

Home Affairs Commons Select Committee Inquiry into Leadership and Standards in the Police

Submitted by Dr Robin Bryant, Dr Stephen Tong & Dr Dominic Wood on behalf of the Department of Law & Criminal Justice Studies, Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU).

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This paper outlines key issues in relating to police professionalization drawing from the experiences of Canterbury Christ Church University in their engagement with police services in providing police education and training. Through this commentary we highlight the challenges to professionalization citing past and current arrangements in restricting the development of innovated policing programmes within higher education. We present recommendations to the committee focused on raising standards, removing barriers and proposals relating to the College of Policing.

2.0 Contributors

2.1 Dr Robin Bryant, Director of Criminal Justice Practice: Dr Bryant was jointly responsible with Kent Police for establishing a Foundation Degree in Policing for initial police training in Kent from 2004-2008. He has edited and contributed to several books on investigation and police training, and published and presented widely on investigative theory. Dr Bryant is also Director of Criminal Justice Practice which is part of the Department of Law and Criminal Justice at Canterbury Christ Church University offering applied research, evaluation, consultancy and training to the criminal justice sector

2.2 Dr Stephen Tong, Director of Policing: Dr Tong is Director of Policing and the Programme Director for the BSc (Hons) Police Studies & Policing (pre-service) programme at Canterbury Christ Church University for the past 10 years. He conducted doctoral research at the University of Cambridge, Institute of Criminology examining the contribution of police detective training to practice and has published on issues relating to the art, craft and science of policing and debates concerning police professionalization.

2.3 Dr Dominic Wood, Head of Department for Law & Criminal Justice: Dr Wood is Head of Department of Law & Criminal Justice at Canterbury Christ Church University. He is also Chair of the Higher Education Forum for Learning and Development in Policing. He was the joint programme director of the Kent Student Officer Programme from 2004-2008 and has led on a number of innovative policing programmes over the past 18 years at CCCU.

2.4 The Department of Law and Criminal Justice Studies: The Department of Law and Criminal Justice Studies sits within the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences with in the region of 900 students studying across a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. It prides itself on the relationships it has built with the professions and currently offers popular undergraduate programmes in Applied Criminology, Crime & Policing, Forensic Investigation, Law and Policing, in addition to an in MA Policing/Criminal Justice and Criminology/Criminal Justice. The Department also has a number of PhD students focusing predominantly on policing related topics.

3.0 Key Issues relating to the improvement of standards and leadership

Context of Police Education and Training

3.1 The Home Select Committee remit in focusing on standards and leadership inevitably leads to an examination of the past and current arrangements for police education, training and recruitment. This timely examination of these issues provides the opportunity to review current arrangements and lessons learned from the past before the introduction of the College of Policing (CoP).

3.2 Throughout the duration of our working experiences with the police, National Police Training (NPT), Central Police Training and Development Authority (CENTREX) and finally National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) have played a lead role in police learning and development. Whilst progress has been made through the endeavours of these bodies, a concern addressed in this submission is that these arrangements have stifled police services and educational providers in bringing about innovations and improvements in learning and development in policing.

3.3 Reports into police training have been critical (HMIC, 2002; BBC, 2003) and the police have also been criticised when fundamental errors or short comings have occurred in operational policing (e.g. Lawrence, Tomlinson, Hillsborough). At the same time it has been widely acknowledged that policing is becoming more complex and the police role requires a range of specialist skills and approaches that are based on good research, knowledge and understanding (Foster, 1999; Stelfox, 2009; Tong, Bryant & Horvath, 2009; Sherman, 2012).

3.4 However, we believe that police training has been too slow in responding to the challenges identified in the above reports. In particular, there continues to be too much emphasis placed upon 'learning on the job' at the expense of focused knowledge and skills acquisition (Bowling & Tong, 2006; Tong, Bryant & Horvath, 2009). The learning requirements of police officers today require a depth and breadth of knowledge that can only be attained through sustained study. There is a growing body of evidence and policy reviews that have called for more educational content in police programmes aimed at preparing police officers for a professional service (HMIC 1999; Foster, 1999; Neyroud, 2011; Flanagan 2008; Wood & Tong, 2009).

3.5 A new police qualification has been launched by the NPIA entitled the 'Knowledge Certificate'. We have serious concerns about the appropriateness of this qualification in terms of developing necessary standards to avoid repeating past shortcomings of the police. It is our view that the current proposals for the 'Knowledge Certificate' present the prospect of a low educational award that fails to recognise and reward officers who are capable of demonstrating that they meet the required levels that we believe are required of a competent police officer (NPIA, 2012).

3.6 The CoP offers the possibility to review the current arrangements with the opportunity to increase quality and standards to a meaningful level in policing from new entrants through to future leaders into the police service.

Police Training & Education at Canterbury Christ Church University

3.7 In the early 1990s the university validated a Certificate in Education award for teachers and trainers in the post-compulsory sector of education and training. Students of the 'Cert Ed' included police trainers based at regional training centres. The initial ad hoc arrangements soon developed into more formal agreements that meant that bespoke Cert Ed programmes could be delivered exclusively to groups of police trainers at their own premises. At one stage this involved over 10 police training centres across the whole of the UK (including the Garnerville Training Centre in east Belfast). The Cert Ed continues to this day although the number of regional training centres has decreased because of changes in national police training. Although the content of the Cert Ed was the theory and practice of education and training our engagement with police trainers led to deeper understanding of the range of police training and the professional demands placed on officers. We noted that both initial police training and more specialist training (for example, investigative training) content had academic value but was often not assessed, or assessed in non-rigorous ways and (perhaps as a consequence of this) rarely formally accredited. It was common at the time (and in many cases remains so) for police officers to undertake what should have been demanding (but certainly often expensive) training but to simply then to be 'certificated' as successful on the basis of attendance only. The Cert Ed remains a vibrant and successful programme within the university.

3.8 In 1996 the university was approached by the then Chief Constable of Kent Police (Sir David Phillips, latterly the President of ACPO) to collaborate on a new approach to police in-service training within an academic framework. The result was the validation of a BSc (Hons) Policing that supported the development of intelligence-led policing in Kent, and the recruitment of a number of large cohorts of students. Within a few years the offer of a BSc (Hons) Policing was incrementally extended to police officers outside of Kent and specialist options (in for example, patrol policing) were added. To date over 300 police officers have successfully undertaken this degree, in many cases financing their studies from their own resources and sometimes in the face of opposition from their forces rather than support. (There are, however, notable exceptions to this, most notably both Kent Police and British Transport Police supported police officers wishing to undertake in-service higher education at CCCU over a number of years). The BSc (Hons) Policing continues to prove attractive to the sector with over 80 new students starting in October 2012.

3.9 In 1997 the university began to address the needs of 'probationary' police constables: student police officers undertaking two years initial training after joining the police service until confirmation in post. Hitherto this initial training had received no formal academic recognition. A Certificate in Higher Education in Policing was designed in partnership with Kent Police. For a number of years all new recruits of Kent Police had the opportunity to undertake the Certificate with progression routes available to the BSc (Hons) Policing (see above). However, soon after National Police Training (NPT) and its successor, Centrex launched a 'national' Certificate for probationary police constables in collaboration with the University of Portsmouth.

3.10 There have since been various similar attempts at accrediting initial police training, but with little long term success. For example, in 2002 the Home Office made funding

available for 500 places on the 'national' Centrex-approved Foundation Degree. However, the Foundation degree had very high drop-out rates and low completion rates and was subsequently withdrawn. A recurring problem that we have encountered has been the lack of a consistent message within the police and government, which has sent mixed messages to officers regarding the value of such programmes to their career progression within the police.

3.11 In 2002 the university again became involved with an innovative approach to policing; in this case through the Advanced Detective Training (ADT) programme of Kent Police. ADT was an initiative of Sir David Phillips (see above) and a direct response to the urgent need for well-trained, motivated and qualified early-career detectives. ADT was embedded within a BSc (Hons) in Applied Criminal Investigation and proved highly successful. However, after only a couple of intakes the ADT became ensnared by both restrictions at the national level (particularly the national promotion system) and costs that proved prohibitive for a single police force to bear.

3.12 In 2003 the Home Office sponsored an independent review of the learning requirement for police probationer training in England and Wales. This sought to provide a 'modern vision of policing' and a modernised initial policing curriculum to match. In the same year a BBC undercover reporter secretly filmed student police officer training at the Centrex Bruche training centre and uncovered examples of racist behaviour by trainees and inappropriate behaviour by trainers (BBC, 2003).

3.13 Also, HMIC (2002) examined initial police training at both national (Centrex) and local (force) level as one of its 'thematic inspections' and found the provision to be no longer fit for purpose.

3.14 The university and Kent Police responded to these national developments by jointly designing an accredited 'Kent Student Officer Programme' (KSOP). The underpinning academic award for KSOP was a Certificate of Higher Education in Policing, with progression routes available to officers to complete a Foundation Degree or BSc (Hons) degree in Policing. KSOP combined both the professional and academic requirements for initial training in a completely integrated manner and was the first such programme of its kind.

3.15 For a period of 5 years all new recruits to Kent Police undertook KSOP on university premises taught and assessed jointly by university and police staff (the latter were seconded by Kent Police to the university). At the outset KSOP was adopted by the university as a pilot of the new national Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) but within a short period of time became one of the small number of 'early adopters'. However, no significant funding was provided by the Home Office for this to happen; instead costs were met from Kent Police allocated resources and through a successful bid to the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Wales (Hefce). In 2008 Kent Police decided not to continue with the KSOP programme, both the light of their financial situation and the downturn in police recruitment. We believe that the

continued lack of any formal requirement for police officers to have their initial learning assessed at this level also undermined the programme and contributed to its demise.

3.16 A significant development in recent years has been the introduction of pre-join (or 'pre-entry' or 'pre-employment') schemes and courses by some colleges and universities in conjunction with police forces. In 2002 the university launched its first full-time pre-service policing programme. This programme has developed over the years and students now complete some of the learning and training required to become a police constable before entry into the police through their duties as a special constable as well as their learning based within the university. In 2010 the university introduced a new revalidated pre-join Dip HE/BSc (Hons) Policing/Police Studies (Pre-join) at its campus in east Kent. The programme has proved exceptionally popular, despite the recent introduction of higher variable tuition fees.

College of Policing

3.17 In our view, the CoP offers an exciting opportunity to truly professionalise and improve standards in policing. In order to achieve this it will need to engage with a wide range of interested parties.

3.18 If the CoP is successful in this regard, we believe there is much potential in selling products internationally and thus contributing significantly to the running of the CoP. The UK already has a strong reputation internationally in terms of both policing and the burgeoning relationship between police services and the higher education sector. There is a chance for the CoP to be at the pinnacle of police professionalization globally.

3.19 It is important that the CoP performs a leadership role in advancing police professionalism and in order to achieve this it will need to have epistemic authority within policing in ways that NPT, Centrex and NPIA did not. It needs to be aspirational and forward looking and in this respect we believe that the Level 3 'Knowledge Certificate' fails to provide the appropriate professional confidence.

3.20 The CoP needs support in ensuring quality assurance. The HE sector has expertise and resources that could be drawn upon here, alongside the various professional police associations.

3.21 The CoP should also ensure that it draws upon (and where necessary commissions) research on what works in the development of effective police officers, policing specialist roles and police leadership.

Barriers to Professionalisation

3.22 The challenge for the NPIA and its predecessors has been to maintain minimum standards nationally across 43 services with different challenges, geography and resources. The objective of achieving consistency across a variety of police services that place different priorities on operational challenges and learning and development objectives inevitably gravitates towards minimum standards as opposed to the pursuit of excellence. The CoP needs to be able to assert with authority standards that that the professionalism

of the police forward. There is an opportunity for the CoP to play an important role in developing the standards for ALL policing roles in this respect.

3.23 There is an opportunity for the CoP to make greater use of the established policing curriculum that exists within universities. Universities have a long tradition of helping the development of professional knowledge and modernisation of the workforce. This is a strategic objective at CCCU and specifically in relation to police work within the Department of Law and Criminal Justice Studies.

4.0 Recommendations:

4.1 The CoP should review, and recognise as appropriate, the learning that occurs on existing policing programmes within higher education, focusing in particular on the suitability of adopting HE level 4 (and above) learning requirements for the attestation of police constables;

4.2 The CoP should also recognise the opportunities to engage with academia in recognising existing pools of knowledge within the police and establishing relevant qualifications for promotion and specialisation within the police. Appropriate support for in-service police staff to engage with modernisation and professionalization, e.g. through CPD courses, should be encouraged.

4.3 The CoP should be informed by academic research into the police training, education and its impact on practice, and commission research to fill gaps in this knowledge;

4.4 The CoP should engage with academia in its endeavours to establish undergraduate benchmarks in policing and more broadly in establishing appropriate mechanisms for governing the quality assurance of learning and development in policing.

Bibliography

BBC (2003) *The Secret Policeman*, Panorama BBC.

Bryant, R, Bryant, S, Tong, S & Wood D (2012) *ASC 547 Higher Education and Policing*, Report submitted to the Higher Education Academy Social Sciences Cluster

Byford, L (1981) *The Yorkshire Ripper Case: review of the Police Investigation of the Case*, unpublished report of for Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary.

Flanagan, Sir R. (2008) *Review of Policing—Final Report*. London: HMSO

Foster, J. (1999) 'Appendix 22: Memorandum by Dr Janet Foster, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge', in Home Affairs Committee, *Police Training and Recruitment: Volume Two*, London: The Stationery Office, pp. 382-391.

HMIC, (1999) *Managed Learning: A Study of Police Training*, London: HMIC.

HMIC, (2002) *Training Matters*, London: HMIC.

Macpherson, Sir William. (1999) *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, London: TSO.

Macvean, A & Cox, C (2012) Police Education in a University Setting: Emerging Cultures and Attitudes, *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, Volume 6, Issue 1, pp. 16-25.

Neyroud, P. (2011) *Review of Police Leadership and Training: Volume One* [online] Available at: <<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/consultations/rev-police-leadership-training/report?view=Binary>>

NPIA (2012) *Professional Entry to Policing Pre-Join Strategy and Guidance Document*, May 2012 Version 1.01

Sherman, L (2011) Professional Policing and Liberal Democracy, Benjamin Franklin Medal Lecture, Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, London, 1st November, 2011

Tong, S, Bryant, R & Hovarth, M (2009) *Understanding Criminal Investigation*, Chichester: Wiley & Sons Publication.

Tong, S & Bowling, B (2006) 'Art, Craft and Science of Detective Work', *Police Journal*, Volume 79, No 4, pp. 323-329.

Wood, D and Tong, S. (2009) 'The future of initial police training: a university perspective'. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, 11 (3). pp. 294-305.