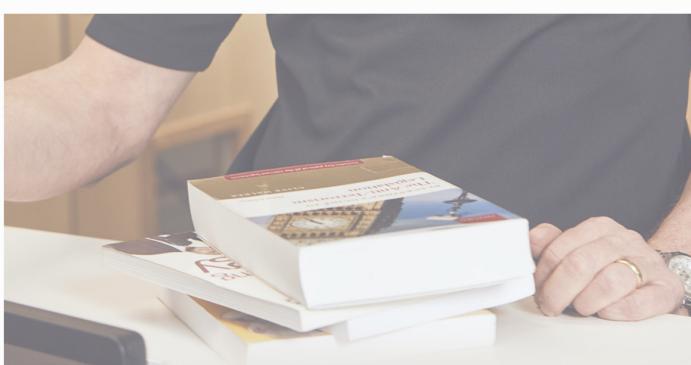
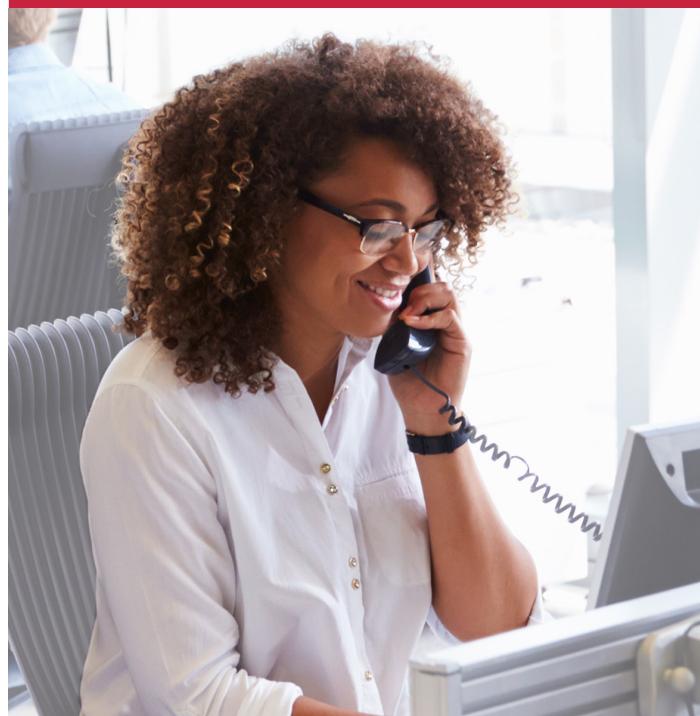




College of
Policing

Values-based recruitment and selection

Guidance for using the Competency and Values
Framework in recruitment and selection



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Introduction

One of the conclusions drawn from the College of Policing's 2015 [Leadership Review](#) was that the values inherent in the [Code of Ethics](#) should be embedded in all local and national selection processes. In support of delivering the review recommendations, the College has developed the Competency and Values Framework (CVF), which clearly defines new and relevant competencies and values which strongly uphold the principles of the [Code of Ethics](#). This will replace the Policing Professional Framework (PPF) Personal Qualities to enable the assessment of values in local and national recruitment.

The CVF:

...aims to support all policing professionals, now and into the future. It sets out nationally recognised behaviours and values, which will provide a consistent foundation for a range of local and national processes. This framework will ensure that there are clear expectations of everyone working in policing which in turn will lead to standards being raised for the benefit and safety of the public.
College of Policing (2016), 'Competency and Values Framework'

The CVF is fully detailed in [Competency and Values Framework for Policing – Overview of Framework](#).

Values-based recruitment

Values-based recruitment (VBR) refers to using and assessing values in recruitment processes. Some processes will be exclusively values-based, while others will contain a mix of values and competencies. As the CVF contains values alongside competencies, we will refer to assessment using the CVF as VBR for the purposes of this document.

As VBR follows the principles of any effective and well-designed recruitment process, this guidance offers information about good practice in recruitment and selection, with a particular emphasis on using the CVF, drawing out specific considerations in relation to the assessment of values.

There are three fundamental changes to the previous competency frameworks used in policing. These are:

- defining a set of six new competencies, each of which is split into three levels
- including four defined values, each of which is defined by one list of behavioural indicators
- redesigning professional profiles which will, when complete, specify the levels of competency expected for each nationally defined role.

This document highlights the key considerations to take into account when integrating VBR using the CVF into local recruitment and promotion processes. There are two sections to the guidance: Section One provides an explanation of the principles and benefits of VBR, and Section Two contains practical advice on conducting VBR using the CVF.

College of Policing

The College of Policing's Selection and Assessment department sets standards for national recruitment, selection and promotion processes for the police service in England and Wales. The department is able to provide advice, guidance and assistance to policing organisations that require professional expertise in standard setting, design and delivery of fair, effective and efficient selection and assessment.

The College is committed to employing fair, objective, reliable and valid methods of assessment to enable the police service to select the best candidates for the job. All guidance is based on good professional practice in assessment and uses the guidelines set out by the British Psychological Society and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO 10667). A list of references and further reading is provided at the end of this document.

The College of Policing Selection and Assessment team can provide advice on VBR and can provide support in all areas discussed in this toolkit on a consultancy basis. You can contact Selection and Assessment via:

Email: CVF@college.pnn.police.uk
Telephone: 0800 496 3322

Section one: Principles and development of values-based recruitment

What is values-based recruitment?

VBR refers to a recruitment or promotion process which assesses values either exclusively or in addition to competencies or other criteria. The aim of VBR for the purposes of this document is to identify candidates whose personal values closely align with the values of the police service, which have now been fully defined by the CVF. Selection decisions will be based not only on how well the candidate's competencies and skills match the role in question, but also on how well their personal values match the values of the service and/or organisation. By being clear about police values, we hope to attract and recruit applicants who share these and who are looking for fulfilling roles in the police service. Existing staff and officers will also be considered for promotion on a similar basis, using the CVF.

The benefits of values-based recruitment

There are a number of benefits to VBR, but these can broadly be combined under two categories: an increased focus on ethics and values-driven behaviour and improved individual and organisational outcomes.

Ethics and values-driven behaviour

The Leadership Review identified that combining behavioural competencies with values helps ensure that selection processes identify those people who 'do the right thing' as well as 'do things right'.

The use of VBR and the increased focus on values will ultimately increase public confidence in policing by ensuring that all police officers and police staff are demonstrating professional behaviour and ethical decision making and demonstrating the values of the police service in all their dealings with communities and the public.

It is also possible that focusing on values as well as competencies will help to attract officers and staff more representative of those they serve who can bring difference to the service through innovation and diversity of thought. This will enable a wider range of people to be successful in entering and thriving in the service.

Individual and organisational outcomes

The match between an individual's values and the values of an organisation is known as person-organisation fit. When an individual and an organisation share the same or similar values, there is high person-organisation fit which leads to higher levels of commitment (Kristof 1996), satisfaction levels and staff engagement.

This has a positive effect on performance and on public perceptions of policing and is a major reason for including values in the selection process.

The Competency and Values Framework

The new behavioural framework combining values and competencies is the CVF. It incorporates the values underpinning the Code of Ethics, as recommended by the Leadership review.

In summary, the CVF differs from the PPF Personal Qualities and other competency frameworks currently in use by:

- including four defined and measurable core values
- defining each of the values by behavioural indicators
- using a new set of six relevant and future-looking competencies
- dividing competencies into three distinct levels, to reflect different levels of responsibility and role complexity

The overall aim of the framework is to translate the Code of Ethics into the highest standards of professional conduct in all areas of the police service, as illustrated in figure 1.

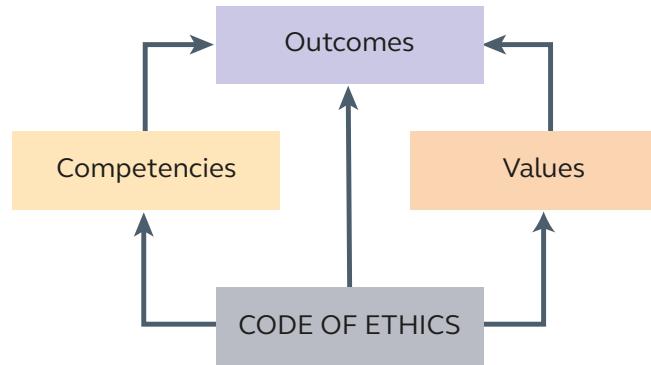


Figure 1. The aim of the Code of Ethics

What are ‘values’ and ‘competencies’?

Values are beliefs which are important to an individual and which guide and motivate particular behaviours and actions. In the CVF, the values are expressed in behavioural terms.

Competencies are usually behaviours (or sometimes technical attributes) which are related to effective job performance.

Combining values and competencies into a single national framework ensures that all employed in policing are clear about what is expected of them and can see the behaviours they need to display in order to support the culture, values and aspirations of the police service.

The competency level may vary depending on the type or seniority of a role, but the values expected of an individual will apply to all ranks and roles, therefore the values' behaviours are not divided into levels.

Role-specific accountabilities, objectives, knowledge and skills sit outside the CVF but will complement the framework in organisational processes such as recruitment, development and performance management. Role profiles, termed Policing Professional Profiles are being developed by the College for the majority of policing roles and these will inform development of job descriptions.

Given that the CVF is tightly linked with the Code of Ethics and that the code is applicable to every force, it is important that any values currently defined and used by an organisation are aligned with those of the CVF. There is flexibility to use values which reflect local priorities and conditions but, if this is the case, it will be important to ensure that the four values of the CVF are represented in local frameworks. Guidance on aligning local values to the CVF is available in [Competency and Values Framework: Implementation Guidance](#).

All national selection processes designed by the College will use the CVF from their current or next design iteration.

Four core values

Six competencies

Each competency has three levels, with three being the most complex. These levels are not assigned to specific ranks.

Levels apply to competencies only, **not values**.

Three clusters

The three clusters describe ways of working and are made up of pairs of competencies.

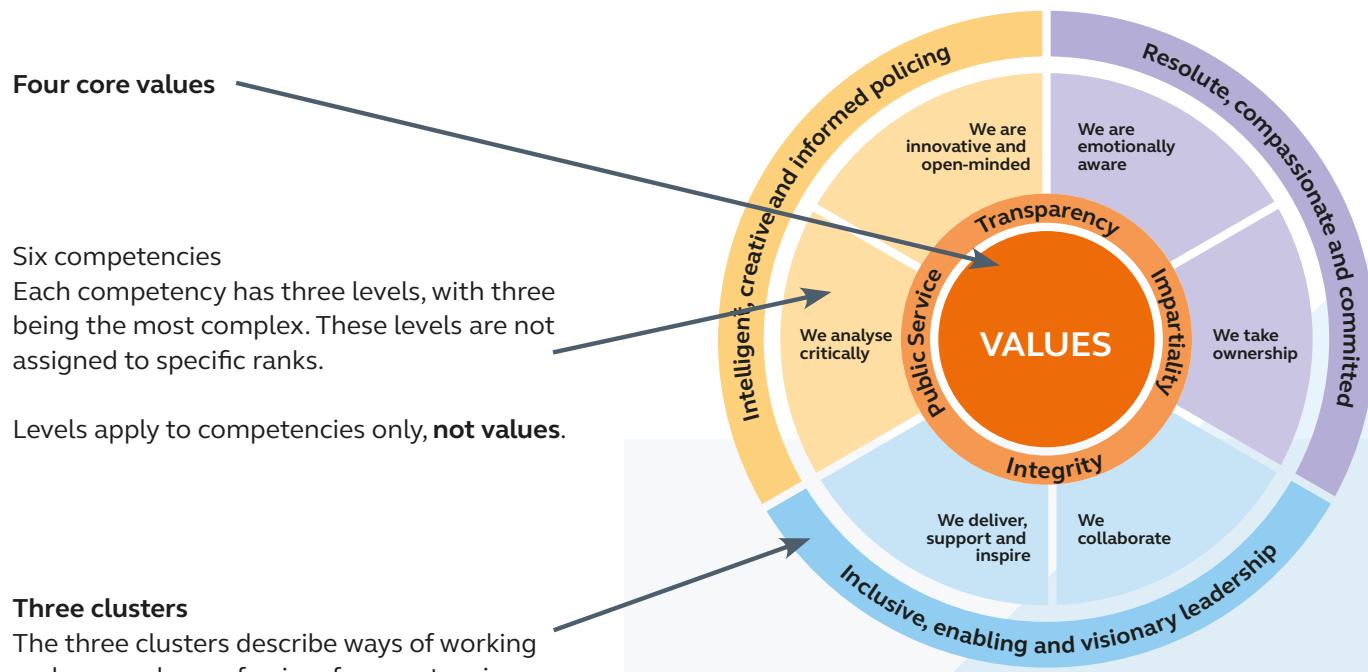


Figure 2. Competency and Values Framework overview

Section two: Effective recruitment and selection using values

Successful VBR depends on effectively applying the CVF to recruitment and selection practices and values must be effectively embedded in other organisational processes. The following guidance is a summary of the main steps organisations can take to achieve this.

Guiding principles for recruitment and selection

Any recruitment process in the Civil Service must follow the principles of merit, fairness and openness – these apply equally to external and internal recruitment. Because police officers and staff also hold important positions in public office, the police service should use these same principles to guide any decisions regarding recruitment and selection and shown in figure 3. It is important that none of these principles is lost by introducing changes to recruitment and selection processes when implementing VBR.

The principle of merit means that the best person or people for the job should be appointed, however, definition of 'best' in relation to the role comes down to which candidate most closely meets the defined criteria for the role. For this reason, careful establishment of the appropriate criteria is an essential and critical part of any appointment process. If the criteria are right and the assessment is fair and well designed, the person who meets the criteria best should be the right person for the job.

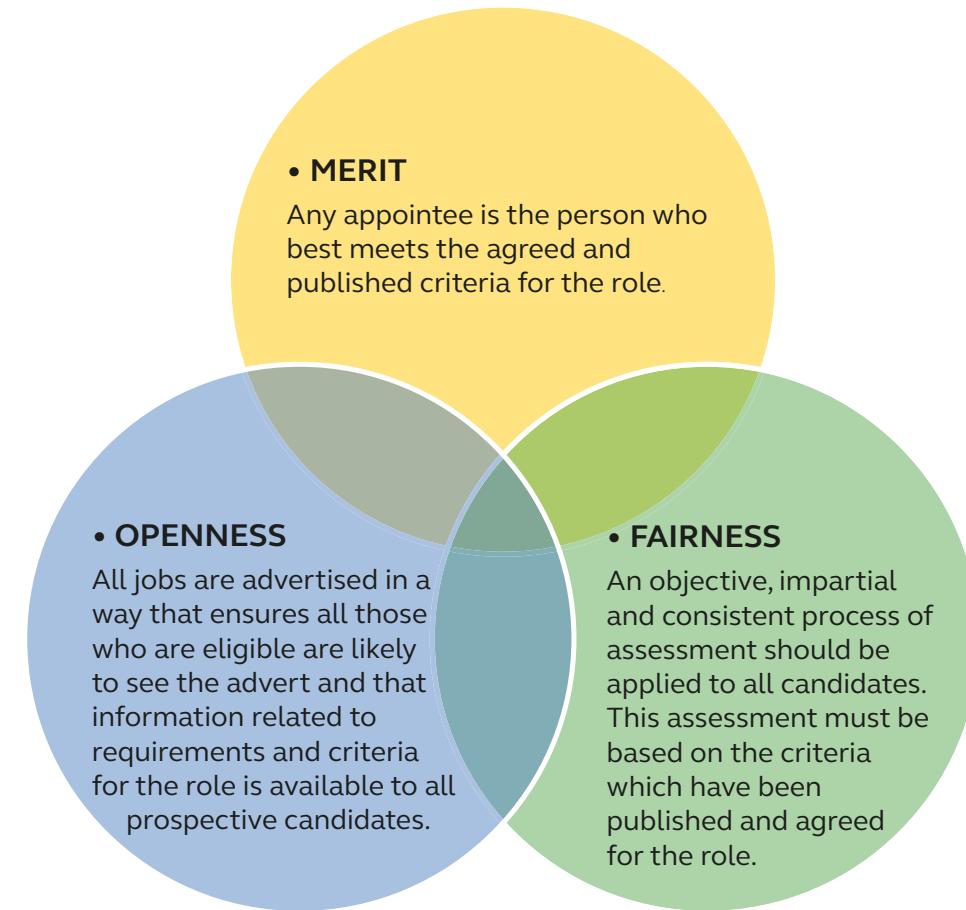


Figure 3. Principles of recruitment and selection

Stages of effective values-based recruitment

In order to deliver a VBR process, the recommended approach is to follow the stages in figure 4 below. Each stage is a set of activities and considerations for good practice which should be made in the sequence recommended. Each stage in figure 4 is described in more detail in the sections that follow.



Planning

These stages apply to all recruitment and assessment design, whether they are large or small-scale, single or multi-method. There may, however, be differences in the way certain stages are completed, depending on the number and types of assessment in question.

The time taken to complete these stages will depend on the resources available to you, the number of candidates that your process may attract and the type of assessment you use. Therefore, full consideration of these aspects is important to allow sufficient time for each stage before agreeing any dates for assessment.

The following sections detail the stages of figure 4 and summarise the actions needed to fully integrate the CVF in recruitment practice. The main focus, however, is on including the values and the new competencies.

Figure 4. Stages in implementing VBR

Stage 1: Embedding values in organisational processes

Recruitment should be one of a number of initiatives which aim to define and embed the relevant values throughout the organisation across all roles and levels. To deliver the intended benefits, the values used to select candidates must fully match the organisation's values. Where values used in recruitment are not sufficiently well embedded in the organisation, this can have counterproductive outcomes for individuals and the organisation. It can create a real or perceived mismatch rather than congruence between individual and organisational values.

Reinforcing values through induction and interaction

Using values in recruitment is a way of selecting people who demonstrate that their behaviour is aligned to the Code of Ethics. Once on board, induction and general interaction are opportunities to familiarise external recruits with the important values, attitudes, and role behaviours expected in the police service. They also further develop the level of person-organisation fit assessed at the selection stage. A well-planned induction stage develops a person's expectations or beliefs about the organisation.

Socialisation at the assessment stage, for instance by the material used in advertisements and applicant packs, and questions asked at interview, also provides opportunities for an organisation to highlight and

share its values. Methods such as formal or informal seminars, selected case studies and basic induction training are all opportunities for interaction and familiarisation.

Using the Competency and Values Framework as the basis for continuing professional development and professional development review

Post-induction, these behaviours are reinforced further by values being clearly evident in other organisational processes and procedures. The CVF has been developed so that it can be applied to processes such as Professional Development Reviews (PDR) and learning and development. Further information on how to implement the CVF in organisational processes can be found in [Competency and Values Framework: Implementation Guidance](#).

Promotion and leadership development/talent management

The CVF should be used in any promotion (as per guidance below) or talent management process. Using the CVF in this way to assess against and as a guide for development and behaviours helps create a consistent approach to development. Using the CVF as a basis for professional development reviews (PDRs), continuing professional development (CPD)

and other development tools such as 360° feedback, allows users to self-reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement as well as giving a clear indication of where to go in their development.

Stage 2: Specify requirements for the role

Every organisation should have job descriptions or role profiles which should include the essential summaries of:

- role purpose
- accountabilities
- behaviours
- education and qualifications
- skills and experience

The College is producing [Policing Professional Profiles](#) which cover all ranks and the majority of policing roles and policing-specific staff roles. These incorporate the accountabilities, skills, knowledge, education/qualifications and CVF competencies to help inform assessment criteria. All values are relevant in all roles, regardless of rank or seniority, and therefore will not be specifically outlined in each profile.

The Policing Professional Profiles should be used as a basis for a job description, which describes the tasks and accountabilities of the individual doing the specific role in the specific organisation. At this stage, consideration should also be given to the requirements of the person who will do the role – their knowledge, skills and abilities as well as competencies and values (the person specification) by using the CVF.

- **Policing Professional Profiles:** The Professional Profiles describe generic roles across the policing profession, for police officers and police specific staff roles.
- **Job Description:** Gives details of the requirements of the job including main tasks or duties and responsibilities.
- **Person Specification:** Focuses on the ideal attributes of the person who will do the job, including skills, abilities and qualifications.

Figure 5. Recruitment documents

Establishing the right criteria

It is critical to get the selection criteria right at this stage, as the rest of the assessment process will be built around them. Care and time should therefore be taken at this stage.

As well as identifying the criteria, consideration should be given to how decisions will be made, including prioritising the most important criteria, if appropriate, or deciding how scores on different elements of the process will be combined.

It is important in line with legal requirements that those who most closely meet the defined criteria are appointed.

Section 159 of the Equality Act (2010) – Positive action: recruitment and promotion

Section 159 permits an employer to take a protected characteristic into consideration when making selection decisions, where people having the protected characteristic are at a disadvantage or are under-represented.

This can be done only where the candidates are as qualified as each other. The question of whether one person is as qualified as another is a **judgement based on the criteria for the role**.

The section does not allow employers to automatically treat people who share a protected characteristic more favourably than those who do not have it. Any action taken must be a proportionate means of addressing such disadvantage or under-representation. For the full wording see '[Equality Act \(2010\) Explanatory Notes](#)'.

Stage 3: Prioritise values and competencies

Once the job description and person specification are established, it is important to decide which are the most important attributes to assess and at which stage of the process.

When deciding what to assess, recruiting managers and HR departments will need to consider the relative importance of competencies and values, as well as other factors such as skills and knowledge, required to do the job effectively.

Many recruitment processes may consist of multiple stages (eg, application, interview day) and/or single or multiple assessment methods (interviews or assessment centres). Recruiting managers may decide to measure values in initial stages and competencies at a later stage, or vice versa, or throughout all stages. These decisions should be based on the priorities for the role and with the validity and fairness of the process in mind.

In the interest of transparency and objectivity, at this stage a decision should be made about whether to apply a minimum standard of performance for the values or competencies. For example, if values were considered a higher priority, candidates might be expected to reach a certain performance level in the values assessment scoring and candidates who do not do so would be removed from further consideration.

Decisions about setting a minimum standard for performance for values and competencies should be evidence based. Evidence could include the views of subject matter experts or HR professionals as well as any formal job analysis information that may have been gathered. The decision will be for recruiting managers and HR professionals to make, and will likely be guided by considerations around the nature of the role and where it sits in the organisational structure or talent pipeline.

Values may be considered a higher priority or weighting, for example, in sensitive public-facing roles or in direct recruitment, while competencies may be more important in candidate pools where prior assessment and confirmation of values has already taken place. The point of entry into the police force is a critical step.

Stage 4: Attraction and positive action

Advertising the role

Recruitment offers opportunities to familiarise candidates with and expose them to organisational values and expectations. Before any direct contact at an assessment, the first opportunity to interact with candidates to highlight, share and demonstrate organisational values is through marketing and attraction. Candidates can be provided with material to read or watch which outlines relevant organisational examples and which has the added benefit of presenting candidates with a realistic job preview.

The values being assessed should be as visible to candidates as possible. For candidates, this starts with a job advert that is based on the job description. The rationale for including values in a job advert is that it provides a clear description not only of the role but also of the organisation, which allows candidates to gain a good understanding prior to their application. It also allows them to self-select out of the assessment process if they decide that either the role or the organisation is not right for them.

In addition to providing potential candidates with information about values, it is also important to make sure that an advert sets realistic expectations. A balance needs to be struck at this early stage between describing policing as an appealing career or attracting

applicants to a new role, while at the same time ensuring that the most suitable candidates enter into the recruitment process. A 'realistic job preview' helps candidates decide whether or not the role is suitable for them.

A simple illustration of how CVF values could be expressed in an advert is shown below in figure 6.

Westshire Police is seeking to attract officers and staff who share and demonstrate our values, which focus on providing the best possible service to our communities. Our values are:

- **impartiality – we treat everyone we interact with fairly and without bias or favour**
- **integrity – we act professionally and in line with the ethical standards of Westshire Police at all times**
- **public service – we will act in ways that are respectful to all the communities of Westshire and always act in the public interest**
- **transparency – we build trust between the police and the communities of Westshire by being open and honest in our interactions and our decision making**

Application pack

Once candidates have been attracted by the job advert, many will apply for a role via an application pack, whether hard copy or online. This is another opportunity to find out more information about the role and organisation. The application pack should therefore include information about the organisation, the role and an application form which the candidate completes to apply. All candidates should have access to the same information including where there are internal and external candidates for the same role.

Candidate experience post-application

Subsequent opportunities to familiarise individuals with the CVF can arise once candidates have applied and are waiting to attend an assessment.

Prior to attending an assessment, candidates should be sent information to help with preparation for the next stage/s. Candidates should be given an overview of the assessment methods that will be used, the process for deciding successful candidates and the values and competencies that they will be assessed against. This is another opportunity to engage with candidates and to explain the relevance and importance of any values that are being assessed. It also enables the force to demonstrate the value of transparency.

Figure 6. Sample of part of a job advert specifying the values

This preparatory information about values will be in addition to other information that is frequently provided to candidates, such as:

- a timetable for the day
- when to arrive
- a map with directions to the assessment site
- a timetable for the assessments, including start and finish times
- contact details for issues/questions
- practice questions/examples

Providing such information is important to candidates as it shows the process is open and transparent. Communications that convey a warm and supportive tone throughout the assessment process can be effective in reducing anxiety and enabling candidates to give their best performance in assessments.

Positive action and maximising candidate performance

Many forces also engage in positive action initiatives with candidates from groups that are under-represented in policing. Social media engagement, face-to-face sessions and continued communication can help keep candidates engaged.

Some evidence shows that asking candidates to think about their motivation for applying and what they bring to policing and their community can have a positive impact on the performance of under-

represented groups. Being asked to think about their values can also improve candidate performance by 'positive priming'. For more information on these interventions and other ways to maximise candidate performance and reduce adverse impact on under-represented groups, see the [Behavioural Insights Team Update Report 2013 to 2015](#), the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) report [A Head for Hiring](#) and the Behavioural Insights Team and the College's rapid evidence assessment on [Tackling unconscious bias in recruitment, selection and promotion processes](#).

Stage 5: Assessment design

Assessment method

Whichever selection method is chosen, two main factors must be considered:

- **validity** – better performance on the selection method predicts or is correlated with better performance in the role
- **fairness** – it does not create advantage or disadvantage for particular groups that are unrelated to their ability to do the job

In order for a selection process to be fair and valid it must be reliable - this means that the assessment methods and environment must be consistent and standardised so that every candidate has the same opportunity.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires organisations to take steps to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against individuals within a protected characteristic group in a range of circumstances which includes the provision of testing and assessment.

It is therefore sometimes appropriate to make accommodations or reasonable adjustments to assessment processes for candidates with particular requirements to enable them to undertake a fair

assessment. In these instances you should proactively work with candidates to identify what would be an appropriate accommodation or adjustment and where suitable implement this.

Equality and adverse impact

It is the responsibility of recruiting organisations to ensure that selection processes comply with the Equality Act 2010, and do not unfairly discriminate against any groups defined by protected characteristics under the Act.

A selection method is said to have adverse impact against minority groups when the success rate of the minority group is significantly lower than the majority group pass rate. Commonly the 80 per cent or four-fifths rule is used to determine whether adverse impact is present. If the minority group pass rate is less than 80 per cent or four-fifths of the majority group pass rate, the method is said to cause adverse impact. This may suggest the method is unfairly discriminating if there is no reason to suspect that there are genuine ability or performance differences between the groups. Although the four fifths rule is a useful guide for evaluation and is commonly used in practice, it does not have a legal footing.

Sifting selection methods

The aim of a sift stage is to reduce the numbers of candidates who apply for a role to a reasonable number who can be practically assessed at an interview or assessment centre by selecting those who are most likely to be successful at the subsequent stage/s. Common sifting tools are application forms, ability tests or situational judgement tests (SJT's).

- Application forms allow a reasonably quick check of candidate suitability and whether they meet the basic criteria, but they need to be assessed by trained assessors, which is resource intensive and time consuming. Some application forms include information such as the candidate's name and details of education, which may reveal gender, ethnicity and age, which can introduce potential bias. It is good practice to remove any identifying information from the assessment of competency or value-based questions.
- Ability tests (such as tests of verbal, numerical or general ability) are a quick and objective measure, but they have a tendency to cause adverse impact whereby white candidates perform significantly better than candidates from some black and minority ethnic backgrounds. If using ability tests, care needs to be taken to set the threshold to minimise adverse impact, and they should only be used where ability is clearly relevant to the role.

Ability tests should only be selected, used and interpreted by those who are appropriately trained to do so through the British Psychological Society qualifications in test use.

- SJTs give candidates a number of scenarios and usually a series of answers which the candidate has to rank or rate according to their effectiveness in dealing with the scenario. SJTs tend to be best when they are designed specifically for the role (as opposed to an off-the-shelf test), so they need to be designed by specialists with expertise in psychometrics. SJTs are objectively marked so are a quick and easy method to use and tend to have lower adverse impact than ability tests. They typically have lower score ranges and validity, however, and therefore may only accurately sift out the lowest performers.

Face-to-face selection methods

Once candidate numbers have been sifted down to a smaller number, most organisations choose to meet candidates in person for an interview, an assessment exercise or perhaps a number of assessment exercises combined into an assessment centre.

Interviews

Interviews are used in most selection processes and, when conducted in a standardised way, they can be a valuable tool. Interviews are best when they are standardised so that each candidate gets the same opportunity to demonstrate their suitability to the role. This means asking the same questions of each candidate and allowing the same time for candidates

to respond. Highly structured interviews have been shown to be the most valid, but can be seen as rigid. In practice, many organisations use a semi-structured interview in which candidates are asked the same questions but assessors have freedom to ask different follow-up questions and probe the candidate's responses.

Unstructured interviews, where the interviewer asks different questions of each candidate and where the interview is not timed and controlled, have very poor validity.

Interviews are susceptible to interviewer bias, so interviewers should be well trained and keep assessing skills up to date.

Work sample tests

While interviews allow a candidate to talk about things they have done or things they may do in the future, a work sample test allows the assessors to see the candidate in action in an activity that represents a sample of the role. This might include an analysis task for someone in an analytical role, a copy-typing task for a typist, or a community engagement exercise for a police officer. Well-designed work sample exercises can be highly valid but care needs to be taken to ensure that the exercise accurately reflects the role (this is more difficult for more complex roles) and that the expectations of the candidate's behaviours and associated scores or marks are clearly defined in advance. Often this is informed by trialling the exercise with those already performing well in the role.

Work sample tests or exercises often assess task performance or skill as well as the demonstration of competencies or values (eg, a teaching task may assess empathy and communication skills, as well as accurately describing the subject matter).

Assessment centres

Assessment centres are a multi-rater, multi-method approach. This means that the candidates are given multiple exercises or opportunities to demonstrate their suitability for the role and are assessed by multiple people in the course of that assessment across several dimensions – usually competencies.

Practically speaking, assessment centres often look like a combination of several different work-sample type exercises, eg, a presentation, a written report and a roleplay exercise. Well-designed assessment centres can have very good validity but they are time consuming and costly and need to be carefully designed to ensure they are accurate and valid predictors of performance. The major benefit of assessment centres is in enabling a very thorough and detailed assessment of each candidate in multiple scenarios and by different people, thereby being more likely to see the candidate's real or typical performance than a singular one-off interview or test. This leads to additional benefits in generating detailed feedback or metrics for the candidate and the organisation.

Designing the assessment process

The CVF describes the competencies and values that are associated with effective performance in policing roles, in behavioural terms. Each competency has a description and a set of indicators, arranged in three levels of increasing complexity, which are examples of how the behaviour might be demonstrated. The values are presented in the same way, the only exception being that values have only one level – the same value behaviours are expected of everyone, regardless of their rank or seniority.

An extract from the document **Competency and Values Framework for Policing** is shown in figure 7 below. It shows one of the four values, Public Service, with its set of behavioural indicators.

| Public Service | Behaviours |
|--|---|
| <p>This values links to the principles of respect and selflessness from the Code of Ethics.</p> <p>As individuals and as part of a wider organisation, we have a responsibility to ensure that we act in the best interests of society as a whole. Improving the safety and wellbeing of the public underpins all that we do. We constantly think about how to create the best possible outcomes for those we serve and we take personal responsibility for delivering these. We show resilience and determination to overcome barriers and to provide the best outcome.</p> <p>We are dedicated to work in the public interest, engaging and listening to their needs and concerns. We work to make sure that the public feel valued and engaged, which helps to build confidence in the police service. We are respectful to the needs and concerns of different individuals and groups.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ I act in the interest of the public, first and foremost.■ I am motivated by serving the public, ensuring that I provide the best service possible at all times.■ I seek to understand the needs of others to act in their best interests.■ I adapt to address the needs and concerns of different communities.■ I tailor my communication to be appropriate and respectful to my audience.■ I take into consideration how others want to be treated when interacting with them.■ I treat people respectfully regardless of the circumstances.■ I share credit with everyone involved in delivering services. |

Figure 7. The Public Service value definition and behaviours

Choosing the appropriate competency level

Most roles will have the level specified for each competency as part of the professional profile and this will normally be the level that should be assessed against, however, there may be some circumstances where recruiters may take the decision to assess the competencies at a higher level (for example, selecting on to a development programme which aims to develop people towards the next or higher rank or level).

Because the CVF is designed with three levels, there may be times when roles at different levels or ranks (or entirely different roles at the same level) are being assessed on the same criteria within the CVF. This doesn't mean that the assessments will be the same, however. The important thing to remember is that the assessment should be contextualised to the role. This means that the assessment content (questions/exercises) and the expectations of performance should be relevant to the specific job being recruited for. To do

this, recruiters need to consider the policing professional profile or job description and the context in which the role is conducted, alongside the CVF. Figure 8 gives an example of how this can be applied using competency statements for different ranks with similar profiles.

As an example, consider how the same competency indicator may lead to different expectations for a sergeant and an inspector.

| | |
|--|--|
| Competency indicator | I actively encourage and support learning within my teams and colleagues. (Take Ownership, level 2) |
| Expected behaviour for sergeant assessment process | Encourages team of PCs, special constables, PCSOs and staff to complete set learning, including allocating time for this. |
| Expected behaviour for inspector assessment process | Encourages own teams and those of other inspectors to complete set CPD. Manages resources (time, workload, staffing) so that individuals have sufficient time for this and other learning. |

Figure 8. Example competency statements for different ranks with similar profiles

Identifying what good performance looks like

Describing the competencies and values behaviourally enables them to be easily used in assessment. In an interview, for example, where questions are designed to elicit evidence of the competency or value, assessors can use the indicators to help them decide how well the candidate has demonstrated evidence of the competency at the appropriate level, in the context of the role being applied for.

For a more complex exercise involving a realistic scenario, for example, a roleplay exercise or written exercise, the indicators in the CVF will not be sufficient on their own. The exercise designers will need to identify what good demonstration of the competency looks like in the context of the exercise. This is usually done by having a sample of good performers already in the role complete the exercise as part of a trial or pilot, and using their responses to help generate guidance for assessors. There will often be several different ways

a candidate could demonstrate the competency in any given scenario – this is about creating supportive guidance for assessors, not a 'model answer'.

An example of how competency behaviours may be translated into assessor guidance is shown below, in a fictional example of a role play on a diversity topic.

Figure 9. Example assessor guidance

| Competency: We are Emotionally Aware (level 2) | |
|---|---|
| Competency behaviours | Exercise-specific examples from assessor guidance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I consider the perspectives of people from a wide range of backgrounds before taking action ■ I adapt my style and approach according to the needs of the people I am working with, using my own behaviour to achieve the best outcome ■ I promote a culture that values diversity and encourages challenge ■ I encourage reflective practice among others and take the time to support others to understand reactions and behaviours ■ I take responsibility for helping to ensure the emotional wellbeing of those in my teams ■ I take the responsibility to deal with any inappropriate behaviours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Candidate generates ideas for encouraging others in the finance team to value diversity ■ Candidate specifically asks the role actor to challenge their thinking ■ Candidate addresses the role actor's inappropriate language about Mr Walker ■ Candidate commits to addressing wellbeing in the procurement team ■ Candidate communicates sensitively and warmly but changes style to challenge role actor's inappropriate behaviour immediately and firmly when required |
| Competency: We Take Ownership (level 2) | |
| Competency behaviours | Exercise-specific examples from assessor guidance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I proactively create a culture of ownership within my areas of work and support others to display personal responsibility ■ I take responsibility for making improvements to policies, processes and procedures, actively encouraging others to contribute their ideas ■ I am accountable for the decisions my team make and the activities within our teams ■ I take personal responsibility for seeing events through to a satisfactory conclusion and for correcting any problems both promptly and openly ■ I actively encourage and support learning within my teams and colleagues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Candidate accepts responsibility for correcting previous management mistakes that have led to the problems ■ Candidate identifies a realistic plan to deal with the issues and says they will commit to it ■ Candidate encourages the role actor to see where they could have a personal impact and to take responsibility for some of the problems ■ The candidate offers support to the role actor, eg, through mentoring or regular communications, to help them meet their responsibilities ■ Candidate generates ideas for how the team can contribute improvement ideas |

Identifying what good performance looks like (and, ideally, what poor performance looks like) whether in the form of brief bullet points for an interview or detailed assessor guidance, is an essential step. Where there are multiple assessors, it is even more critical to ensure that everyone has the same shared understanding of what is being sought from candidates and how it will be recognised.

Rating scale

Almost all assessment processes will employ scoring of some sort. Typically, assessors will award a score for each competency area and then for the interview or exercise overall, using a rating scale.

It is important that rating scales are understood by everyone involved in the process and that everyone has a shared understanding of the grades and what they mean, to ensure consistency of scoring. To this end, the rating scale must have descriptors alongside each score and these should be clear and unambiguous. Steps should be taken to calibrate multiple assessors' ratings, for example, by conducting a mock assessment or having a discussion about expected levels of performance at each grade, in advance of the first live candidate assessment. This is often referred to as benchmarking or frame of reference training.

An example rating scale is shown below in Figure 10.

| | |
|---|---|
| A | Substantial positive evidence of the competency observed with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence and few or no areas for development observed |
| B | Positive evidence of the competency observed and some areas for development but, on balance, more positive evidence with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence |
| C | Some positive evidence of the competency observed but, on balance, more areas for development with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence |
| D | Substantial areas for development identified and little or no positive evidence of the competency observed with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence |

Figure 10. Example rating scale

Assessor training

Assessor training or briefing prior to any assessment process helps to ensure that assessors are competent and fair in their assessments. As a minimum assessor training or briefing should cover:

- ensuring assessors understand their role and the role being assessed for
- ensuring all assessors have a shared understanding of the criteria being used
- familiarisation with interview questions or exercise materials
- familiarisation with competencies and values
- understanding the rating scale and calibration with other assessors
- barriers to accurate assessment
(please see appendix 2)
- unconscious bias
- assessing and interviewing skills

Assessor training does not always have to be face-to-face and some of the above can be covered by written materials, however, it is always valuable to take time with an assessing panel to ensure that there is shared understanding and agreement on the key criteria and scoring mechanisms and to discuss how the process will be run. For volume assessment processes with large numbers of assessors and candidates, assessor training and calibration becomes more critical to ensure consistency of assessing.

Volume processes should also have a quality assurance process to ensure that candidates are being assessed fairly and consistently. This may involve monitoring assessors, role actors and other staff, if involved, to ensure they are performing consistently to an agreed standard.

Stage 6: Assessment methodology

The assessment should be as objective as possible, focussing on criteria that are relevant to job performance, and excluding those that aren't. Trained assessors should follow a structured process such as ORCE (observe, record, classify, evaluate), which breaks down the assessing process into component parts and helps to avoid bias. The basic model is shown below in figure 11 and described more fully in [appendix 1](#).

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Observe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observe, and listen to everything the candidate does and says |
| Record | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take contemporaneous notes, as verbatim as possible, whilst observing |
| Classify | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classify the observed behaviours into competencies and values, after the candidate has finished the assessment |
| Evaluate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decide how well the candidate demonstrated the competencies and values, and award a rating |

Figure 11. ORCE model of assessment

Because the values are behaviourally defined, they can be assessed in the same way as competencies, ie assessors rate the behavioural evidence they observe. There are some key differences to be aware of, however, when assessing values.

- Values are often tied to individuals' deeply held views and motivations, therefore assessors may need to probe behaviours to identify the underlying values – asking candidates to explain their thought processes and feelings and why they took a particular course of action. This is clearly easier to do in an interview or other exercise where the assessors have a chance to interact with the candidate and ask questions.
- Questions and topics focused on values may be emotive and assessors should be alert to signs that candidates are becoming upset or emotional when describing events or when playing a role in an exercise.
- Similarly, values-based interviews can quickly get into territory that is personal to the individual – assessors should treat this information sensitively and in particular not reveal sensitive personal information in scoring sheets or feedback reports.

Stage 7: Decision making

As stated in stage 3, expectations of performance levels and thresholds should have been set out and communicated to candidates prior to attending any assessment.

Full and accurate records of scores for each candidate should be made throughout the assessment process so that there is a final verified record to be used in decision making and also forming an audit trail.

Arithmetic decision making, where the candidates' scores are used to rank candidates according to their performance, has been shown to be the most valid decision-making method. This can incorporate the application of thresholds for certain competencies, values or exercises that have been identified as most important in advance of the process.

Rational decision-making methods, where groups of assessors discuss the candidates' performances and decide who should be successful, have been shown to be less effective in selecting the best candidates and are difficult to justify from a fairness point of view.

Assessor discussions can, however, be useful where candidates are borderline or where there are a number of candidates tied with the same score or score band, and qualitative information can be used to supplement the decision-making process.

All decisions should be evidence based, however.

As with all existing selection processes, the following principles apply:

- Decisions are based on information collected only from a well-designed, valid, objective and standardised assessment process (unless it has been stated to candidates before their application that other information may be used during the decision-making process)
- It must be the same process for all candidates
- The process is clearly documented and explained
- Section 159 of the equality act (positive action: recruitment and promotion) may be applicable where candidates are equally qualified – [see page 12](#) for an explanation

Results and feedback

Candidates should be told when to expect their results after being assessed. It is also good practice to provide candidates with feedback for personal development and to reinforce organisational values.

As an organisation which is trying to introduce and reinforce values, it is necessary to provide feedback to successful as well as unsuccessful candidates. As well as being of potential use to unsuccessful candidates

for their own development, it also helps to send out a positive message about police values to the wider public.

Any feedback which is given to candidates should:

- be constructive, highlighting what was done well and what can be done to improve
- be based on their actual performances at the assessment centre or interviews
- be given in a timely manner, soon after the assessment process.

It is particularly important for feedback on the values to be based on behavioural evidence. Assessment of values is sensitive and should therefore be dealt with sensitively during feedback. It may be useful to frame feedback by explaining that decisions are based on what was observed during an assessment, which is only a snapshot of their performance. Therefore, it is not to say they don't hold the values, but that they have not evidenced them.

Appeals

Candidates should be provided with the opportunity to raise any concerns or circumstances which they feel may have affected their performance. A clear process should be established and communicated with candidates so that they are able to raise issues in a timely manner either during or after any assessment.

Stage 8: Evaluation of process

In order to ensure that the selection methods used are fit for purpose, recruiters should undertake regular evaluation of the chosen methods and use this to contribute to ongoing development and refinement of the selection methods.

Any assessment and selection method should be monitored and reviewed, regardless of whether a single or continual process. Monitoring and reviewing the use of values and the new competencies will ensure that issues or problems are identified and can be addressed as soon as they are raised, or prior to starting the next recruitment process. The aim is to ensure that assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable.

It is important to monitor selection processes for adverse impact on under-represented groups. This will require collecting monitoring data, such as age, gender or ethnicity, to enable analysis to be completed. All data should be collected, used and stored in line with data protection laws.

Where adverse impact is detected, further analysis should be conducted to verify if the difference is statistically significant and the possible reasons for this.

Other factors that may be evaluated include the candidate and assessor experience, commonly measured using feedback questionnaires, to determine whether the experience could be improved. Candidate experience in particular can have an impact not only on candidate performance, but on organisational reputation.

Studies that compare assessment scores with subsequent performance on the job (predictive validity studies) are challenging to conduct in organisations and require some specialist analysis skills, however, these are of great benefit and can show whether the selection process is working.

Any changes that result from an evaluation should be monitored further to ensure that they are adding value and improving the assessment process. There should be a clearly identified benefit of any changes and then actions put in place to measure whether a positive change is occurring. This might mean conducting comparisons before and after changes have been made.

Appendices

Appendix 1 ORCE sequence for assessment

The ORCE process (observe, record, classify, evaluate – see below for a summary) is an established, linear model of assessment. ORCE should be used with paired assessment or in groups with assessors first carrying out each stage independently and then meeting to discuss their grades and evidence and then agreeing on a final grade. Followed correctly, this model can help to minimise the effect of bias and help assessors deliver objective assessment decisions.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Observe candidate's behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ For example, watching, listening or reading a candidate's assessment▪ Carry out 'record' at same time▪ Independent of any other assessor(s) |
| Record candidate's behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Carry out 'observe' at same time▪ Take detailed notes of behavioural evidence (as close to verbatim as possible).▪ No assuming or interpreting▪ Record just behavioural evidence▪ Independent of any other assessor(s) |

| | |
|--|---|
| Classify observed and recorded evidence into appropriate category (eg, value, competency) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ After candidate has left the room▪ Independent of any other assessor(s)▪ Only classify behavioural evidence▪ Only classify behaviour from that assessment▪ Classify each behaviour once – do not double count▪ Classify behaviours according to competencies or values and assessor guidance |
| Evaluate candidate's performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ After classifying▪ Independent of any other assessor(s)▪ Based on quality and quantity of the classified evidence▪ Consider the level of role and aim of the assessment process (benchmarking)▪ Consider what the candidate missed or if anything detracted from their performance |

Appendix 2 Barriers to effective assessment

| Barrier | Description | Overcome by |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Expectancy effect | Tendency for assessors to generate either a positive or negative expectation from pre-assessment information (eg application form, word-of-mouth opinion, appraisal document) and for their evaluation and decisions to follow these expectations. | Using ORCE model of assessment Only give assessors information they truly need in advance of the assessment. |
| Confirmatory information | Assessors actively seek information to confirm their initial impressions. This is closely linked to the expectancy effect. Interviewers tend to ask questions designed to elicit information confirming their initial impressions or may ignore evidence which goes against their initial impression. | |
| Personal liking | Assessors' evaluation and decision are influenced by personal liking (or disliking) of a candidate. | Comprehensive assessor training to ensure they fully understand the role being assessed for, assessment criteria and identifying biases e.g. unconscious bias training. |
| Primacy effect | Assessors are more influenced by information provided early in the assessment process. | Using ORCE model of assessment. |
| Stereotyping | Characteristics that an assessor feels are held by a certain group are ascribed to all individuals within that group. | |

| Barrier | Description | Overcome by |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Prototyping | Assessors believe there is an ideal 'type' for a role and are biased towards candidates who they feel match this type or against candidates who they do not feel matches the type. | |
| Halo/horns effect | Assessors assume that if a candidate scores well, or is viewed favourably, in a particular exercise/situation they will also do well throughout and is scored accordingly (halo). Alternatively a candidate who scores poorly, or is viewed negatively, in a particular exercise/situation is assumed to do poorly throughout and is scored accordingly (horns). | Comprehensive assessor training to ensure they fully understand the role being assessed for, assessment criteria and identifying biases e.g. unconscious bias training. |
| Quota effect | Assessors' decisions are affected by pre-set employment quotas. | Using ORCE model of assessment. |
| Contrast effect | Candidate's performance is compared to and evaluated against previous candidates' performance. | |
| Negative information bias | Assessor's evaluation is influenced more by negative information than positive. | |
| Similar to me effect | Assessor favours candidates who are similar to them. For example, from the same town, have a similar personality. | |

| Barrier | Description | Overcome by |
|---|---|---|
| Non-verbal communication | Assessors misinterpret non-verbal communication when rating performance. | Training assessors in identifying biases and ways to overcome these, eg unconscious bias training. Using ORCE model of assessment. |
| Fundamental attribution error | Assessors incorrectly attribute causes of behaviour to personality rather than situational factors. | |
| Information overload and selective attention | Assessors have a lot of information to contend with and may consider a fraction of the available evidence. | Assessment process designers should be aware and factor in breaks and not schedule the assessment of too many candidates by one assessor. |
| Fatigue | Effects of tiredness on the assessor. Where mental demands of tasks outweigh the attention available, assessors only attend to what they consider the salient points to be. | Using ORCE model of assessment. |
| Rushing | Assessors may cut corners due to rushing to meet logistical arrangements. | |
| Central tendency bias | Assessors consistently score candidates in the middle of a rating scale, avoiding the extreme ends. | Assessors should be trained in how any rating scales are used and should be encouraged to use the full length of the scale. |
| Leniency | Assessors consistently score candidates at the higher end of the rating scale, avoiding the middle and lower ends of the scale. | Using ORCE model of assessment. |
| Stringency | Assessors consistently score candidates at the lower end of the rating scale, avoiding the middle and higher ends of the scale. | |

Appendix 3 Useful links and references

Kristof, A.L. (1996) Person-Organization Fit: An Integrative Review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49, pp 1-49

British Psychological Society (2015) Design and Delivery of Assessment Centres. Available from

CVF general information - College website – <http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Pages/Competency-and-Values-framework.aspx>

Skills for Justice website – <https://skillsforjustice-pf.com/competency-values/>

Professional development platform – <https://profdev.college.police.uk/>