

Improved apprenticeship offers work-focused route into policing

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Police constable degree apprenticeship (PCDA) moves to similar model as nursing

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New national apprenticeship requirements will be introduced for the police constable degree apprenticeship in April next year. Training will be focused on workplace skills and on-the-job learning. Regulated by the College of Policing, the revamped [police constable degree apprenticeship \(PCDA\)](#) will be aligned with the nursing equivalent and will allow more flexibility for local programmes.

The PCDA

Recruitment through the PCDA makes policing one of the biggest providers of degree apprenticeships in England. It is one of four [entry routes into police constable careers](#). All routes into policing are underpinned by the same core curriculum so forces can offer a mix of options to attract talented and diverse joiners.

The PCDA has been redesigned to maintain high standards while giving forces more freedom to align local courses with the real-world challenges faced by recruits and operational demands. Assessments will focus on work-based skills, so courses resemble the regulated profession model used for nursing degree apprenticeships. Alternatives to final written dissertations can be considered in local programmes.

New technical qualifications

The new technical qualifications and occupational apprenticeship standards for PCDA have been agreed with the [Institute for Technical Education](#) (IfATE), along with granting the College full regulatory status. Bridget Phillipson MP, the Secretary of State for Education, has approved increased funding for the new PCDA in England.

Forces, alongside their higher education partners, will be introducing the new PCDA from April 2025.

The PCDA changes are part of a wider initiative to embed work-focused, practical training across all of the entry routes for police constables including:

- degree holder entry programme (DHEP)
- degree in professional policing (PPD)
- police constable entry programme (PCEP)

The increased flexibility with the PCDA supports forces to recruit more diverse candidates and future leaders – particularly those individuals who may have been discouraged from applying because they felt the apprenticeship was too academic, and not for them.”

Jo Noakes, Interim Deputy CEO at the College of Policing

The increase in funding means English forces can draw down an additional £3,000 from the government’s compulsory [apprenticeship levy](#) for each PCDA student officer, with the funding band for the PCDA being raised from £24,000 to £27,000.

- Find out more about the [police constable degree apprenticeship](#).

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