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The publisher’s URL is:
http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/12551/

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A framework for the evaluation of courses

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June 2009
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1. The nature of evaluation

1.1 There are multiple uses of evaluation. We use evaluation to measure a programme’s productivity, to subject it to accountability, to learn from it or to see it as it may be seen by diverse stakeholders in it. Evaluation can look at quality – but also at a programme’s qualities. Evaluation proves to be a useful instrument for developing a programme. At its best, evaluation reveals a programme in ways that have not before been noticed, but which help to explain its potential. Evaluation is, perhaps, at its most useful when it helps to reveal to a community of practitioners and their stakeholders what they share or might share. IAB can use evaluation to make itself, its professional and policing values, more transparent.

1.2 Evaluation can rarely be used to provide ‘proof’ of success or failure. Rather, it feeds the judgement of those who have decisions to make, it engages people in deliberation and discussion – it persuades rather than convinces. This is so even in the analysis of costs and benefits – for example, as IAB comes to terms with its commercial realities. Even here, there is no clear ‘bottom-line’ – no certain proofs to dictate action and direction. Positioning IAB in a competitive market requires informed judgement, negotiated consensus among its members, crafted agreements and shared insights. Evaluation is a useful tool for building in IAB an informed ‘community of practice’.

1.3 It is often useful to employ a stranger to the programme to evaluate it. Such a person is best placed to help programme managers and stakeholders think about what they do in unfamiliar, but constructive, ways. In this first section we set out a framework for evaluating IAB courses which would help design a brief for an external evaluation – but which we will use in later sections to underpin what we propose, which is the formation of an evaluative culture. External evaluation has the advantage of seeing with greater ease and clarity what is often concealed from those who are too familiar with it – its realities. The challenge for internal evaluation – the focus of this report – is for those inside IAB to be able to see their programmes with such clarity, beyond the ‘taken-for-granted’.

1.4 The relevance of evaluation for the International Academy, Bramshill, therefore, can be stated as follows:

- To agree common principles and criteria for judging the quality of all IAB courses and programmes so as to inform decision making and enhance reputation;
- To help IAB position itself in relation to the market and in terms of its competitive advantage;
- To help position IAB in relation to NPIA developments;
- To help consolidate IAB as a centre of professional excellence and scholarship for police leadership, and as a community of practice.

2. Interpreting the task

2.1 The brief asks us to design an evaluation strategy that measures (i) the quality of IAB programmes and (ii) their impact. These are separate matters. Studies of impact are not reliable measures of programme quality. We cannot work back from impact assessment to derive criteria for the quality of provision. For example, a programme might have high levels of impact despite the poor quality of its teaching; and good quality programmes may yield little impact. In any event, attributing impact or lack of impact to strengths and
weaknesses in the programme is problematic, given that there are numerous intervening variables in local, in-country contexts – including politics, culture, other programmes and influences, people and organisational structures. Nonetheless, impact is important in terms of providing clients, sponsors and other stakeholders the confidence that IAB programmes make a difference and contribute to the spread of progressive policing practices and leadership. It is also important for those courses which have, as a goal, systems change.

2.2 The quality of IAB programmes, therefore, should be assessed independently of their impact. While we would not go so far as to say that impact should not be a concern of IAB (but that quality should be) we do recognise that comprehensive studies of impact are costly, labour-intensive and challenging for the organisation. It is also true that impact studies are relevant in different ways to Open Courses as from in-country programmes. Open Programme courses tend towards an advocacy model – i.e. promoting certain policing values and core procedural principles (such as fairness, structured investigations, community policing); whereas in-country, ‘bespoke’ courses are offered on more of a responsive/service basis. These are distinct products of the IAB and can be regarded differentially in respect of evaluation and quality assurance. Certainly, there is more expectation of attributable impact of IPA programmes – especially where a high concentration and broad spread of training programmes across organisational levels promises systemic impact. And the fact that many (most?) students attend/are sent to Open Programme courses specifically to gain experience of British approaches to community policing and serious crime, intensifies the need to sustain high quality provision irrespective of likely impact.

2.3 Another dimension for the evaluation of IAB programmes concerns the link between personal, professional development and organisational development. Open courses lean towards professional development; in-country courses towards organisational development and systems change. These are distinct orientations. However, close evaluation – analysis of the respective curriculum and impacts – would reveal how they are linked. A change in key individuals represents an innovation resource for a police service; no organisational change can be sustained without corresponding change in its personnel. In many ways, the ethos of IAB programmes promotes such a link.

2.4 Evaluation of one programme, therefore, can usefully inform the other, and we propose a common approach that will generate practical, developmental information for both programmes – not ignoring the need for impact assessment. We are also conscious that in a competitive and changing market, IAB needs an approach to evaluation that does not merely offer summative judgement, but which feeds formatively into development, is responsive to changing contexts and markets, and which is multi-faceted so as to pick up diverse dimensions of IABs work. Evaluation, in this sense, is a learning, as well as an accountability, process. It is, therefore, more useful to think of cultures of evaluation than of evaluation technologies or one-off measurement exercises – i.e. ongoing commitment among tutors and programme managers to critical reflection. The focus for developmental evaluation is on programme quality (i.e. estimations of worth and significance) as well as programme qualities (i.e. key characteristics that define it). Impact evaluation focuses more on programme productivity – just as essential.
3. A framework for evaluation questions

3.1 Background
IAB is in an advantageous position in that it is under no great external pressure to account for its work, but is motivated by its own conviction that it should be ready to be held accountable. This means it is, in a sense, one step ahead of external pressures and so can determine for itself how its work is best represented. This is the first challenge for IAB – to establish its priorities in terms of how it is to be represented in evaluation. What follows is a framework for evaluation – for establishing and negotiating the priorities of IAB – set out in the form of questions – which can be a self-questioning device. How do we propose it is used?

3.1.2 This is far from exhaustive and is for IAB to complete – this is a starting point. The process of adapting and extending this matrix of questions is the basis for building an evaluation culture – i.e. it will require negotiation, trade-offs, the building of consensus.

3.1.3 We would not anticipate fixed answers to these questions that satisfy a management need. Rather, these are points of self-enquiry to which IAB should return from time-to-time in order to understand how priorities are being met, how they shift over time, what the state of consensus is and where gaps in knowledge are. This is a formative not a summative instrument;

3.1.4 This framework provides a central reference point for all evaluative activities. Over a defined period of time a set of evaluation activities (set out below) will generate a bank of evidence of different kinds – student feedback sheets, IAP field reports, Project Board Reports, assessment feedback, accreditation feedback, etc. Each of these will contribute to discussions over these questions. This framework should be the integrating device for assembling and making sense of discrete elements of an evidence base.

3.1.5 The Framework should be owned by IAB Executive and administered through the Quality and Learning role. Ownership by the Executive does not mean that it ultimately determines the priorities, but that it takes responsibility for leading the process of consensus-building among programme leaders, tutors and associates and NPIA.

3.2 The Framework

3.2.2 Context
- What policing values does IAB stand for – and is this known – by itself? Others? Does IAB want to change policing practices?
- What is the nature of IAB’s relationship to its markets – how does this limit/determine the possibilities for course content and style? (in relation to economics - including competitors - culture and logistics)
- What are client expectations of quality and how does IAB know these? How does IAB relate to NPIA – how might it fashion a relationship and what is the balance between potential benefits and costs?
- What obligations do IAB hold towards British policing?
• What are contemporary movements and developments in police leadership and how does IAB learn about these and position itself and its programmes in relation to them?

3.2.3 Structure, governance and funding

• To whom is IAB accountable and to whom ought it be accountable – who are its stakeholders?
• What should IAB be accountable for?
• What governance structure best supports IAB ambitions for the future?
• What is the balance in funding and resource allocation between systems maintenance and systems development?
• What is IAB’s style of leadership? Is it appropriate to its work and ambitions?

3.2.3 Course design, staffing and content

• How does IAB know that its courses are well-designed for client needs?
• How does IAB know that its course content is of appropriate quality in relation to the world of ideas and practice in police leadership and command?
• How does IAB strike a balance between responsiveness to client preferences and advocacy of particular ideas (i.e. does IAB give clients what they need as well as what they want?)
• How does IAB maintain a consistency of approach, values and quality while employing temporary staff? How does IAB know that it is (or is not)?
• Is IAB’s staffing policy appropriate to the market challenges it faces and to its development aspirations – e.g. is there a core community of professionals in IAB or an assembly of ‘jobbing tutors’?
• How does IAB discover and promote new ideas in police practice and leadership?

3.2.4 Pedagogy and learning

• What are appropriate criteria for good pedagogy and where do they come from? Are they updated, critically reviewed?
• How does IAB know that it promotes good pedagogy?
• What are the core values being promoted through pedagogy and do they represent IAB values and aspirations? How does IAB know this?
• What approaches to professional learning and development underpin IABs courses and pedagogies – do these match IAB values and aspirations? Are these deliberate? Within the control of IAB and its tutors? Is there consensus over these – should there be?
• Given that competence is generally held to fall on a continuum from ‘novice’ to ‘excellent’, how do IAB tutors regard competence?

3.2.5 Culture

• Are there universal policing and police leadership values and principles which apply across nation states and cultures?
• What cultural biases are present in IAB programmes?

3.2.6 In order to work with this framework we suggest a matrix of activities conducted over an extended period of time. This might be a period of 18 months, during which time an evidence base is assembled from evaluative activities set out below and discussed internally and with key stakeholders. A further formal review might be undertaken
after a further period of one year to return to the framework so as to document change and progress since the first such review.

3.2.7 We propose, therefore, a menu of activities which might usefully be driven by the questioning framework set out above. This is a set of data collection strategies – how to generate diverse views from diverse sources. Clearly, each menu item is elective – the key, however, is a process and a technology for collecting together all the information implied by these methods and critically reviewing them in an ordered and coherent way, and in a way that coincides with planning and decision-making processes. For example, it may be that IAB can designate a period – say, a year – as a ‘period of systematic reflection’, adopting the Framework as a self-interrogating device at meetings, workshops, in classes and through small-scale research exercises.

4. Impact assessment

4.1 The first requirement of impact study is for the organisation to articulate the impact it aims to have. This should not be the overriding focus since unanticipated impacts and achievements can be more valuable assets – including to sponsors and clients. However, impact assessment requires a benchmark of aspiration – if not a baseline. Such a benchmark might have technical characteristics (e.g. adoption of command styles and procedures), but it will always have values-based characteristics (e.g. consent, democracy, distributed leadership). We are not arguing, here, for an outcomes-based approach. Clients for IAB courses are too diverse, contexts too unstable. In any event, our conversations with IAB staff imply a common assumption that good outcomes will arise independently from courses that have good integrity.

4.2 In suggesting that IAB might formalise its hopes and expectations of impact we propose that IAB might invest in an exercise that sets out a range of likely impacts – initially, at least, for internal use. This might form the basis for conversations among tutors and course leaders leading to greater coherence between aims and methods of delivery.

4.3 Conventionally thought of, the key complexity in impact assessment is disentangling the impact of IAB programmes from that of contextual factors and other initiatives. However, the challenge is better thought of as understanding how IAB programmes fit into the range of contextual factors such as local politics, organisational development, personnel changes and other (sometimes competing) initiatives. In the case of organisational impact, this requires description, analysis and judgement – i.e. IAB needs (i) to know the characteristics of the ‘target’ organisation; (ii) understand its workings and susceptibility to change; and (iii) make judgements about how best to design interventions. This is the kind of information that will be held by IAPs.

4.4 For example, IAB provides courses of professional development to individuals and groups: a key impact assessment question concerns the relationship between professional and organisational development – how each depends upon the other. An understanding of this would allow a more strategic approach to planning course provision. A comprehensive approach to evaluation design would include the identification of key Qualitative Indicators to guide such an analysis. Examples of such indicators are these:

- The organisation has or might develop a change strategy within which it locates the professional development of key individuals/groups;
- IAB course participants can position themselves in the changing nature of their policing organisation.
4.5 In practical terms, and in terms which are likely to be manageable for IAB, we would recommend the following elements of an evaluation culture dedicated to the assessment of impact – some of these are already under way, but might be made more systematic and integrated.

4.5.1 Country Situation Analysis: At whatever level of detail, IAB can accumulate an evidence base on each participating country so as to conduct a Situation Analysis based on a comparative assessment of need and provision. Such an analysis should not be seen to be a one-off exercise or related to a particular programme. Rather, it should be an ‘open file’ – developing continuously through the accumulation of information and feedback. Such an ‘open file’ can provide an evidence base for each country comprising official policy documents, records of interactions and IAP field-notes, student reflections and action plans, records of telephone interviews with ‘client’ authorities, course content covered over time, formal stakeholder feedback (see below) and tutor reflections and reports. As a key element of such an assessment, IAPs conduct and report (pro forma) Case Analyses on in-country visits in collaboration with in-country policing and Ministry of Interior authorities. There might be a formal periodic (scheduled) Country Situation Analysis in which the evidence base is subject to critical scrutiny and which is prepared with face-to-face/telephone interviews with key client informants.

4.5.2 Stakeholder views: Consideration might be given to a ‘Virtual Steering Group’ comprising domestic donors and authorities as well as client groups. This might meet on an annual – or biennial – basis to review and discuss impact and quality.

4.5.3 Telephone interviews: A pro forma can be developed for scheduled telephone interviews with client managers in other countries. The pro forma would include a small range of questions concerning the changing nature of the organisation, challenges faced and the experience of participants on IAB courses.

5. Competencies and professional quality

5.1 Any judgement as to the quality of an educational or training programme needs a criterion. Against what measure are we making such a judgement? Here we propose such a criterion in the form of an underlying theory of professional development for leadership which embraces the ACPO-based competency framework.

5.2 At present the IAB send its course participants home with an assessment against the ACPO-related core competencies framework. This is a useful device, not for summative assessment (e.g. ‘tick-box’ assessments of whether a negative attribute has been switched off and a positive one switched on), but for continuing professional development. Many of the competencies serve well as a basis for career-long reflective practice. For example, there is no single point at which an individual would be deemed competent at ‘understanding community’ or working through the media. These are focuses for continued self-reflection and growing mastery. But continuing personal action-planning can be guided by the framework and it may be that investment is usefully put into an accompanying guide to career-long personal development.
5.3 However, we are more concerned here with the educational principles that underlay professional development and competency – the key learning challenge for police leadership. Given that competency lies on a continuum of ‘novice’ to ‘expert’ (simple to complex understanding; basic performance to excellence):

![Novice → competence → excellence]

5.4 The question is *what lies beyond competence and closer to professional excellence in leadership?* What is it that underpins IAB training that gives the participant the personal qualities that allow them to interact with the competencies and embrace them in their personal development?

A useful device for such a calculation – in a sense an underlying theory of leadership learning - might be a 3D model:

Discernment + Discrimination + Disposition = Critical Thinking

**Discernment:** the capacity to notice and subject to analysis important elements of events and situations

**Discrimination:** the capacity to use that analysis to identify differences across those elements and to assign them priorities and significance

**Disposition:** personal insight, courage and commitment that make one ready to act upon that prioritisation

**Critical Thinking:** the capacity to deploy the 3 Ds to evaluate a situation independently

5.5 This is just one option and discussion and deliberation might well find a more appropriate one. The point, however, is that once such a criterion has been determined it can stand as a reference point against which assessment of quality – and qualities – can be made. How and how far are we stimulating personal insight and commitment? To what extent does the style of pedagogy encourage or displace critical thinking?

### 6. Programme quality assessment

#### 6.1 Accreditation

6.1.1 To reiterate, programme quality is somewhat independent of impact assessment – we cannot always infer one from the other. This section, therefore, concerns how we assure the quality of IAB courses. This has two principal strands: academic and professional quality. Though these are at their best when integrated (see below), we can recognise their characteristics separately.

6.1.2 Academic quality: The rigorous development of intellectual ideas in relation to police leadership: sophistication of ideas underpinning teaching (e.g. theories of leadership);
coherence of course planning (sequence, continuity and coherence in curriculum\(^1\)); effectiveness and appropriateness of teaching.

6.1.3 **Professional quality:** The rigorous application of intellectual ideas in policing practice: correspondence between what is taught and the practical challenge of police leadership; sophistication and appropriateness of underpinning model of professional development.

6.1.4 At the heart of the evaluation of quality must be an accreditation process that combines both professional and academic judgement – in its procedures and in its governance. Such a combination is a way of assuring that courses meet the highest expectations of relevance and merit in terms of police leadership, but that they also reflect significant levels of quality assurance in terms of the quality, modernity and sophistication of ideas. At its best, such a combination ensures that professional aspirations are moderated through the quality filter of academic oversight; and that academic values are properly disciplined by the need to be practical, constructive and accessible. There is an essential and constructive tension between the two forms of judgement.

6.1.5 We do not propose accreditation primarily as a quality assurance process, nor merely as a measuring and legitimating device. We see accreditation as a developmental evaluative tool, a continuous and systematic evaluative process supporting monitoring, reflection and action learning. This implies an arrangement with a Higher Education Institution which includes an accreditation governance framework which combines academic and professional (policing) judgement – and, in this case, would also include NPIA. The latter allows for the further harmonisation of IAB and NPIA practices – paving the way for making each a resource for the other.

6.1.6 Accreditation can be regarded as a harmonising device across all IAB programmes, including Open and in-country courses. Harmonisation is not the same thing as standardisation, and we are not proposing this. We see the difference between Open and in-country courses as a potential strength and an important flexibility allowing for both advocacy and responsiveness. However, both programmes can usefully be made coherent with a set of pedagogical and assessment practices, curriculum assumptions, global principles associated with what is meant by disciplined and progressive policing, and a common philosophy towards police leadership. As with children, practices can be familial without being identical. Harmonisation would involve the following dimensions reinforced by accreditation:

- Common assessment procedures
- Common allegiance to and estimation of academic levels
- A common set of philosophical principles to do with progressive policing and police leadership which are translated into familial curriculum structures
- Common procedures for critical reflection on pedagogies and their adaptation
- A common approach to ‘the student experience’

6.1.7 An important bedrock of accreditation is a culture of scholarly reflection on the quality of curriculum design, teaching and management of the student experience (see

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\(^1\) Sequence: the ordering of content; continuity: how one theme leads on to the next; coherence: how all holds together with an overarching purpose.
below). Where tutors (certainly core tutors and course leaders) see themselves as ‘reflective practitioners’ engaged in both worlds of practice and ideas, they become sophisticated users of developmental accreditation.

6.2 Final note on accreditation:

6.2.1 We understand that the programme is accredited presently – but this does not carry the currency associated with a programme accredited by a University, or the mix of scholarship and theoretical underpinning promoted in higher education. Previous attempts at securing such academic accreditation have been attempted but prematurely aborted due to various factors – not least perhaps, the failure of developing a pathway that is at once robust enough to ensure credibility whilst at the same time, the flexibility necessary to accommodate the range of ability and familiarity with the level of written English necessary for recognition by academic institutions.

6.2.2 Existing practice in some English universities readily lend themselves to this challenge without compromising the players involved. Where a University has in place a ‘flexible’ pathway that facilitates students undertaking similar programmes, to register at a level that is most appropriate to the individuals and where examination is conducted with reference to the level at which the student is operating (rather than that at which the programme is itself validated), participants can graduate to level 3 or level M, as appropriate. Students registering on different levels would be required to be assessed against the satisfactory completion of assignments requiring them to meet differentiated criteria according to the award on which they are registered. Specific domains are selected by the tutor in collaboration with the programme leader and would best match the nature of the task to be addressed (Domain A however, is like to be a requirement necessary for all tasks). Please see Appendix A for an example of differentiated criteria within specific domains. This enables students studying on the same taught programme to exit with either a University Certificate, a Postgraduate Certificate or a Postgraduate Diploma as appropriate (See Appendix B for further clarification of Higher Education Levels). Indeed, students graduating through any of these awards could readily extend their accreditation by continuing their registration and hence, their study whilst operating in their home settings. A major advantage of such an approach is that this would encourage engagement with the learning accrued at Bramshill within an operational context in their home environment – hence providing the desired dimension of workplace implementation, reflection, dissemination and refinement.

6.3 Scholarly activity

6.3.1 The prestige to which IAB aspires and which is clearly perceived by clients suggests the appropriateness of a scholarly approach to teaching and curriculum design. This does not imply a detached, academic approach, but one that is engaged in practical ways with leading-edge ideas in both policing and professional development. Good quality teaching and curriculum design – like policing and policing policy – rests upon an evidence base, and there might be a more systematic attempt at generating, updating and promoting an evidence base on IAB practices that ensures tutors are aware of what makes for good practice. This can be backed up by a commitment among tutors to professional principles associated with Reflective Practice – i.e. treating pedagogical
practice as a process of constant testing and experimentation supported by critical self- and peer-reflection.

6.3.2 Some of this already takes place and may be accomplished at relatively low cost. For example, there is a relatively high teacher/student ratio and we noted the presence of more than one tutor in those few classes we were able to observe. Ancillary tutors – on a regular or an occasional basis – might play a ‘critical friend’ role, observing pedagogies and feeding back (perhaps formalising what people already do in an informal way).

6.3.3 The following measures are aspects of an evaluative scholarly culture:

6.3.3.1 Maintain a research library on policing and professional development with subscriptions to both policing and professional development journals – explore the possibility of partnering a higher education institution for on-line access to journal holdings;

6.3.3.2 Establish over time a journal of police leadership in collaboration with a prestigious HEI (to our knowledge no such journal exists);

6.3.3.3 Establish a standing series of seminars for internal conversation and external presentation on professional development, police leadership and pedagogy;

6.3.3.4 In collaboration with an HEI sponsor a Knowledge Transfer Fellow to conduct systematic enquiry into programme quality (and impact?)

6.3.3.5 Formalise ‘morning prayers’ - into critically reflective tutor groups rather than recall/reinforcement sessions.

6.3.4 We have had the opportunity to review some few evaluation instruments currently in use, including material from Focus Groups and Evaluation Questionnaires. While we see clearly that these generate information that leads to recommended changes, we offer the following constructive critique as an introduction to ways of improving on these instruments.

6.3.4.1 It is noticeable that student feedback through Lickert Scales yields consistently high quality measures and only rare (if any) excursions into areas of dissatisfaction. Alongside these are qualitative data which yields critical views. This has to be regarded in technical terms as providing evidence of systematic bias in the questionnaires which, itself, invalidates the instrument. No doubt some, at least, of this is due to cultural deference. It suggests, however, that such measures should be used, at best, with great caution.

6.3.4.2 For the most part, students are qualitatively asked for general feedback on the quality of course provision. This yields critique – which we note leads to recommendations for minor course adaptation – and we do not minimise its usefulness to a given cohort and course. However, it suffers the following flaws in terms of generating evaluative evidence for curriculum and teaching:

- such feedback is subject to changing tastes from one cohort to another;
- the feedback is not necessarily associated with curriculum aims of the courses and may, therefore, miss the point;
• students often find it difficult to identify the source of their (dis)satisfaction and light upon a surrogate which expresses the (dis)satisfaction, but not the cause.

6.3.4.3 The question is how to ensure that this form of feedback mirrors the continuing challenge of learning about senior leadership – i.e. how this form of feedback is incorporated into the curriculum. For example, the senior command competencies point to “breaks down barriers between groups and involves others in discussions and decision” (Competency 4) and encourage the use of “logic and reason” (Competency 6). Asking for this feedback and then returning it to groups in the context of a requirement that participants take responsibility for their own learning is a way of integrating curriculum, assessment and feedback. High-level courses imply high-level learning which, itself, implies high-level reflection. They can and should provide the basis of conversation and reflection on learning. It might further we worth using this form of feedback to encourage peer-to-peer forms of assessment.

6.4 Independent Rapporteur

6.4.1 In order to overcome the inherent difficulty associated with any evaluation exercise conducted by those who have a direct engagement with the designing and/or delivery of a programme of professional development, it is suggested that the IAB management team might appoint an Independent Rapporteur, charged with the task of serving as independent, critical friend to IAB tutors and reporting directly to the programme management team through a process of programme review. Such a role reflects aspects of an external examiner function, but takes on a broader remit to review materials and feedback from all sources in the proposed evaluation culture. These responsibilities would include:

• annual facilitation of a focus group with a sample of trainees completing their training programmes (and where possible, a representative sample of students who had recently completed a programme of study and were back in post implementing their new learning and refining home-based practice) with a view of gaining greater insight into the quality, (dis)satisfaction and potential impact of their experiences at Bramshill – and, perhaps, including examples of client feedback;
• Review of learning products (essays, action plans, logs and reflections);
• Critical review of course content, its delivery and any associated assessment procedures, so as to contribute to the accreditation process and to the verification of levels of study;
• Review of broader organisational contexts and reports so as to locate success at personal, professional development with impact at the organisational level;
• Placing such an evidence base in the context of planning and development discussions in IAB.

6.4.2 This task is a demanding but made more manageable by Information Technology which make it possible for a Rapporteur to establish communication and to conduct Skype, video-conference, teleconference and other strategies for virtual feedback.

6.4.3 The primary function of the Rapporteur – to be reflected in their reports – is to work with IAB to identify, over the period of this evaluative review, a set of key qualitative indicators for the quality of IAB programmes. These will be based on student
experience, client feedback, IAB estimations of its impact, independent views based on Rapporteur observations and conversations. Indicators will include, but not be confined to, adapting and extending the Framework.

6.5 **Student Blog**

6.5.1 A strategy can be identified that can overcome the well acknowledged difficulties associated with reliance upon evaluative approaches that cannot ensure student anonymity, with the consequences we have seen above. Student logs are notoriously variable in the quality of their use by students and tutors. As importantly, it became clear in the brief conversations we were able to have with course participants that cultural anxieties sometimes persuade people to withhold authentic views which may be critical of provision. A challenge for any evaluative approach is how to overcome this. We note the staff commitment to maintaining informal conversations with participants and the value of doing so in encouraging participants to be open and honest. However, something more structured and accessible is clearly needed in order to reveal some of the realities of the ‘student experience’.

6.5.2 It would be worth adopting an approach that draws upon more recent technology (and with which students of all forms are increasingly becoming familiar and comfortable in using). It may be worth considering establishing a student ‘Blog’ that is password-protected. Students could be encouraged to insert reflections about the quality of programmes and issues concerning all aspects of their experiences whilst at Bramshill (and subsequently). Access would be available to students and to the Independent Rapporteur who would act as a conduit between the student body and the tutorial staff, enabling a free exchange of views to be transmitted – but critically, not to those most directly associated with the management, delivery of examination of the programme. This might be managed, initially, as an experiment with the potential for generating rich evaluative insights.
### 7. An indicative timeline for evaluation activities

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Continuity</th>
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| Start-up     | 3 months | - Agree a range of activities  
- Integrate them within an agreed Framework  
- Determine resources  
- Assign roles | Staff seminars  
Telephone interviews  
Feedback sheets  
Rapporteur exchanges  
Iterative accreditation |
| Phase One    | 9 months | - Generate an evidence base from multiple sources  
- Establish internal Staff Seminar Series to discuss pedagogy and principles  
- Appoint external Rapporteur  
- Commission HEI/Police accreditation team | |
| Phase Two    | 3 months | - Review evidence base in critical staff/stakeholder forums  
- Receive feedback from Rapporteur  
- Review and amend Framework in the light of key themes (e.g. relationship with NCPL)  
- Fashion consensus over values and principles in relation to pedagogy and policing and on governance  
- Determine information gaps and further evaluation methods | |
| Phase Three  | 9 months | - Revisit and extend evidence base including Country Situation Analyses | |
| Phase Four   | 3 months | - Review evidence base and Framework  
- Fashion consensus over values and principles in relation to course design, staffing and governance | |
Appendix A

EXEMPLARY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A FLEXIBLE POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

A: Conceptual Domain (Core)

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student can identify and use relevant ideas and perspectives for purposes of reflection upon issues under study.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student can use and organise coherently relevant ideas and perspectives to interpret and/or explore issues under study.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student can use and organise coherently relevant ideas, perspectives or theories to interpret and/or explore issues under study and in addition can critically analyse and/or evaluate those ideas, perspectives or theories.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student can use and organise coherently relevant ideas, perspectives or theories to interpret and/or explore issues under study and in addition can critically analyse and/or evaluate those ideas, perspectives or theories showing the ability to synthesise and/or transform ideas in the process of developing an argument.

B: Literature Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of appropriate literature and its relevance to the task.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of appropriate literature and can discuss its relevance to the task.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student can reference appropriate literature and utilise it in the development of analysis and discussion of ideas.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student can reference an extensive range of relevant literature and utilise it in the development of analysis and discussion of ideas, including critical engagement with that literature.

C: Contextual Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of contextual factors (eg personal, locational, historical, political etc) influencing the area of study.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student can differentiate contextual factors (eg personal, locational, historical, political etc) influencing the area of study.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of the significance of relevant contextual factors (eg personal, locational, historical, political etc) influencing the area of study.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of the significance of relevant contextual factors (eg personal, locational, historical, political etc) influencing the area of study and is able to critically engage with the contextual significance.

D: Research Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student can plan for and execute a small scale enquiry in a systematic manner, showing how their thinking was affected as the enquiry unfolded.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student can plan for and execute a small scale enquiry in a systematic manner, showing how their thinking was affected as the enquiry unfolded and showing that they can discuss the suitability of alternative approaches.
L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student can plan for and execute a small scale enquiry in a systematic and reflexive manner, clearly justifying plans and methods on technical grounds and evaluating research outcomes.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student can plan for and execute a small scale enquiry in a systematic and reflexive manner, identifying and explaining methodological and epistemological issues around the research process and critically analysing and evaluating research outcomes.

E: Ethical Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of ethical issues arising in or associated with the area of study.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of ethical issues arising in or associated with the area of study and can discuss how these relate to practical cases.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of ethical issues arising in or associated with the area of study, showing sensitive engagement with an appropriate ethical framework for interpretation of ideas or for practice.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student has an awareness of ethical issues arising in or associated with the area of study, showing sensitive engagement with an appropriate ethical framework for interpretation of ideas or for practice. In addition, there is exploration of some of the problematics arising in relation to ethical dilemmas or decisions.

F: Values Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student can clearly identify and articulate their own value position and where relevant, the value position of others in relation to the area of study.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student can clearly identify and articulate their own value position and where relevant, compare it with the value position of others in relation to the area of study.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student can clearly identify and analyse the basis of their own value position and where relevant, the value position of others in relation to the area of study.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student can clearly identify and analyse the basis of their own value position and where relevant, the value position of others in relation to the area of study, and critically evaluate associated claims to knowledge.

G: Action Domain

L1 The assignment demonstrates that the student has awareness of a relationship between theory and practice in the workplace, and can use reflection to develop a personal theory and refine professional practice, with due regard to issues of equity and social justice.

L2 The assignment demonstrates that the student can identify and articulate a relationship between theory and practice in the workplace, and can use reflection to develop a personal theory and refine professional practice, with due regard to issues of equity and social justice.

L3 The assignment demonstrates that the student can explore the relationship between theory and practice in the workplace, and use reflection to develop personal theory and refine professional practice, with due regard to issues of equity and social justice, appraising professional development needs and/or outcomes.

LM The assignment demonstrates that the student can explore the relationship between theory and practice in the workplace, and use reflection to develop personal theory and refine professional practice, with due regard to issues of equity and social justice, critically evaluating professional development needs and/or outcomes.
H: Negotiated Domain

In addition to criteria specified under domains A-F, we accept the possibility of tutor and student negotiating an appropriate assessment criterion, to encompass specific elements of significance not addressed through the existing criteria. With tutors new to the programme it is important that such negotiated criteria are approved by the relevant Award Leader.
Appendix B

QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS FOR POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

 Descriptor for a qualification at Certificate (C) level: Certificate of Higher Education

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1) knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study

2) an ability to present, evaluate, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work

2) communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments

3) undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

and will have:

4) qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

 Descriptor for a qualification at Intermediate (I) level: Degree (non-Honours)

Non-Honours degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1) knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed

2) ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context

3) knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s), and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study

4) an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge
Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1) use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis

2) effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively

3) undertake further training, develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

and will have:

4) qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Descriptor for a qualification at Honours (H) level: Bachelors degree with Honours

Honours degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1) a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline

2) an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline

3) conceptual understanding that enables the student:
   - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline; and
   - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline;

4) an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge

5) the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (eg refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1) apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects

2) critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
3) communicate information, ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

and will have:

4) qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts and
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Descriptor for a qualification at Masters (M) level:

Masters degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1) a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their field of study, or area of professional practice

2) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship

3) originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline

4) conceptual understanding that enables the student:

- to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
- to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1) deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences

2) demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

3) continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

4) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

*The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) - The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

[http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/EWNI/default.asp#annex1](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/EWNI/default.asp#annex1)