# Job Description – Professor of Policing and Research

## **About Policing at the Open University**

The Open University’s (OU) Department for Policing (DfP) is looking to appoint a Professor of Policing on a full time, permanent contract, working within the Faculty of Business and Law.

The DfP showcases a portfolio of successful accredited police education programmes, including the delivery of police apprenticeships and other accredited learning programmes (for more information see – [Policing Organisation and Practice (POP) | The Open University Business School](https://business-school.open.ac.uk/academic-departments/policing-organisation-and-practice) Alongside the education profile, the DfP hosts the dynamic Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL). Undertaken in true collaboration between the university and police force members across the UKs four nations, CPRL drives innovation through research knowledge which is co-produced. This approach not only strengthens links to non-accredited learning and continuing professional development but also creates practical outputs to ensure research is translated into real-world impact through a strong ethos of knowledge into practice.

CPRL is distinguished by a multi-tiered approach to collaboration. At the core is the Partnership Advisory and Review Board, comprising senior police officers, university leaders, independent experts, and key stakeholders. This diverse group ensures that the centre's initiatives uphold essential standards through rigorous evaluation and oversight. Further oversight is provided by the Membership Group, chaired by an elected senior police leader, and a smaller Steering Group, both groups play a vital role in shaping the centre’s strategic priorities and decision-making processes. As a result, the CPRL has generated significant income and external funding and is widely recognised for its intellectual leadership in policing and its ability to achieve multi-faceted impacts.

## **About the Role**

The DfP is embarking on an exciting new phase focused on advancing its strategic priorities in the years ahead. The Professor in Policing will provide leadership in all areas of the DfP strategy supporting the synergies across teaching, research and knowledge into practice within the department and the faculty. A core focus of the role will be leading the CPRL by utilising its entrepreneurial model to address the evolving and dynamic landscape of policing. Additionally, the role will involve shaping the future research agenda while driving continued income generation. We are developing specialist research across several areas, including AI in policing. Driving high quality research in at least one of these areas is expected.

## **Key Responsibilities**

The successful candidates will be required to:

* Shape the vision of Policing and lead CPRL in line with its core principles and the strategic priorities for policing at the OU with proactive engagement with key internal and external stakeholders, including the police force membership.
* Provide academic leadership to the policing academics across the department to deliver the synergies between research, teaching and learning and knowledge into practice.
* Contribute actively to the leadership within FBL with the executive team, the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, the Associate Dean of Research, Enterprise and Scholarship and the Head of Policing department to continue to shape and implement the strategic development of policing at the OU.
* Lead the research strategy and work closely with the academics to secure significant research funding to achieve the priorities of policing and REF-able outputs.
* Develop a research agenda that will shape and address the future needs of policing, with a full understanding of the evolving issues requiring innovation and research in policing and public sectors.
* Develop national and international policing networks and strengthen member engagement through visits and meetings to police forces and agencies advocating for Policing at the OU and the work of CPRL at public events.
* Support professional development for all academics within policing to enhance individuals’ academic profiles and to maximise the impact of their research and teaching.
* Sit on the academic promotions committee within the Faculty.
* Play a full part in the academic life of The Open University’s Walton Hall campus in Milton Keynes.

## **Person Specification**

**Essential**

* Appropriate academic qualifications in policing-relevant and/or public services related area(s). Minimum academic qualification would be a relevant PhD.
* Experience of collaboratively working with public service professionals, including police.
* A proven interdisciplinary research record evidenced by a series of publications including articles of 3\* or 4\* quality by REF 2029 standards or equivalent in internationally recognised journals.
* Successful record of winning research funding and consequent project management.
* A skilled researcher with expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and an ability to apply innovative methods to policing.
* A record of involvement in the wider aspects of research life, such as contribution to academic conferences, membership of academic networks.
* Experience of and aptitude for, academic leadership.
* Proven academic credibility within policing field with the ability to influence and shape practice.
* Evidence of working with appropriate external national and international networks, and demonstrable ability to develop strong collaborative links, with, for example, government and public services or industry, policy makers and funders.
* Evidence of ability to innovate and to improve existing practices in organisational settings.
* Experience of working in multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research.
* Teaching experience, particularly with part-time professionals.
* Experience of successfully supervising PhD students through to completion.
* Previous administrative or leadership experience at Faculty/School/Departmental level.
* Effective communication skills orally, in writing and electronically.
* The ability to work to tight deadlines.
* A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

**Desirable**

* Experience in online distance education.
* An ability to undertake research to address innovation in respect to new technologies, data analytics and Artificial Intelligence.

*The Open University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion which is reflected in our mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. We aim to foster a diverse and inclusive environment so that all in our OU community can reach their potential.  We recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and culture, and that this difference brings great strength.  We strive to recruit, retain and develop the careers of a diverse pool of students and staff, and particularly encourage applications from all underrepresented groups. We also aspire to make The Open University a supportive workplace for all through our policies, services and staff networks.*

