been central to my success as a Direct Entry Inspector and has helped me to make a positive impact and influence on the management and culture of policing. My communication skills were developed throughout my previous career.'
Programme members

There were mixed views amongst respondents (both surveys and interviews) around how much emphasis had been placed on the direct entrants using the knowledge and skills from their previous careers – this also varied by force. Two graduates had been involved in change projects in their force and one felt they had also used these skills in their day-to-day operational role, due to the fast paced and changing nature of their work. Another had done a number of projects and reviews alongside their main policing role and stressed that they had actively put themselves forward for the projects – another survey respondent echoed this as well. Some mentioned they felt the need to prove themselves to some colleagues, who assumed that as a direct entrant they would not be any good at their job.

Some respondents spoke about small, but significant cultural changes they had made in their team to make the structure less hierarchical and their role more accessible to all staff and officers. Some members also recognised the emphasis they placed on their team's development and welfare – as well as being open about learning from their colleagues and peers – being a big part of their own development in their substantive inspector roles. Allowing vulnerability and permission to question practices were important ways respondents felt they could demonstrate this to their teams.

Four respondents, however, felt they had not yet been able to make any difference due to the intensity of the programme which they described as requiring them to complete numerous assessments (including the inspectors' exam – see **section 3.4.1**), learn the operational role on rotations, integrate into new teams and locations, as well as complete College modules. Another two

'[…] there was no progression plan or utilisation of the existing skills I brought into the role which has resulted in skill fade.'

'I have realised that the inspector doesn't get the responsibility that perhaps you do in a smaller force. I feel like I've lost responsibility from my old job, if I'm being honest.'

'Particularly at the inspector rank, your experience is undervalued. The police is so set in its ways that having people come in from outside has a limited impact, however much you try.'

'Forces are being given a person who has been trained to Inspector very quickly, and has a load to bring, but it's up to them [the force] to do something with that really.'

'The programme is designed to morph us into police officers, rather than embracing our difference and empowering us to think differently and implement changes.'

'The program is set to bring in difference but the pathway doesn't reflect this.'
Programme members

respondents felt more frustrated with the inability to make a difference at this point and were concerned that the programme was too focused on assimilating the programme members into existing practices, rather than enabling them to use the previous skills to transform the service. Three of the chief officer interviewees felt that it was too early to assess the benefits of the programme (with only one cohort to have graduated as at June 2019). One chief officer felt this was particularly in relation to leadership, as they hadn't been in post long enough. Another chief officer put it 'the Jury's out' as to whether Direct Entry inspectors have benefited the force.

3.3.3 Influencing and affecting change

A few respondents felt the inspector rank did not allow them to influence change in a way that would make a difference across the force – they felt the rank was not senior enough to initiate changes. This was especially reported by respondents in larger forces, which had more ranks and fewer management responsibilities for inspectors. This was also reflected by a chief officer interviewee who felt that in a big organisation, it could be hard for some at inspector level to effect change.

Some graduates felt that they had not been in a substantive inspector post for long enough to influence changes. Others interviewed, felt that once they had graduated it was up to the force to ensure that they were given the opportunity to best use and apply their prior knowledge and skills at an organisational level – and for some this was not being done.

There was a view held among some cohort 1 and 2 respondents that the programme was misleading in its aim to bring 'difference' into the police. The programme focus on becoming a uniform inspector was seen as being at odds with the marketing, aimed at bringing in different approaches and applying existing skills in the police. Some members in cohort 2 felt that while their force was more open to embracing their different approach, the College programme was not designed to encourage this.

3.3.4 Culture and reception in force

Experiences were mixed from graduate interviewees as to how they had been viewed by their teams and colleagues in force. Some interviewees reported receiving positive feedback directly from

'Everybody makes the assumption you're going to be rubbish. Everybody. It takes a long time. I feel like you have to prove yourself, and work harder than everybody else, and try harder than everybody else.'

'What most people have said to me is, "Yes, we know how you've come in, but we've kind of forgotten that," which is probably one of the best compliments you can get really.'

'I don't want to be necessarily Direct Entry for the rest of my life.'

'You get a bit of stick from certain people; you can tell certain people aren't keen either on you or what you represent.'

'It was nice when I left…a couple of them were really upset when I was leaving because they said, "Oh well we never saw the inspector before, you're always around and you're so approachable."'

'Amongst the comments from colleagues…were observations that I "communicate effectively", have "strong interpersonal skills" and "a strong ability to empathise, listen and problem solve."'
Programme members

their teams, which was often coupled with an initial uneasiness about having a Direct Entry inspector as a manager. A couple of graduates felt their colleagues had tried to test them, to see if they were up to the job. One example given of this was a programme member working on a shift recently, after becoming substantive, where they had multiple temporary sergeants and a lot of long-term sickness. When they questioned the organisational risk of putting someone with no experience and brand new in role with an inexperienced team, they were told, 'You said you're this top-talented police officer. Now you're going to have to show everybody that you can turn it around.' The interviewee reflected that although this was a steep learning curve, they did turn the team around and gained the respect of their seniors. Three of the six chief officers interviewed commented on the positive reception of the Direct Entry programme in their force. One felt those in force who had met a Direct Entry inspector had been mostly reassured by them, another was impressed by the welcoming nature of the scheme and those involved in it, and a third said the Direct Entry inspectors were respected for what they bring and their willingness to learn what they don't know.

While these interviewees felt that views from their colleagues would be mixed towards a new scheme of this nature, the critical stance of some colleagues was felt to be an extra challenge for the members, and made them want to drop the Direct Entry label once they became substantive in role. There was an acknowledgement among respondents that this was much easier to do in a larger force. There was a feeling among some interviewees that while they wanted to maintain their difference, they also wanted to be appreciated by their colleagues for the way they do the job, regardless of the route they took to get into the role.

One member felt that due to their length of service being directly attached to their warrant number (and length of service being such an embedded aspect of police culture), officers could quickly work out that they were direct entrants simply from the lack of years in service and being in an inspector role.

Some members had more positive experiences and one cohort 1 respondent felt they had succeeded in changing preconceptions of what their colleagues thought was a 'typical' Direct Entry programme member.

3.4 Lessons learned for implementation

3.4.1 Overview

A main benefit of the Direct Entry inspector scheme is the learning that can be drawn from it. The scheme developed rapidly and so far, has only been delivered in its entirety to one cohort (who graduated in 2019) and partially to two more cohorts, who are still on the programme (cohorts 2 and 3). To date, it has been a relatively small-scale pilot that has drawn out extensive and invaluable learning around what can work well and what could be improved for future cohorts if the scheme, or similar, continues. A scheme that brought external recruits into the police at inspector rank in such rapid time had never been tried before in policing and there was a strong interest to see if it could be done and whether it could bring wider benefits. The Direct Entry inspectors' evaluation also has overlap with learning from the original version of the programme – the Direct Entry superintendents' evaluation and the Fast Track to inspector evaluation. Together, they offer useful observations and provide relevant indications as to how the programme may proceed in recruiting and developing talented future leaders for the service.

The two-year Direct Entry Inspector programme follows a core curriculum[26]. The content is set by the College and is made up of four phases of College inputs and four operational rotations in force – see **table 4** below for a detailed programme timetable (see **Appendix 1** for more information on the programme).

Programme members are assessed through three methods: work-based assessment (WBA), an action research project assignment and a knowledge-based exam. The WBA covers eight assessment units throughout the programme. The eight units collect evidence of: operational competence against the three in-force rotations (police constable, sergeant and inspector), passing the National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) step 4 process, and the policing management and operations bespoke WBA which is accompanied by a 2,000 word written report. The action research project requires programme members to complete a community policing project with a 4,000 word written report, which is assessed by Teesside University. In line with the national process for those seeking promotion to rank of inspector, all programme members have to pass the NPPF step 2 knowledge-based exam. All elements of the programme, including the assessments, are delivered in a relatively tight timeframe of 24 months.

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26 Direct Entry Inspector programme handbook (College of Policing), 2018, available on line at **recruit.college.police.uk/Officer/leadership-programmes/Direct-Entry-Programme/direct-entry-at-inspector/Documents/Direct_Entry_Inspector_Handbook_2019.pdf**

Table 4: Direct Entry Inspector programme timetable

Programme phase	Location	Month(s)	Duration
Phase one – Part A	College	November	2 weeks
In-force induction	In force	December	2 weeks
Phase one – Part B	College	Jan–Feb	8 weeks
PC rotation and work-based assessment (WBA)	In force	March–June	14 weeks
Phase two	College	July	4 weeks
Sergeant rotation and WBA	In force	July–Oct	15 weeks
Legislative exam	College	November	–
Phase three	College	October	3 weeks
Inspector rotation and WBA	In force	Oct–Jan	14 weeks
Phase four	College	February	3 weeks
Duty officer rotation (with support)	In force	Feb-May	12 weeks
Action research project (4,000 word report)	College	March	–
Inspector posting	In force	May-Oct	26 weeks
WBA reflective account (2,000 word report)	College	August	–
Programme and probation period ends	College and force	October	–

3.4.2 Barriers and facilitators to promotion

As at June 2019, 11 cohort 1 graduates had only been in their substantive inspector roles for six months, making it difficult to report on promotions due to the short time they had been in post.

Some cohort 1 respondents (interviews and surveys) were concerned at the lack of experience in the inspector role they had, and would have in the coming years, compared to inspectors who had been through the standard recruitment route, and how this may affect their chances of promotion. One interviewee felt they were not in a position to apply for other roles and questioned whether they would be able to stay in the police, as they felt unable to compete with inspectors who had been promoted through the standard route. They felt this was mainly due to their lack of police experience, which they saw as the main requirement for

'[…] it is very difficult to compete for jobs when your operational experience is measured against other inspectors who have years more than you.'

'The irony is a lot of my previous experience would be incredibly useful to the roles. They do not accept pre-policing experience but if you're going to hire me for my previous experience why would you then not let me reference the previous experience.'

'[…] we're never going to be able to compete in terms of certain aspects of our experience, and actually, we should be given the support to progress in our careers without that background of experience.'

'There is absolutely no support post programme. There is a huge opportunity missed here to ensure the benefits of this programme are maximised in the medium to long term.'

'[…] the ones of us who have been successful or are still in, we had to do it on our personalities really.'

'So I actually felt quite supported by my force. But when I say force, what I actually mean is person… I was supported by the superintendent.'
Programme members

promotion. Two interviewees were frustrated that their previous skills were under-utilised by the force and their perception was that these skills would not be rewarded through the promotion system.

Some cohort 1 respondents in their final survey and interviews felt that there was a lack of post-programme support from the College following the completion of the programme. Many of the respondents said they would have liked ongoing support and development, including ongoing opportunities to network with other cohort members.

Senior officer support and direct involvement with programme members was seen as being critical to success in force. Cohort 1 interviewees explained that interested senior officers could help support their development and ensure they were gaining the experience and support they needed – including, for example, by being placed in roles with supportive senior officers. Gaining the support of senior officers was viewed by respondents as very much down to them, as individuals, building relationships, rather than something facilitated by the programme.

3.4.3 Programme feedback

Over half (16 out of 26) of all first survey respondents who answered this question (cohort 1 and 2) were 'satisfied' with the content of the phase 1 modules, although there were suggestions for where improvements could be made. Where feedback was negative, it was generally coupled with an appreciation that the scheme was new and evolving. Respondents from the three cohorts appreciated the force-exposure days and use of role plays and real-life scenarios in classroom training. There was a suggestion that these could have been used more to make the learning more impactive. The Hydra exercise was also consistently praised by respondents from cohort 1 and 2 as being a positive useful input.

Areas where respondents felt improvements could be made included more pre-read materials given in advance of the modules, including comprehensive timetables and reading lists. Respondents across all cohorts also suggested they would value more focus in the first phase on the practical, operational role and tasks they would undertake in their upcoming rotations (at constable, sergeant and inspector rank). Cohort 3 also raised some of these issues – respondents particularly felt the first 10 weeks of College training could have better linked the practical learning with the knowledge of the law, including doing role plays and practising the tasks expected of them in the PC rotation. Encouragingly, one cohort 3 member acknowledged that the College

'I know they [the College] wanted and expect 100% but it was never going to happen and I think the fact that the College have got 60% through the scheme is sort of an indication that they're doing something right.'

'I feel strongly that the first 10 weeks could have been utilised to much greater effect when preparing the group for PC rotation.'

'A lot of this feedback has already been provided to the College and they do appear to be acting on some and have already acted on others which will improve activities for this year's intake but has not been reflected in our Phase 2.'
Programme members

programme had taken on board their feedback and they felt that they were acting on it.

Across all three cohorts, respondents highly praised a number of the tutors and speakers. However, some respondents felt the quality of inputs were mixed and a few suggested that bringing in more speakers from outside policing would be helpful, given the focus on difference. Where quality issues were raised with inputs, respondents felt the pitch was not always aimed at people with prior leadership and work experience, and could have better focused on practically preparing them for their rotations (especially the constable rotation), rather than on inputs that were more theoretical.

There has been a common suggestion amongst respondents that the programme could be adapted to more robustly promote one of its key aims – to bring individuals that can make a positive difference in policing. To this end, respondents across the three cohorts have suggested that centrally delivered inputs could be more innovative, and rely less heavily on seconded and retired officers. Some respondents felt the delivery of the programme failed to create an open and inclusive learning environment, where flexible working and different learning styles were respected and catered for. Several respondents also expressed a concern that they were not treated in a way they would expect as professionals, in an adult learning environment.

The majority of cohort 1 respondents in final interviews and surveys did not regret joining the programme, however, some did feel that more could have been done responding to, and preparing them for, the demands of the programme and providing support throughout and after. While the rotations, WBA and other programme work[27] contributed to this, the inspectors' exam was consistently singled out by respondents as being a major cause of stress.

The pressure of having to study for such an important exam, while also learning the operational side of policing, doing the job and the WBA, was often cited as too much at once. In survey feedback across cohorts 2 and 3, only four out of 19 respondents felt the programme had a good balance between assessment and development, the issue was also raised in survey feedback from a cohort 1 line manager.

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27 See **section 3.4.1 Overview** for further details of programme work and assessments, and **Appendix 1**

'The exposure to a new world, completion of work based learning assignments, shifts and OSPRE on top has proved too much – for too many of the cohort.'
Line manager

'This has been the best and hardest thing I have ever done.'

'It is supposed to be challenging and we are picked on the basis of our ability to handle stressful situations etc however this process is life changing and takes everything.'
Programme members

'I have enjoyed the scheme as a whole and felt supported, challenged and stretched by various elements of it.'

'In terms of support overall, I have to say, it was pretty poor, throughout the programme, I felt. I think it may have improved in terms of what it may be now, because we fed a lot back.'

'I have enjoyed the scheme as a whole and felt supported, challenged and stretched by various elements of it…I have felt supported by CoP colleagues.'

'Owing to the nature of the programme it is very fast paced – which is great however I don't think there was enough pastoral care placed on programme members around handling the pressure which Direct Entry brings.'
Programme members

Some interviewees from cohort 1 questioned whether they would have joined the programme had they known the weight placed on the exam in terms of completing the programme. Others also questioned the format of the exam and the timing of it in the programme as a contributor to the stress they had felt.

Respondents in all cohorts have suggested there was a need for better communication between the College and forces in terms of responsibility for the programme elements. Respondents have also raised a concern about a lack of consistency between forces, especially in relation to how the rotations were run and the view that the College could do more to ensure that programme members receive similar training opportunities. Feedback from cohort 1 interviews included the view that the College needs to be clearer about the aims of the programme.

3.4.4 College support

Some respondents across the three cohorts spoke highly of the support they had received from the College – the staff being dedicated to the programme and trying to accommodate programme members. In surveys with cohorts 2 and 3, respondents were mixed on their views of College staff being approachable for support and advice; when asked if they thought they were approachable, out of the 19 respondents: eight disagreed, seven agreed and four were neutral (with cohort 2 having a higher proportion of negative views). In terms of feeling informed about the programme by the College, responses were more negative, with five out of 19 respondents feeling well informed.

Across all cohorts, respondents felt the College's offer for support was always available to them. Some respondents would have liked the programme team to take a more active role in their individual development, in terms of visiting them in force and really understanding their experience. A few (n=4) respondents felt the College created an atmosphere where they could not be open or honest with the College programme team and didn't feel like they were provided with the support (especially around the exam) they needed.

There was a view by some cohort 1 respondents (in interviews and surveys) that due to the nature of the programme and the rigorous initial recruitment process they had to pass, the College and forces assumed they would be equipped to undertake the demands of the

'I always felt the College's view was "You guys have been picked because you've got the skills"… I think, in terms of actual more holistic support, it's life-changing, you know? I can't express to you on the telephone how much this takes over your whole life.'
Programme member

programme. This was felt by those cohort 1 respondents to have been a reason why they did not always get the sufficient support they needed while on the programme.

3.4.5 Force support

All cohort members were asked questions relating to the support they received in force. As well as interviews and survey data with cohort 1, this section draws on the results from cohort 2's second survey and the first survey with cohort 3. The majority of those that responded to the survey were positive in terms of feeling able to talk to their line manager (16 out of 19) and tutor (12 out of 19) and feel they were supported by them (13 out of 19 line managers).

Across the three cohorts there were mixed views on the support provided by forces. Some respondents had a positive experience and felt their forces had been prepared for them and the programme. Others felt that a lack of communication between the College and forces led to a disjointed approach to their programme, and a lack of clarity from forces as to what was required of them and their role. Survey responses from cohorts 2 and 3 strongly support this (one respondent out of 19 agreed there was good communication between the force and College). The majority of survey respondents also did not feel that the force had kept them well informed about the programme (cohorts 2 and 3: 13 out of 19). End of module debriefs supported the findings where there were a couple of very positive examples, but the general perception was that some forces had not been fully prepared. Some respondents felt their time in force had not been well or appropriately planned, which meant they did not get the most from their experience. There was further feedback from several respondents about how more support from their force could have avoided a lot of unnecessary stress, for example, if HR issues were addressed in good time.

'The college did support us and the force supported me, but they also had different ideas about what we were doing and a lot of the time I felt in the middle of a disagreement that wasn't my disagreement to have.'

'My force had no understanding of the DE Inspector role prior to my starting … I felt like my force and the College should have communicated with each other better so a clear landing plan was ready.'

'[…] warm welcome from force and open-minded starting position of force colleagues of all ranks.'
Programme members

When asked about their force's engagement with the Direct Entry programme, less than half of respondents thought their force had been engaged (cohorts 2 and 3: 8 out of 19). A few respondents (n=4, cohorts 1 and 2) felt in the middle of the College and force – trying to feedback and resolve issues themselves. A chief officer interviewee explained they recognised the importance of the force having a good understanding of the cohorts and the programme. They felt that it was really important to have someone in a central role, coordinating the programme and making sure they are connected.

'My initial line manager was excellent and I just clicked with them.'
Programme member

'When I got up to rank as an inspector, I spent 14 weeks with my inspector tutor, which is really, really good. I think those relationships needed to be developed from week one on the course, because actually that would have given us that kind of mentoring, and that relationship.'

'I think everyone needs a tutor … You should be speaking to them every week. "Where are you at? What do you need? How are you getting on?"'

'You've got the corporate support from the top from the DCC… and now I'm in touch with the chief superintendent in charge of crime, who again has been looking out for me.'
Programme members

When asked for feedback on force support more specifically, respondents from all cohorts, in surveys and interviews were generally very positive about the support they had received from their line managers. The majority of survey respondents (cohort 2 and 3) felt confident they could express personal views on work-related matters to their line manager (16 out of 19 agreed), they felt able to discuss their development needs (13 out of 19 agreed) and they felt that their line manager was supportive (13 out of 19 agreed).

There were positive examples of mentors being assigned and tutors being proactive in engaging with programme members. Cohort 1 and 2 respondents reported that being assigned an inspector tutor or mentor was helpful in terms of learning the role, being supported and preparing them for the substantive role. Many suggested that it would have been helpful to be assigned a mentor earlier on in the programme, or from the outset. Surveys with cohorts 2 and 3 supported this and the majority of respondents felt able to openly discuss their development needs with their tutor (12 out of 19).

There were also some respondents who encountered negative views from officers in their force; a few questioned the suitability of officers that they were matched with in their rotations.

In terms of senior support in their force, nearly all survey respondents (cohorts 2 and 3) felt the senior leaders in their force were approachable (17 out of 19 agreed). Interviewees from cohort 1 suggested that where they had had interactions with senior officers, they often felt they were very positive, but they were few and far between in terms of their frequency.

Conclusion

The three-year evaluation report has drawn together a limited collection of evidence which has allowed some tentative suggestive findings to be made in terms of the viability of the Direct Entry Inspector programme. Due to the reporting period for the evaluation, only one cohort of Direct Entry inspectors has so far completed the programme – 11 members from cohort 1 graduated in January 2019. These graduates have demonstrated that individuals can be prepared for inspector rank within 24 months and made ready for the role.

The evaluation indicates that support, senior endorsement, joined-up working between forces and the College, as well as clearly defined expectations of the force in terms of the member's development, are key to ensuring the programme is manageable and supportive of the wellbeing of individuals going through it. For some members, these elements have not always been present, and more could be done in terms of ensuring the force and College provide, as a minimum, the national requirements as set out in the Direct Entry Inspector handbook.

Programme members have been recruited from a range of different backgrounds and brought with them diverse skill sets and career experience. There are tentative examples where programme members have applied these skills in their policing role, but this has varied across forces and the opportunities members have had to use them. It is too early to know the extent to which programme members will be able to use their previous skills in their substantive inspector roles, or indeed throughout the programme. The programme would benefit from further research, five or so years after graduation, to understand the extent members have felt they've been able to do this and the return on investment for the service.

The evaluation has provided key insights in terms of the learning that can be drawn from and applied to the programme. The scheme was developed rapidly in response to the closure of the Fast Track Inspector external scheme, and with many elements based on the existing Direct Entry Superintendent scheme. Considering how radical the new programme was, and the infancy of the scheme it was replacing, it should be commended to all those involved from the College, forces and other policing colleagues that 11 of the 17 who started in cohort 1 have successfully graduated[28], and of those five who left the programme, three re-applied to be police constables.

While the evaluation has highlighted the success of the first cohort of Direct Entry inspectors, it has also found many suggestions for ways to improve it, new ideas to explore and learning to apply.

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28 One member remained on the programme.

Appendix 1– Programme details

A1.1 Overview

The Direct Entry Inspector programme has not fundamentally altered since it first launched in 2016, but improvements have been made throughout. The following section gives an overview of all programme elements – including programme marketing (**section A1.2**); recruitment and selection (**A1.3**); governance (**A1.4**); programme content and structure (**A1.5**); learning objectives (**A1.6**); assessment (**A1.7**); and support for members (**A1.8**) – and describes relevant changes that have been implemented during the last three years.

A1.2 Marketing and attraction

Annual recruitment rounds have started with a period of marketing to promote the schemes, originally led by forces for the Direct Entry programmes (with varying regional/local support). The College has delivered a centralised national campaign in recent years and forces have continued to promote the schemes locally through their websites, local and regional PR and social media, and regional events.

In order to streamline the College marketing and recruitment offer for the Direct Entry programmes, the College developed a stand-alone microsite called 'LeadBeyond' for the Direct Entry programmes. The microsite was redesigned in 2018 to make it more interactive and engaging for potential applicants. The LeadBeyond microsite was also linked on social media with a Twitter and Facebook account. Both social media accounts were launched in 2018 and used to promote awareness of the programme and direct those interested to the LeadBeyond microsite.

A number of positive action initiatives have been incorporated into the marketing and attraction campaigns throughout the programme to attract a diverse range of applicants, especially those from under-represented groups. These have included: in 2019 gathering expressions of interest with demographic data (with appropriate permissions from applicants) to help forces deliver positive action to those applying; and running 30 virtual meet and engage events (reaching 1,250 people) focusing on providing information on the programme, the role and providing role models for the programme. The College has also provided workshops for positive action single points of contact (SPOCs) in force, to upskill them on the Direct Entry programme and recruitment campaign.

Campaign messaging

The communications strategy for the Direct Entry programme recruitment has focused on different messaging over the years to attract suitable candidates. The marketing messages and literature have also been reviewed

to ensure they are in line with the positive action initiatives. For the 2019 campaign, the focus was on the changing nature of the police, reflecting the changes in the world we live, and reflecting these differences in the workforce, in terms of skill sets and perspectives in the Direct Entry programme. The campaign was designed to attract, inspire and drive potential applicants to the campaign microsite for more information.

A key learning point from previous campaigns was that a strong motivating factor for joining Direct Entry programmes was to make a difference, and impact positively on people's lives and the community. This was incorporated into the 2019 messaging by suggesting how skills gained in a civilian role could be used to help and give something back, while providing an exciting and rewarding career in the police.

External advertising

The College has run external adverts in various print and online media outlets for the previous years' Direct Entry campaigns. For the 2019 campaign, the following adverts and activities were run by the College:

- Targeted marketing based on specific job titles and recorded skill sets were run on LinkedIn, a professional networking digital platform. The platform allows you to define specific job titles and the skills individuals have listed on their profiles, and then targets the marketing material at those who match what is required for the Direct Entry programmes.

- The campaign was launched with an advertisement in the METRO newspaper which appeared in all regional publications across the UK on the launch day. The decision to launch with the METRO, on application window opening day, was made to reach a new audience and as wide a number of professionals who commute on the rail/tube on day one as possible.

- A radio streaming pilot was co-bought (with a force) as part of a focus on targeted recruitment for applicants from under-represented groups. This is the first time radio adverts have been run.

Events

For the 2019 positive action campaign, the College ran and promoted nine live 'meet the police' events in various locations around the country. The events were advertised via the LeadBeyond microsite and the College website Direct Entry pages. Each event was an opportunity for prospective applicants to obtain an overview of the process and the programmes. A presentation was given about the programmes, followed by personal insight from serving officers and Direct Entry programme members on the programme, training and the job role. Attendees

also had the chance to ask questions and network with officers. The events were advertised via email communications, the LeadBeyond microsite and social media channels, in addition to the College website.

A1.3 Recruitment and selection

The application process has varied slightly each year but has always involved the following stages:

- Online application form, including competency-based questions suitable for the rank and application sift

- National assessment centre, based on the following criteria:

  - The ability to perform competently in the rank of inspector following a two-year programme.

  - The potential and motivation to reach the rank of superintendents and above during their service.

  - The ability to bring new ways of thinking and different perspectives into the police service and to effectively influence the way that policing operates.

- Final force selection, based on local workforce requirements.

Positive action initiatives were run prior to the assessment centre, and included briefings held to ensure candidates had all the information they needed and the opportunity to ask any questions. The College also worked with forces to provide candidates with ongoing support (including mentors) ahead of each stage of the recruitment process.

As referred to in **section 3.1.3**, the lower success rate of applicants from a black and minority ethnic background was monitored throughout the evaluation period. Over the years, various changes in the recruitment and selection process have been introduced and monitored, with the intention of continually improving and learning from experience.

Following the 2017 recruitment, the assessment process was brought into the College, to ensure that all parts of the process were conducted according to established and emerging best practice within the field of selection and assessment. Application forms were blind, double marked, and assessors fully trained including benchmarking assessment standards. The entire process was quality assured. Guidance on the application process, including how to complete competency-based application forms was also refreshed.

Despite the measures described above, lower success rates for applicants from a black and minority ethnic background continued in later recruitment rounds. In 2018 applications from candidates from a black and minority ethnic background comprised 10 per cent (93) of all applications (943), and candidates from a black and minority ethnic background only made up 5 per cent of those invited to the assessment centre. Following the 2018 recruitment, it was decided that forces should again conduct the application and sifting stages (for the 2019 recruitment round). It was hoped that having closer involvement with candidates, particularly those from under-represented groups, would have a positive impact on the pass rates for applicants from a black and minority ethnic background, supported by guidance from the College. To date, however, subgroup differentials remain and the issue continues to be monitored and the possible reasons for differentials explored.

Independent reviews of the Direct Entry inspector recruitment process have been conducted on the application and sifting process (on the 2018 round), and the assessment centre (on the 2019 round), by a specialist consultancy with expertise in diversity and assessment. Although some suggestions for minor improvements were made, the reviewers did not find any issues or concerns with the assessment process, that would explain the differentials in outcomes for some under-represented groups. On the contrary, the assessment centre was deemed to be robust, fair and professional.

The College has invested in refreshing the assessor bank to increase the diversity of those conducting the assessments. This work is ongoing and results will be monitored.

Internal research conducted by the College on the application stages for the 2018 Direct Entry Inspector recruitment suggested that candidates from a black and minority ethnic background were slightly less likely to have the right level of experience. It is possible that the Direct Entry attraction campaign is not reaching or attracting candidates from a black and minority ethnic background with the right skills and experience, or that these candidates are not sufficiently demonstrating their skills – perhaps due to unfamiliarity with policing or assessment centres of this type. Ongoing work is taking place by the College to ensure that the Direct Entry Inspector programme attracts a diverse cohort of individuals with sufficient skills and experience.

A1.4 Governance, roles and responsibilities

A Consolidated Governance Board (currently named a Professional Reference Group) has provided independent oversight on the Fast Track and Direct Entry programmes since their launch, along with a pre-existing High Potential Development Scheme. It is chaired by a chief police officer, in their capacity as representing the Workforce Coordination Committee of the National

Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). Members include relevant College staff and representatives from stakeholder organisations, including the Home Office, Police Federation and Police Superintendents' Association.

Both the College and participating forces have been required to have a programme lead (in the case of forces, from the chief officer team/executive level) as well as a SPOC for the programme. The force lead has overall responsibility for ensuring the national minimum standards for delivery of the programme in force (as set by the College) are met. The force SPOC manages the implementation, delivery and end-to-end quality assurance of programme requirements, ensuring it is communicated to all relevant in-force stakeholders (including programme members, line managers, trainers, assessors, mentors, workplace coaches and local staff associations).

A1.5 Core learning objectives

The learning outcomes for the 24-month programme were, from the outset, designed to reflect the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that a Direct Entry Inspector would require in order to operate independently, as a competent, uniformed inspector in a wide range of deployments. They also address the wider programme aims to support the continuous development of policing. The following list of core learning objectives have been taken from the 2019 programme handbook.

Knowledge and Understanding – programme members should be able to demonstrate:

- systematic knowledge and understanding of the broad policing and public policy challenges and contending perspectives, discourses and conceptual debates within policing, law enforcement and criminal justice

- critical awareness of new insights and an evolving, evidence-based approach to policing to inform future professional policing practice

- comprehensive knowledge of the regulations, procedures and legislation relevant to the rank of uniformed police superintendent.

Skills application – programme members should be able to:

- communicate effectively and persuasively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences, both verbally and in writing (including presenting clear arguments, capacity to analyse, and ability to critically interpret information)

- plan, lead and execute projects requiring cross-disciplinary communications, partnership working and high-level resource management skills

- critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship (from a broad range of disciplines) to inform decisions and to develop and advance the boundaries of professional policing knowledge

- use established research, enquiry and evaluation techniques to create and support evidence-based policing

- apply the regulations, procedures and legislation relevant to the rank of uniformed police inspector sensitively in complex, unpredictable and diverse situations.

Attitudes and behaviours – programme members should:

- have the personal qualities and attributes required to lead a modern, values-based professional police service such as high ethical standards, professionalism, integrity, sound moral judgement, emotional intelligence, initiative and personal resilience

- have self-awareness of their leadership style and implement effective leadership strategies to create a motivated, empowered and high-performing workforce

- consistently assess and evaluate the key ethical considerations underpinning policy formulation and strategic decision-making in policing

- possess an independent learning ability and a commitment to continuing professional development (CPD).

A1.6 Programme delivery and content

The programme follows a core curriculum set by the College. Around 20 per cent is delivered by the College as four residential modules. These are designed to help prepare programme members for their 'rotation' experience at the next rank (constable, sergeant and inspector). They also all include topics related to 'leadership in a police context', covering the following broad areas: personal leadership, Code of Ethics, integrity, equality, diversity and human rights, professional policing skills, media training, and partnership working.

Most of the programme (around 80 per cent) is delivered in the force, mostly as 'rotation' experiences at the different ranks from constable onwards. The programme allows flexibility for forces to include development

opportunities or training not specified by the College, provided they are informed by identified, specific requirements of the force or by a programme member's personal development plan.

A1.7 Programme assessment

The assessment strategy consists of three methodologies: work-based assessment (WBA), action research project assignment, and a knowledge-based examination (described below). Programme members are required to successfully complete all three assessment components.

Work-based assessment

Programme members are required to provide evidence of competence against criteria in nine areas (listed below), as set and quality assured by the College. Assessment was carried out by in-force assessors (trained and supported by the College).

- Apply professional standards in policing.

- Providing an initial police response.

- Investigation and interviewing.

- Provide protection to the public.

- Criminal law and offences.

- Apply a preventative policing approach.

- Managing information and intelligence.

- Policing management and operations.

- Policing management and operations 2.

Action research projects

Programme members were required to complete an action research project during the programme, which will focus on community policing. The project should be negotiated between the programme member and force to reflect the needs of the local community and force, and help the programme member see policing through the eyes of the community. The project is assessed through a 4,000 word written report. The action research project is approved by Teesside University's ethics board.

Knowledge-based examination

Programme members are required to pass the National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) Step 2 knowledge-based examination in line with the national process for those seeking promotion to the rank of inspector. Programme members are required to pass this multiple-choice exam, which assesses their knowledge and understanding of relevant law and procedure. Programme members that do not achieve the pass mark first time have one opportunity to re-sit the exam.

Scheme completion

At the end of the programme, a review is conducted of all elements of the programme member's formal assessment results before final sign-off is given by their chief constable or force commissioner, in agreement with the College. Those who are signed off, graduate from the programme, their probation period immediately comes to an end and they take up a substantive inspector post in force.

The programme is accredited by Teesside University (who has the current contract to accredit the programme). Successful completion of the scheme leads to a level seven qualification (post graduate certificate – Direct Entry Inspector Programme) awarded by Teesside University.

A1.8 Force support

National minimum standards, set by the College, include standards of support for programme members while in force. It is stipulated that forces should ensure programme members have regular performance reviews and a personal development plan, which informs which roles and opportunities the member should take up in force while on the programme. Participating forces are also required to provide each programme member with two mentors – one at inspector rank and one at superintendent rank to support ongoing development to meet career aspirations.

For each of the force rotations (constable, sergeant and inspector), programme members are also to be assigned a workplace coach, who should be an officer at the rotation rank. This workplace coach is responsible for their programme member's training and development and for ensuring they receive the necessary level and variety of operational exposure during their rotation.

Appendix 2 – Programme costs

The programme costs have been calculated using the College's auditable accounts for the three years the programme has been run (2016–19). They include all associated costs of implementing the programme, including: marketing, recruitment, design and delivery, administration and staffing of the programme. The cost for each activity associated with delivering the programme over the three years (2016–19) is outlined in **table 1** and further detail of what was included under each activity is in the sections below.

Table 1 – Three-year programme costs by activity

Programme activity	Total cost: 2016–2019
Marketing	£677,574
Recruitment	£894,285
Programme design and delivery	£301,372
Business administration	£24,268
Direct Entry College staff team	£851,672
Total	£2,749,173

Marketing

The marketing cost included the costs of: the LeadBeyond website, meet the police events, positive action initiatives, paid advertising (such as in the METRO newspaper), design and production of marketing materials and anything else identified as marketing the programme.

Recruitment

The recruitment cost included the costs of: the sift and selection process (including interviews), running the assessment centre and anything else identified as part of the application to selection process for the programme.

Programme design and delivery

The programme design and delivery cost included the costs of: the design and delivery of lesson plans and tutor guides, delivery of classroom teaching, academic accreditation of the programme, administration of the work-based assessment, knowledge exam and action research, programme graduation, accommodation and venue, assessment training for forces/candidates and anything else identified as relating to the design and delivery of the programme.

Business administration

The business administration cost included the costs of: couriers, telephony, programme staff team meetings and accommodation, legal advice, IT software and hardware, office supplies, staff training, programme evaluation and anything else identified as involved in the day-to-day administration of the programme.

Direct Entry College staff team

The Direct Entry College staff team cost included the costs of the Direct Entry College staff team salaries and Direct Entry College staff team expenses.

Appendix 3– Evaluation technical information

Research team and governance

The research was conducted in-house by College researchers – all of whom were members of the Government Social Research (GSR) service and as such, bound by the Civil Service Code (and its core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality), as well as the professional standards set out in the specific GSR code, which have been designed to ensure quality, rigorous social research and analysis for government.

Throughout the evaluation, research participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. The researchers have been the only College staff with access to the raw data gathered through qualitative evaluation fieldwork (interviews, surveys and focus groups).

From the outset, a Quality Assurance and Evaluation Steering Group (QAESG) was established, which convened on a quarterly basis through the duration of the five-year evaluation period. The group was chaired by the College Fast Track and Direct Entry programme lead and included the College evaluation leads for the project, other relevant College staff and representatives from external stakeholder organisations (Home Office, Police Federation and Police Superintendents Association for England and Wales), as well as two external academics. QAESG was a forum for presenting emerging findings from evaluation fieldwork, providing programme updates and discussing and agreeing any adjustments to the planned fieldwork.

QAESG reported to a larger Professional Reference Group for the Fast Track/ Direct Entry programmes and a separate (and longer established) High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS), headed by an external chair (a chief police officer).

Annual interim reports were produced and shared with the programme team, QAESG members and the Professional Reference Group (PRG).

The final evaluation reports all underwent external academic peer review.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation was designed to gather data to inform answers to the same research questions which were used in the Direct Entry superintendent evaluation. However, timescales of reporting have meant that these questions, in particular: 'What rank and role did those on the Direct Entry Inspector programme progress to after the programme was completed and what barriers did the individuals encounter?' and 'What are the perceived benefits of the programme (return on investment)?' have not been possible to address in the research. As a result, the evaluation focuses on the following areas instead: potential to bring new skills and thinking, and lessons learned for implementation. The operational competence and force participation questions mirror those in the Direct Entry superintendent evaluation.

The research questions were derived from the core objectives of the programme and were created in consultation with the PRG and QAESG for the Fast Track/ Direct Entry programmes.

Q1. Profile of programme members

Which police forces took part in the Direct Entry Inspector programme? What are the professional and demographic backgrounds of the programme members?

Q2. Operational competence[29]

Has the Direct Entry Inspector programme attracted, recruited, trained and graduated people who are operationally competent as Inspectors and are they demonstrating effective leadership?

Q3. Potential to bring new skills

What new skills and thinking did programme members bring with them when they joined? What extent have they been able to/encouraged to use them to the benefit of the force and what have the barriers been?

Q.4 Lessons learned for implementation

What helped to facilitate programme members effective integration into the service? How can the observations be used to provide indications as to how the programme can help recruit and develop talented future leaders for the service?

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29 Operational competence will be defined through the national assessment strategy. If programme members have passed the assessment, they will be deemed to be operationally competent.

Limitations of the research

Limited availability of objective measures: the nature of the programme and its aims made only a few objective measures possible (primarily demographic/ recruitment data). There was a heavy reliance on perception evidence, which is understandable for an evaluation of this nature. The reliability of perceptual evidence was strengthened by comparing responses from different evaluation participant groups (programme members, line managers/workplace coaches and to a lesser extent, those managed by a direct entrant). In relation to the operational competence and effective leadership research question, perception evidence was also corroborated by programme assessment data (most of which was based on observation of programme members by in-force assessors).

Methods have been used to enhance the reliability of the perception evidence – for example, guaranteeing anonymity to fieldwork participants and aiming to interview all cohort members to avoid sample bias – but weaknesses, such as that linked with unconscious personal bias are unavoidable. Additionally, while fieldwork participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, the extent they felt able to be candid is unknown.

The common perceptions that have been drawn out from the fieldwork participants may differ to common perceptions that could be drawn out from other groups that were not involved in the evaluation research. The evaluation did not gather feedback from those managed by Direct Entry inspectors – (they had only been operational for six months) and did not gather views from the wider workforce in participating forces.

Small cohort numbers: this has reduced the opportunity to look for trends in the data, for example, whether individuals with particular work experience are more/ less likely to graduate from the programmes and be promoted. It has also created sensitivities around the report writing, since the low numbers increased the risk of identifying individuals or whole cohorts. Finally, most participating forces only had one or two programme members each, which may have limited the opportunity for the scheme to have a discernible impact at a force level. Even in the MPS (the force with the most members) the participants are spread out within the organisation and geographically.

Timescales: the Direct Entry Inspector programme was introduced midway through the five-year evaluation, with only one cohort graduating during the evaluation period – again limiting the opportunity to look for trends. It has also limited opportunity to explore members' performance in substantive posts. It may take time and a greater number of direct entrants in individual forces for more discernible force level impacts to be realised.

Lack of a comparison group: opportunities for comparing Direct Entry inspectors with traditionally promoted officers were considered but ruled out, largely because fair, objective and helpful comparison measures could not be identified. The programme aims were deliberately broad around bringing in those with different perspectives who wanted to make a positive difference. The evaluation focused on exploring whether and how this may have been achieved with the recruited cohorts. Without having more specific differences defined and aimed for at the outset, it was not feasible to have a more robust research approach, for example, to measure whether the direct entrants were more/less likely to exhibit particular differences to other inspectors.

Consistency of administrative data: data collected for the purpose of recruitment and assessment data could suffer from potential weaknesses such as: misreporting, different recording methods and sample errors.

Programme evaluation – fieldwork table

Research method	No. participants/ response rate	Cohort	Year of fieldwork
First survey (cohort members)	11/17	1	2017
Final survey – end of programme (cohort members)	5/11		2019
Final interviews (cohort members)	6/11		
Final survey to line managers/ mentors	4		
First survey (cohort members)	15/20	2	2018
Second survey – final work-based assessment phase (cohort members)	9/17		2019
First survey (cohort members)	6/17	3	

In addition, interviews with five chief constables and a chief officer from six forces were conducted at fieldwork end. The selected forces had all recruited at least one programme member during the evaluation period.

Example of graduate interview topic guide (cohort 1, post-graduation)

- PURPOSE: To hear about your experiences during the DE programme and since graduating and becoming a substantive inspector.

- Will help inform the programme evaluation, as well as how the DE programmes could be implemented in future years. As such we are interested in hearing about the positives and the negatives.

- DISCLAIMER: As explained in the consent form which you have signed and returned to the College, all answers will be kept anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for the purposes described in the consent form.

- You have agreed that I may audio record the interview today. We will delete the recording after the transcription has been done. Are you happy for me to record this interview?

- Please do not disclose anything operationally sensitive in this interview and as far as possible, avoid naming individuals.

Part 1. Prior experience and motivations for joining the scheme

1. Please could you briefly describe your work experience prior to joining the DE scheme.

- Did you have any experience of police work, prior to applying to the programme?

- Eg, police special, member of police staff, worked in a related field?

- Close friends/family in the police?

2. Would you have considered applying to be a police constable, if you had been unsuccessful in joining the DE Inspectors' scheme?

- Had you applied to be a constable before?

- What may have stopped you applying to be a constable?

- Why was the DE Inspectors scheme more attractive to you?

3. What was your understanding of the aims of the Direct Entry Inspectors' programme?

- (any or all of the following ….aims to bring in talented leaders from outside policing, bring in different skills, bring in different perspectives/ views)

- What part of those aims most appealed to you?

4. Please could you describe your initial motivations for applying to the Direct Entry Inspector programme.

- Long term career aspirations – did you want to reach more senior ranks/ specialise/ stay a police officer for the long-term?

- For policing – did you come with any expectations around how you would like to positively benefit your force/ policing/ the public?

Part 2. Support during the programme

5. Please describe how supported you felt by your force during the programme (including HR, senior leaders, colleagues, your mentor/ tutor/ line managers). Please consider this in relation to:

- The unique pressures of belonging to the first cohort of DE inspectors (managing expectations, perceptions of colleagues etc)

- your work/life balance and time for studying

- getting the experience/ learning opportunities you needed

- adjusting to the nature of police work

- personal wellbeing more generally

6. Please describe how supported you felt by the College (as above)

7. What were your most important sources of support?

8. What would you suggest changing to make support for programme members more effective?

Part 3. Developing competence for substantive inspector rank

9. Do you feel the programme was successful in getting you ready for an inspector role? (operationally and in terms of leadership/ management ability)

- what aspects of the programme were most helpful? (including force experience and College inputs)

- what aspects of the programme were least helpful?

- Should any skills/ knowledge areas have been addressed in greater depth? Were there any significant gaps?

- would you have liked anymore/ less of particular learning methods (e.g. on the job learning/lectures/ project work/ simulated experience/ shadowing)

10. Please think about your development journey, then briefly describe one or two of your most positive and influential experiences on the programme.

11. Did you encounter any barriers that you felt could have been avoidable and held back your preparation for a substantive inspector role? Please briefly describe.

Part 4. Post-graduation: difference and making a difference

12. Have you felt able to make use of the skills and experience you have brought from your previous career? Please provide examples.

- Have you felt encouraged by your force/ College to make use of your prior skills and experience?

13. Have you felt that you have been able to make a positive difference in force, through other means – e.g. in offering a different perspective, having a different management style etc? Please provide examples.

- Have you felt encouraged/ supported to make a difference in this way (i.e. share different views, challenge norms, etc). Has this been emphasised as part of a DE role by the College?

- Have you felt enabled in force to voice a different view? Please describe anything that has helped or hindered you in this respect.

14. How do you feel you are perceived by others in the force?

- Credibility/Authenticity?

- How do you feel Direct Entry generally is perceived in your force?

15. Are you glad to be recognised as a DE inspector?

- Is it something you wish to promote?

- Is it important to maintain your "difference"?

- Do you feel you have an ongoing role to progress the DE inspector aims (bring and make a difference?)

Part 5. Post-graduation: Role

16. Please could you describe your current role?

- What are your main responsibilities?

- Is this your first role since graduation?

- If not, what other roles have you had?

- If you have changed roles, did you opt for this (and any previous roles)?

- How are you finding your time as a substantive Inspector?

17. Do you feel sufficiently supported in role? By your force and the College?
As a direct entrant, do you feel you need any extra support to manage your role/progress your career?

18. What are your career aspirations now?

- Stay in policing? Progress to senior roles? Specialise?

- So far, would you say your career aspirations are being met? What could help you reach your goals?

Part 6. Conclusion

19. Overall, how satisfied are you with the DE Inspector programme?

- Are you glad you joined?

- Would you recommend the scheme to others?

- Have your main expectations been met?

20. At this stage and based on your own experience, what would you describe as some of the key benefits of having Direct Entry inspectors in the police service?

21. If you had to give your top tips for future cohorts due to graduate from the DE programme and become substantive Inspectors, what would they be?

22. Do you have any further thoughts around how the Direct Entry Inspectors programme could be improved?

Example of programme member survey (cohort 3, phase 1)

About this survey

The College has been conducting an evaluation of the Direct Entry programmes since they first launched and a five year evaluation report is due to be submitted to Parliament in November this year. The evaluation will present evidence and learning on how the programmes have been implemented and how they are meeting their aims. We would like to request your support with the final stages of this evaluation activity, as well as the ongoing monitoring and quality assurance of the College modules. Your feedback to this and later surveys will support the continuous improvement of the Direct Entry schemes.

This survey is anonymous and asks for your feedback on Phase 1 College training and your constable rotation, as well as information on your expectations and prior experience when joining the scheme.

Thank you for your feedback.

Privacy statement

Please read the following statement and then answer whether you have read and understood it.

This survey is commissioned by the College of Policing, and as such, the College is the Data Controller for the personal and sensitive personal data that will be disclosed by survey participants. The College is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office under registration reference: Z3458257. Your participation in the survey is based on your consent, which you are free to withdraw at any time by responding back to the survey invite email.

Your information will not be used for any other purposes other than for monitoring and evaluation of the Direct Entry programmes and, anonymously, for the production of future training/guidance documents and/ or publicity materials for the programme.

This survey will not ask for your name or any identifiable information. This survey is being delivered in-house by College government social researchers. Access to the "raw" data (individual responses) will be restricted to the College researchers – who will analyse all responses and only share aggregated data (i.e. summarising feedback from all respondents), along with example quotes, with the programme team and in resulting evaluation reports. All comments will be treated anonymously and no individual will be identifiable in the published evaluation findings or any other published documents drawing on the findings – unless your express permission is given.

Your responses will be held securely by the College research team for 5 years, after which time the data will be securely destroyed. The College of Policing takes its legislative responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) very seriously, therefore, should you have any concerns regarding the processing of your information in this regard, please do not hesitate in contacting the College of Policing Data Protection Officer on: **Data.Protection@college. pnn.police.uk**. For further information about your rights under GDPR please see our full **Privacy Notice** on our website.

Please contact the Direct Entry programme team or a force representative directly, if you wish to discuss an issue concerning your programme. Alternatively, please refer to our complaints process **http://www.college.police.uk/Contact/ Pages/Feedback-and-complaints.aspx**

Q1. I have read and understood the Privacy Statement (please note, if you select no, you will not be able to complete the survey.)

- Yes

- No

Phase 1/Constable rotation

Q.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that you felt adequately prepared for starting your constable rotation.

- Strongly agree

- Agree

- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

Q3. Thinking about your phase 1 College training and constable rotation, would you have preferred any more or less of the following, before progressing on to your sergeant rotation?

Statement	I would have preferred more of this	I had about the right amount of this	I would have preferred less of this
Time on rotation			
Exposure to different types of work in force			
Force led training			
Work-based project work			

Q4. This question explores the support you are receiving and communications. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel confident to express my personal views on work-related matters to my line manager.					
I feel able to openly discuss my development needs with my line manager.					
I feel able to openly discuss my development needs with my tutor.					
My programme mentor is a helpful source of advice.					
The programme strikes a good balance between assessment and development.					
I feel confident I have the support of my line manager.					
I feel confident I have people in the College of Policing I can approach for support or advice.					

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The senior leaders in my force are approachable.					
The College has kept me well informed about the programme.					
My force has kept me well informed about the programme.					
My force is actively engaged with the Direct Entry programme.					
There is good communication between the force and the College.					

Q5. Please use the space below if you would like to share any additional feedback on your Phase 1 modules and constable rotation - e.g. assessments; support; work-life balance etc.

Q6. The Direct Entry scheme aims to bring in talented individuals with different skills, perspectives and experiences into police leadership roles. It is early in the programme, but please use the space below if you would like to describe any examples of how you feel you have already been able to apply your prior knowledge/ skills/ perspectives and/or make a difference in force.

Pre joining information

It is helpful for our evaluation of the programme, as well as for developing marketing strategies and programme content, to get an understanding of what attracted programme members and prior policing experience/ connections.

Q7. If you are happy to, please describe what most attracted you to the Direct Entry programme. (We are interested in why you wanted to become an inspector, as well as the unique appeal of the Direct Entry route).

Q8. Had you ever considered becoming a police officer prior to finding out about the Direct Entry programmes?

- Yes, had seriously thought about and/or had applied to be a constable before

- Yes, but not seriously and have never applied to be a constable before

- No

- Prefer not to say

Q9. This question explores previous experience or connections with policing. Please tick all of the following that apply to you:

- I have close friends or family that have worked for a police force

- I have worked or volunteered for a police force before

- I have not been employed directly by a police force before, but some/ all of my work has been closely connected with policing

- None of the above apply to me

- Prefer not to say

Q10. If you had not been successful in your application to Direct Entry, would you have considered applying to be a police constable instead?

- Yes, definitely

- Yes, maybe

- No

- Prefer not to say

Appendix 4 – Recruitment selection and assessment data

Results of DE inspector recruitment activity cohorts 1, 2 and 3

Recruitment stage	Cohort 1 (2016)	Cohort 2 (2017)	Cohort 3 (2018)
No. applications received	1019	1597	943
No. selected for assessment	76	81	88
No. withdrew prior to assessment	15	17	22
No. attending assessment centre	61	64	66
No. successful at assessment	23	29	28
No. accepted places in force	17	20	17
No. left the programme to date (as of June 2019)	5	4	0
Graduated from programme	11	N/A	N/A

DE inspector cohorts 1, 2 and 3 by force

Force	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Total (June 2019)
Cumbria	–	–	1	1
Derbyshire	–	1	–	1
Devon and Cornwall	–	–	2	2
Dorset	–	1	–	1
Gloucestershire	2 (1 left)	–	–	1
GMP	–	3 (1 left)	1	3
Gwent	–	1	–	1
Hampshire	2	1 (1 left)	–	2
Humberside	1	2	–	3
MPS	7 (3 left)	5 (1 left)	1	9

Force	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Total (June 2019)
Norfolk	–	–	1	1
Northamptonshire	–	1	–	1
North Wales	–	–	1	1
Northumbria	–	–	1	1
Suffolk	–	–	1	1
TVP	–	1	3	4
Warwickshire	1	1	–	2
West Mercia	2 (1 left)	1	–	2
West Midlands	–	–	3	3
West Yorkshire	2	2 (1 left)	2	5
Total successfully placed in force	17	20	17	–
Total – June 2019	12	16	17	45

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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