

Welcome to Policing BA (Hons)

The policing team wishes to welcome students embarking on the BA (Hons) Policing programme, within the Faculty of Health & Society, The University of Northampton. Your chosen course is a joint venture between the University of Northampton and Northants Police. Those of you who later become special constables will carry out much of your learning by working alongside regular police officers in a variety of roles. You will find as you settle down that the course team is very approachable, we are there to help.

Since your course is a vocationally based qualification there will be an element of added responsibility and increased expectations placed upon you, to which students on other courses are not subjected. You will on occasions throughout your course, be in contact with, and undertake role play exercises with other students who are undertaking our other course 'Criminal and Corporate Investigations'. When we carry out the role play exercises we often use trained assessors who are police officers from Northants Police to help us. They will expect certain standards from our students, both behavioural and in terms of the exercise that is being assessed. Our students generally perform very well in these exercises and they enjoy the interaction with serving officers.

During your first week at university the application process for joining the special constabulary will be explained to you by members of the Northamptonshire Police recruitment team. You will be invited to submit an application, and a deadline date will be set. It is essential that you listen to what is required from you and that you undertake some research to sell yourself in the best light. Even though it is a voluntary role the process is quite rigorous, we tend to find that those students who are accepted are those who put some effort into the process. Please note that just because you are a student on this course, it does not guarantee you a position in the special constabulary, you need to work for it!

During the first term you will be introduced to the criminal justice system and will then begin to learn some of the laws that you will become familiar with when working as a special constable. You will learn the basics of police procedures and how to use a pocket note book before moving onto recording evidence in statement format. You will learn how to use discretion, the criteria that is required to make an arrest and how an arrest is made and you will then demonstrate this in an assessed role play exercise. In other modules you learn about the police code of conduct, how equality and diversity issues impact on a police officer, the national decision model and how to apply it. You will

learn about investigative methods and how to recognize a crime scene, how to protect it and how to collect exhibits. You will learn about rules of evidence and how they are applied and how the police use research to inform best practice.

As this is a degree programme you will be taught the university requirements in terms of essay writing and you will learn about research methods. It is essential that you pay attention to what is being taught in this module because if you don't comply with these requirements your grades will be seriously affected. Throughout the programme there will be a commitment to the integration of research, evidence based policing, and policing and academic skills development. For all assessments it is absolutely essential that you read your feedback as it is there to help you develop and obtain good grades.

The programme requires individuals to learn through a variety of techniques and procedures. As the modules are professionally orientated they include significant components of directed learning. This is a university course and at university the onus is on you to read around the subject matter, it is not acceptable to simply turn up at lectures without having conducted prior reading. We expect you to actively participate in lectures once again it is unacceptable to just sit at the back and say nothing. You will not be spoon fed.

As you progress through year 1 you will take part in several role play exercises including stop and search, powers of entry, crime scene management. As your confidence develops, the role play exercises become more testing and you will be required to control and determine what exactly is going on and what powers (if any) are available. Around May in year one, those students who are successful with their application for the specials will spend three weeks at police HQ learning how to use the police IT systems, radios, and defensive tactics, they will be given their uniforms and become attested as warranted officers.

In year 2 you will learn about further laws such as homicide offences and sexual offences, defences to law, community policing, and there is a further research module that you will undertake. Special constables will learn how to interview suspects and will carry out a depth role play exercise culminating in a court appearance. These students will spend ten weeks working on Area with a tutor constable responding to incidents and eventually taking the lead role at these incidents. You will be assessed to national policing standards and will hopefully be determined as being 'fit for independent patrol'. Note that you will be taking the lead role at incidents which means you will be speaking to people which is why we cannot allow you to sit back in lectures and not participate. Please also note that a tutoring phase is earned, it is not given. If we do not feel that you warrant being tutored we will not allow it, this will be explained in greater detail as the course progresses.

By the time you reach year 3 hopefully you will have been signed off for independent patrol and will undertake another operational policing module where you will learn about leadership and some fairly involved police procedures. You will also prepare and conduct a policing operation. In year 3 there is more choice regarding module options and you can select those that are most appealing to yourself. There is an independent study module that requires you to research your own chosen topic and prepare a 10,000 word dissertation. Once you have completed this you will graduate.

We try to keep any changes to a minimum, although sometimes such changes are necessary. Keep an eye on (NILE) (our electronic learning system) for course information and supplementary module learning materials and for communicating with you. It is important that you check this regularly. You will be guided on the use of information technology as part of induction and also in the early teaching that introduces you to study skills. Please don't buy books in advance as most are available in the university library either as hard copy or electronically. There are some books that are however essential reading and we have a successful arrangement with Oxford University Press who offer a significant discount on our course materials.

Thank you for choosing Northampton, the course team is looking forward to meeting you in September and guiding you through the next three years.

Bob Lyman (course leader BA Policing)