



College of
Policing

Working together
to prevent crime

Assessment and Recognition of Competence (ARC)

Pay point 4 – Constable

User Guide

Version number 2.0

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Constable user guidance – Assessment and Recognition of Competence

Purpose of the guidance

This guidance is to provide you, as the constable who is being assessed through the Assessment and Recognition of Competence (ARC) process, with as much information as possible so the assessment phase will be a positive and rewarding experience.

This guidance contains information on:

- The ARC process
- The ARC assessment standards
- Guidance on how to gather and present assessment evidence
- Paperwork which can be used for assessment.

Introduction

This guidance has been written for you as a police constable undertaking the ARC process, who is approaching **pay point 4** in your policing career. The term ‘pay point 4’ will be used in this document to mean those officers who are likely to be at the end of their third year of service in policing. If your force differs from this, you will need to check with your line manager or human resources (HR) department.

This will generally be the time when you will have had approximately two years in a supervised training programme, a year to blend together your training and policing practice and be approaching your incremental point for pay point 4.

What is ARC?

The ARC process was created prior to the implementation of the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). It was designed to ensure constables remained effective and competent in their role following completion of their initial training. It is

not intended that ARC will apply to those constables joining through any of the PEQF entry routes.

ARC is an assessment which confirms that you are a fully competent officer who can be deployed into any relevant operational role, both in force or, if needed, to other parts of England and Wales. Successfully completing the ARC assessment also gives you access to pay point 4.

The ARC standards are an integration of the following:

- Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) Units (introduced in April 2016)
- the constable's own continuing professional development (CPD)

Although it is the line manager who makes the final assessment decision, your line manager and you should be working in partnership to achieve success. The line manager is the person most likely to know and understand your work, the issues you face in your place of work and your strengths and where you need to develop. Your line manager, therefore, is best placed to advise and support you through the whole process and make appropriate managerial assessment decisions.

This assessment is not a repeat assessment of your original initial learning units but a new assessment of competence to demonstrate that you are able to manage your role and responsibilities and that you are competent to move to the next pay point.

The ARC assessment

The ARC assessment is a joint responsibility held by you and your line manager, therefore both you and your line manager have a shared responsibility to make the assessment phase a positive experience.

For you, it is an opportunity to demonstrate your skills and experiences to the force and have them recognised, and be rewarded for the work you do by moving to the next pay point.

Preparing for ARC

Before the assessment for ARC begins, you should take an opportunity to reflect on your work and select recent (if possible, within the previous six months) examples of your policing work which demonstrate how you meet the ARC standards.

During the pilot¹ of this assessment strategy, the following good practice in gathering assessment evidence was identified and developed:

- Both you and your line manager need to be familiar with the ARC standards.
- You can, **by exception**, use material from the previous two years of your working life, however the best examples are those from within six months of the assessment date.
- Two or three competent pieces of work cross-referenced into the ARC standards are often sufficient to meet all the criteria.
- You should not write reams and reams of evidence but make sure that the description of the event is clear and concise and cross-referenced into the assessment standards. You should identify where the evidence is held and not download information to build a huge portfolio.
- Being clear of any in-force objectives gives useful examples of work to use to demonstrate competency.
- It is not recommended you use examples of police work where a number of officers are involved because individual assessment evidence can get lost in complex events.

¹ The defining and assessment of competence (DAC) ran from January 2015 until December 2015 in eight pilot forces.

- You should gather evidence through the whole assessment phase and not leave things until the last minute.
- If your role is different from the mainstream, discuss with your line manager opportunities to help you demonstrate the generic standards. If this is not possible, then you and your line manager should produce assessment evidence through another assessment methodology (e.g., simulation, professional discussion, demonstration) to confirm your competency.

At the end of this guidance we have added a form that you can use **Appendix 2**, along with some worked examples of how assessment evidence can be recorded and cross-referenced with the standards **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4**.

These examples demonstrate best practice but the force can, if they wish, use a different recording mechanism. Check with your line manager.

ARC and the PDR process

In April 2015, [police regulations](#) were amended to require forces to have an appraisal process and that progression through the pay scale (constable to chief inspector) would be dependent on officers obtaining a satisfactory (or better) performance grade in their appraisal. It is recommended that the ARC assessment runs simultaneously with the PDR process. This means that your one-to-one meetings aren't duplicated and time can be used efficiently.

A formal meeting will give the ARC assessment structure and provide you with opportunities to explore examples of practice and evidence.

In order to successfully complete the ARC assessment, you are required to gain a satisfactory grade or above in your PDR **and** meet the ARC assessment of competency.

ARC assessment standards

The assessment standards (**Appendix 1**), as already stated, are a blend of the following:

- Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) Units (introduced in April 2016)
- the constable's own continuing professional development (CPD)

These assessment standards have been developed to be valid to the police constable role across England and Wales. It is the minimum standard that all police constables should be able to meet at pay point 4.

You may not be using these standards on a daily basis. In such cases, together with your line manager you will need to find opportunities for you, if appropriate, to spend some time in another department or assess you by another methodology to confirm that you can still perform the police constable role.

Preparing ARC assessment evidence

The ARC standards shouldn't be viewed as standalone units but as standards that can be integrated together. As a competent constable you don't deliver your work unit by unit, but in a complex and blended way, delivering your work through a variety of positive behaviours.

In the ARC assessment, evidence of the whole event should be cross-referenced with a number of the ARC standards.

These examples are known as 'evidence-rich' opportunities as they illustrate a number of assessment criteria together.

To help, we have provided two examples of using police work to demonstrate the standards.

Appendix 2 shows an example of the suggested paperwork and an explanation of how to use it when recording the ARC evidence.

Appendices 3 and **Appendix 4** are worked examples demonstrating how a number of assessment standards and behavioural competences can be evidenced together.

Recording assessment evidence

During the ARC assessment and PDR process, evidence used for your ARC assessment may also demonstrate PDR objectives. Although each event may need to be evidenced separately, using the same incident would be a good example of an 'evidence-rich' opportunity.

The force PDR process may give scope to record ARC evidence or the force may have designed its own template. Whichever method is chosen, it is important that both you and your line manager are able to access it.

Reasonable adjustments

There may be rare occasions where it will be appropriate for you to identify that you need a reasonable adjustment to the assessment, for example, if you are on a phased return to work after illness. The assessment will still be made against the national standards and criteria, but there may be scope to adjust timings or assessment methodology.

If you feel that a reasonable adjustment is appropriate, you should discuss it at the earliest opportunity with your line manager. Individual forces should have a reasonable adjustment policy in place.

Appeals procedure

An in-force appeals process should be in place, which should be followed if you disagree with your assessment outcome and it cannot be resolved directly with your line manager.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The assessment standards

AS.1 Plan, implement and review an evidence-based preventative policing approach

Identified a problem/concern/issue/situation and applied an initiative to mitigate the risk of escalation, continuation or incidents occurring. You have followed up on the success (or otherwise) of the intervention and shared your findings.

AS.2 Support victims, witnesses and vulnerable people

Provide initial support to those affected by offending or anti-social behaviour (victims and witnesses) and those who may be particularly vulnerable to becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour. The initial support may be practical (e.g., relating to safety and security, compensation claims, paperwork) or emotional (e.g., listening).

AS.3 Manage conflict situations in policing

Recognising and dealing with a range of behaviours and incidents requiring proportionate responses and actions. You must act in ways that do not provoke conflict and show you can defuse situations where conflict exists or threats of conflict are present. There should be an example of appropriate personal safety techniques and equipment, including self-defence and restraint.

AS.4 Use police powers to deal with suspects

This unit is about conducting arrests, detentions and reporting procedures, including the disposal options available. Police officers have the authority to exercise an extensive range of police powers with autonomy, across many potentially volatile situations, not least when dealing with individuals suspected of committing an offence. You need to be able to conduct your actions legally and in a balanced and proportionate manner, considering the impact of your actions on others. You need to use the correct techniques and deal with any contingencies that arise.

AS.5 Conduct police searches

Police officers have the authority to exercise an extensive range of police powers, with autonomy, in many potentially volatile situations, including conducting police searches.

This unit is about searching individuals, vehicles, premises and outside spaces for items suspected to be evidence of an offence as part of an investigation, or for prevention of harm to self or others.

The search must be conducted in a legal and ethical way, and using approved search methods. Before you carry out the search you need to establish that you have the grounds and legal authority to do so and you must preserve the search scene. Where evidence is found, this must be seized, packaged and stored in a manner that maintains its integrity and continuity. You also need to be able to complete any necessary documentation.

AS.6 Handle information and intelligence that can support law enforcement

This unit is about gathering information and intelligence to assist and support law enforcement objectives. You need to be able to work in accordance with the requirements of the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and principles of managing police information used across the service. You must identify, analyse and evaluate information for relevance to police investigations and law enforcement objectives from a variety of situations and sources (including human and technical) and conduct an initial analysis, assessment and grading of that information.

AS.7 Provide an initial response to policing incidents

This unit covers providing an initial response to incidents including crime, non-crime and road-related incidents. Police officers have the authority to exercise an extensive range of police powers with autonomy across many potentially volatile situations.

The initial response to incidents, which are sometimes potentially critical situations, and the control of them is a paramount aspect of the police officer's role. You need to be able to gather information on the incident, analyse the information to establish its nature and plan your actions accordingly. If you are the first on scene at a major or critical incident, you need to take control of the incident until relieved by an appropriate person.

AS.8 Conduct priority and volume investigations

This unit is about conducting investigations and is applicable to investigations across all types of priority and volume incidents. You need to be able to gather, analyse and assess the available information and intelligence from all sources (including social media), conduct risk assessments, identify and preserve the initial scene(s), and identify and deal with materials. You must also be able to develop initial lines of enquiry and deal with any victims, witnesses and suspects. In addition, you need to ensure that the appropriate people are briefed about the status of the investigation to maintain continuity and ensure that all relevant documentation is completed and added to the case file.

AS.9 Interview victims and witnesses in relation to priority and volume investigations

This unit is about interviewing victims and witnesses as part of priority and volume investigations. The unit covers interviews conducted at police premises or elsewhere. You must plan and prepare for both formal and informal interviews by developing an interview strategy, assessing the interviewee's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct interviews in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines, using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are expected to evaluate interviews (including your own performance) and take any necessary further action in relation to investigations.

AS.10 Interview suspects in relation to priority and volume investigations

This unit is about interviewing suspects as part of priority and volume investigations. The unit covers interviews with suspects who are under arrest and those who are not under arrest, whether the interview is conducted at police premises or elsewhere. You must plan and prepare for interviews by developing an interview plan, assessing the suspect's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct interviews in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines, using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are

expected to evaluate interviews (including your own performance) and take any necessary further action.

Appendix 2 - Recording your ARC evidence – explanation

Police Constable.....

Line manager.....

Date.....

Box 1 – Description of event	
<p>This is not evidence for court but is showing where the assessment standards (AS) have been met during the incident, so you should summarise the event here.</p> <p>You need to write a short description of the event you are using to show your competence. When you are writing your description, it will help you and your assessor to cross-reference into the description which assessment criteria you are using, for example (AS.1).</p>	
Box 2 – Assessment standards	<p>Where the information is held (only fill in the assessment standards achieved)</p> <p>This box contains a list of the 10 assessment standards. Only write where the evidence for each of these is stored if it is applicable to the event you have written about in Box 1.</p> <p>If you have not achieved an individual assessment standard, you must record another event/incident and present this to your line manager too.</p>

	At the end of the assessment period you must have covered all 10 assessment standards. It is likely that this will be achieved across two or three events as described beforehand.
(AS.1)	
(AS.2)	
(AS.3)	
(AS.4)	
(AS.5)	
(AS.6)	
(AS.7)	
(AS.8)	
(AS.9)	
(AS.10)	

Box 3**Contributing to your Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

You should note how you have demonstrated your CPD (at national, role, local or individual levels) through a range of CPD activities and how this development has helped you improve your performance, knowledge and confidence in your role.

Box 4**Line manager's comments**

An opportunity for the line manager to sign off the evidence. It is good practice to say whether or not the standards have been met.

Appendix 3 - Recording your ARC evidence – Example 1

Police Constable.....

Line manager.....

Date.....

Description of event
<p>There have been a number of incidents of bike theft from young people in my area and it was clear that some of these thefts could have been avoided. The bikes were being stolen from insecure areas and the bikes didn't have security chains or security markings.</p> <p>I looked on our force system to see if there was any more information and intelligence (AS.1). I followed the force protocols when accessing this information (AS.6). I found four more incidents that followed a similar pattern. On my beat there is a senior school and youth café. I approached them both and asked if there had been any similar thefts and another two incidents were brought to my attention. The crime prevention team in my force has lots of information about bike security and has security pens to write postcodes onto bikes, so I developed an information pack on bike security to take into the school and the youth café. Within six months, bike theft in my area is down by 20%, suggesting the security marking intervention has had an impact. In order to be more confident that the reduction in bicycle theft was linked to the security marking intervention on my beat, and was not part of a force-wide trend or a seasonal shift in crime, I did, however, check the</p>

force intelligence systems and spoke to force analysts to see if similar reductions had occurred in other areas. In the neighbouring beat area, which had had similar levels of bike theft to my beat before the security marking intervention, bike theft has stayed constant. This suggests that we can be confident that the security marking intervention is what has driven the 20% reduction in bike thefts in my area.

Assessment standard	Where the information is held (only complete the assessment standards achieved)
(AS.1)	I have completed an intelligence tasking document (ref 231/2016) which is held in the intel unit.
(AS.2)	
(AS.3)	
(AS.4)	
(AS.5)	
(AS.6)	I gathered information from the crime map and interrogated the crime reporting and intel systems.
(AS.7)	

(AS.8)	
(AS.9)	
(AS.10)	
Contributing to your Continuing Professional Development	
<p>I reflected on this event using my CPD log.</p> <p>My sergeant asked me to brief my shift, something which I hadn't done before.</p> <p>I spent some time looking at the work of the crime prevention practitioner and how their work is co-dependent with my work.</p>	
Line manager's comments	
<p>I am satisfied that PC Jones has met AS1 and AS6 at the appropriate level.</p> <p>AS1 tasks the officer to develop a project-based approach to research and put a plan in place to action it.</p> <p>The officer had to handle information sensitively, complete the research and produce an intelligence tasking report to seek approval for the operation. This report was completed to a high standard.</p> <p>PC Jones has shared this material with the team and the intel unit for dissemination across the area.</p>	

This officer worked well with the community and local school to achieve a 20% reduction in bike crime in the area over a 6-month period.

This project is set to continue with the support of the local community. PC Jones has clearly made an impact in the professional way this was approached and has received a letter of thanks from the head teacher of the school.

PC Jones has taken an innovative approach to help prevent crime on his beat achieving some excellent results.

Appendix 4 - Recording your ARC evidence – Example 2

Police Constable.....

Line manager.....

Date.....

Description of event

On Thursday, 4 February 2016 I was called to an address in Manor Place to the sounds of a female screaming. On arrival at the address I noticed the front door was open. I updated the control room with my time of arrival and conducted a dynamic risk assessment **(AS.7)**. A female came to the door. I noticed that she had a number of abrasions to her lower lip and blood was coming from a small wound on her left cheek. I established what had happened by asking her a number of questions and I rendered first aid **(AS.2)**. The female informed me that an ex-partner had returned to the address earlier in the evening and over the next few hours the situation had turned violent after an argument. Just before she called the police, her ex-partner had hit her around the face with his hand four or five times. While she was on the phone calling the police, he had taken her handbag containing her purse and run out of the back door into the garden. She was unsure if he was still in the garden. I arranged for a colleague to remain with the victim while I made a systematic search of the garden with colleagues. I updated the control room asking for other officers to assist me by going to the road at the rear of the garden to block off any escape routes **(AS.7)**.

In accordance with the relevant guidance, I had turned on my body-worn video (BWV) for the search. Within five minutes, I found the suspect hiding in a small shed at the rear of the premises **(AS.5)**. The suspect was aggressive, shouting and swearing at me. I tried to calm him down by talking to him in a relaxed manner and tried to explain what was going to happen next. Although we were in a confined space, I kept my distance, maintained a relaxed and non-threatening posture responding to the NVCs of the suspect by backing off to release some of the tension created by the situation **(AS.3)**. The suspect tried to run past me out of the shed. At this point, I detained and arrested him on suspicion of assault and theft (this was recorded on BWV). He continued to struggle trying to break free of my grip, so I handcuffed him to stop him causing an injury to himself, to me or to any of the other officers at the scene and to establish control over his movements **(AS.4)**. The suspect was taken to the police station where I gave details of the arrest to the custody officer. The suspect was detained for interview. I was able to prepare the interview strategy and obtained the relevant documents (witness statement, interview plan, and relevant intelligence checks on the suspect). The handbag and purse had been found during the search of the shed after the suspect's arrest. I conducted the taped interview at the interview room at the police station in accordance with the appropriate guidelines. My colleague from the arrest was also present during the interview **(AS.10)**.

Assessment standard	Where the information is held (only complete the assessment standards achieved)
(AS.1)	Not completed in this example

(AS.2)	Pocket book Qs & As, AMB, call recorded in DASH ² and arrest notes (124d)
(AS.3)	BWV clip no.2 at 1 min 20 seconds
(AS.4)	BWV clip no.3 (2 mins), DASH and arrest notes (124d)
(AS.5)	BWV clip no.1 (30seconds), DASH and arrest notes (124d)
(AS.6)	Not completed in this example
(AS.7)	124d, CAD message
(AS.8)	Not completed in this example
(AS.9)	Not completed in this example
(AS.10)	Custody record, interview tape.
Contributing to your Continuing Professional Development	

² Domestic abuse, stalking and harassment and honour-based violence

I reread the DASH guidance to make sure I had informed all parties that required an update.

My line manager reminded me about the two NCALT packages for domestic violence orders. I will complete these to see if they could support me in dealing with the ongoing enquires in this case.

Line manager's comments

PC Jones handled this situation exceptionally well, taking control, calming the situation, directing other officers at the scene, keeping the control room informed, searching the garden, and finding and arresting the suspect.

I reviewed the BWV and saw that this was a text book arrest. The officer remained calm and totally in control of the situation. The use of handcuffs was proportionate to the situation.

I am happy to sign off the following as complete and at the appropriate level.

AS2, AS3, AS4, AS5, AS7 and AS10.

At our next one-to-one meeting, I would like you to think about any activity to meet AS8 and AS9. This may be a bit more of a challenge with your role but let's talk through a plan of action.

About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

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