Collaborative Deep Dive Summary Report

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With thanks to all the participating forces who worked with the team

and contributed so much to the knowledge and understanding which informed this report

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The Open University's Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL) and MOPAC worked together, on a Police Transformation Fund grant from the Home Office, to undertake action research to support the development of the training, learning and development (TLD) function in all 43 English and Welsh territorial police forces.

This action research initiative derived from Policing Vision 2025[1], which recognises that the policing challenges of the future are changing in scale, nature and complexity, so, learning and development will also need to change to nurture a continually learning, problem-solving workforce, which works not only with craft but informed by a scientific evidence base. Many forces recognise that their Learning and Development (L and D) function is not yet fully prepared for these challenges or the introduction of the PEQF initial education routes.[i] The project's baseline survey of attitudes and practices in L and D confirmed this.

Approach and Methodology

This was an action research project, so the research team was committed to creating high-quality knowledge which can be used for practical improvement and application. The research methodology included 5 collaborative deep dives; where we spent an intensive week in each of five forces, interviewing people across a wide range of roles, and observing activities to appreciate and understand the force's strengths, innovations and challenges in the L and D function, and also collated and reviewed a range of strategy, performance, and force documents. We participated in these five visits between September 2018 and March 2019, and included both peer co-researchers from forces and MOPAC representation. At the end of each of the visits, we provided initial feedback sessions on our observations over the week.

This report draws together key themes from the collaborative deep dives (which can also be described as case studies) and outlines some of the distinct differences and similarities we identified in each of the case studies, as well as areas of promising practice. It also outlines some key considerations and reflections that might assist other police forces in supporting changes to their Learning and Development function to correspond to the workforce ambitions of Policing Vision 2025.

Context

Context was important in trying to understand each force's position and needs in terms of Learning and Development now and in the future. Local and regional variations can have an impact on forces' ability to make changes to their L and D function in a quick and efficient manner. Likewise, understanding their current challenges and therefore the skills and abilities staff require; could also be influenced by these broader contextual factors.

It should be noted that these contextual factors like types of crime, population size, transportation infrastructure, national events and political and cultural context, were reported to influence the content and delivery requirements for L and D. For example, cultural or historical context might influence police relationships with specific communities, and might have to be considered in discussions of how officers and staff recognise and deal with specific sensitivities. Also, larger urban areas often deal with a higher volume of public events like festivals and demonstrations. This might mean that police and staff need to have skill sets in order to work effectively when these occasions occur.

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[1] link to Policing Vision 2025

Table 1 outlines some of the key factors that were identified by the research team.

Table 1 Contextual Factors Impacting L&D in CDD Forces

Context of CDD	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
Urban Areas	Some	Significant	Some	Some	Significant
Major Transport Links (motorways, airports, etc)	Some	Considerable	Considerable	Some	Considerable
Major Events and Tourism	No	Substantial	In particular areas	In particular areas	Substantial
Historical Political/Culture Contexts	Yes	Not particularly relevant	Not particularly relevant	Yes	Yes
High and Diverse Population	No	Yes	Varied by locality	Varied by locality	Yes
Transient Population	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pockets of Deprivation	Yes, some high	Yes, some high	Yes	Yes	Yes, some high
Organised/Gang Crime Activity	Increasing evidence (specifically drugs)	Yes, high levels	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Yes, high levels
Collaborative Arrangements	Some cross force	Some cross force	Cross force	Cross force	None

This list provides an overview of some of the notable context factors that might directly or indirectly influence L and D. It should also be noted that these contextual factors are likely to change in influence through time. For example, some of the forces we worked with had collaborative arrangements for delivery of some of their functions, but were aware this might change with force strategies/priorities.

Leadership and Governance

Leadership and governance can be an important part of driving L and D forward and ensuring that it is embedded within the organisation more broadly.

Table 2 outlines the main elements of Leadership and Governance that were identified as having a role in supporting the Learning and Development function.

Table2 Leadership and Governance Factors Impacting L&D in CDD Forces

Governance and Leadership	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
Executive buy in	Strong awareness of L and D	Some awareness reported	Strong awareness of L and D	Strong awareness of L and D	Strong awareness of L and D
Strategic vision incorporating L and D	Not evident at time of visit	Starting to emerge	Not yet clear what strategy was, force thought it needed refreshing	Stronger vision and strategy in comparison to other CDDs	Stronger vision and strategy in comparison to other CDDs
Governance structures in places to support L and D development	Structures emerging	Structures emerging and appear to be strengthening	Structures emerging and appear to be strengthening	Structures emerging and appear to be strengthening	Yes, clear Structures
Strong support from senior leadership in L and D	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L and D professionals in key roles to drive work forward	Variable, some experienced and others new to area	Variable, some experienced and others new to area	Yes, and clearly visible	Yes, and clearly visible	Key personnel tasked with specific areas
Reliant on a small number of individual expertise	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Expanding pool of individuals involved
Communication about L and D evident throughout organisation	Not always clear on front-line or with police staff	Not always clear on front-line or with police staff	Not always clear on front-line or with police staff	Not always clear on front-line or with police staff	Not always clear on front-line or with police staff
Supporting Leadership across Organisation	Some form of leadership development in place	Some form of leadership development in place	Some form of leadership development in place	Some form of leadership development in place	Some form of leadership development in place

Executive Buy in

The level of executive buy in was varied across forces, but we did hear about some positive engagement from the executive team. There was only one case study where this was not as obvious, however, here there was still an organisational lead who was driving forward Learning and Development. This demonstrated that there was a growing recognition of the importance of L and D.

"So, we're quite supportive of each other. I find it a really healthy working atmosphere actually, I have to say. And there is a commitment to, with that wellbeing agenda, part of that is about training and equipping your staff to deal with what they need to deal with".

This is also supported in the end line survey findings which found that two thirds of the forces reported executive buy in[ii]

There was recognition that it was challenging for chief officers and other authorities to balance workforce development:

"Crime clearly is increasing in real terms, as well as the new and more complex online crime that they're having to deal with. It's a huge conundrum, and I know police and crime commissioners are acutely aware of the need for the right staff with the right skills to do the job, but at the moment, the priority is firefighting that increased demand that we seem to now be experiencing. Brexit coming up, whatever it looks like, the reality is there could be huge civil unrest in one way or the other. Whatever happens, there are some real challenges there."

Clear Strategic Vision for Learning and Development

Developing a strategic vision for Learning and Development to enhance workforce capability and support development is seen as key to supporting changes in this area to help drive forward change. The forces that we worked with were at different stages in developing strategy in this area. Workforce development often formed part of the strategic direction of the force, but the extent to which this was being implemented also varied across the forces. In some areas there was a clear vision; and L and D was viewed as a critical part of this journey, in other places, strategy and practice were yet to align. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

"And then [this force] has an ambition, has its vision and its strategic plan, and one of those is to become an organisation where people learn, where we learn from each other, from all sorts of external people"

The team heard how approaches could be piecemeal or ad hoc at times:

"It's been, we need this, we also need that, and I've just realised we need to be putting some more money and effort into this. It tends to be quite reactive. We say, yes, we can do all of those things, but that's going to require investment. Okay, can you please put a business case together and put it through the change governance to make sure that's delivered? That tends to be how it manifests itself. It's been quite reactive and piecemeal in terms of those investment decisions, which tend to be done in isolation of each other".

Governance Structures in Place to Support L and D Development

There were strong governance structures in place to support L and D moving forward in some forces. One example was where specific organisational structures included having key leadership roles in place to drive forward proposed changes. In most places, L and D leadership did have a route to make businesses cases for additional resources or to support policy. We saw one example where leads for different areas of business were tasked with embedding L and D strategy into their area, and how this subsequently supported the overall vision. One participant outlined how it was important to work differently, to move away from a siloed approach which was impeding delivery of L and D, and

make sure there was alignment between strategy and what was being driven forward in L and D. This is illustrated in the comment below:

"it's about being clear on where the benefits are. So, I've mapped out my role and the strategy that I've just talked you through, against the force strategy. So, I'm saying, in my world, this is where I'm adding value. I'm adding value around your key bits of the strategy and, where relevant, I've linked it into the national strategy, if I'm frank".

In some other forces, these structures existed but they were not always operationalised, and L and D sometimes appeared to be an afterthought:

"I think they're [L&D] seen, they should be involved at the beginning of the conversation, not the outcome. So, I think probably we're not very mature in the force in involving them in the discussion at the beginning. They are the task at the end, do you know what I mean? It's sort of everybody who thinks they know everything about everything makes a decision what's going to happen, and then just get L&D to do it."

Learning and Development Leadership

Across the forces we found leadership in the L and D space which focused on purpose and quality and communicated this to others. There was a mix of officers and staff with operational responsibility for Learning and Development. In two of the CDD forces it was a senior police officer who held the head of L and D role, where as in others L and D was headed by a member of police staff with an L and D background. For officers new into role, there were still further aspects to learn about L and D matters. This did not distract from their willingness to drive L and D forward, and we heard very positive comments about L and D leadership across the CDDs:

"So, I think it's a really exciting time for L&D, really exciting time. We've got a new management structure in place, really, really competent, motivated people and I think, you know, that's proving dividends really".

The challenge for the leadership of L and D was mainly related to trying to make the function of L and D more visible and having to deal with a small amount of resources (described below). Also, it was often a limited number of key people that were driving the L and D agenda forward, meaning that there was little resilience within the organisation should someone leave the organisation or change roles:

"It's probably not always L and D's fault. You know, it's more of a workforce, the whole organisation. But in some respects, they are not fully staffed in all their teams. They don't always have all of the resources they need. So, you are planning to what they have got, and there is no resilience there. So, if someone goes sick, or leaves and goes to another team or something like that, it can be a while before they are back up to their levels again".

Additionally, there were concerns about organisational expectations of L and D against the lack of willingness to financially support L and D. (This was also confirmed by the endline survey.)

"My view on the question of investment is that chief officers want investment in L&D, or rather, they need or expect a top quality service from L&D, but they don't want to put their hands in their pockets to achieve it".

Communication about Learning and Development Evident Throughout Organisation

When we spoke to front-line officers and staff, there appeared to be a disconnect between - on the one hand - the official strategy and vision, and the workforce awareness and knowledge about changes being made to L and D. Lack of effective communication between different parts of the organisation was reported to the team frequently, and it also meant that those at the front-line were often unaware of executive team members or the personnel responsible

for the core business of Learning and Development delivery. This meant that if front-line officers felt that they had specific training needs, there was a sense that they did not know who to go to for support. This made them feel that they were not informed of changes that were occurring within the broader organisation (for example limited knowledge of PEQF).

This is illustrated by the quote below;

"…and I don't think that we invest sufficiently in what I would call business change. Because business change means that there's a whole series of things that need to be done to help people transition from what they're currently doing to what we want them to do. Communication I think is probably not as good as it should be. And I think we do have to remember, people are adults and sometimes I think we try and protect people and by trying to protect them, we then look as if almost we're not being honest, we're keeping information back".

We did find examples where efforts were being made to try to ensure that staff were being made aware of the changes being made. The quotation below outlines the approach in one force where the changes being made in L and D were being communicated across the organisation:

"Because I think we can be bad at saying why we're not doing stuff anymore, or just making decisions and not being clear about why we're making those decisions. That's all been part of that strategy, and when I've gone to organisations on business days, which have had all department heads and district commanders there, talking about this is how things are changing. This is how HR will be changed. And the individual management meetings are to say; in practice now, this is what you're going to stop getting, but this is what you're going to start getting instead. So, it's clear in the documents. I think they just need the wrap around dialogue".

Table 3 Factors Impacting Current Workforce

Current Workforce	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
Loss of Experience personnel in recent years	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Less Experienced Front-line Staff	Yes high % of front-line less that 2 years experience	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recent uplift in recruit intake	Yes	Yes	Yes		Recruitment drive at time of case study
Evidence of Effective PDR	In progress at time of visit but work to do	Plans to enhance PDR underway at time of visit	Moving toward a different system but focusing on new entrants initially	Clear plans for the development of PDR	Clear plans for the development of PDR
Evidence of Effective CPD Opportunities	Individual orientated and siloed (people could benefit if awareness of opportunities available)	Limited to a small number of individuals at top end of the organisation or organised	Some opportunities but recognition of need for growth	Strategy to drive these forward	Number of strong offerings and opportunities emerging

		for specific groups			
Evidence of Dedicated CPD activity for example use of training days	Dedicated Training days regularly offered to officers and some other workforce members	Training days not evident across the board	Focused on core skills at the moment	Training days covering a range of topics used for staff and officers	Both centrally and locally organised
Workforces encouraged to take responsibility for own opportunities	Examples in some areas and staff we spoke with motivated to engage	Processes and systems being put in place to enable this to happen	Increasing opportunities and plan to encourage this appearing	Dveloping systems and support to enable this process	Individual seen as having key role in own development
Workforce Felt Valued	Some staff and officers reported positive experience, others (police staff) not always the same	Morale particularly amongst front-line and L and D staff appeared low at time of visit	Relatively positive but some indications of some feeling improvements could be made	Relatively positive but some indications of some feeling improvements could be made	Varied, some L and D staff reported as lower morale, but not sufficient evidence to say widespread

Workforce

Table 3 outlines some of the factors impacting on the workforce more broadly. These include the loss of personnel and experience. As a result of austerity and an overall reduction in staff, forces were more stretched, but also that there was the loss of experienced personnel particularly in some areas of the service (especially the front-line).

The result was an inexperienced front-line, who may not have yet developed the same level of skills and knowledge to understand all the complex issues that required their attention. The numbers issue was being countered by new intakes, and a recent drive for more front-line officers over the next few years.

However, there was concern that those who were in service for a short-period of time might be then expected to support the new intakes:

''They look the same as the next officer, but they have a huge gap in terms of experience and knowledge. And so, I am then having to manage the operational impact of that, in terms of finding them experienced tutors to work with. And so, the net result of that is that operational performance suffers because of the lack of experience''.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Performance and Development Review (PDR)

Linked to Learning and Development is how forces support their workforce in their individual PDRs and Continuing Professional Development. The approaches across forces were quite variable, as were the opportunities for staff. Again, this can be linked back to force priorities, strategies and resources.

There were some common threads across the CDDs, including the lack of an effective PDR system in previous years; although this has been mainly recognised, and the forces were starting to develop better systems. Where PDR systems did exist, they were often not used effectively to think about staff professional development, and were often not linked to roles, or lateral development, or the workforce's own personal CPD goals.

This situation is not necessarily unique to the forces studied during the CDDs, and we heard from other stakeholders this was common across policing.

In relation to CPD, there were varied opportunities for police officers and staff. Police officers would often have training days in forces (although this was not the case across all the CDDs), but these were not always used effectively:

"Training CPD is challenging, the teams resent coming in early and that impacts on engagement. You've got to accept that some [officers] will never engage, there's a degree of cynicism".

"Training is often not relevant or targeted to the needs of core teams. There is a 'blanket' approach that is very unengaging and loses the audience".

The research did find examples across the CDDs where there was good practice in relation to staff development. This was usually in specific departments, and could be either specialist areas, or specific roles (for example we found a structured programme to support new control room staff in one force, and a specific CPD and mentoring programme for forensic staff in another).

The potential impact on staff morale of not feeling they were not getting support or professional development was discussed on several occasions. (This may also be determined by other factors which were not discussed with the team.) The following quotes provide a brief outline of some of the feedback given by police officers and staff:

"I think that was probably for a period of two or three years while we were going through difficult times with finance. I think we've seen a sea change in the last two or three years of recognising that, actually, cutting training is probably counter-productive because it manifests itself in the way you deliver your service, the quality of service that you give, and the ability of staff to progress. And to develop themselves. I think it has an impact on morale. It has an impact on all the aspects of policing".

"Right, I look at my role, sort of like I've had temporary sergeant positions before and then I'm back down to PC and I'm back as sergeant now for a short period of time. No-one's ever taught me to be a manager… Last night a complaint came in for a PC. Well, I'll go and deal but in my mind I'm a PC. I haven't got a clue how to deal with a complaint. Certainly, I'm put in this position of responsibility, and though I've not had one hour of training as to how to be a sergeant. It is purely just learning on the job"

Collaboration

Police forces frequently collaborate with other forces and external partners; therefore, collaboration was found to be a key part of delivery of existing L and D within forces. As a result of the introduction of the PEQF, collaborations with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were also being developed or extended. The way that these collaborations happen varied across the forces. The table below outlines the main collaborative relationships:

Table 4 Collaboration across L and D in forces

Collaboration		Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
L and D delivery with other forces		Joint delivery of recruit training in new PEQF model	Offers L and D delivery to neighbouring forces	Both joint and independent collaborative delivery	Both joint and independent collaborative delivery	Offers L and D delivery to other forces

				exited previously	
Internal collaboration	Smaller force allowed sharing of knowledge and opportunities	L and D delivery often siloed	In some specialisms good collaboration but need more communication	Collaboration between L and D departments more evident	Centralised function circumvented by local circumstance
External (independent) collaboration	Use of external experts, seen as offering better quality L and D than some internal offerings	Use of external experts seen as key strategy to take L and D forward	Collaboration with other forces good, positive about other possibilities with HEI	Collaboration with other forces being decreased	Use of external experts seen as key strategy to take L and D forward
HEI Collaborations	Reported as strong for PEQF and in working on innovative ideas	Taking a consortium approach/in process of engaging contractor/s at time of visit	Taking a consortium approach/in process of engaging contractor/s at time of visit	Taking a consortium approach/in process of engaging contractor/s at time of visit	Taking a consortium approach/in process of engaging contractor/s at time of visit

Delivery With or For Other Forces

Learning and Development delivery and products were sometimes shared between forces, or one force would deliver training to other forces. Larger forces tended to be able to use their products in this way more frequently. This appeared to be quite common for more specialised operational training. It appeared there was not always a recognition of the potential value in these collaborations, including creating additional income from delivering this training:

"We've been a big force, you're the ones that are always providing and so if you work it on a you scratch my back, I'll scratch your back you end up losing out as a big force. And I know that sounds and it might not be the right attitude to have but we found when we collaborated unofficially, so it wasn't sort of, we pay for it and they pay for it that we were losing out massively on that we were just not getting back. Because a lot of the smaller forces don't provide what we provide".

Participants also outlined the benefits of collaboration and how working with other forces can also have the benefits of encouraging learning from each other:

"So, we saw it as a good opportunity to learn from another force, to say, actually between us can we come up with the perfect PNC course? And it also gave us some of those economies of scale, which is, if PNC needed rewriting but we were all flat out with something, we could ask the [name] colleagues to do it and vice versa".

Internal Collaboration

We were given some examples where Learning and Development had effectively collaborated with other departments internally, and their work was highly valued. The quote below outlines how an operational lead and L and D practitioners worked effectively to develop a product that was required.

"They've got a commissioning team, which is positive, and they've got a delivery team, which is positive. Not very recently, but quite recently, I worked closely with the team, landing a new piece of legislation, which is the ……………Act..

The service I got was exceptional and it felt like a really good piece of work to be involved with. Both from the planning team, to the delivery team was really well supported".

There were reports that there could be a siloed approach in L and D, and even despite best attempts to have a centralised strategy, there were times where local approaches or personnel pursued their own agenda:

"It would give me the flexibility, it would be a lot quicker, if I did it locally, because it comes under, it's in my own gift. If you don't have to rely on anybody else, it's a lot easier, a lot quicker, and a lot more manageable. If you're relying on elsewhere, immediately there's another person to engage and liaise with. If I can do it inhouse, it's easy, cheap, quick, and flexible".

External Collaboration

Forces also collaborated with external providers, including the third and private sectors. Two of the forces had directly engaged with private companies to support them in developing strategies to support workforce development, including learning and development.

There were also examples where forces would use experts in areas such as leadership development to help them develop new products. For example, one force was using an external provider to support the design of a new PDR system.

There was some discussion on the use of external providers and how they could provide benefits and have the expertise that was not available internally. Perceived benefits were that they were able to offer a better service and quality product. Leadership was a key area in a couple of the forces where external experts had been brought in to run courses, and where it was perceived as working relatively well:

"People tweak things a little bit and, depending on how much you allow someone to tweak it, you then start losing that consistency. And if you're not careful, you can lose those standards that you want to maintain. And so, it might be, to have that independent outsourcing, maybe we are going to be able to keep that consistency and standard better than if we do it in-house ourselves".

There was a perception in some forces that externals were better or more able to provide a better service than the police themselves, even though the people we spoke to were not always certain what the service could provide:

"I suppose, where I feel... If the organisation doesn't want to invest in that, you start to think, well, there are organisations out there who do learning and development a million times better than us, so why not look at [that] as an option? And that's kind of where I feel there is the potential to do more to draw in that investment and transform it without necessarily needing to put all that cash in ourselves".

Collaboration with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

All of the CDD forces were in the process of implementing the PEQF at the time of the research. They were at varying stages of collaboration with HEIs. Most forces were hopeful and positive about the potential for the development of

these relationships. Within the research we looked at good examples of HEI and police partnerships which were already established. Participants perceived that the benefits would be that HEIs could provide support in areas where they did not necessarily have knowledge (i.e. student support), and also support staff to gain the skills required to deliver the PEQF:

"From my perspective, that's why we need to make sure we upskill our trainers to the relevant level at which they can deliver the training and be QA'd by the HEI or whoever that can be, the qualification provider or the associate college. Whether they come in on a regular basis or whether they just dip-check or QA everything as a point of verification, I'm not sure. That's really for sort of the more detailed (discussion). …"

In some places there were still questions about what the relationship was going to look like and how it was going to work effectively. The following quote provides a good overview of some of the questions that were raised:

"And then from the L&D point of view, therefore, what is the role of my operational trainers? What's being delivered by the HEI? What's the curriculum going to be, what does it need to be? I've seen the curriculum, I know what it's… But what's the reality of that, what percentage is delivered by X university in their… What's delivered here? Where does our existing 14-week programme fit in, how is that delivered? Is that still fit for purpose? What do we do with PCSOs, what do we do with specials?"

Table 5 Learning and Development: Key Challenges.

L and D Challenges	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
Transactional training still in existence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reduction in resources in L and D (people) in recent years	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evidence of central L and D Facilities and infrastructure reduced in size or lacking in resources (infrastructure)	No	To a great extent	No	To some extent, variable across forces	To some extent
Issues with technology infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lack of awareness of staff abilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Learning viewed as an abstraction at times	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tick box mentality for some L and D products	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lack of time and space to develop L and D products	Used external sources instead	Lacked time and space	Varied depending on individual	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned
L and D drive by reactive pressures in force	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

A key aim of the research was to establish what police forces were doing to prepare for the changes to Learning and Development in light of Vision 2025. This included trying to gauge what forces' current position was in relation to Learning and Development. What were some of the difficulties they were experiencing? The table above outlines some of the main issues identified in the CDDs. This is supported by some of the quotes and comments made throughout the research.

From Transactional to Transformative

There was still evidence in all forces of transactional training to a varying degree, and many of the forces were transitioning due to recent changes like the implementations of the PEQF. This was sometimes tricky given the pressures to get recruits through quickly onto the front-line, as a result of time and cost constraints:

"I think the training, even for police officers, is largely transactional and problem-focused in that it's not about… It's not transformational; it's not about changing what officers do or preparing officers to raise their skill set. It's about solving problems that we've identified in the here and now. It's about giving them skills in an area that we suddenly feel we're falling short in".

Loss of Infrastructure and Resources

In most forces L&D had experienced loss of some kind, either through the reduction in personnel or in other resources like facilities (poorly maintained estates, IT and equipment).

People

Even more so than in other areas of the workforce, L and D appeared to have significant losses in personnel in recent years. This was more apparent in some functions, where in some cases the whole section was disbanded. For example, in one place the whole of the quality assurance team was lost. The impact of this was that some forces felt that this had reduced the capability of L and D to deliver quality products:

"All of our quality issues are because of time. Something's got to go. If you haven't got time, you haven't got the quality, you haven't got the resources, quality is the first thing that's going to go".

Infrastructure

There was a stark difference between the forces in relation to the 'feel' of their training of their facilities and how this might make L&D personnel (and recipients of learning and development) feel. In two of the forces, the College facility where training, learning and development took place, felt that it had experienced investment in making the space feel like a 'learning' space. This included open plan spaces for staff to utilise for group meetings or individual study. There were signs of investment in facilities (giving staff laptops) to allow for flexible learning and investment in new learning techniques.

This was not standard across all the CDD forces and other training facilities felt tired and unloved. There was one specific example where the lack of investment was having a direct impact upon the ability to effectively deliver inputs. This was also noted by staff and they felt this lack of investment in the surroundings had a significant effect on their own sense of well-being.

Issues with Technology Infrastructure

There was a frustration within some CDDs that they had ambitions for using different interactive teaching and learning styles but were being let down by the technologies, with older IT systems that were unavailable, or did not have the functionality.

We observed one occasion in a session where a practitioner was trying to use the internet, but could not get the system to work. It was reported to us that this was commonplace in some forces. In other CDDs there had been more investment in technology and there was an ambition to use technology more effectively to create different types of learning:

"We are so far behind really, I think 12 to 18 months ago I suggested webinars for special constable training. Which other forces are doing, that isn't exactly setting the world alight, that technology's been round, like [name] says, for a long time? And yet when I've suggested it, heads went because it was just like, we can't do that, we haven't got the technology infrastructure to do that.

At that point, you sort of give up hope in a way, in terms of trying to be innovative. That was probably far from innovative, it was innovative for [name] Police".

Learning and Development as Abstraction Rather Than Investment

A common theme across the forces, and through the research more broadly, was how L and D was often seen as an abstraction rather than an investment. This is outlined in the quote below:

"I think one of the big challenges we face is around abstraction and I think - this is a personal view - I think we need to change the narrative about abstraction because I think certainly here within our forces abstraction is seen as something that's taking you away from doing the job you should be doing and I don't think development is something on top of the job you should be doing. I think it's part of the job".

Viewing L and D as an abstraction also means that at times L and D found difficulty in undertaking longer-term planning. It also had an impact on delivery, where people would be booked on to a course; but as operational pressures were viewed as taking priority, people did not turn up to booked L and D sessions. This meant in some forces that sessions had to be postponed or cancelled.

It was also difficult for local divisions to support Learning and Development. If operational staff were busy and pulled off duty to do a three-day course, this was viewed negatively by both supervisors and staff, particularly when staff would have to travel to a designated place, sometimes at distance; to receive classroom-based training:

"They're not looking at the bigger picture, in the future. If these people are trained now, in the future, we'll be able to use them where we need to use them. They're just looking at… These people are going to be missing now from their shift for three days or a week".

Difficulties in Capturing Workforce Abilities

A common theme across the forces was the difficulty of finding ways to log and deploy existing staff experience and abilities. Some forces knew there was considerably more talent and capability than was captured in existing HR systems. This was sometimes related to not having the systems to capture this information, or not undertaking any systematic review of workforce skills and capabilities. Often there was little training needs analysis, and training was very reactive (discussed later) rather than related to specific roles or what the individual required as part of their own CPD:

"We don't have a training needs analysis for the force. I couldn't tell you at the press of a button what courses people need, or what the demand would be in the next 12 months or two years".

Tick-box Mentality for Some Learning and Development Products

The perception of high-volume e-learning in the package (that used to be called NCALT) was quite negative, and there was a view across the CDDs from staff who experienced the packages that they felt they were not well designed and did not facilitate active learning. Rather, engagement was often based on a 'click as quick as possible' basis, with learners and the wider organisation trying to minimise the time and resources put into the packages:

"So, although they've bought a different system maybe because of that barrier, I think the issue is, the danger is I think people view it as but it's just e-learning, and there is a perception, and I think organisations have created this, there is a perception that e-learning is almost a tick in the box. So, when we have learning that needs to be done, it's turned into e-learning, and it's almost for the organisation a tick in a box, well, that's it, everybody has learnt, but I'm not certain that we actually know or have any proof that people have learnt something by doing that piece of e-learning".

Lack of Time and Space to Develop Learning and Development Products

L and D staff said they lacked resources or time allocated in their work plan to complete development work, and that it was not seen as a priority because the pressure was on products just needing to be delivered.

It is possible that this influenced how L and D was received in the rest of the organisation. The lack of time to develop, or adapt learning materials, meant that the delivery of existing packages was not always well received by recipients.

Discussion with some L and D staff highlighted issues as to whether some student recruits can meet required standards. Recently, forces reported that there has been an increase in the number of recruits with learning support needs. Information had not always been provided beforehand about such learning needs, so L and D staff often felt unable to support these students adequately.

Staff spoke of their experience in other sectors and how they felt that the police could learn from them, for example how HEIs implemented student support strategies. There was a concern that not being able to identify learning support needs might hinder recruits from progressing to become police officers.

L and D Driven by Reactive Forces

"I think we operate largely in territory that is very reactive. A new piece of legislation will come along, or some new authorised professional practice will be issued, and we very much respond to that. And I guess that has to be a balance. The law will change. Policies and procedures, our understanding around safeguarding, all of these things are natural developments within the service. And of course, people need to demonstrate their ability to think strategically as well as tactically and apply consistent standards. So, I think it's really important that it's a complementary relationship, that they're not mutually exclusive. But I do think we have for a long time been in that reactive territory."

Overall this situation was felt to contribute to constraining the L and D function's capability and capacity to deliver effectively in the short term (through, for example; creating unplanned demand for planning and delivery; and lessening the effect of resource and activity planning that had already been undertaken).

This management of unexpected demand then impacted the function's ability to plan and deliver activity more strategically to support organisational goals and priorities in the medium to longer term.

Changes being made to Learning and Development

A key aim of the research was to establish what police forces were doing to prepare for the changes to Learning and Development in light of Vision 2025, this included trying to gauge what forces' current positions were in relation to Learning and Development.

Clear Systems in Place to Support Learning Management

Core to supporting Learning and Development was the infrastructure of systems that could capture relevant information about learners and staff development, but also be used as a mechanism to support learning delivery.

It was clear that all forces engaged in the deep dives had started to focus on developing or adopting Learning Management Systems. Some were more advanced than others (e.g. Force 4). There were examples of clear plans about what an LMS would be able to achieve, but progress and knowledge about how particular systems were being utilised and what their potential was were not always clear across all CDD forces.

Systems had been bought from external sources, or forces were developing their own internal system based on their own expertise. One challenge to this second approach was that they were often reliant on one of two individuals who had in-depth knowledge of the system, so there was a risk if there was any loss of key personnel could mean that systems would not run effectively and loss of organisational knowledge.

The quotation below outlines the progress being made in one force:

"In terms of a structure, a process, a system for recording learning, we have it on the page. The system and process, not the IT environment, is largely designed now in principle. We have to test it".

Table 6 Changes being made to L and D

Changes being made to L and D	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Force 4	Force 5
Clear systems in place to Support Learning Management	Some evidence of emerging systems	Central teams developing systems	Some evidence of emerging systems	Evidence of emerging systems	Some evidence of emerging systems
L and D staff enthusiastic and clear about forthcoming changes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clear systems and personnel to support Introduction of PEQF	Yes, but lacked resourcing	Yes, but was left to a few individuals	Strong focus on development of PEQF	Still in development or unclear due to procurement stage	Dedicated team/unit and clear leadership
Attempts to upskill staff to required standard for effective delivery of L and D	Some evidence of upskilling staff to meet new requirements	No evidence available	Desire but lack of clarity over requirements	Lack of awareness around requirements	Not viewed as necessary due to approach
Changing or embedding new learning styles in L and D	Examples of innovative practice emerging	Good examples in pockets of operational delivery	Some examples but variable still developing		Ambitious plans and awareness of new learning approaches

Encouraging the use of Evidence-Informed practices in L and D	Good examples provided where this was beginning to happen	Observed some areas of L and D delivery	Observed in L and D delivery on a couple of occasions but not embedded everywhere		Still need to develop approach further
Key Functions like Q and A being re-established	Had been cut but was starting to be explored again	Key personnel involved but reduced in size and capacity in recent years	A key governance structure and QA process developed alongside new offerings	Team focused on QA and clear processes for QA of L and D delivery	Informal and internal QA processes
Demand on L and D increasing	Yes, but still lacked resourcing	Yes, but still lacked resourcing	Yes, but still lacked resourcing	Yes, but still lacked resourcing	Yes, but still lacked resourcing

L and D Staff Enthusiastic and Clear about Forthcoming Changes

Over the course of the CDDs we encountered several learning and development teams and practitioners. It was clear from most of those we spoke to that they were aware of the changes needed, and were enthusiastic about the possibilities and potential for change within L and D. There was a real desire for practitioners to make the required changes and cultivate better systems to support and develop staff.

There were examples of this including one force developing a new PDR process. There were examples of individual departments within the service having clear processes and systems to support staff, ensuring that they had the skills and resources they needed to do their role, and with evidence that mentoring systems and development opportunities existed.

While there was a great deal of enthusiasm, there was also frustration around the time it took for change to happen, or a concern that they did not always have all the resources, investment and support required. There was a sense that this was beginning to change.

Clear Systems and Personnel to Support Introduction of PEQF

In the forces visited, the progression of PEQF was at different stages. Where they were more advanced, forces had started to consider not just the relationship with HEIs but also how they change structures and processes to better support new recruits coming into the organisation. The quotation below provides an example of thinking about the broader infrastructure, and ensuring that new recruits would have adequate support from tutors; or a system that provided that support:

"Moving forward, when we have our PEQF officers, then their progression, or their journey with us, is going to be linked to their academic progress. So, unless we're supporting them correctly, and giving them the protected learning time, and having the correct tutorship, they may be failing for reasons that are not their fault. So, we recognise that. The proposals we're making is that we have a tutorship part, which is going to be quite labour-intensive.

There were also other examples where staff were allocated to specialist roles to ensure the appropriate processes were in place for the transition for new recruits joining under a new learning approach.

This was not always the case and there were other situations where planning around the PEQF was still at an early

stage, and not yet fully thought through, or police forces were reliant on external partners providing quite substantial elements for the needs of new recruits, for example, ensuring adequate student support systems. In some forces it was reported that some systems to support the introduction of the PEQF were already in place or being developed further. For example, staff who were already aware of the need to recognise different learning needs and identify potential support requirements that individuals might have.

Attempts to Upskill Staff to required standards for effective delivery of L and D

There was an awareness that L and D personnel would require upskilling to enable them to fully support the new requirements demanded by PEQF. There was a variety of staff skill levels and abilities across the CDD forces.

Staff with a L and D professional background tended to have the qualifications and skills required for their role. Those who came from a police officer background were less likely to have the relevant or required skills to deliver inputs. There was a perception amongst some of the people we spoke to across the service that police officers were traditionally put into L and D because they were near to retirement or on sick leave, though the research team was unable to substantiate this.

A high volume of staff were highly skilled personnel with the appropriate skills. Where this was not the case, forces were trying to support staff to gain qualifications. The pace and extent to which this was happening was variable across the CDD forces, but it was mostly recognised that this was required for staff to meet the new demands they faced through the transition to PEQF.

Changing or embedding new teaching and learning styles in L and D

In order to examine the different learning delivery methods utilised in the CDD forces we were invited to observe numerous inputs, both practical, operational and classroom-based inputs. For the most part we found the inputs we observed to be of high quality. One of the co-researchers outlined their experience after spending time at one of the police forces:

"I was very impressed with the training delivery that we did get to observe. All of the trainers observed were knowledgeable and experienced Police Officers (& staff) but also excellent learning facilitators. I was surprised at just how good they were. I particularly liked the use of discussion and debate introduced to the lessons by the facilitators in addition to the traditional didactic methods utilised.

The trainers made good use of technology (Clevertouch boards, PowerPoint, Youtube videos) to make the lessons more engaging for the learners. The blend of methods and resources made the lessons appeal to a range of different learning styles. [Trainer A] and [Trainer B] made the lessons fun, engaging, humorous, informative and professional. Students were comfortable asking questions and seeking clarification denoting a comfortable teacher-student relationship. I also liked the way that [Trainer B] drew upon the experiences of the students in the room to add value to the lessons and how he embedded values and ethics throughout the lesson. This is all very promising."

Encouraging the use of evidence-informed practices in Learning and Development

Using evidence to support practice is viewed as critical to decision-making, and to ensure that the police are making best use of resources, as well as implementing or pursuing initiatives that are perceived to be beneficial and work effectively in-service delivery.

We did find some examples where police were drawing on evidence to support their Learning and Development approach. For example, one force was using 'trauma based' approach training, that had drawn on academic research

and theory. There were other pockets of evidence- based policing being utilised, but there was often a lack of awareness around its application:

"Some evidence-based policing, whether it's been messaged properly is another matter. But if the principles behind it are being used, just on the patrol strategy. I think it's few and far between isn't it? You do see examples of it in force, but it's few and far between".

Key Functions like QA being Re-established

As a result of the reduction in L and D spending since budget restrictions, several functions or services within L and D had been cut. We found that the value of some of these functions (most notably Quality Assurance) had latterly started to be realised, and the requirement to have a clear QA function was recognised. We saw a good example where one force had started to consider how they might be assessed through Ofsted, and examined how to ensure that this was taken into account whilst developing their educational provision.
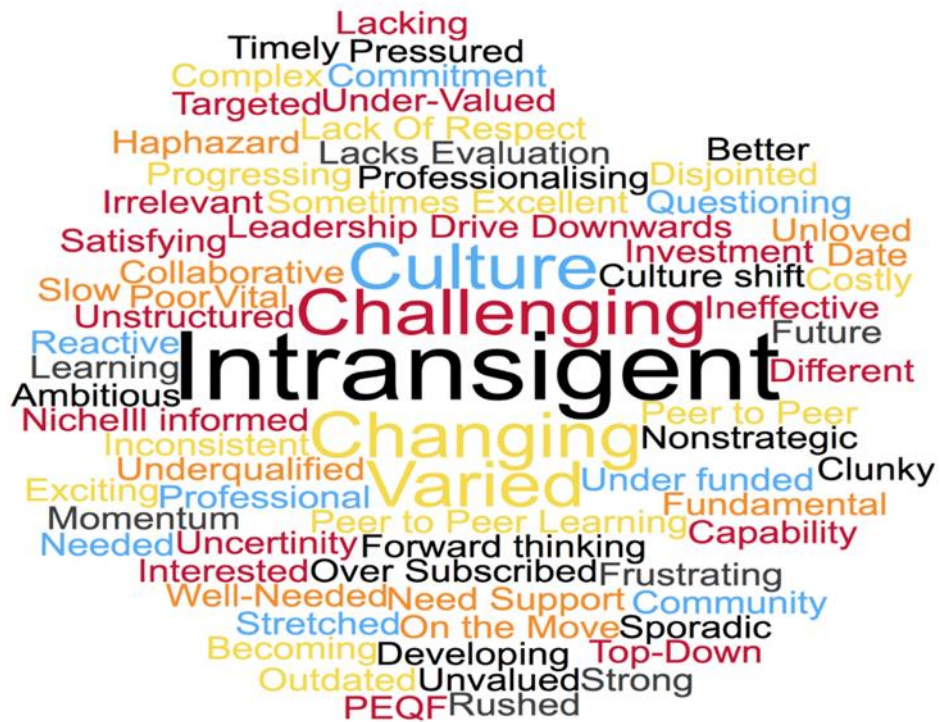
Demand on Learning and Development Increasing

It was clear that as a result of the implementation of the PEQF and the apprenticeship degrees, the demand for L and D services was increasing at a quick rate. There was also an increase in investment in this area starting to occur (this is supported also by the end-line survey [ii]). Whether this investment was enough to meet the demand placed on L and D was another matter. The team were told that in some forces there were more staff and resources available, but also how this was still not adequate to meet the demands set out by Policing Vision 2025. This is reflected in a quote below that related specifically to operational L and D:

"What is it we in Ops L&D are to deliver in the force? Because now there is such a disconnect and it feels as though we want a Rolls Royce service, but we don't want to pay for it. So, it's almost that we've got to say, what do you want Ops L&D to do? Is it just about keeping people safe and compliant? Or is it about giving people the skills to meet the 2025 Policing Agenda.

What this indicated; and what the team were frequently told, was that capacity was there to meet the current demands, but not to meet increasing or new demands, and often there was little room for flexibility or for testing new ideas.   It was appreciated that there would have to be a balance between demands and availability:

", that would be a good mechanism by which we could kind of just put everything back into a central point of understanding what the business need is for everyone, and then working out who gets what, because of the competing needs and demands, which of course there will be. Because our need and demand for L&D is going to outstrip what can be delivered, without a doubt. So, there's got to be mechanism by which we assess what's more important and needed at any given time".

A Visual Record

As part of the interviews and discussions with staff we asked each person participating in the CDDs to provide five words or short phrases that they felt represented current Learning and Development in their force or agency. Words that appear larger in the 'word cloud' (the visuals below) are those that were used by respondents more frequently.

Opportunities
Constrained Hard working
Growing Students focus Development
Trainer centric Value add
Came from bad place Fashioned
Confused Huge strides Achieving
Influential Seniors get it Apprehensive
Visionary Busy Old fashioned Reactive
Capable Siloed Vision
Dull
Innovation Old Exciting
Collaboration Aspirational
linear Varied Traditional Burden
Forward thinking Linear
Dated Challenging Satisfied Stalemate
Motivated Awareness
Lack of investment Opportunity Innovative
Future
Passion Keen interest Lots of ideas
Need for technology
Deep rooted culture
Credibility
Good leadership
Backward thinking
Learn from past
difficult
Not priority
Unprotected time

Exciting Dated
Bespoke HR-Overload Archaic
Confidence Professionalised Under-valued
Professionalisation Pressured Basics
Blanket Promising
Enthusiastic Collaborative Hard-working Vital
PEQF Reactive Willing Stretched
Collegial Agile Efficient
Approachable Stall Dedicated Skilled
Open Realistic Business-focused
Underqualified Questioning
Frustrating Passionate Relevant
Switched-on Helpful
Accessible Not-flexible Limited
Specialism Professional Future
One-team Flexible Specialist
Grassroot Essential Capacity
Improving Quality
Resources Intrinsically-motivated Customer-focused Forced
Relaxed Forward-looking
Infancy Value-for-money Standards
Adaptable Rushed

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[i] The project's baseline survey of attitudes and practices in L and D confirmed this see Implementing the Transformation of Police Training Learning and Development: Baseline Survey Report Jean Hartley and Loua Khalil   (2018). Available from the Centre for Policing Research and Learning.

[ii] As a follow up to the initial survey a second survey was conducted some 12 months later. It repeated the questions asked in the original, and posed new questions aligned to the development of the Destination Map. Khalil L., Harding R., Hartley J., with IFF Survey (2019) Implementing Transformation of Police Learning and Development: Follow up Survey Report