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me+Graduates

MPS GRADUATE MARKETING PLAN

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**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

Contents

Contents



Guide Pic

- 3 Executive Summary**
- 5 Introduction**
- 7 Background**
 - Recruitment Targets
 - High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS)
 - Level of attainment Pass rate at assessment centre
- 11 Approaches to Graduate Schemes**
 - Trends in Graduate Labour Market Outlook for 2005
 - Vacancies and recruitment in 2003/2004 by employment sector
 - Recruiting methods
 - Graduate attitudes to the MPS – Research Aim and Method
 - What and where is the student market
 - Size and performance
 - Trends and developments
 - MPS brand association
 - User base/loyalty
 - Competition & Timing
 - Key Influencers
 - Which sources of information are being used
 - How is the present economic climate affecting decisions
 - Missing components
- 21 Recommendations**
 - Scheme Organisation
 - Incentives
 - Advantages of the scheme
 - Costs
 - Marketing the MPS Graduate Scheme + HPDS
 - Timing
 - Branding
 - Campaign
 - Media
 - Websites
 - Work Placements
 - Strategic Platform
 - Conclusion

Summary

Executive Summary



Guide Pic

Graduates represent an attractive prospect for the future of the MPS and recent research strongly supports the business case for inviting this fresh talent to take on police officer and police staff roles. Graduates are 25% more likely to pass the National Recruitment Standards selection process than non-graduates, and black and minority ethnic (BME) students now constitute a significant proportion of the graduate population. With an ever growing emphasis on a diverse, multi-racial and highly performing police service, it makes perfect sense to approach graduates at this time.

The Home Office High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) is a successful one but is limited by the fact that only small numbers of officers achieve the standard to join the scheme. The effect of this is that minimal numbers of BME officers also qualify. This leads to limitations in terms of how it can be realistically marketed to universities without falsely raising hopes of people applying to join the Service.

There is currently no apparent brand association with the recruitment of graduates for the MPS, although there does seem to be an awareness that the police service does recruit graduates. Two thirds of graduates surveyed claimed they would be more likely to apply to the MPS if it had a formal graduate scheme.

A graduate scheme should therefore be introduced to run alongside the current Home Office High Potential Development Scheme. Its main targeting focus should be at establishments with high numbers of BME students, and particularly those in their second year of study. Strong, targeted marketing is essential since the MPS is competing with other large employers who have established schemes, most notably private sector employers and the Civil Service. Graduates value work placements highly when choosing an employer, and the role of the internet is also crucial.

This is a clear and effective plan to suit a modern and diverse recruitment culture. Similar recruitment schemes are already adopted by other sectors and provide invaluable models that enable us to construct a performing and worthwhile graduate recruitment drive. The cost to the MPS of a graduate scheme need not be prohibitive, as the infrastructure for this scheme is largely in place, but it will require further investment and ideally be aligned to an HR Board member.

Introduction



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This paper addresses the marketing activities required to support the recruitment strategy of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), in particular the stated aim of enhancing the academic skill base of the organisation through the active recruitment of graduates.

The importance of developing an effective graduate strategy has been recognised within the MPS. Graduate recruitment offers the MPS the opportunity to attract and employ individuals who have specific technical skills and knowledge, and the ability to be developed into specific roles relatively quickly. They are also more likely to be successful through the selection process than non-graduates.

This paper concentrates on the business case for attracting graduates, taking into account findings from a recent research project, and the creation of a strategic platform for taking this initiative forward.

Background



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Recruitment Targets

During the last five years the MPS has engaged in an unprecedented level of recruitment activity in order to raise the strength of police officers, police staff and other key roles such as Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and Metropolitan Special Constabulary Officers (MSC). Initially, a strategy of wide scale, generic advertising and marketing was adopted to meet the challenging targets. The strategy was very successful and police strength has increased to over 30,000 officers.

At the same time our approach to recruiting people from black and ethnic minority groups, and other underrepresented groups such as females, was being developed. As a result, the representation of black and minority ethnic (BME) groups in police ranks has increased from 4.3% in 2001 to 7.3% in 2005, amounting to a 69% increase in four years. Similarly, there has been a substantial increase in female officers during the same period, rising from 15.7% in 2001 to 19.2% in 2005, an increase of 22%. Consequently, the MPS is not only the largest it has ever been, but also has its most diverse workforce ever.

The MPS is committed to providing a police service that reflects London's diverse community. The intention is for intakes of personnel to mirror this, with recruits to training school being representative of London's population. This is already the case for some roles where 30% of intakes are from black and minority ethnic communities, and 50% are female. The benefits

of this are two-fold: firstly it is instrumental in meeting our diversity targets, and secondly it will establish from early on the diverse environment within which recruits will work.

This commitment by the MPS mirrors the Home Office requirement that all uniformed services increase the level of black and minority ethnic groups within their workforces to the same proportions as the localised populations. The MPS was required to raise the level of black and minority ethnic groups to 25% of the police officer strength by the end of March 2009, although for legal reasons this will take longer in practice. Specifically, although by the end of 2004/5 the MPS managed to increase the black and minority ethnic police strength to 6.9%, in order to meet the 25% target (and provided funding were available), nearly every police officer recruited to the MPS would need to originate from black and minority ethnic groups. Since no change in the law is anticipated, such an action would be treated as unlawful on the grounds of racial discrimination.

In London nearly one third (i.e. 2.1 million people) of the resident population would describe themselves as originating from black and minority ethnic groups. Similarly, nearly one third of young people in London speak English as an additional language. Although the National Recruitment Standards (NRS) selection process was welcomed as a robust tool, applicants with English as an additional language appear to have been significantly disadvantaged by the process. This has had a direct impact upon the ability of the MPS to reach the Home Office representation target of 25%.



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Consequently, the Directorate is moving away from target-based recruitment to a citizen-focused mindset, recruiting for the skills required to police London's diverse communities. The first step towards this new focus is the introduction of the life skills questionnaire and the sequencing of recruits onto earlier intake dates according to the business needs placed by the demands of particular minority communities, demands such as language skills and faith/community knowledge.

Whilst generic recruitment activity has attracted a high proportion of graduates, it is envisaged that a bespoke strategy targeting BMEs would further enhance the numbers and calibre employed.

High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS)

The Metropolitan Police Service does not have a specific graduate scheme for either police officers or police staff. For police officers the MPS supports the Home Office High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) also administered by other police forces throughout the country. HPDS is designed to support and develop the future leaders of the police service, although not necessarily graduates. It is not a fast track scheme as such, but stresses self-development within a structured career development programme, the emphasis being firmly on how far individuals can progress, not how fast they can progress.

The HPDS has been designed to support and develop the future leaders of the police service, to improve their leadership and command skills, and assist them to progress to senior positions.

The scheme is focused on assisting individuals to turn their potential into performance and progress through the service. The scheme is also designed to remove artificial barriers such as age, background, gender, race and other obstacles to individual progress. It ensures that new police officers benefit just as much as serving officers and encourages applicants to fulfill their own expectations, pursue specific areas of interest and broaden their career horizons should they wish to do so.

In summary HPDS is designed:

- To support High Potential officers to turn potential into performance and develop their leadership and command skills.
- To provide a structured career framework that assists, enables and encourages officers to attain senior positions.
- To help officers translate their skills, attitude and potential into real success in management, leadership or strategic roles.
- To offer successful scheme applicants a range of exciting career opportunities.



Guide Pic

The Home Office HPDS is a successful one but is limited by the fact that only small numbers of officers achieve the standard to join the scheme. The effect of this is that minimal numbers of BME officers also qualify. This leads to limitations in terms of how realistically it can be marketed to universities without falsely raising hopes of people applying to join the service.

Current statistics for the Assessment Centres on the NRS show a correlation between the levels of academic attainment and pass rate.

Level of attainment pass rate at assessment centre

Postgraduate	81.3%
Graduate/NVQ level	79.1%
A Level/NVQ level	64.7%
GCSE/O level/CSE 5+ A-C	54.3%
No formal qualifications	29.2%

Source: Centrex Technical Report 2003/4.

There are significant differences in pass rates, a degree or equivalent giving a candidate almost 25% more chance of passing than one with only GCSEs. This has possible implications for the way in which advertising and other recruitment activities are targeted. Clearly it would be better to put more resources into areas that will yield candidates with higher levels of academic qualifications in order to achieve more passes for our investment. In addition, the candidates who pass are probably more likely to succeed within the organisation once they have joined.

With regard to police staff there is no Home Office equivalent to HPDS. However the MPS's Career Management Unit (CMU) manages an Intensive Development Programme to develop and retain a pool of highly talented people who have the potential to progress as future leaders in challenging police staff roles within the MPS. This scheme is in an embryonic stage and is currently not externally marketed.

Conclusions from this:

- Recruitment target to achieve by March 2009: 25% of workforce strength should be from BME communities.
- Existing recruitment is marketed generically, and not targeted to graduates.
- HPDS scheme has limitations due to the small numbers of officers who achieve the standard to join the scheme and the minimal numbers of BME officers who qualify.
- There is a correlation between levels of academic attainment and NRS pass rates for police officers.
- There is no national HPDS equivalent scheme for police staff.

Graduate Schemes

Approaches to Graduate Schemes



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Organisations are increasingly clarifying their aims and expectations, and understand more about offering different entry approaches for graduate recruitment.

There are a number of recognised entry points for the recruitment of graduates within organisations similar to the MPS.

- High-potential corporate management schemes:- very selective, for a small number of entrants, with a highly structured programme combining periods of placement, on-the-job training and personal development. Likely to be 2+ years in length, with strong management input from the corporate centre.
- Elite functional or business unit streams within wider entry:- graduates are recruited initially into a professional or business scheme where the most able are identified for fast track career advancement. Less centrally managed, and usually focused on one function or business area.

- Professional or functional schemes (e.g. IT, Marketing):- academically selective, often recruiting from specific disciplines or with specific attributes, lasting six months to two years and combining work placements or development. Managed mainly at a divisional or business unit level, and usually having an internal entry route for existing employees.
- Direct job entry:- often sold to students as graduate entry but not a graduate entry scheme as such, because when graduates start in their jobs, they are managed by the line manager (or shared with local HR) and given structured development which is often individually tailored.
- Ad hoc recruitment:- graduates enter advertised vacancies along with non-graduates, receive a variable amount of development and are managed by the line manager.

The distinct features of these approaches have blurred in recent years, with the exception of the high-potential corporate schemes. Larger organisations increasingly have more than one type of graduate entry (e.g. high potential plus some functional scheme and ad hoc recruitment) and recruit non-graduates alongside graduates.

Formal graduate schemes, in particular the fast track type, are still valued by larger organisations, and are attractive to graduates, despite talk of their demise. It is of course increasingly important for employers to ensure a good cultural fit between the organisation and the graduates they recruit.



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Trends in Graduate Labour Market Outlook for 2005

According to the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) Graduate Recruitment Survey 2005, the number of graduate positions is predicted to increase for the second year running, this year by 14.5%. Last year vacancies rose by 15.5%.

Recruiters also expect starting salaries to rise in 2005, with just over two thirds of employers anticipating a rise in salaries by the cost of living or more. Employers are expecting to pay new graduates an average starting salary of £22,000 in 2005 – an increase of 4.8% on last year, the biggest predicted increase for 5 years. The results are dominated by a huge increase in salaries and vacancies in the accountancy sector, where graduate starting salaries in some parts of the UK are predicted to exceed £25,000 for the first time.

The MPS current starting salary of £26,730 on commencing, rising to £30,423 after two years' probationary training, is competitive but is, as expected, topped by investment banks, law firms and management consultancies.

These predicted salary increases of 4.8% are very generous and indicate that employers continue to recognise the value that top graduates bring to businesses. It also suggests that among recruiters, competition for the best graduates is intensifying.

Vacancies and recruitment in 2003/2004 by employment sector

Graduate vacancies rose by 15.5% in 2004 compared to the numbers recruited in 2003 – this is the first rise in three years.

- Information technology, investment banking and media:- these sectors had the largest increases in vacancies, at 52.1%, 50.9% and 45.9% respectively.
- Public sector:- Vacancies increased by 13.2% in 2003/2004, accounting for 24.2% of all AGR vacancies. The National Health Service is especially popular among university graduates this year, rising four places to fifth in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers list for 2004/2005. Overall, the health service attracted 5,500 applications for graduate places on its general management, financial management and human resources schemes. Women are more likely than men to work in this sector (26% compared to 16%).



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Recruiting methods

Recent trends in the labour market and the growth in graduate supply have not led to any major differences in employers' choice of their main graduate recruitment methods. This is supported by other research amongst graduate recruiters, which shows that many use a range of different methods to attract graduate applications, typically six or seven different approaches.

Advertising in graduate job directories, careers fairs, internet sites, press advertising and campus presentations still represents a valuable method of bringing an employer to the attention of graduates.

On the other hand, a recent survey of employers engaging in graduate recruitment, found that only a minority of employers were engaged in the traditional 'milk round' (23% of respondents) or graduate recruitment fairs (34%). The preferred methods of attracting graduate applications included establishing direct contact with specific universities (64%), speculative applications (61%), using careers services (56%) and placing vacancies and appointments in student vacancy bulletins.

Additionally, other recruitment methods are still used more in certain areas of graduate employment, e.g. sponsorship of undergraduates, work placements and recruitment agencies. Traditionally, these have been used by IT and engineering recruiters, but some of the pre-recruitment activities (e.g. student placements and internships) are becoming more widespread.

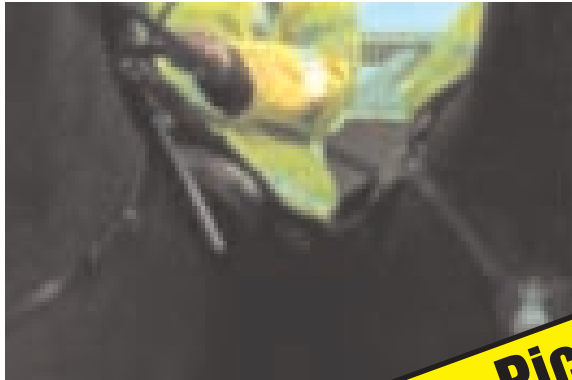
The role of the internet has increased substantially in the last year or two. This new media is attractive to students and has the advantage of reducing costs and time (to both employer and graduate). It also provides a better shop-window for organisations to communicate a realistic employment offer and project the right type of image to the kind of applicants that they want to attract.

The main impact of this so far has been in organisation, promotion, advertisement of vacancies, application forms and, to an extent, prescreening. The AGR estimate that perhaps as many as 90% of final year students looking for work now seek their first job on the internet, and nearly 50% apply online.

The growing graduate output has led to greater targeting by recruiters of specific university courses, although employers need to be aware of the dangers of narrowing the field and affecting diversity. Links with universities, and pre-employment activities, are recognised as useful recruitment and selection tools.

For example, the blue chip pharmaceutical companies will make sure they have very close relationships with tutors, even providing guest lecturers for certain events and donating sponsorship money. For employers looking for students, regardless of degree, this is less straightforward.

Approaches to Graduate Schemes



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The nature of graduate development and training varies between shorter, modular training throughout an initial development programme, to action learning, and to new improved management skills training. Mentors and coaches are used in graduate programmes, and more responsibility is given to graduates for their own learning.

Conclusions from this:

- The overall increase in graduate vacancies gives graduates a wider choice of careers.
- The popularity of certain sectors makes the challenge of attracting graduates to other sectors even greater.
- Employers still use a range of recruitment methods to attract graduates, including traditional and new media.
- The use of the internet and other new media in graduate recruitment is now essential in order to reach the right audience, and for the credibility of the recruiting organisation.
- Recruiting organisations need to establish effective links with universities in order to tailor their recruitment and development programmes to maximum effect.

- Graduates are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their assessment of the effectiveness of development programmes.
- Ethnic minority students now constitute a significant proportion of the graduate population, so that recruitment programmes must be attractive to them (which of course is consistent with the overall aims of the MPS in terms of diversity).



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Graduate attitudes to the MPS – Research Aim and Method

A number of research reports have been commissioned to look at the trends in graduate recruitment, drawn mainly from the MPS's own research studies and other relevant research literature.

In May 2004 research was commissioned with undergraduates and 14-18 year olds. The research with the undergraduates focused on career expectations, career influences and how to most effectively engage with this group in terms of media. The research work with 14-18 year olds focused on career aspirations, perceptions of a career within the MPS and how the MPS can most effectively target young people.

The primary aim of the research undertaken was to explore how the MPS might establish the most cost effective methods of communicating and engaging with the graduate target group.

Having established that this was best undertaken by e-mail using a pre-screened database of 1,000 students, respondents were screened to ensure that they were open to the idea of a career in the MPS and to ensure a high proportion of BME students were included, together with a broad cross section of gender, age and year of study. In addition to this, meetings were held with the managers of both of the existing schemes to gain a broader understanding of the issues facing the MPS.

What and where is the student market

There appears to be no strong difference by gender in those interested in joining the police service, and the average age of 21 years suggests that most are waiting until after they have commenced further education before making any crucial decisions. Whilst the proportion of white students represented 67% of those spoken to, 32% were from BME communities, which indicated a good response rate from this section of the sample. In the sample group, 88% (of which 73% were from a minority ethnic background) were from outside Greater London, but nevertheless indicated that they would be interested in working for the MPS.

Size and performance

Of students questioned, 60% had yet to seek any information about the MPS. The 2nd year students are the most receptive group to target with potential careers information. The most appealing aspects of the MPS to graduates were perceived to be the range of career opportunities available, and the opportunity to “put something back into the community”.

The most off-putting aspects were seen to be the perceived low salary, the potential danger of the job and the perception that racism and bureaucracy existed within the MPS.



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Trends and developments

It is difficult to compare historical data regarding the number of graduate applicants joining the MPS, but intake figures from the past twelve months suggest that there has been an increase in numbers joining the MPS training school with a degree.

The research suggested that two thirds of graduates surveyed claimed they would be more likely to apply to the MPS if they thought it had a formal graduate scheme. Students generally thought that the salary likely to be offered was below the actual salary offered. Of student respondents, 79% were unaware that the Home Office offers an accelerated promotion scheme.

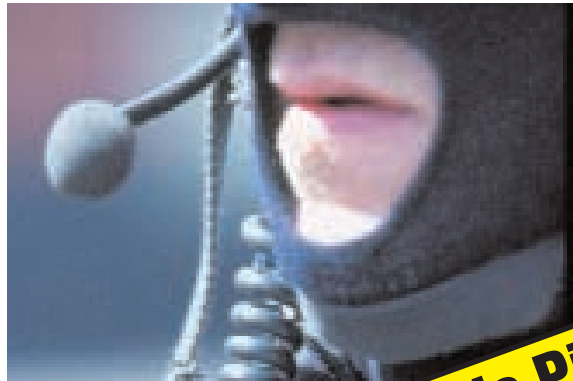
MPS brand association

There is no apparent brand association with the recruitment of graduates for the MPS, although there does seem to be awareness that the police service does recruit graduates. This is highlighted by the fact that the police service was ranked number 20 in The Times recent survey of Top Graduate Employers.

User base/loyalty

Although the entire sample had heard of the MPS, 63% of students had never actually sought information about careers within the MPS, and 51% could not recall seeing any information or communication from the MPS. Encouragingly, there were no great differences shown by the respondents as to whether they preferred the idea of a career as a police officer or police staff.

However, the number of BME students preferring a career as police staff was higher (20% police officer by comparison to 28% police staff). Respondents were generally well informed about the range of police staff opportunities available, and the elements that appealed to them most included variety of work, having a stable, life-long career, doing something valuable and helping others.



Guide Pic

Competition & Timing

Police services are competing with other large employers who have established schemes, most notably private sector employers and the Civil Service. (The Cabinet Office, for example, has an excellent reputation for graduate recruitment). Most respondents said that their interest in the MPS came about during their second year of study at university, with 74% of students hoping to have secured employment during their third year. Only 19% thought they would secure employment after leaving university, which raises important questions about the timing of campaigns.

Key Influencers

Over half (54%) of the respondents clearly identified the University Careers Service as having an influence, with careers publications/guides also being highly used. Parents and friends (49% and 37% respectively) contributed significantly to the decision making process, while School Careers Services and TV programmes were seen to contribute marginally (10% and 11%).

Which sources of information are being used

Employer websites accounted for 86% of the information retrieved. Careers publications, graduate recruitment fairs and speaking to friends and relatives also featured highly. Visits to Hendon Training Centre, work experience and targeted advertising were identified as being good ways to communicate to students. 'Personal touch' i.e. knowing someone in the police service is a big driver of interest levels.



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How is the present economic climate affecting decisions

Of respondents surveyed, 66% thought they would enjoy working in London, 74% of whom were from minority ethnic backgrounds. However, the most commonly cited reason not to live and work in London was cost, which included transport and accommodation. Other barriers include finding accommodation; concerns over safety; crime; terrorism; and London being a big “dirty, daunting city”.

Missing components

The respondents suggested that the creation of a recognised graduate scheme leading to a genuine offer of employment would provide the foundation for a better relationship.

Other components of the scheme should include the following:-

A website/microsite is essential, with printed collateral that includes some type of brochure that can both stand on its own and act as a web driver. The ability for graduates to apply online is also very important - the competition will have invested in highly sophisticated systems and the MPS needs to stand up to comparison.

Internships, work placements and sandwich components work for everyone. Employers get from two weeks to a whole summer to look at undergraduates in action, and get a unique opportunity to assess them. Students equally get a great chance to evaluate a potential employer or potential market sector before they make a choice. Similarly, it allows them to pad out their curriculum vitae. (Because nearly half of this generation has a degree, they need other means of standing out, which makes solid work experience, and in some cases a masters degree, increasingly important.)

Approaches to Graduate Schemes



Guide Pic

Conclusions from this: -

- There was no strong difference identified by gender in those interested in joining the police service, and the average age of 21 years suggests that most are waiting until after they have commenced further education before making any crucial decisions.
- The 2nd year students are the most receptive group to target with potential careers information.
- The research suggested that two thirds of graduates surveyed claimed they would be more likely to apply to the MPS if they thought it had a formal graduate scheme.
- There is no apparent brand association with the recruitment of graduates for the MPS.
- The majority of students had never actually sought information about careers within the MPS, and could not recall seeing any information or communication from the MPS.
- The police services are competing with other Forces, large employers who have established schemes, most notably private sector employers and the Civil Service.
- Key influencers include the University Careers Service, with careers publications and guides also being highly used, and parents and friends also contributing to the decision making process.

Recommendations



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Scheme Organisation

There is clearly a need to provide an alternative entry scheme for graduates into the Service. This new graduate scheme would be used to raise the profile of the Service within the universities. It would be separate from the Home Office scheme, organised and run by the MPS, and designed to deal with issues affecting this Service, as opposed to policing in general.

The scheme would run alongside, and compliment, the current Home Office HPDS, and candidates would be able to apply for both.

The main targeting focus of the MPS scheme would be at establishments with high numbers of BME students.

Students at the universities would have their awareness of the scheme raised during their first two years, and apply during their third year. Their NRS scores would be examined and those scoring well would be invited to apply for the scheme.

Those wishing to be on the MPS graduate scheme would be invited for additional assessment. The exact nature of the assessment is to be decided, but the final selection process would be critical to the success of the scheme. It is essential that the top candidates are selected and that there are a high number of BME candidates amongst them.

Incentives

It is envisaged that candidates selected to be on the scheme would be offered places at training school in advance of others, dependent on their skills and experiences. Where possible as a part of the scheme they would be encouraged to select attachments that were of interest in furthering their preferred career paths.

Clearly all operational aspects of the scheme will need to be developed with key stakeholders.

Advantages of the scheme

- By concentrating on universities with high numbers of BME students, the final make-up of candidates on the scheme should be proportionate. The scheme will therefore support the organisation's aims of reflecting the community it serves.
- The scheme is very flexible and may be adapted to suit both the organisation and the individual.
- As the scheme is targeted solely at graduates, it is envisaged to have more universal appeal to this target group.
- The numbers on the scheme can be adjusted each year to address projected demand in the years ahead.
- Raising awareness of the MPS would also indirectly attract good quality candidates into other police family roles, thereby enhancing the organisation's reputation as being an employer of choice.



Guide Pic

Costs

The cost to the MPS need not be prohibitive, as the infrastructure for this scheme is largely in place. However, there are implications in terms of staffing levels, abstractions from operational teams and training staff. If the scheme is successful it will require further investment. In fact, many public and private sector organisations devote entire departments to the support of graduate recruitment and administration of the scheme. It is therefore recommended that HR Recruitment and HR People Development work together to establish both the short and longer term strategy.

Marketing the MPS Graduate Scheme and HPDS

AGR research has shown that, on average, there are around 90 applications per vacancy to organisations in their membership.

It is usual that employers target a limited number of institutions (15-20 maximum) to gain an understanding of the student base. Moreover, it limits the number of applicants, and so helps to concentrate resources on those more likely to fit their specification. It also helps to foster closer business links with careers advisors, who are essential in helping to promote the career opportunities within the Service.

In selecting appropriate institutions, consideration will be given to forming closer links with universities that have a higher than average percentage of BME students, for example:

- London Metropolitan University
- University of East London
- City University
- University of Westminster
- Kingston University
- Middlesex University

The existing approach to targeting university graduates is having some success but is limited by the lack of a real product to sell applicants. The longer-term adoption of a graduate scheme could have possible alignment to an HR Board member. This will serve to demonstrate the commitment at the highest level within the Service and provide a point of reference for prospective candidates and successful participants in the scheme.



Timing

The timing of the communication with graduates throughout their second year and the ability of the organisation to offer secure employment by the third year of study is vital, as this allows students the time to concentrate on their final studies.

Branding

The MPS should make use of the existing brand loyalty surrounding the police service. However there is a need to raise awareness of the career choices available within the MPS by specifically targeting this group.

It is essential that the MPS present itself alongside other major employers of choice in appropriate environments such as career events, websites and publications.

Campaign

The MPS has already taken the opportunity to develop graduate marketing material, including a specific graduate advertising campaign. The campaign “What use is your degree?” focuses upon the development of skills and abilities beyond obtaining a formal qualification. It also builds upon the positive elements of joining the organisation - i.e. excitement, variety, and putting something back into the community - whilst seeking to address some of the concerns raised.

Media

Effective media campaigns promoting the existence of graduate opportunities should be adopted in both mainstream and minority graduate publications. Specific campaigns should focus upon community involvement and address the issue of danger by featuring realistic profiles of existing officers.

Websites

The newly constructed recruitment website www.metpolicecareers.co.uk offers a wealth of information about the many and varied career opportunities available within the MPS. However, further developments early next year will see the creation of a graduate micro site.

The greater use of IT in the recruitment process has implications for graduate recruitment and selection. It is envisaged that all offline activity (e.g. brochures, giveaways and events), as well as online activity, will drive traffic to the website.

Whilst e-recruitment can raise some challenges - such as issues of equity and access - there are a number of ways of addressing this, and this is not generally perceived to give rise for concern.



Guide Pic

Work Placements

Providing work placements for sandwich students has traditionally played an important role in the long-term recruitment of graduates, as has providing sponsorship.

Graduate sponsorships, further training, bursary schemes and assistance with student loans are all ways of attracting and retaining graduates. However, the most effective way of attracting high calibre graduates continues to be the provision of a quality graduate scheme.

Strategic Platform

**So how does the MPS progress from here -
Decisions to be made**

- * Whether there is the necessary strategic backing within the organisation to support the development of a specific MPS graduate scheme.
- * Funding and resources for long-term investment in the scheme.
- * Where the administration of the scheme will best fit within the organisation in terms of its creation, development, implementation and evaluation.
- * The exact nature of the recruitment and selection process and the numbers required, in addition to the actual detail of the scheme.
- * Timetable for delivery.



Conclusion

The business case for having a graduate scheme is a compelling one. The MPS would not only benefit from enhanced skills and experiences from a broad section of the community, but would also encourage competitive advantage through the generation of new ideas. Short-term opportunities such as work placements would also introduce flexibility at times of difficulty, such as during holiday periods and peaks in workload. These placements also give the organisation the opportunity to evaluate students as new talent in advance of employment.

Fundamentally, it would enable the MPS to directly target a largely untapped pool of skilled resources, many of which come from BME communities.

Competition within the graduate labour market means that students are keen to work, not only to support themselves through their studies, but also to enhance their marketability and career prospects through real work experience.

A good experience by the individual, whether or not they ultimately become a MPS employee, can only enhance the reputation of the organisation and, may, in the longer term, assist in together making London a safer city.