Global Citizenship and Critical Thinking in Higher Education Curricula and Police Education: A Socially Critical Vocational Perspective
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Introduction
The re-emergence of the concept of global citizenship within higher education (HE) after what Smith et al. (2008, p.136) have described as ‘many years of comparative neglect’ has reopened the debate about the fundamental roles, responsibilities and purpose of HE. Rhoads and Szelenyi (2011, p8-9) argue that not only do ‘universities have an obligation to use their knowledge capacities to advance social life and to better the human condition’, but they also have a responsibility for ‘advancing global social relations’. Likewise, Camicia and Franklin (2011, p.39) maintain that universities have the ‘intellectual authority that society needs to help it reflect, understand and act’ which suggests that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have a profound and moral responsibility to take a leading and active role in creating a more enlightened, socially just and civilised global society.

Higher education should therefore arguably have a fundamental civic mission to develop a socially critical consciousness within students and, in doing so, contribute to the development of a more just and tolerant society. With the growing awareness of the need to promote active citizenship for a democratic society (Boland 2006), Englund (2002) argues it is both legitimate and valid to question how universities and institutions of higher learning in any civilised society will contribute to and fulfil their role, responsibility and society’s expectations of them in terms of citizenship.

McLaughlin and Annette (2005) differentiate between the implicit, general impact of HEIs on the civic sphere and the direct effect of specific curricula design and/or interventions in ‘making citizens’ since as
Boland (2008, p.3) argues, ‘it is within the teaching and learning relationship that greatest potential lies for realising democratic ideals and for promoting active citizenship’. However, McCowan (2012, p.51) reveals that ‘other contemporary trends in HE have discouraged an emphasis on the civic dimension’ and, as Peach (2012) has noted elsewhere, the shift in orientation from traditional liberal education towards more utilitarian and vocational curricula, increasingly influenced by market and consumerist ideologies, appears to have mitigated against the specific inclusion of citizenship education within HE curricula. The purpose of this chapter is to explore how this civic dimension and in particular, the idea of global citizenship, should be conceived of, embedded and operationalized within the HE curriculum. As such, the main focus of the chapter is to examine and further develop the HE curriculum philosophy of Socially Critical Vocationalism [SCV] (Peach 2010), with particular reference to global citizenship as a key construct framing this book.

Socially critical vocationalism is conceptualised as an approach that embraces global citizenship education and what Boland (2006) describes as a ‘pedagogy for civic engagement’. It is based upon providing education that is socially responsive and professionally oriented in order that students are able effectively to contribute to society, both socially and economically. In doing so, SCV also provides a useful analytical framework to explore the interface between the concepts of critical thinking and global citizenship. However, before specifically exploring the ‘how’ (i.e. the curriculum approach) it is helpful to establish a rationale for ‘why’ HE needs to reconnect with its democratic purpose and re-assert its leadership role for preparing students for citizenship in a global society.

In order to contextualise the debate, the first part of this chapter explores the contentious nature of global citizenship as a concept and articulates the particular interpretation and perspective adopted in this chapter. The second part argues why the civic dimension of HE is so critically important for today’s global society and in doing so examines the interrelationships between critical thinking, global citizenship and leadership. The third section explores SCV as a curriculum philosophy in which citizenship education is an integral and pivotal feature. Finally, to conclude the chapter, we use a case study to explore the curriculum and educational provision for professional practitioners within a major international public service: policing - at a time when policing is becoming more complex and police face significant challenges if they are to adapt to a rapidly evolving society. Specifically we explore the implementation and realisation of a SCV approach in practice by examining how the National Policing Curriculum for the police service of England and Wales and new graduate-level police education programmes are being developed and transformed to meet the challenges facing police education. The particular focus in this section is thus to discuss the various strategies adopted to embed critical thinking, global citizenship awareness and leadership skills into the education for a profession which has at its core a commitment to maintain and preserve a safe and just society.

Global Citizenship

‘Global citizenship’ as a concept has been variously described as ill-defined, elusive, contradictory, contested, divisive and abstract, and it is clear within the literature that there is a broad spectrum of perspectives and discourses on the term and its definitions. It can be viewed from consumerist, political and activist standpoints (Fanghanel and Cousin, 2012), whilst Delanty (2001) distinguishes between notions of ‘cultural citizenship’ and ‘technological citizenship’. Thus whilst recognising that the concept is multidimensional and pluralistic, the intention in this chapter is not to critique, analyse, compare or challenge the many different theoretical positions and diverse ideas of global citizenship. Instead, the inclusion of this section is to extrapolate and articulate the particular perspective and interpretation of the concept adopted in this chapter as an important basis to inform and contextualise later arguments.

Interestingly, although no single conception of global citizenship exists and the range of perspectives is vast, the predominant focus of global citizenship has been on the moral dimension which emphasises an allegiance to humanity, human rights and sense of responsibility and obligation to others. Cliffard and Montgomery (2014, p.30), for example, suggest that ‘global citizenship discussions are predicated on an agreement on universal ideals such as equity and social justice, at the same time as honouring
difference’. Likewise Rhoads and Szelenyi (2011) argue that a major organising principle underpinning notions of global citizenship is that of ethical and moral responsibility ‘informed by global understandings and oriented toward the collective good’ (p. 26). They propose a citizenship typology and locate forms of citizenship within a framework of two intersecting axes (individualist to collectivist and locally informed to globally informed). According to this typology four types of citizenship are possible: Locally informed collectivist (type 1), Globally informed collectivist (type 2), Locally informed individualist (type 3) and Globally informed individualist (type 4). Rhoads and Szelenyi (2011) strongly advocate type two (the globally informed, collectivist model of citizenship) as being critical to meeting the needs of the twenty-first century.

From this perspective the thoughts and actions of a global citizen will be informed by an understanding of global connections, rights and responsibilities and are reflective of concerns that go beyond individual interest to serve a broader sense of social good. As Nassbaim (2002, p. 289) argues ‘this requires an ability to think as a citizen of the whole world, not just some local or region or group’.

It is the interpretation and perspective outlined above that is adopted in this chapter. This view of global citizenship is closely aligned to that of Haigh and Clifford (2010, p.1) whose aspiration and vision is that future graduates (who they remind us will be both our future leaders and neighbours) will be able ‘to solve the problems of the future, to care for those who cannot care for themselves, to defend the social values that we believe in, to protect the environment for those who will follow and to help set our world on a sustainable course’ (p.4). In other words, global citizens will possess a social consciousness as well as intercultural intelligence and understanding and will be responsible (to both society and the environment), capable (problem solvers, communicators, negotiators and leaders) compassionate (socially and emotionally intelligent) individuals, able to sensitively and constructively engage with cultural ‘others’.

Higher education and globally informed citizenship education

The argument we present in this chapter is essentially based on the premise that higher education should be regarded as a ‘public good’ with a civic purpose and acknowledges the longstanding importance of civic education as a core goal of undergraduate education. The European Qualifications Framework identifies preparation for active citizenship as one of the four purposes of HE and HEFCE (2008) formally recognised the role of HEIs in promoting citizenship in its Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Higher education is in a unique and privileged position to provide the intellectual leadership required to shape and influence how societies envision citizenship and to offer authoritative insight and opinion on areas of public discourse and those global issues that matter in society. Indeed, given the university sector’s hugely significant role in both the production, management and application of knowledge and in educating the next generation of leaders, universities are critical to the mission of promoting globally informed citizenship.

Yet, according to Flores et al (2012, p.213) HE appears to be falling short in its responsibility to produce graduates with ‘the ability to take knowledge and transform it into uses that benefit not only the individual, but more importantly society as a whole’. The issue of ideological fit (or misfit) between the concepts of global citizenship (premised on equality, social justice, cooperation, compromise and care) and capitalism (based on dominant market forces such as competition, self-interest and materialism) has been highlighted by Clifford and Montgomery (2014), Rhodes & Szelenyi (2001) and Faulks (2006). The perception of HE as benefiting the private individual rather than creating or leading to a collective or public good has been further reinforced by the recent change from publicly funded HE in the UK to a personal loan repayment system (thereby placing a financial emphasis upon the individual from the outset). This is leading to concerns that this critical function of educating for global citizenship is being overlooked, or at least not given a high priority or prominence in the design of undergraduate curricula.

Whilst there is evidence to suggest that the processes of HE are themselves conducive to the formation of citizenship (i.e. graduates are typically more socially and politically engaged, more likely to engage in voluntary work, hold less extreme views and are generally more tolerant [Barnett 2007; Bynner et al,
2003; Egerton, 2002]), it is not sufficient to assume that participation in HE alone will simply make individuals more socially aware, engaged citizens and society more inclusive and tolerant. As Taylor et al (2002, p.160) argue ‘without a critical humanistic framework in HE, the system tends to produce technically competent but socially, morally and politically disengaged and thus in the ‘public’ sense, amoral graduates’. Today’s world is increasingly framed and challenged by heightened global tensions, terrorism, ethnic and sectarian conflict, economic crises, environmental problems, famines and pandemics. The transnational nature of these complex global issues requires globally informed citizens capable of participating more responsibly in a pluralistic and interconnected world community and with the capacity to think and act for the broader collective good.

Maxwell (1992, p.206) advocates strongly that in order to create ‘a better, more civilised world, we need to learn how to do it’. He suggests that we need a different kind of academic enquiry – one that aims to improve personal and global wisdom to empower individuals to act humanely, cooperatively, rationally and in society’s long term interests instead of an academic enterprise primarily devoted to improving knowledge and technological competence. Maxwell defines ‘wisdom’ as ‘the capacity to realize what is of value in life, for oneself and others’ (p.207) and suggests that we need ‘a kind of learning that gives intellectual priority to articulating our problems of living, proposing and assessing possible cooperative solutions’ (p.213). Interestingly Barnett and Coate (2005) have more recently suggested that the traditional emphasis in HE on ‘knowing’ has shifted towards a greater emphasis on ‘acting’, but envisage that ‘in the context of the increasing integration of HE with the wider world, encouraged forms will much more be those of being-in-the-world’ than being-in-knowledge (p. 119).

Thus, a key challenge for HEIs is to design engaging curricula that connect academic with civic learning, enable students to understand the public purposes of their discipline and prepare students for lives as active citizens, responsible disciplinary practitioners, professionals and leaders. In essence, space needs to be found within HE curricula for the concept of citizenship and for civic engagement. McGowan (2012) distinguishes between curricula that teach about citizenship rather than for it, highlighting the need to not only explicitly embed a civic engagement dimension within the HE curriculum but critically to utilise pedagogies that will facilitate and foster active engagement. Effective citizenship education within HE should therefore not just be concerned with ‘knowing about’, but should enable students to ‘become’ and ‘be’ engaged active citizens by virtue of their undergraduate studies and experiences. Barnett (2007 p. 30) suggests we should turn away from epistemology and argues that ‘a new basis for citizenship lies in ethics and ontology; in matters of how we are to go on in the world and how we understand ourselves in the world’. Higher education has a responsibility to help students develop skills and attributes that promote civically engaged citizens and this has led Nussbaum (2002) to argue for universities including a component of general education for citizenship in the curriculum. In doing so, she has not only recognised the vitally important contribution that HE makes to citizenship, but has crucially highlighted the important link between critical thinking and deliberative democratic citizenship which is further expanded upon in the next section.

**Critical thinking, global citizenship and leadership**

According to Nussbaum (2002) democracy requires citizens who can think for themselves and can reason together about their choices. She relates this to what she describes as the ‘Socratic ability to criticise one’s own traditions and to carry on an argument on terms of mutual respect for reason’ (p. 289). These abilities are closely associated with the fundamentals of critical thinking and consequently critical thinking can be regarded as a key attribute and prerequisite for active and effective civic engagement. As Simons et al (2007) advocate, critical thinking is needed for democratic citizenship and a key function of a university is to encourage critical thinking within society.

The notion of critical thinking is deeply ingrained within the higher educational system and therefore the development of critical thinking remains an almost universally accepted goal for all HE curricula. Indeed, Phillips and Bond (2004) have suggested that critical thinking is regarded by many as the defining characteristic of a university education, despite there being differences in disciplinary understandings
and definitions. Thus, whilst critical thinking comes in many forms, a unifying and defining feature is reflected in the systematic evaluation of argument and reason. Paul and Elder (2006, p. xx) interpret critical thinking as ‘thinking explicitly aimed at well-founded judgment, utilizing appropriate evaluative standards in an attempt to determine the true worth, merit or value of something’. It is evident that the skills of reasoning and deliberation and the ability to make informed judgements not only constitute elements of critical thinking but are also of crucial importance for the active engagement of informed citizens in democratic life. Lim (2011), however, has argued that critical thinking needs to genuinely embody a ‘critical’ dimension aligned in the traditions of critical theory to ensure that students deliberate over issues of social justice and moral goodness that address notions of right and wrong. He warns that narrowly conceiving of critical thinking only as the cognitive skills of logic and argument analysis is dangerous. In order to nurture a citizenry capable of democratic deliberation and empowered to address social problems or redress social wrongs Lim argues that more inclusive, versatile and diverse forms of critical thinking which centre on ethics, imagination, intuition and empathy must be adopted. A broader interpretation of what constitutes critical thinking which goes beyond the traditional view of higher level cognitive and intellectual capacity to explicitly incorporate the social and moral aspects of critical thinking may therefore be helpful.

Higher education is no longer an elitist system for a small privileged minority but it does still have a fundamental role in producing society’s future leaders and decision makers. As noted earlier, contemporary society is increasingly pluralistic, culturally diverse and made up of a multitude of competing ideological perspectives and political and economic agenda. As such Flores et al (2012, p. 219) suggest that ethical behaviour, the ability to work with diverse populations and understanding the influence that culture plays are the new demands of leadership. They have also noted that the most recent emerging leadership theories and frameworks within the leadership literature have a much greater emphasis on ethical, moral and reflective components. Leaders inevitably have to deal with complex and diverse problems that will often require complex solutions and effective leadership will be dependent on well-developed, multi-dimensional critical thinking skills (i.e. those that also embrace the social and moral aspects of critical thinking). HE thus has a responsibility to equip the next generation of leaders with the capacity to think in more complex ways, across different dimensions and to instil a civic and moral identity and sense of obligation to society.

**Socially Critical Vocationalism as a curriculum framework for civic engagement**

Having discussed the relationship between critical thinking and citizenship and the responsibility of HE in this context, it is now time to introduce the notion of socially critical vocationalism (SCV), a curriculum philosophy in which citizenship education is an integral and pivotal feature and an approach that embraces what Boland (2006) describes as a pedagogy for civil engagement. The theoretical framework of SCV has been outlined in detail elsewhere (Peach 2010), but a brief overview will be reproduced here to provide the necessary conceptual understanding to facilitate a critical examination of how SCV specifically contributes to global citizenship education, civic engagement and the social and moral dimensions of critical thinking.

Socially critical vocationalism is an approach to curriculum that is intellectually rigorous, vocationally-oriented and socially responsive. It is premised on two central tenets. Firstly, that HE should be regarded as being about the ‘public good’ with a civic purpose to enable students to develop democratic values and the capacity to reason about moral and ethical deliberations in order to become good citizens. The second premise rests on the assumption that HE plays a critical role in sustaining a competitive, productive economy and building a flexible workforce by providing vocational training for the many professional domains on which society depends.

Citizenship education is firmly embedded within a SCV perspective because, however citizenship is defined, ‘it speaks to a “public service” role’ (Barnett, 2007). Barnett has noted that this public service role is not necessarily incompatible with the economic goals of higher education. Although Haigh and Clifford (2010) refer to the potential conflicting agendas regarding the ethics of global citizenship versus
the ethics of individual career advancement, entrepreneurialism and national economic imperatives, they do not need to be conceived of as mutually exclusive or as an either/or. McCowan (2012), for instance, refers to the notion of a ‘win-win’ situation whereby students can develop civic virtues and become more ethical citizens at the same time as being more successful career-wise. The private and public interests can and should coexist and as such SCV can be perceived as a philosophical approach which legitimately encompasses a multiplicity of perspectives. Indeed SCV also challenges the economic/vocational versus liberal/academic binary that traditionally underpins philosophical debate about the purpose of higher education. It is neither training nor pure traditional academic provision and it does not regard the critical and the vocational as dialectically opposed. From a SCV perspective philosophical differences do not necessarily equate with philosophical conflict. A key aim of SCV is to prepare students for a vocation, but it is not about providing a narrowly conceived form of training designed simply to adapt future workers to the existing practice. Instead, like Silver and Brennan’s (1988) notion of ‘liberal vocationalism’ it is about enabling individuals to act and think more autonomously, critically and responsibly in both their social and working lives. A SCV approach will develop the student’s understanding of the role of his or her profession within contemporary society and the role that it plays in shaping the social, political, economic, cultural and global contexts in which we live. It may also lead students to challenge the way a profession is practiced and organised, to become change agents and to question whether the way it influences society is democratic, fair and just.

Socially critical vocationalism fully endorses the need for students to gain a deep theoretical knowledge while at the same time acknowledging that a critical understanding of such theory is a means to improve or change professional practice and /or address societal problems rather than being an end in itself. It acknowledges that any vocational programme must be firmly rooted within an intellectual and academic framework and that, whilst knowledge within this approach may have a strong practical focus, it must be located and embedded within an academic and theoretical understanding.

A critical educational goal for SCV is, therefore, to develop and enhance the student’s intellectual skills as a reflective practitioner, capable of analysis, independent judgement and informed decision making in all aspects of their academic, professional and social and civic lives. Thus, vocational preparation from a SCV perspective is not only (or indeed primarily) about higher level skill development and employability. Socially critical vocationalism perceives vocational preparation in a much broader and intellectually challenging way which enables students to establish a set of clear beliefs and values about their profession and an ability to act as positive agents for change, able to challenge and transform the culture and practices of their profession when appropriate.

The socially critical dimension of SCV also facilitates a critical awareness of societal and social policy issues influencing the professional and wider citizenry role in work-related and community contexts. Equality, diversity, moral and ethical issues would be core themes within a SCV approach so that students embrace different forms of citizenship and alternative ways of understanding individuality and cooperation. This socially critical aspect is therefore particularly important, as it offers potential for HE to inform and shape society through its curricula, enabling students to develop democratic values, the capacity to reason and deliberate about not only what is epistemologically correct but more crucially about what is socially just and morally right to become actively engaged citizens able to contribute to society positively.

The curriculum for police education in England and Wales.
It is now time to move from the articulation of educational theory to consideration of an educational system in practice, specifically education within a profession in which citizenship, leadership and public service figure prominently. In this final section of the chapter we discuss the ongoing development by the College of Policing of a national curriculum for the police service of England and Wales, considered particularly from the standpoint of socially critical vocationalism.
The College of Policing is the professional body for everyone involved in policing in England and Wales. The College works in partnership with a broad range of key stakeholders in policing, including the Home Office, police officers and staff (and their associations), Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), multi-agency partners in the public sector, community and minority groups (and their representatives) and, increasingly, academic partners. Within the overall context of protecting the public and preventing crime the College has responsibility at national level for a number of strategic functions, including setting standards of professional practice in policing and supporting the professional development of those working in policing. The combination of these functions means that, *inter alia*, the College has a specific remit to set standards for the police service with regard to education, development, skills and qualifications.

The key conduit by which the College of Policing sets the educational agenda for learning and development within the police service of England and Wales is via the National Policing Curriculum (NPC). The NPC is developed, owned and maintained by the College and defines national learning requirements across a wide range of policing roles, functions and activities, thereby effectively setting out the national standards for learning, development and assessment within the police service. The curriculum provides both a framework and a benchmark for the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours within policing, by means of education and training interventions using a wide variety of approaches and delivery methods (e.g. completion of formal certificated learning programmes, digital and distance learning opportunities, immersive learning, classroom-based training, coaching, workplace training/assessment, professional workshops and continuing professional development).

As is to be expected, the educational provision of the National Policing Curriculum is structured around learning and development relating to key functions of police activity. Major police activities that can be classified as possessing a citizenship context for the purposes of this chapter include ensuring public safety; protecting vulnerable individuals; engaging with communities; reducing and preventing crime; investigating crime; and providing support to victims of crime and their families. The NPC is directly organised around such functions, bringing to the fore the key role of policing in terms of maintaining an environment within which a safe, just and equal society may operate.

Underpinning this curricular approach to the more practical learning and development needs of those undertaking the operational challenges of policing is a complementary, more reflective learning approach, premised upon the skills, attitudes and behaviours required to carry out the role of policing in an increasingly complex societal context. This becomes more obvious when the National Policing Curriculum is considered against further fundamental requirements of the policing role, especially professional judgement, ethics, integrity and accountability. It is when the NPC is viewed through the prism afforded by such perspectives that essential elements of critical thinking, global citizenship and leadership skills embedded within it begin to emerge as learning and development concepts in their own right, and the usefulness of socially critical vocationalism as a framework for a policing curriculum becomes apparent.

**Critical Thinking**

Increasingly UK policing is moving towards an evidence-based approach to policing. It is a publicly-stated objective of the College of Policing as part of its five-year strategy (2014, p11), to ensure that the standards set in policing are based upon the best available evidence; to this end the College is actively and continually working with academic and other research partners to apply an evidence-based approach to the policing priorities identified by the police profession, the public and other relevant partners (as referenced above).

Efficient and effective critical thinking can benefit from the foundation provided by an appropriate evidence base. Accordingly, this is reflected in the national learning provision, which emphasises the link between informed decision-making and the critical thinking process. The police service has developed...
an intellectual framework against which decision-making in policing at all levels may be construed and measured. The implementation tool for this is referenced as the National Decision Model (NDM), a widely consulted-upon thinking process encouraging those who work in policing to stratify their critical thinking around key concepts such as knowledge and risk, when engaged in a decision-making process.

But there is also an ethical dimension. Central to the NDM is the police Code of Ethics, a system of principles developed by the College of Policing, articulating exemplary standards of behaviour for all of those involved in policing. The Police Code of Ethics is premised upon a positive approach to policing, underpinning a system of critical thinking that will lead the professional individual to ‘do the right thing’. This NDM critical-thinking process is embedded across the National Policing Curriculum across a range of modules and programmes.

It is through such fundamental emphasis on ethics and values in decision making that the NPC plays its part in encouraging the policing profession to apply an ethical dimension to practical policing. As such, the curriculum encourages those undertaking the curriculum not just to think about their own performance of their police officer or police staff role, but also in relevant contexts to consider the importance to society of their performance of that role, and to reflect that their professional function has a citizenship dimension that must be articulated in an ethical approach to professional behaviour and action. The curriculum encourages learners to reflect constantly upon their own performance as professional practitioners and implement lessons learned; it is from this standpoint that the NPC can be most clearly understood as an educational conduit for enabling the learner to understand the public purpose of their discipline, engage in the ethical deliberations that should inform their actions, and reflect upon the consequences of such actions and their own professional accountability.

Global Citizenship
It is not difficult to see that the policing profession, in particular because of the societal crimes, incidents and issues with which policing practitioners have to deal on a daily basis, is directly related to global citizenship. At its most fundamental level, the National Policing Curriculum is infused with a fundamental awareness of the importance of human rights, most notably the Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights. More specifically, both in policing and police education, there is a necessary emphasis upon protecting the vulnerable in society. This translates into formal training in areas such as protecting vulnerable adults and children from serious crimes (e.g. becoming victims of modern slavery, sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, hate crime etc.). As is to be expected, training also lays great emphasis on respect for diversity.

It will not be possible for police officers and staff appropriately to fulfil their professional responsibilities to society in these areas of policing, without possessing a high degree of emotional intelligence and social consciousness. The multi-cultural nature of policing in the UK demands policing practitioners who can engage and communicate effectively with all communities and cultures. It is therefore an ongoing educational responsibility of the National Policing Curriculum, in particular the area of learning and training that deals with public protection issues, to emphasise the importance of cultural and social awareness, respect for diversity, and empathy. From this perspective, this aspect of policing is not dissimilar to the concept of citizen-focussed policing, in which the emphasis is upon the needs of the individuals and communities that receive and make use of police services.

An additional consideration is now increasingly permeating police intervention in society, namely the more proactive deployment of police capability in terms of protecting the vulnerable, via the concept of ‘professional curiosity’ (a professional concept also associated with health and social care professionals). The aim of this concept in a policing context is to encourage police officers to apply the same skills they would traditionally bring to bear in an investigative arena to identification and protection of vulnerable adults and children who may be at risk. Work is ongoing to develop the NPC’s learning and development provision further in this area. Professional curiosity would by its very nature presuppose that policing represents a positive intervention in society, reflecting the ‘duty of care’ of the profession.
The Leadership Dimension
In order to be challenging and effective, a curriculum of learning should never stand still, and the National Policing Curriculum is by necessity evolutionary, especially in the area of leadership development.

Because of the nature of the profession, it is a given that effective leadership is essential to the successful performance of policing. The Leadership Review of policing carried out by the College of Policing in 2015 (p6) found that:

The ideal police leader is driven by the core values of policing, seeks out challenge and is quick to adapt....This is a leader who empowers, trusts and supports every individual to succeed among their peers, within their teams and across their organisations; who copes with the challenges of emerging crime and public safety issues; who values difference and diversity; and who readily accepts personal accountability while retaining the trust of communities.

In the Leadership Review this definition of police leadership is explicitly articulated within the context of an evidence-based, ethical professional performance, is visioned within a diverse, democratic society, and takes account of the evolving requirements and pressures of police leadership in the twenty-first century. In short, it deals with police leadership in the round, interpreting it as a key conduit facilitating the professional relationship between the police service and the communities it serves.

Training in leadership skills has traditionally formed a key component of national police education in England and Wales, and the National Policing Curriculum currently embeds specific learning in leadership skills at all levels in policing, incorporating, as implied previously, an ethical dimension. Leadership education has often been interpreted as segregated or distinct from the wider police curriculum, and the challenge that has been taken up by College of Policing in order to facilitate appropriate leadership and management development within the police service is encapsulated in a key recommendation of the Leadership Review (p31), namely to ‘create a new model of leadership and management training and development which is accessible to all within policing’. In achieving this objective the emphasis will be on increased collaboration with the wider educational sector, including higher education providers.

So how is all of the above learning and development contextualised into a formalised educational process? At present the National Policing Curriculum supports a number of national qualifications related to policing, most notably the Diploma in Policing, the standard qualification that all officers must achieve before they are confirmed in rank as a regular Police Constable and, also, the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing, a qualification equivalent to the ‘knowledge’ component of the Diploma, and which may be undertaken by learners prior to joining the police service. Additional qualifications linked to leadership roles and direct entry to senior levels of policing also exist. A common denominator in all of these learning programmes is the presence of key themes of evidence-based policing, diversity and equality awareness, ethical decision-making and the duties and responsibilities of the police towards protecting the public and vulnerable members of society. The educational aim is to develop policing practitioners who are socially and interculturally aware, responsible, capable, effective and compassionate, in other words precisely those qualities (expressed in a professional context) associated with the concept of global citizenship.

The aforementioned national qualifications, therefore, operate as something of a benchmark for the current system of police education that is the national policing curriculum in England and Wales, and the way in which policing practitioners are encouraged to understand the public purposes of their profession, becoming responsible professionals and leaders in the process.
The above outlines the current ‘educational landscape’ in policing education; in a much more fundamental sense the College of Policing is working in partnership with the police service and key stakeholders in policing to develop a Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF), the aim of which is to set minimum education levels, by level of practice or rank, for the police service. Such a framework, based upon HE principles, will bring the policing profession into line with other comparable professions that have similar potential impact upon society. One of the key educational principles of the PEQF is that programmes of policing education will be developed and delivered by means of a practical, professional collaboration, bringing together in educational partnership the best of what a combination of academic learning and applied professional practice can offer. Introduction of the PEQF, carrying with it its direct, consonant focus on raising educational standards through working in partnership with the higher education sector, will therefore constitute the impetus for further cultural change in ways of thinking and working for future effectiveness in policing.

To give one practical example, the first educational programme to be developed and launched as part of the PEQF initiative is a national, higher-level apprenticeship for those entering the police service at the rank of constable, based upon a new national professional standard for the performance of this key policing role, and linked to successful completion of a Degree in Professional Policing Practice. As explained in the College’s National Policing Curriculum (p6), the new apprenticeship curriculum ‘is professionally transformative, covering a breadth, depth and range of professional education for the police constable not present in previous national specifications of the training required to perform this policing role’. The degree-based education underpinning delivery of this 21st century curriculum will be the product of a collaborative approach requiring each police force offering the PC apprenticeship entry route to work in partnership with a chosen HE provider.

What will be the practical benefits of this change? In the first place, partnership working with HE is already necessary (and underway) anyway, from the standpoint of an improved evidence-base for policing. It is in the research carried out by the academic sector, the College and police forces, by means of collaborative strategies and approaches, that the way forward in respect of developing evidence-based practice lies.

Secondly, there will also be further benefits to policing professionalism in adopting a specific educational policy of moving towards graduate-level education for the service. As has been implicit in the arguments presented above, policing increasingly requires police professionals to be able to think critically, reflect and deliberate effectively, exercise judgement, challenge accepted norms, contribute to the evolving evidence base, work with a high degree of autonomy, communicate effectively and be independent decision makers. These higher level skills and attributes are much more closely aligned to Higher Education than is envisaged by the current educational provision of the policing curriculum, and it is via a HE curriculum that they can best be embedded as outcomes of a learning process.

But the link to the HE sector is also not without its specific vocational context. Education of policing practitioners is by necessity a transaction in which there must be direct linkage between pedagogy and citizenship. More proactive adoption of a curriculum philosophy based on socially critical vocationalism (already implicit in the ethos and content of the National Policing Curriculum) will place to the fore the citizenship element of both the role of the policing practitioner and the education required to fulfil that role. Accordingly, global citizenship-related thinking will inevitably become a more prominent feature of the educational provision of National Policing Curriculum, as it moves towards benefitting from the approach that a fully-fledged HE curriculum, contextualised via a SCV approach, can best provide.

References


