

Guidance for Forensic Science Career Activities

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Grey shaded sections will denote changes from previous version

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1 Definitions and Abbreviations

Abbr.	Meaning
Customer	Party to which a service is provided to
FCN	Forensic Capability Network
CV	Curriculum Vitae
IT	Information Technology
Shall	indicates a requirement
Should	indicates a recommendation
May	indicates a permission
Can	indicates a possibility or a capability

2 Recruitment challenges in Forensic Science

Forensic Science is facing specific challenges in relation to recruitment currently, particularly for digital forensic and toxicology roles, where recruitment can also be a challenge. The community also has the challenge to recruit to all roles from underrepresented groups, particularly from the minority ethnic community.

The forensic science workforce is recruited through multiple routes. Feedback from recruitment processes highlight many areas where students are deficient in their knowledge and ability, including in completion of application forms, and performance at interview and assessment centres.

3 How can we address these challenges?

An area that has been identified by the community, is the need to promote forensic professions in a more attractive way. It is important that we present all roles in Forensic Science to the workforce of the future, in a realistic way; including information from recruitment processes to a provide a more accurate representation of what all roles involve, including details from those currently employed.

This can include the use of social media, advertising campaigns, professional websites, as well as university recruitment events, career days and employability events.

A significant proportion of the new Forensic workforce is recruited from universities and other educational institutions and any activities that can be focused in these areas will be beneficial to forensic employers. The inclusion of guest lectures, long-term and short-term placements, work experience and live briefs are all positive activities and would help to provide students with a more 'true-to-life' perception of forensic science roles.

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4 Why do we need Forensic Science career days?

Feedback from employers often makes reference to the poor quality of application forms received from graduates and the poor performance at assessment centres and interviews. Interventions by employers and working in partnership with Higher Education Institutes can address this, by including an input from those involved in police recruitment, in university career and employability events. Collaboration between academics, practitioners and recruitment/career specialists can work to address these problems.

An example of how such an event could be structured is included in Section 5.

5 Example

Draft University Career event timetable	
Introduction	University introduction. Representative from local police.
Roles in Forensic Science	Introduction to forensic science roles – This needs to include details across the range of roles available in the forensic workforce, with particular focus on roles with shortages if possible (now and future) (DF, Toxicology, Fingerprints). This should include roles in Policing, Forensic Science Providers and private industry.
Skills/employability	This should include the skills needed for these roles – forensic subject specific and work-based skills, as well as generic employability skills that our applicants often lack. How to get opportunities to improve your CV – This should include the benefits of the experience gained by taking the opportunity to undertake placements, live briefs, work experience, etc. This can include detail of how to engage in these activities and how to identify opportunities. Vetting processes; both Security and Biometric and in some areas work place Drug Testing
Completing policing style application forms	Representative from the Police who completes shortlisting for forensic roles to present on how policing style application forms should be completed including examples and the opportunity for Q and A.

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Draft University Career event timetable	
Preparing for Interview/Assessment centre	<p>Representative from the Police who completes interviewing to present on how to answer policing style questions.</p> <p>Should include examples of questions and the type of information that students should make themselves aware of before attending and interview.</p> <p>Include examples and opportunity for Q and A.</p> <p>Possible workshop activity or mock interviews.</p>
Case Studies	<p>Opportunity for practitioners and students to present case studies and examples of research completed.</p> <p>Possible competition for best presentation/poster.</p>

6 What else is available and what resources are useful for students?

There are other tools and resources available that can be included on social media, employers and university websites. These should provide the future workforce with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their applications for work and to understand more about the roles that they are applying for.

6.1 STAR method

Use the **STAR** method to complete your application form and plan your answers to interview questions is encouraged by many employers. It is:

- **Situation** - the situation you had to deal with
- **Task** - the task you were given to do
- **Action** - the action you took
- **Result** - what happened as a result of your action and what you learned from the experience

This method can be used to highlight the specific skills and qualities that you have that are required for the role. This can include examples from your work, study, volunteering or home experiences. They should be to the point and not too lengthy and you should be able to explain your points and answer supplemental questions if asked.

6.2 Understanding quality is essential

The importance of embedding quality processes and accreditation within educational courses is essential. This is an integral part of the forensic workplace, and so graduates need an understanding of ISO 17020/5 and the role of the Forensic Science Regulator including the Codes of Practice.

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[Forensic Science Regulator - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

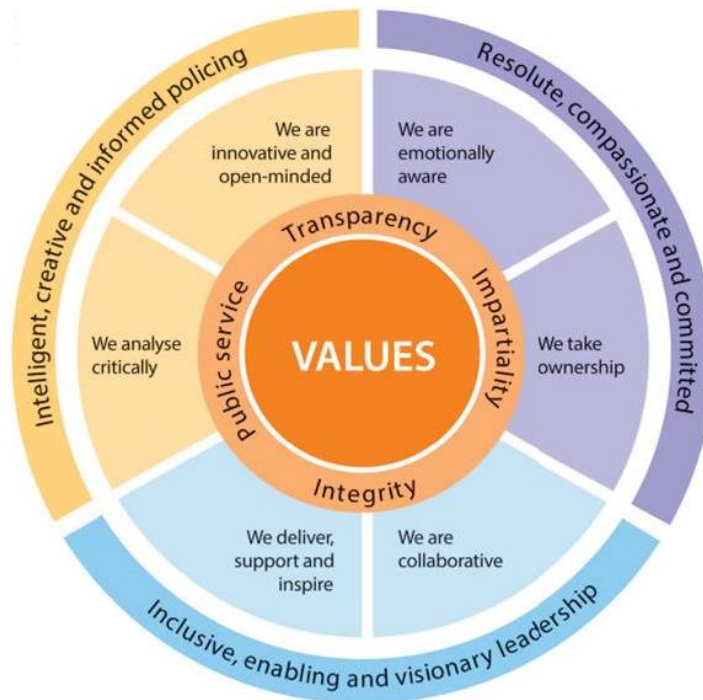
6.3 Ethics

Everyone in policing works to the Code of Ethics, this code of practice for the principles and standards of professional behaviour for the policing profession of England and Wales.

[Code of Ethics | College of Policing](#)

6.4 Competency and values framework

There is also a competency and values framework which many forces work towards (see below). It is important that you understand this.



(College of Policing, 2016)

This framework provides a foundation for the expectations of everyone working in policing, and is for the benefit and safety of the public.

6.5 Vetting

It is important to remember that this can take longer than expected which must be taken into account particularly when recruiting placement students, who need to complete their placement during an academic year.

[Vetting | College of Policing](#)

7 Useful resources

The College of Policing hold the Professional Profiles for all forensic roles in policing and these are accessible through the following link:

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<https://profdev.college.police.uk/professional-profiles/profiles/specific-role/>

It is important to note that the job title for these roles may vary between police forces.

These roles are available across the country. The following links provide information in relation to these roles from across the country.

These videos cover a wide range of roles in forensic science, including lab and policing roles.

[Forensic science: An insider's guide | BBC Ideas - YouTube](#)

[Day in the life of a Forensic Scientist - YouTube](#)

[Crime Scene Investigator | Join The Police \(joiningthepolice.co.uk\)](#)

[How to join the NCA - National Crime Agency](#)

[Digital Forensic recruitment - YouTube](#)

[Planit : Job Profiles : Crime Scene Examiner Police and Security Work \(planitplus.net\)](#)

(These videos are publicly available and are not endorsed by the FCN)

8 Professional bodies

There are a number of professional bodies that cover the various forensic disciplines and these include.

[Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences | Recognised Professional Body \(csofs.org\)](#)

[The Royal Society of Chemistry \(rsc.org\)](#)

[Home \(bafs.org.uk\)](#)

[Homepage - Official Website of the International Association for Identification - European Division \(theiaieu.org\)](#)

[Home » BAHID](#)

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