Guidance Information on the IPLDP Programme – February 2023

What is IPLDP+?

IPLDP+ (Initial Police Learning and Development Programme) is a two-year training entry route into Merseyside Police. This is an exciting, non-degree level entry route, that will enable successful recruits who may not have a previous degree, or do not wish to obtain a degree whilst training, to join Merseyside Police as a police constable; completing a learning programme designed and delivered by Merseyside Police.

The required policing knowledge combined with the practical, skill-based, operational competence as a police officer will be achieved throughout a two-year probationary period. You will be assessed against national assessment criteria at various stages throughout your learning to demonstrate that you are able to, firstly, police on your own, and then subsequently, towards the end of your two-year probationary period, evidence that you have achieved full operational competence.

How is this different to PEQF (Police Entry Qualification Framework - PCDA/DHEP) entry routes?

We know that not all people who aspire to become Police Officers here in Merseyside want to study a degree alongside their training. We also know that, for some, this can be a daunting prospect and deter them from applying.

IPDLP+ offers a faster entry route to becoming an operational Police Officer without the added element of degree-level study at a Higher Education Institution alongside your Police training. All your IPLDP+ training is provided on-site, in the organisation, by existing officers and staff, meaning you are well prepared for life as a Constable in Merseyside.

IPLDP+ provides a curriculum based on previous iterations of IPLDP (the predecessor to PEQF routes) with added learning from the PEQF courses, ensuring that you will get the most recent training context, legislative knowledge, and competency development when you train on this route.

You will still complete written assessments, but these will be conducted and assessed by Merseyside Police Trainers and Assessors, meaning that everything you learn and do is geared towards your role and development as a Constable in Merseyside.

Where will I study IPLDP+ and what is involved in the training?

The first year of the learning programme will take place at our specialised Training Academy in Allerton, Liverpool, and will consist of various sessions including classroom inputs; IT systems learning; developmental roleplay exercises; personal safety training (at our specialised training venue in Lea Green, St. Helens); and numerous developmental assessments to assist with knowledge-based learning and policing practice. You are also required to undertake directed self-study and self-reflection to further develop and deepen your understanding of the role.

Towards the end of the first year, a period of operational policing will be undertaken with coaching/mentoring support from an experienced officer. At this stage you will be assessed to see if you are able to gain 'independent patrol status;' if so, you will then proceed onto year two of the programme.

The learning programme for year two will consist of operational policing, with some 'protected assessment' phases at our Training Academy. You will develop your operational skills by working within several 'key' areas of policing, culminating in being posted to a particular operational policing function. Postings at this stage will be dependent upon force resource requirements.

Throughout the two-year period, developmental review meetings and coaching/mentoring sessions will assist in your development, and an individual learning plan will be created to ensure suitable direction and support is available according to an individual's own learning needs.

All recruits who join Merseyside Police via this entry route will receive further information of the structure, learning requirements, and assessments of their learning programme and their probationary period upon commencement of their employment.

Independent Patrol Status (IPS)

Once you are deemed to have IPS status you will then develop your knowledge and skills further by policing on your own, or with colleagues, dealing with policing incidents in response to demands of the public and the police force. As a minimum you will spend time within response policing predominantly dealing with 999 calls; community policing dealing with longer-term community problems such as drug dealing; and further time within the Investigations function investigating crimes that have been reported by the public.

It is during this phase of your learning that you will continue to be assessed against and develop your ongoing competence, as to how you deal with certain policing activities. Once you have achieved this full occupational competence (FOC), subject to you having also demonstrated good ethical behaviour in line with police standards, you will be confirmed in the rank of Constable.

Do I have to go to University and study for a degree?

You do not need to study at University or obtain a degree whilst training on the IPLDP+ entry route, and you don't need a degree to apply. This course is designed to enable you to learn all that you need to obtain the rank of Constable in Merseyside Police. The course is delivered by our Initial training team against national standards, meaning that all your training is provided by Merseyside Police trainers, with learning inputs from all areas of business around the organisation.

The course aims to facilitate you with all the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required of a Constable within Merseyside. You will be supported throughout the course by experienced trainers and operational officers, ensuring that when you complete your training, you are able to hit the ground running on a successful career in Merseyside Police.

What support will I receive during my training?

Here at Merseyside Police we want to support all our officers and staff to ensure they can work in their roles to the best of their abilities. This helps us to better serve and protect our communities.

During your training on IPLDP+ you will be supported by your trainer and the Initial training team, your Tutor Constable, and the wider organisation. If you require support with any element of your studies, such as written assessments, we can assess you on an individual basis via an educational professional and put in place reasonable adjustments to ensure you feel comfortable and empowered to achieve.

Merseyside Police have a specific organisational goal around ensuring we have healthy people working for us – this means we have a suite of support available to all our officers and staff, inclusive of an employee assistance programme offering individual and family support such as counselling and mental health support; a mindfulness programme of inputs during your training; a dedicated Occupational Health Unit working across the force; regular support meetings with your trainer/tutor constable; and much more.

We take student officers' feedback seriously, so you will be regularly canvassed for your thoughts and opinions on your training programme as part of our internal quality assurance. This means you're empowered to feed back on, and help shape, the training you receive. As part of this process, you'll also be able to attend a regular, formal Student Council meeting and feed back to training managers via your class representative. No matter the circumstance, you will feel empowered and supported to discuss any support you may need, safe in the knowledge that you will be listened to and aided in any way possible. We know you are investing yourself in us, and therefore, we will invest in you.