

Police Tutoring Processes in England and Wales: Current Challenges

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Rationale

- Research suggests that police tutoring is an often overlooked area of police education and development (HMIC, 2002, Chandler, 2021)
- PEQF and Uplift offer added impetus to understanding tutoring and to develop knowledge and insights about tutoring that will inform future decision making.
- Reported challenges include inconsistencies in supervision and selection criteria, insufficiently numbers of trained tutors and problems of tutor burnout.
- The importance of tutoring goes beyond organisational learning and socialisation and intersects with attrition and retention of officers from a range of backgrounds.

Methodology

- Mixed methods
- Literature review
- Data request (43 forces)
- Semi-structured interviews/Focus groups

Existing Literature on Police Tutoring

Fragility of Arrangements (HMIC, 2002)

Knowledge of the Curriculum (Bergman, 2017)

'Thinking for Two' (Tyler and Mckenzie, 2011)

Assessment (Chan et al, 2003)

EDI (HMICS, 2021)

Reactive Nature of Policework (Tyler and Mckenzie, 2016)

Pedagogy (Tyler and Mckenzie, 2016)

Knowledge into Practice (Kennedy, 2014)

Existing Literature on Tutoring in Comparator Professions

Supportive work environment (Gazaway et al, 2019)

Coercion (Peiser et al, 2017)

Emotional Labour (Smith, 2000)

Lack of experience (Devenish et al, 2016)

Need for a permanent named tutor (Saukkoriipi et al, 2020)

Professional Socialisation (Dinmohammadi et al, 2013)

Cultural Divide (Foley et al, 2013)

Structured Programmes (Gazaway et al, 2019)

Collaboration with HEIs (Givati et al, 2017)

Space for Reflection (Naseem, 2016)

Key Themes

Theme 1 - Structure and Status of Tutoring

Theme 2 – Classroom, Practice-based and Reflective Learning

Theme 3 – The Tutor Role

Theme 4 – Monitoring and Support

Theme 1 Structure and Status of Tutoring

Challenges of sustainability, structure and strategic positioning

Over a quarter of the 43 forces stated that they view tutoring as a core capability

Unsustainable numbers

Interruptions and mitigations place further strain on the system.

Learning is dictated by operational demands, not by the needs of learners.

“..we talked about retention, mental health people, the pressure that’s on not just the student but the tutor as well, as a department. All those things... It will break. It will break after five years if nothing’s done. That is for sure” [Tutor]

Theme 2 – Classroom, Practice-based and Reflective Learning

Challenges of how officers learn and how to ensure consistency of learning

Are response teams the best environment for all officers to learn the skills and knowledge of policing?

Ensure that tutoring engages with the needs of learners, rather than just the resourcing and capacity challenges of the organisation

Core skills and competencies, as taught, are often undermined during operational policing. Classroom and work-based learning need to be co-ordinated, integrated and consistent.

Ensure that active learning is a central principle of tutoring arrangements.

Limited space/opportunity for reflective learning undermines the benefits associated with it.

Theme 3 – The Tutor Role

Challenges of articulating what a tutor is and how they are valued

Ensure that tutor and assessor role profiles reflect the value and status of tutoring and are consistently used

Ensure that tutors receive sufficient support in their role to negate the need for additional financial incentives

Ensure that no officer is ever made to tutor if they do not wish to or are not qualified to do so

Theme 4 – Monitoring and Support

Challenges of ensuring that tutoring is positioned, and supported, more formally within existing processes

Ensure that adequate support is given to tutees throughout the period of tutorship, but especially as recruits develop from Independent Patrol Status to Full Occupational Competency

Ensure that PDU staff/assessors are available to provide support to tutors and tutees

Ensure that relationships with higher education partners are close and collaborative and frequently reviewed

Ensure that appropriate Regulation 13 procedures are used with tutees who (in the absence of mitigation) are not meeting required performance standards

Ensure that the tutoring element of officers' performance is appraised

Concluding Comments

Tension between the breadth of the police role and the inability to control learning opportunities of tutees

Knowledge into practice

Reflective practice as a tick box exercise?

Uncomfortable Knowledge and the Sociology of Ignorance (Rayner, 2012)

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Any questions?