

BRIEFING

Revised High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS)

Purpose

1. This paper provides information on the revised HPDS for ACPO officers, including a summary of the role of force HPDS ACPO advisers.

Background

2. The High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) was established in 2002, replacing the Accelerated Promotion Scheme (APS) and Accelerated Promotion Scheme for Graduates (APSG). A revised version of the HPDS was launched in 2008, following consultation with the service and stakeholders about how a new scheme might better develop, support and prepare those capable of rapid progression to senior police leadership positions.
3. The design of the revised HPDS responds to criticisms of the previous scheme and incorporates priorities and lessons highlighted during the national debate on leadership in 2007/08, including:
 - scheme members should be trained in cohorts to maximise mutual learning, support, and to foster long-term networks;
 - members should engage in the same core learning, so that the HPDS is a more precisely defined development programme;
 - the programme should include an accredited academic qualification tailored to the needs of the service;
 - there must be a focus on applying learning in the workplace;
 - that forces should own the processes of supporting officers on gaining entry to the scheme and remaining in the scheme; and
 - officers must continue to demonstrate high performance and progress their careers in order to remain on the scheme.

Scheme Overview

4. The revised HPDS aims to produce a cohort of officers with the operational credibility, management skills, and strategic awareness to meet the challenges of senior police leadership. The scheme supplements and does not replace conventional career progression systems. Ultimately, it seeks to increase the quantity and quality of potential chief officers in the long term.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

5. The scheme also seeks to contribute to wider efforts to address issues such as under-representation of women and black, minority and ethnic officers at senior ranks. The NPIA therefore undertakes a range of positive action initiatives to encourage officers from underrepresented groups to apply to join the scheme.
6. The HPDS is fully funded for Home Office forces. Charging provisions for the involvement of non-Home Office forces are in place.

Development Programme

7. Officers successful in joining the HPDS will undertake a programme of professional and academic development. They will be part of a group of peers in an action learning set, take part in master classes and have the opportunity to undertake attachments and other development opportunities.
8. The academic element of the HPDS is a two year development programme with Warwick Business School, one of the UK's leading universities, culminating in a Postgraduate Diploma in Police Leadership and Management. The study will reflect the police leadership domains of Professional Policing, Executive, and Business Skills. It is delivered in six modules each of which requires officers to complete a 3,000 word assessed piece of work directly related to or based in the workplace:
 - Leadership and Public Value;
 - Operations and Performance Management;
 - Managing People and Change;
 - Partnership working, Stakeholder Management and Community Engagement;
 - Policy Making and Strategy; and
 - Managing and Using Resources.
9. Officers who successfully complete the diploma will then undertake a period of professional consolidation where they will apply their learning in force and potentially undertake a development attachment. The highest performers will then go on to take a Masters qualification in Police Leadership and Management, which will include:
 - Advanced Leadership and Strategic Management;
 - Research and Evidence Based Policy Making; and
 - A dissertation involving a substantial piece of research that is relevant and beneficial to their force or the wider service.
10. Officers on the scheme will be subject to ongoing assessment, and must maintain the support of their force to remain a member of the scheme.
11. The specific promotion provisions that apply to HPDS officers have been retained for the revised HPDS. These provisions are set out in regulations in both England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They specify

that subject to completion of mandatory requirements such as OSPRE and/or the National Police Promotion Framework, officers should be promoted as soon as their Chief Officer considers they are competent in the next rank, irrespective of whether or not there is a vacancy.

Access to the scheme

12. The scheme is open to serving constables and sergeants via an annual assessment process. Officers must be recommended as potential HPDS members by their forces and complete a selection process run by the NPIA. In 2008 and 2009 this process involves a series of ability tests and an assessment centre. The 2008 assessment aimed to identify around 80 officers (with 84 ultimately being successful). The 2009 and future assessments will aim to select a maximum of 60 officers.

Role of the force ACPO Adviser

13. Every force participating in the HPDS is required to nominate a chief officer to perform the role of ACPO adviser. The role of the force ACPO Adviser is vital in ensuring the success of the scheme. Their main areas of responsibility are as follows:

- ensuring that the HPDS is administered in their force in accordance with the policies set out in the manual of guidance;
- acting as the guardian of the scheme locally by ensuring that suitable officers are recommended as potential scheme members, and that officer's membership of the scheme is constantly reviewed;
- ensuring that appropriate career development opportunities and support are provided to HPDS members in their force;
- resolving disputes in relation to the scheme; and
- making the final decision on promotion recommendations.

14. The role of the ACPO adviser is set out in more detail in the HPDS Manual of Guidance (2008), which is available on the NPIA website. The regional HPDS Development Advisor and other NPIA Leadership Services staff are also available to provide advice to forces as required.

Talent Spotting

15. The credibility and success of the scheme depends on identifying high potential officers as possible scheme members. This should be an ongoing process, and not only be a focus at the time of the annual HPDS assessment process. The ACPO adviser and other senior managers should consider the following questions about their officers:

- Do they consistently make a difference? Do they achieve more than expected of someone in their position?
- Do they consistently deliver and perform to the highest standard?

- Do they look at issues strategically? For example, do they link their work to the wider work of the Police Service? Do they think ahead and display a broader perspective?
- Do they influence people to achieve goals no matter what the situation and whoever they are with?
- Do they challenge people's decisions or actions if they are inappropriate?
- Are they confident when interacting at all levels of the organisation?
- Do they welcome responsibility?
- Are they self-motivated? Do they show a determination to succeed and to make an impact?
- Are they prepared to question and challenge the status quo?
- Have they demonstrated commitment to their own development and improvement?
- Ultimately, do you believe this person has the capacity to be a senior manager in the future?

16. If an officer displays a majority of these characteristics then they may be suitable for consideration as an HPDS candidate.

Existing (2002) HPDS

17. The NPIA continues to support officers on the existing HPDS who joined the scheme before 2008. The existing (2002) scheme will be maintained until 31 March 2010 for members who held the rank of inspector or chief inspector as of 31 March 2008. The existing (2002) version of the HPDS will be maintained until 31 March 2012 for other officers, subject to their retaining the confidence of their force that they remain suitable for HPDS membership in this period. Existing scheme members will continue to have access to the benefits of the HPDS such as a development advisor, access to leadership programmes, and the HPDS promotion provisions.

Conclusion

18. The revised High Potential Development Scheme represents a new way forward: a structured development programme, where officers progress in a cohort, with top quality teaching and development delivered in partnership with Warwick Business School and actively supported by Development Advisors. It is a challenging programme where application to the workplace will be critical. Officers must pass a rigorous selection process to join the scheme, and must demonstrate continued high performance to remain on the scheme. Finally, forces have ownership of the key decisions in regard to scheme membership.

19. Further information is available on the NPIA website, from your regional HPDS Development Advisor, and from NPIA Leadership Services on 020 7021 7070.