

## How to guide: Using the evidence-based policing maturity model

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## What is the maturity model

The evidence-based policing (EBP) maturity model is a self-assessment tool that describes the typical features that characterise an evidence-based organisation at different stages or levels of development.

The model can be used to:

- indicate how far an evidence-based approach has been established within a team/force
- inform what activities and behaviours can be developed to increase levels of maturity in relation to EBP.

This guide provides advice on how you can use the model to review and develop EBP in your team or organisation. Before getting started, you may find it useful to refer to the [College's definition of EBP](#).

## How was the model developed?

The EBP maturity model is based on a College review of the best available research evidence on what characterises an evidence-based organisation in a policing context. The model was then reviewed, developed and finalised during a series of regional and national workshops with police officers and staff. Involving policing practitioners in developing the model helped to ensure it's relevant and accessible to its intended users.

## Why is the model useful?

This model supports forces in progressing towards the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC) [Policing Vision](#), which states that by 2025, EBP will be embedded and will inform everyday policing practice. The model is designed to help police organisations reflect on their current culture and behaviours in relation to EBP and to identify areas for improvement.

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## What should the model be used for?

The EBP model is designed to aid reflection, inform development and promote change. It can be used by individuals, in teams, or across a whole force at a strategic level. The model provides a mechanism for supporting structured and ongoing discussions about the level of EBP maturity in the organisation.

The model can be used in a number of ways and at different stages in the development of evidence-based practice. Its uses include:

- benchmarking current EBP capability
- identifying differences in perceptions, and building consensus across different roles, ranks and teams
- helping forces to identify their own areas of strength and areas for improvement, and tracking these over time

- demonstrating characteristics of an organisation and/or team with a more developed approach to EBP
- encouraging peer support – matching those with something to share to those with something to learn.

The model is not intended to be used for performance management or external assessment purposes.

### Getting started

🗨️ Be clear at the start about whether you are assessing the whole force, the command, the area or the team as this will have an impact on your scores. 🗨️

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## How is the model structured?

The EBP maturity model is presented as a matrix or table, where the rows represent the enablers in an organisation that influence the implementation of EBP. The columns represent the levels of maturity, with '1' being the least developed and '5' being the most developed or mature. Within each box there are a number of statements that describe examples of characteristics of an organisation at each of the five levels of maturity.

The statements should not be used as a precise checklist, but they are examples of the type of features and behaviours expected at that level. It may be that some of the level statements are relevant but not all, so in that case you will need to decide which box is the closest fit.

## Levels

	1: Limited	2: Initiated	3: Refined	4: Developed	5: Integrated
Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

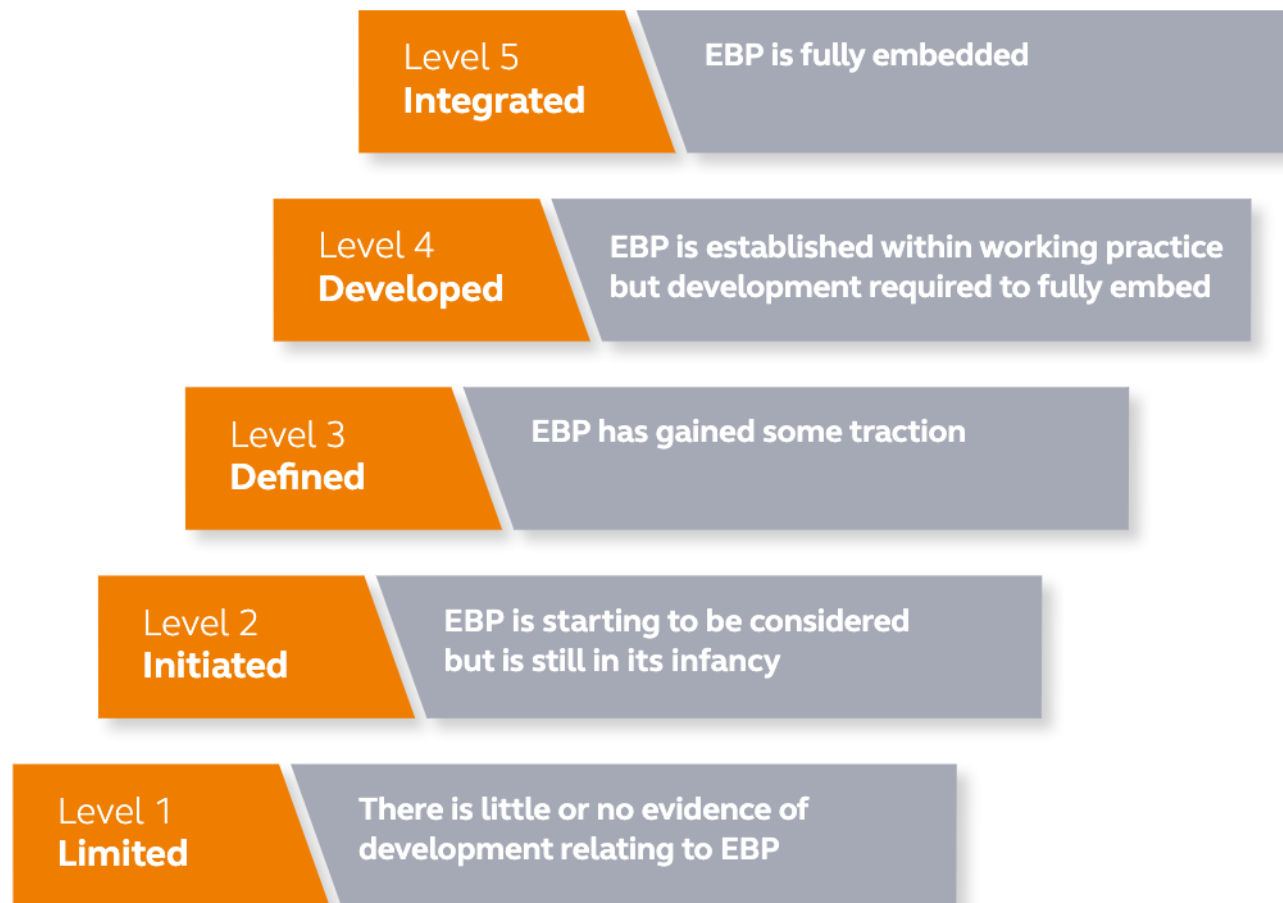
## Enablers

The four EBP enablers identified as important in adopting EBP are:

Enabler	Description
<b>Culture</b>	The underlying beliefs, values and behaviours of the organisation that inhibit or support EBP. This includes how receptive (or resistant) the force is to adopting and promoting EBP in its everyday practice and decision making, and the extent to which EBP is viewed by staff as central to the development and improvement of future policy and practice.
<b>Capability</b>	The degree of investment in resources to develop and improve the capability of all staff to understand and practice evidence-based policing. This includes the extent of sufficient learning opportunities provided for staff to develop their skills, knowledge and experience of research and EBP.
<b>Structure</b>	The presence or absence of appropriate mechanisms to capture and facilitate learning and practice around EBP and to disseminate and promote it throughout the organisation and the wider service. These mechanisms include the level of investment in effective collaborations and knowledge exchange activities with academics and other key stakeholders in order to generate, develop and share learning around EBP.
<b>Strategy</b>	The conditions, processes and core activities most important to the organisation, which can offer the greatest potential for improvement around EBP. This includes the level of commitment by leaders and senior managers to the promotion and implementation of EBP and the extent to which the force's mission, vision and strategic plan reflect a commitment to evidence-based practice.

## Levels of maturity

The five levels of maturity for progressing towards embedding EBP are:



## How should the model be used?

The model should be used to stimulate structured discussion in groups or teams to help reach a consensus about the level of EBP maturity in a team or organisation. Consider including people from a range of roles, ranks and responsibilities to reflect varied experiences and perspectives and to encourage constructive debate.

## STEP 1: Getting started

First, complete the model individually by placing a tick in the box for the one level that best fits each enabler. For example, you might decide that 'Culture' is a level 1 in your team or organisation and 'Capability' a level 2. Jot down the reasons for your decision to discuss later. Individual scores can be recorded on the [A3 printable version](#) of the model.

### Preparing

🔗 To get the greatest value, consider randomly selecting people to attend from across all the different ranks and roles. 🔗

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## STEP 2: Reaching consensus

Once the model has been completed individually, groups can be brought together for a facilitated discussion to reflect on the similarities and differences in scores and to agree a consensus. This should be as informal as possible to encourage open discussion and debate.

During this discussion, scores across all enablers should be considered. The scores are unlikely to be the same across all four enablers and this will help to gain a greater understanding of EBP development across the organisation and to identify where there are strengths and where there are areas for improvement.

Strengths and potential barriers across each of the enablers should be discussed and recorded, encouraging participants to reflect on why the organisation is where it is and how it can progress to a higher level.

### Using the model

🔗 Don't become too fixated on each individual statement – decide where you are based on what the box is broadly describing. You might find some statements apply from level 4 but overall your team/force more accurately sits at a level 2 or 3. 🔗

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### STEP 3: Moving forward

The model can also be used to agree which (if any) enablers are important for your force or team to improve on, how many levels you agree the improvement needs to go up by, and over what timeframe. This can be used to inform the development of an action plan for progressing EBP in your

#### Using the model

🔗 As well as considering individual levels of maturity, it is also useful to discuss the links between the different enablers, for example, how EBP culture affects strategy and vice versa. 🔗

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organisation. The **online version** of the model, which allows you to save comments, observations and actions, is a useful tool to facilitate reviews of progress.

The enablers you select for improvement do not have to be those you scored lowest on; it may be that you decide that one or more of the enablers are more important for your organisation to progress on than others. Agreement should be reached as to how many levels your force or team wishes to improve by; this will often be dictated by the availability of resource and capacity to support the required actions.

### STEP 4: Reviewing and updating

It is recommended that you repeat the above exercise at regular intervals to review and update your action plan with progress made and future actions.

### Sharing learning

The model can also be used to share learning and practice with other people and teams in different parts of the force, or with colleagues from other forces. Liaising with others will allow colleagues to share information on the strategies and activities they have established to help them become more effective in a particular enabler. It will also assist with self-reflection by each party on their own assessments, bringing together individuals or teams with something to learn and something to share.

**For further information and/or support in using the model please contact [whatworks@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:whatworks@college.pnn.police.uk)**



## Key references:

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We're the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. Our purpose is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust.

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