

## Frequently Asked Questions – Recognition of Prior Learning (October 2017)

Recognition of Experience and Prior Learning (RPL)	
1. I am an existing officer/member of police staff with no interest in gaining a qualification. How does this affect me?	<p>Existing officers and staff will not be required to work toward or gain an education qualification in order to remain in their current role.</p> <p>The PEQF programme has introduced professional development opportunities through the RPL process for those already working in policing, if they wish to gain recognised and transferable qualifications.</p>
2. What is happening with the role profiles?	<p>We are continuing to develop the new professional profiles (to replace those on the Skills for Justice website). We held workshops with those carrying out the roles in May-July 2017 and will follow this up with extensive consultation. Eventually, the profiles will be endorsed by the appropriate NPCC business lead.</p> <p>The new profiles will be available via the <a href="#">Professional Development Platform</a> at the same site as the RPL material.</p>
3. Will the National Policing Curriculum (NPC) courses be qualifications in their own right?	<p>No. They will have an indicative level and credit value which may contribute towards a qualification. The credit estimator in the online tool will help individuals see how many credits they might be able to get for the NPC courses they have completed. The <a href="#">Professional Development Platform</a> provides more information on how this process will work.</p>
4. What is a credit estimator and where can I find it?	<p>The credit estimator is part of the online tool to enable individuals to find out how many credits they might be able to claim for the learning they have gained from their skills, experience and police training. (This only relates to certain National Policing Curriculum courses which were deemed suitable during extensive research.)</p> <p>The credit estimator will provide a summary of the number of credits you might be able to use to undertake further education qualifications. The credit estimator provides an indicative credit value only. The exact number of credits an individual is able to claim will be assessed by the course provider, based on the evidence presented by the applicant and the relevance of the credits being claimed to the course being applied for – for more information, see the <a href="#">Professional Development Platform</a>.</p>
5. I completed a course seven years ago. Will this be included in my credit score?	<p>Unfortunately it is not entirely straightforward. Individual higher education institutions have existing policies around the currency of courses they will accept.</p>

	<p>If a course is over the 'currency' time limit, however, but an applicant can demonstrate that the learning from a course is still being used and therefore is current, they may still be able to claim this as part of their Recognition of Prior Learning.</p> <p>For example, an individual may have completed a specific course seven years ago and the currency time is five years. Over the last five years, however, they have worked in the area of study and have maintained their knowledge, competence and expertise through experience and undertaking continuing professional development in relation to the topic. Therefore, their knowledge is still current and the credits accumulated.</p>
<p>6. Will all my RPL credits be enough to get a degree?</p>	<p>No. Individuals will need to complete further work in order to achieve a qualification in the form of a certificate, diploma or degree. Higher education institutions (HEIs) and other qualification providers have individual policies on the maximum number of credits an individual can claim towards a qualification. It is important that you check with the HEI or qualification provider you are applying to.</p> <p>For example, many HEIs state that the maximum number of credits you can claim through RPL towards an honours degree is 240 credits of the 360 credits required (ie, equivalent to two years of a three-year programme). Every individual will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It may be possible for some individuals (particularly where they can demonstrate evidence of higher-level skills and competencies) to enrol directly onto a postgraduate qualification without having an undergraduate degree, which would normally be a prerequisite.</p>
<p>7. Have all universities agreed to these credits?</p>	<p>A directory of providers that have agreed to the College RPL process will be available on the <a href="#">Professional Development Platform</a>. This will include universities and other organisations offering professional qualifications. It contains information about the courses available, how they are taught and assessed, the course cost and location, along with direct links to the course listed.</p>
<p>8. The College of Policing put in a bid to the Police Transformation (PTF) Fund to help forces with local implementation. What is the outcome of this bid?</p>	<p>The College recognises that the PTF bid could have a huge impact on what support forces are able to offer. At the time of writing, we are still waiting for the outcome of the bid.</p>

<p>9. Does the RPL apply to police staff, as it seems focussed on police officers?</p>	<p>Yes. This process is aimed at officers and staff. Not all National Policing Curriculum courses were suitable for awarding credit, however, a number of courses listed will apply to police staff. Learning from experience has also been mapped for police staff. To identify which level a member of police staff is at, they are advised to look at their professional profile, also held on the new <a href="#">Professional Development Platform</a>.</p>
<p>10. Why doesn't the RPL process cover the ranks of chief inspector and above?</p>	<p>The intention is that work will be undertaken to more accurately map the skills and experience of chief inspectors and above during the next phase of the PEQF project. As a priority, ranks of inspector and below were looked at in line with the PEQF focus on entry routes.</p> <p>Officers above the rank of inspector will still be able to use the online tool and their course history will be taken into account, based on the NPC Matrix. At this stage, however, minimum credit values and levels haven't been identified for learning from skills and experience.</p> <p>It is likely that at chief inspector and above, an applicant would at least be able to gain direct entry to a postgraduate qualification.</p>
<p>11. What are the criteria for an apprenticeship and how can I find out what apprenticeships are available in my force?</p>	<p>Apprenticeships require the learning to be for a significantly new post for the individual. Hence, apprenticeships will be available on promotion (not all ranks) and for lateral moves into some specific policing roles.</p> <p>Forces will be introducing apprenticeships at different times. If you wish to change your current role in the police service, you should regularly check your local force vacancies.</p>
<p>12. Under my Initial Police Learning and Development Programme, I achieved a level 5 educational qualification. How can I now progress to a level 6 qualification via an apprenticeship?</p>	<p>A person cannot join an apprenticeship unless they are new in post or there is a requirement for significantly different skills, learning and development.</p> <p>There will be opportunities for existing officers and staff to gain accredited qualifications via the RPL process as part of the introduction of the PEQF.</p>
<p>13. I've heard something about advanced practitioners?</p>	<p>The College is exploring and developing the role of advanced practitioners. This is a role that provides a lateral career pathway, enabling knowledge and expertise to be recognised and rewarded without following a traditional vertical promotion route.</p>

	<p>The advanced practitioner’s pilot started in February 2017, following one of the recommendations in the <a href="#">Leadership Review</a>. The pilot, which focuses on police constables, began with 73 advanced practitioners from Cheshire, Lancashire, Thames Valley, the MPS, South Yorkshire, Humberside and West Yorkshire.</p> <p>The <a href="#">advanced practitioner pilot</a> will also be considering appropriate qualifications.</p>
14. Will there still be ‘promotion exams’?	The current NPPF will not be changed, other than to replace the stage 4 requirements with a level 6 apprenticeship for sergeants and a postgraduate certificate for inspectors. The assessment format for these qualifications has not been determined.
15. Will I be required to hold an education qualification to move into a specialist post?	Yes, this is likely to be the case. Work to discuss and establish the qualifications necessary for those moving into specialist and specific staff roles has only recently started, however, with implementation not likely to be before 2019. Further details will be published in due course.
16. Will I need to already have an education qualification in order to be promoted?	<p>No, unless you are applying for the Strategic Command Course (SCC). All other newly promoted officers will be supported in gaining qualifications as shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>sergeants</b> will complete a 12-month higher-level apprenticeship (with a professional level 6 leadership and management focused accredited qualification embedded) in order to be confirmed in post following promotion, replacing the existing level 4 qualification that forms stage 4 of the NPPF for sergeants</li> <li>• <b>inspectors</b> will achieve a postgraduate certificate (level 7) qualification (which has a core focus on leadership and management) in order to be confirmed in post following promotion, replacing the existing level 5 qualification that forms stage 4 of the NPPF for inspectors</li> <li>• <b>superintendents</b> will complete a master’s apprenticeship (level 7) in order to be confirmed in post</li> <li>• there will be a requirement to hold a level 7 qualification as a prerequisite for entry to the SCC), which will be reviewed with potential for the revised programme to carry credits towards a professional doctorate programme (level 8).</li> </ul> <p>Any requirements following promotion are planned for initial introduction in 2019 at the earliest and will not be mandated until at least 2021.</p> <p><a href="#">Education levels explained.</a></p>
17. When will the requirement for new in-post officers to achieve	The proposals will be implemented in a phased approach over the next few years, following further consultation and in collaboration with forces and higher education partners. Although full implementation of all proposals was originally proposed for 2020, further modelling and consultation with chief constables and police and crime

<p>these education levels be implemented?</p>	<p>commissioners has taken place, taking into account the workforce planning, cost and infrastructure implications and challenges for forces. The proposed date for implementing the full PEQF is now 2022 at the earliest.</p>
<p>18. I am an experienced serving officer. Will I have to pay for these new educational qualifications?</p>	<p>No, not if the requirement to achieve the qualification follows a promotion, as this will form part of your development into the new role.</p> <p>Each respective qualification will be obtained through the learning programme that will support individuals in gaining the knowledge, skills and competencies required when they move to a new role on promotion or, in due course, into a specialist post. It is therefore important to emphasise that, with the exception of the pre-join undergraduate degree in policing entry route, the learning required for new officers in the role to meet the appropriate education level will be achieved through professional development and not at the individual's expense.</p> <p>If, however, there is no operational requirement for you to undertake an academic qualification and you do so for your own personal development through the RPL process, you will have to pay for it. It may be that forces are able to offer some support, although this may not be financial assistance. Any support will be force-specific and subject to local organisational demands and priorities.</p>
<p>19. 4. So what would someone working in policing do if they wanted to achieve a qualification?</p>	<p>The answer would depend on the level they wanted to reach. For example, if they were a police constable with 20 years' service wanting to achieve a degree-level qualification, the first step would be to use the online tool to obtain an indicative credit score for their RPL and see what opportunities are available.</p> <p>The next steps toward obtaining the qualification would depend on what additional evidence the higher education institution or qualification provider required to prove the learning an individual was claiming as part of their RPL application. This evidence may be in the form of researching and writing up one or more original pieces of work, attending workshops or seminars and taking part in debate and discussion, creating and giving presentations, or putting together and presenting a portfolio of work-related material.</p>
<p>20. Why is the PC apprenticeship 3 years, but the sergeant apprenticeship can be done in 12-18 months?</p>	<p>The PC degree apprenticeship leads to a degree qualification and is over three years because year one will be studying at level 4, year two will be level 5 and the last year will be studying at level 6 and will include completing an evidence-based research project.</p> <p>The sergeant higher-level apprenticeship will be for a minimum of one year, offering a professional level 6 qualification in the form of a certificate or diploma in leadership and management.</p>

<p>21. If I am a PC who already holds a master's qualification, will I still have to undertake the sergeant apprenticeship and inspector's postgraduate certificate following promotion?</p>	<p>The specific content of the qualification at each level remains subject to confirmation, but it is anticipated that individuals would need to demonstrate achievement against the appropriate police curriculum to be confirmed in post. There will be use of RPL and 'advanced standing' mechanisms to ensure unnecessary duplication does not occur.</p>
<p>22. Will the sergeant and superintendent pay scales be adjusted to reflect the apprenticeship at those levels? Will there be different pay pre-qualification and post-qualification?</p>	<p>There will be no change to these pay scales to reflect qualifications at this point. Pay scales are reviewed and determined each year by the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB). There are currently a number of changes happening or being proposed to the future workforce framework, PEQF being one of them, and these will then inform what a future reward framework looks like (including a review of pay scales). If any changes are needed, these will be recommended to the PRRB for consideration.</p> <p>Setting pay is not within the College's remit.</p>
<p>23. Will the College provide study/report writing advice and guidance for those who choose to attain a qualification?</p>	<p>Guidance for officers and staff who choose to pursue academic qualifications (as opposed to any requirement to do so following promotion) is most likely to be offered by the higher education institution offering the qualification.</p> <p>The College has created an <a href="#">Academic Support Network community</a>, however, on the Police On-Line Knowledge Area. This new community has been created specifically for those in policing who are undertaking academic studies, focusing on providing developmental peer support for members studying for academic qualifications.</p>
<p>24. Will I get protected learning time if I apply to study for a qualification?</p>	<p>Officers completing apprenticeships following promotion will have protected learning time incorporated into the programme. Those choosing to seek accreditation through study of their own choosing, however, will be subject to local force arrangements. This may mean that some or all learning is undertaken in your own time.</p>

Further updates will be posted on the College of Policing website as this work progresses. Any questions can be forwarded to [PolicingEQF@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PolicingEQF@college.pnn.police.uk)