



College of
Policing

Working together
to achieve your potential

National Police Promotion Framework

Quality assurance audit guidance

Version number 5.0

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College of Policing Limited
Leamington Road
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NPPF.Enquiries@college.police.uk

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Introduction

The National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) was introduced to all forces in England and Wales on 1 April 2015 and applies to all officers seeking promotion to the rank of sergeant or inspector.

According to the Police (Promotion) Regulations 1996 (as amended), all forces in England and Wales must comply with the requirements of the NPPF.

Each force must carry out a quality assurance process, to ensure that it meets the nationally agreed standards on the implementation of NPPF. The College of Policing is responsible for the national NPPF quality assurance process. All forces in England and Wales are required to self-assess against this process periodically.

The different steps of the quality assurance process are provided in a diagram in Appendix 1.

Aim of the NPPF quality assurance process

The aim of the NPPF quality assurance process is to ensure that forces:

- operate a fair and effective promotion process for police constables and sergeants
- recommend standardisation in promotion activities at both local and national levels – the significant requirements are described in the NPPF national [operating manual](#)
- are provided with a framework that supports and enforces good practice in the administration of the NPPF process
- provide assurance that their promotion process is designed and delivered in line with the NPPF national [operating manual](#) requirements
- provide assurance to candidates and stakeholders that the administration of the NPPF is subject to scrutiny to ensure adherence to national standards
- provide assurance that any risk to fairness and equality is reduced and managed through comprehensive risk management processes
- set and enhance national standards of professionalism to ensure excellence in operational policing

- identify evidence of what works and share good practice
- support the education and professional development of police officers and staff effectively, providing equality in opportunities to all staff

In developing the quality assurance process, consideration has been given to the interests of the candidates, individual forces and the police service as a whole.

Governance

The NPPF governance board oversees the NPPF process and the related NPPF quality assurance process.

The board membership comprises of:

- College of Policing
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
- Police Federation of England and Wales
- NPPF strategic user group
- Home Office
- senior police officers

The governance board is responsible for:

- directing the strategy for the NPPF
- managing and resolving strategic issues relating to the NPPF
- providing a decision-making body for changes to policy and practice
- considering any changes requested to the relevant regulations
- reviewing annual highlight reports relating to the NPPF

Overview of the quality assurance process

Forces may not run promotion activities for both ranks at the same time. However, forces are expected, via the quality assurance process, to show how they apply the NPPF process in promoting to both ranks. Forces must indicate whether or not the same approach will apply to both ranks and must describe any differences, including timescales.

The Police Service Quality Management System (PSQMS)

The force self-assessments mentioned above are completed on a software application called the **Police Service Quality Management System** (PSQMS), using the version based on the internet.

In the event of a technical difficulty, or if a new point of contact needs access to PSQMS, please contact **PSQMS.enquiries@college.police.uk** for assistance. There is no charge for using PSQMS.

Registration on PSQMS

All Home Office forces are now registered on the PSQMS (internet version) as part of the quality assurance audit process.

It is the responsibility of each force to ensure that the registration section is kept up to date and current on PSQMS.

The information provided will only be used for communications regarding the individual force's submission.

The purpose of registration is to:

- identify the primary force contact for NPPF
- assure national stakeholders of the force's agreement to support the achievement of the aims of the NPPF – forces are expected to agree a number of registration clauses

The registration section holds details of the single point of contact (SPoC) for NPPF.

If there is more than one point of contact, you must put a comma after each name and after each email address for technical reasons. It is recommended to always have a deputy SPoC to support continuity.

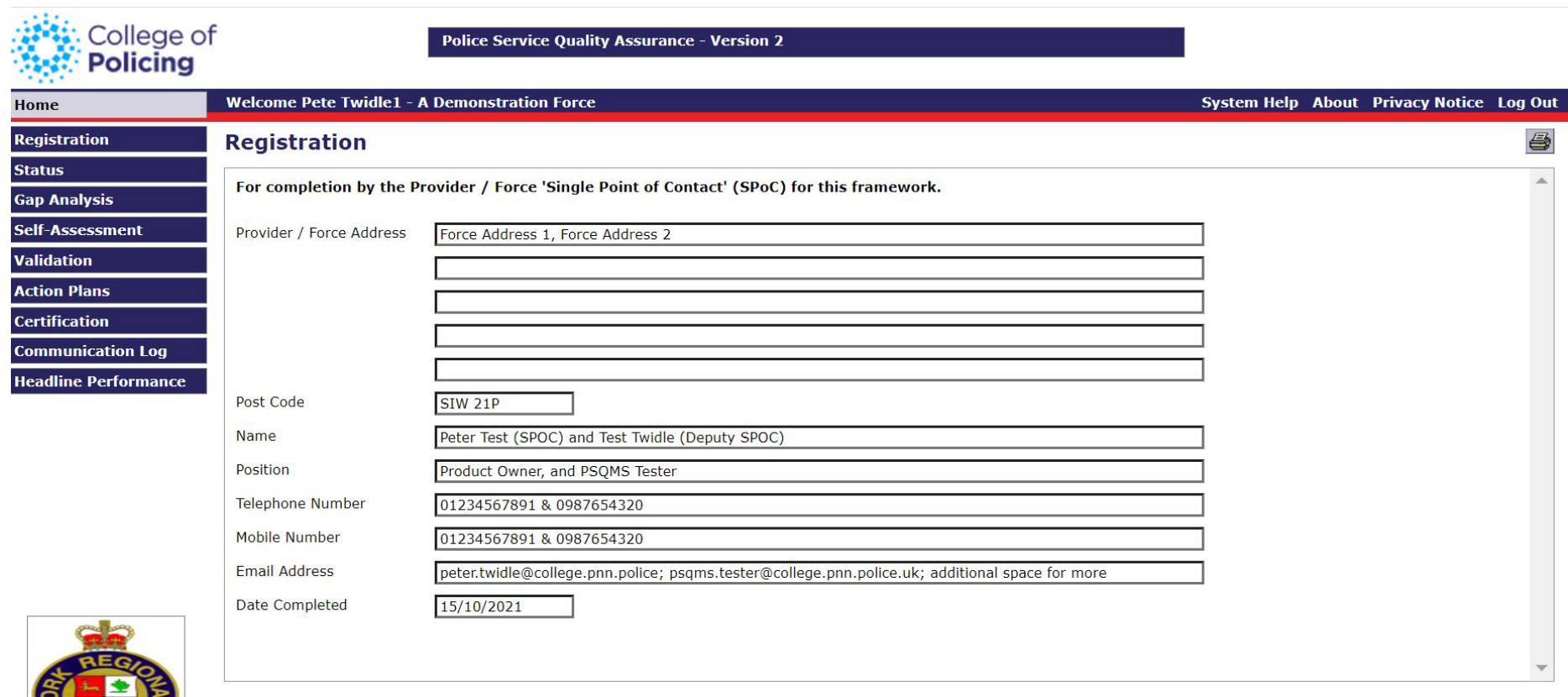
The SPoC's role

- Inform the College of any changes to the SPoC, including contact detail changes.
- Ensure a nominated deputy in case of sickness, with a reasonable depth of knowledge to deputise on work related to this process.

- Where a collaboration exists, it is the SPoC's role to identify the lead person responsible for implementing the NPPF on behalf of the forces represented in the collaboration.
- Responsible for submitting the self-assessment and communicating with the College on behalf of the force.

Registration

Below is an image of how the registration template looks on PSQMS.



The screenshot shows the PSQMS Registration form. At the top, there is a header bar with the College of Policing logo on the left, the text "Police Service Quality Assurance - Version 2" in the center, and navigation links "System Help", "About", "Privacy Notice", and "Log Out" on the right. Below the header, a sidebar on the left contains a list of menu items: "Home", "Registration", "Status", "Gap Analysis", "Self-Assessment", "Validation", "Action Plans", "Certification", "Communication Log", and "Headline Performance". The "Registration" menu item is highlighted. The main content area is titled "Registration" and contains a sub-header "For completion by the Provider / Force 'Single Point of Contact' (SPoC) for this framework." Below this, there are several input fields for registration details. The "Provider / Force Address" field is a multi-line text area containing "Force Address 1, Force Address 2". The "Post Code" field contains "SIW 21P". The "Name" field contains "Peter Test (SPOC) and Test Twidle (Deputy SPOC)". The "Position" field contains "Product Owner, and PSQMS Tester". The "Telephone Number" field contains "01234567891 & 0987654320". The "Mobile Number" field contains "01234567891 & 0987654320". The "Email Address" field contains "peter.twidle@college.pnn.police; psqms.testers@college.pnn.police.uk; additional space for more". The "Date Completed" field contains "15/10/2021".

College of Policing

Police Service Quality Assurance - Version 2

Home Welcome Pete Twidle1 - A Demonstration Force System Help About Privacy Notice Log Out

Registration

Status

Gap Analysis

Self-Assessment

Validation

Action Plans

Certification

Communication Log

Headline Performance

Registration

For completion by the Provider / Force 'Single Point of Contact' (SPoC) for this framework.

Provider / Force Address Force Address 1, Force Address 2

Post Code SIW 21P

Name Peter Test (SPOC) and Test Twidle (Deputy SPOC)

Position Product Owner, and PSQMS Tester

Telephone Number 01234567891 & 0987654320

Mobile Number 01234567891 & 0987654320

Email Address peter.twidle@college.pnn.police; psqms.testers@college.pnn.police.uk; additional space for more

Date Completed 15/10/2021

Please read and agree to the registration clauses by ticking each box, as displayed on PSQMS on the registration page.

Self-assessment and the quality audits

A self-assessment is carried out by forces on PSQMS against the quality assurance criteria. There are two cycles of self-assessments:

- a full self-assessment every four years
- an interim self-assessment every two years

Each force will submit an explanation of how they are addressing each criterion, with supporting evidence uploaded on to PSQMS. The College of Policing provides support as needed and upon request to forces via Microsoft Teams. Details of how to seek support are provided by the quality assurance adviser before forces submit their self-assessment or you can email PSQA.Enquiries@college.police.uk

The framework

Generic criteria

The generic criteria below cover all four steps of the NPPF.

- A.1 Implementation in accordance with the [operating manual](#).
- A.2 Candidate record of competence (PDR or equivalent).
- A.3 Local data capture and monitoring, and national equality-based data capture.
- A.4 Quality assurance.
- A.5 Reasonable adjustments.
- A.6 Appeals.

NPPF step one

The criterion below covers only NPPF step one.

- B.1 Line managers are sufficiently skilled to carry out their duties.

NPPF step two

The legal examination is subject to a rigorous quality assurance system within the College of Policing. As such, no specific criterion has been included in the quality assurance framework.

However, force self-assessments would still need to refer to step two in considering a number of the generic criteria. This is because NPPF should be presented to candidates as a complete four-step process. For example, in assessing how information is presented to candidates, it is important for the force to explain how candidates are kept fully informed about all four steps, including step two.

NPPF step three

The criteria below cover only NPPF step three.

- D.1 Detailed explanation of force implementation of step three.
- D.2 Evidence of how the 'pool' of successful candidates are managed, including the rank ordering of candidates.

NPPF step four

The criteria below cover only NPPF step four.

- E.1 Awarding body registration.
- E.2 Opportunity planning for candidate success.

Full details of these criteria can be found in Appendix 2, which includes an explanation for each criterion, together with an indication of possible evidence. Guidance for each criterion can also be seen on PSQMS.

The explanations section on PSQMS

- On PSQMS, enter an explanation as to how the force addresses each criterion. Please keep explanations simple, easy to read and in short paragraphs or bullet points. A useful tip when using PSQMS is to enter each sentence separately, especially when referring to evidence items.
- Anonymise all evidence – for example, use ranks or job titles rather than personal names.

- Another useful approach is to type explanations into a Microsoft Word document, and then cut and paste onto PSQMS.
- Please remember that PSQMS does not have an automatic save system, so it is advisable to save your work regularly using the blue 'save' button.

For interim reviews or renewals, do **not** overwrite or delete existing entries. Instead, please make new entries.

The evidence section on PSQMS

- You may upload more than one item of evidence (for each criterion) in support of your explanations.
- For security reasons, the internet version of PSQMS – which hosts the NPPF quality assurance process – is only allowed to hold documents with the former classification of 'not protectively marked' or the new classification of 'official'. If you wish to submit evidence with a higher classification, which should only be in exceptional circumstances, please email NPPF.enquiries@college.police.uk to receive instructions on how to do so.
- Upload only sufficient, pertinent and credible evidence to demonstrate compliance for a criterion. Where a full document is submitted, please signpost to the relevant section of the document for the purpose of the audit.

It is not a requirement to write new documents specifically for the NPPF self-assessment submission, except if relevant documents do not exist. Existing policies and procedures that meet the requirements should be used. All documents used, such as policies and procedures, must be up to date and relevant.

Useful tips

- Give a unique reference to each evidence item.
- Only upload evidence relevant to NPPF.
- If the evidence is online, PSQMS might not accept hyperlinks. Please print out the relevant document and upload it, copy and paste into a Microsoft Word document and upload it, or take a screenshot of the document and upload it.
- If you upload extracts, please provide details of the original document and its status.

Submission

Only submit the self-assessment when all the criteria have been addressed, otherwise the submission will not be audited by the College and the force would still be given a 'non-submission' status.

When you have completed the self-assessment, please send a notification of submission by emailing PSQA.Enquiries@college.police.uk.

Desktop validation

Please see the process outlined in [Appendix 1](#).

Review of self-assessment

A quality assurance adviser (the auditor) will be assigned to carry out an audit of the force's online self-assessment. The auditor will then complete a feedback report for the benefit of the force. The outcome of the desktop audit will be detailed in the feedback report showing the findings and any actions that need to be carried out by the force.

If no issues or risks emerge, the force will be deemed compliant with the quality assurance framework.

If any issues or risks are identified, the auditor will work with the force to ensure that they are resolved to an agreed timescale, based on an action plan mutually agreed with the College of Policing.

Site audits

A site visit will only be conducted under exceptional circumstances.

Such a visit will focus on any issues and/or risks identified during the audit of the self-assessment. It will not require a re-examination or submission of the entire self-assessment.

The following are examples of possible issues or risks that might require a visit.

- The force's chosen method of implementation at step three creates risks in relation to equality of opportunity.

- Continued absence of local quality assurance measures covering steps one, three and four.
- Evidence that the force's implementation is in conflict with the requirements of the [NPPF operating manual](#).

Interim audit

After two years, forces deemed as compliant will be expected to undertake an interim review of their self-assessment on PSQMS. The interim audit date will be included in the initial feedback report and reminders for upcoming submission will follow intermittently.

The interim self-assessment should include an update of the registration details on PSQMS, as necessary.

Forces will be asked to review the self-assessment and add explanations and evidence where major changes have occurred, such as the implementation of a new regulation. Forces will need to explain how any significant changes and outcomes that have taken place have an impact on the past self-assessment submission.

If no change has taken place for a particular criterion, then 'No change' should be entered in a new explanation box. No evidence would be needed in this case.

An auditor will audit the interim self-assessment and either confirm that the force is still compliant with the framework or set an action plan to address any issues.

A full audit

A full review will be required after four years of being deemed as compliant.

After four years, new explanations must be provided and evidence must be updated. At this time, an entry of 'no change' will not be acceptable.

The self-assessment should cover all criteria but particularly focus on:

- forces ensuring that registration details are up to date on PSQMS
- national change and how forces have responded to any changes to the [operating manual](#)

- any significant changes that have occurred locally to the way the force implements the NPPF – for example, a major change to the way that the force implements step three of the NPPF
- how a force has used equality information to inform decision making, in terms of anything it is doing to address its public sector equality duty
- monitoring of ongoing practice at step three
- monitoring of procedures and outcomes for appeals and reasonable adjustments
- any changes to relationships with awarding bodies

This would be achieved by the force reviewing its existing self-assessment on the PSQMS. New entries should be made against each criterion. Previous entries should not be amended or deleted. An auditor will review the updated self-assessment and either confirm that the force is still compliant or set an action plan to address any issues or risks identified. Each force will be issued a written reminder before the re-assessment date, giving the force sufficient time to prepare and undertake the necessary review.

Non-compliance

If a force does not comply with the requirements of the NPPF quality assurance system and if any related issues cannot be resolved by the auditing team at the College, the force will be referred to the NPPF governance board, which will determine the outcome and subsequent action.

Advice and guidance

Quality assurance advisers can offer advice and guidance on the detail of the NPPF quality assurance process, covering, for example, the criteria and the process.

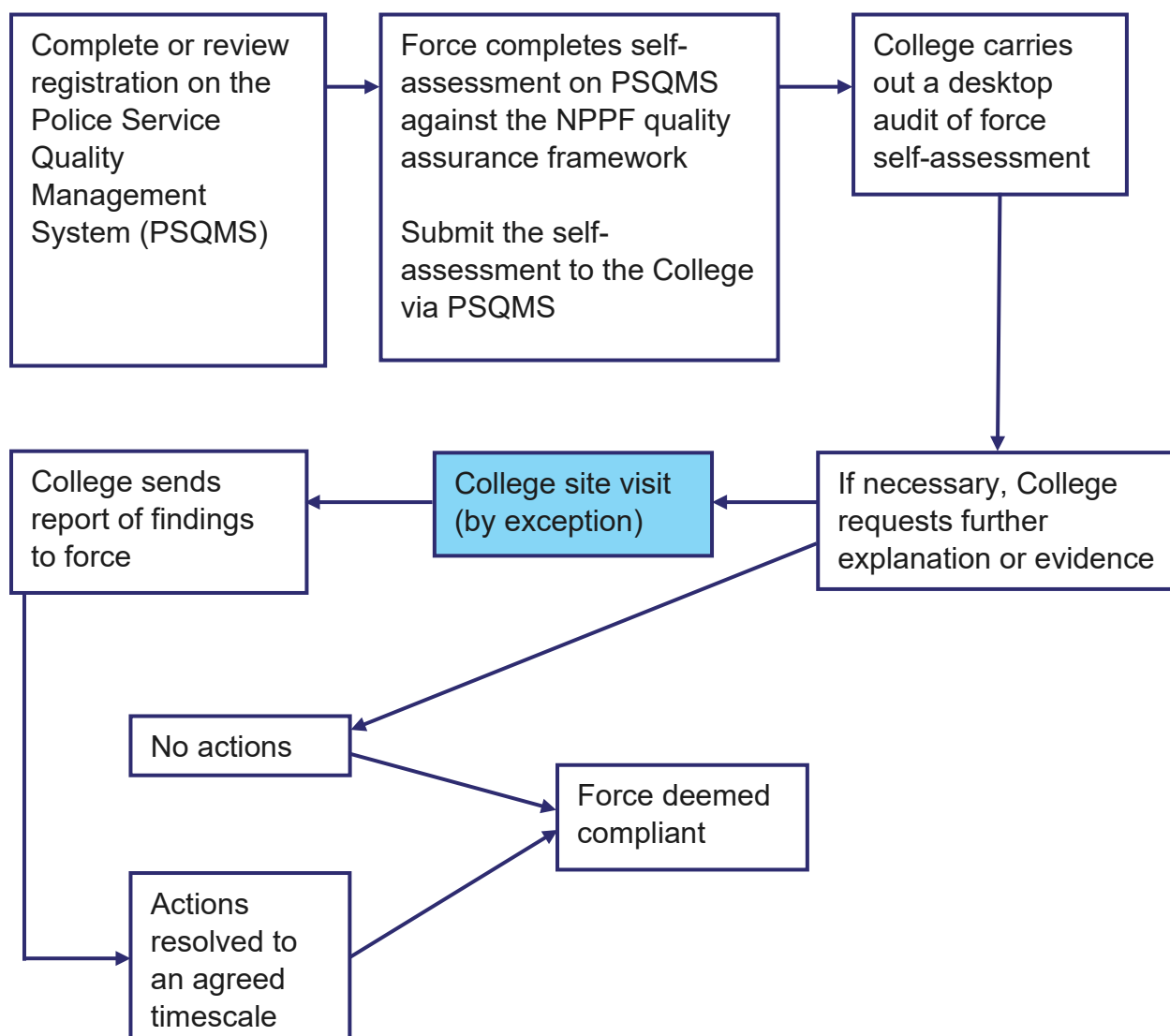
Please email PSQA.enquiries@college.police.uk for assistance. If we are unable to help via email support, the need for a Microsoft Teams meeting can be explored.

Advice and guidance on the actual implementation of the NPPF will be provided by members of the NPPF policy team. A NPPF page exists on the College website.

Please email the NPPF policy team via NPPF.enquiries@college.police.uk

Technical support is also available for how to use the PSQMS. Please email PSQMS.enquiries@college.police.uk for assistance.

Appendix 1: NPPF quality assurance process



Appendix 2: Criteria framework

Generic criteria

Criterion	A.1 Implementing NPPF in accordance with the national operating manual
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain in detail how the force has interpreted and applied the mandatory requirements of the <u>operating manual</u> in the implementation of all four steps of the NPPF. How does the force manage the integration of Objective Structured Performance-Related Examination (OSPPE) and Fast Track qualified officers in the promotion process?
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A force operating manual for NPPF or a standard operating procedure(s) or force equivalent for each of the four steps. Evidence that the force has complied with paragraph 3.18.2 of the national <u>operating manual</u> that reflects regulation 3 of The Police (Promotion) Regulations 1996 (as amended).

Criterion	A.2 Giving feedback or candidate record of competence – professional development review (PDR) or equivalent
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the feedback management in the PDR, talent development and management process and the use of a candidate record of competence (PDR or equivalent). How is this critical to the successful implementation of all four steps of the NPPF?
Evidence required	<p>Please provide examples to cover all steps of the NPPF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the PDR system covers all four steps of the NPPF. Any system used must be based on the Competency and Values Framework (CVF). Any separate force system must

	<p>be mapped in general terms to the CVF regarding role requirements and personal qualities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of how the force manages the provision of feedback to candidates.
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Criterion	A.3 Equality duties under the Equality Act 2010
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain how the force captures and monitors local data on officers entering and progressing through the four steps of the NPPF. Include details of who is responsible for making decisions based on the data collected in relation to NPPF. ▪ Provide examples of what steps are taken by the force to ensure that, when implementing the NPPF, the force has given due regard to the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017).
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of the involvement of specialist staff in the design and implementation of the force's approach to the NPPF – for example, the Police Federation and subject matter experts. ▪ Evidence that the force annually submits fully completed NPPF data capture for sergeants and inspectors using templates provided by the College of Policing. Evidence of how this data is used to inform decision making in the administration of the NPPF process. ▪ Evidence of the force having undertaken a current equality impact assessment, reflecting its consideration in step three methodologies. ▪ Evidence of any positive action initiatives that have been used to encourage participation from under-represented groups.

Criterion	A.4 Quality assurance and information management
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain how the force communicates and manages information to potential and existing candidates regarding the requirements of promotion via the NPPF route at all steps. Demonstrate how candidates are fully briefed about the legal examination step two and available support from the force. ▪ Explain how the force quality assures the implementation of the NPPF, covering steps one, three and four. ▪ Step two quality assurance would be dealt with under the NPPF step two candidate handbook, as issued by the College of Policing.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples of information provided to potential and existing candidates regarding the overall NPPF process. For example, internet e-bulletins or guidance documents. ▪ Explain if there are any specific differences in the approach between the sergeant and inspector routes. ▪ Evidence of the involvement of key stakeholders in the quality assurance process, such as specialist staff, staff associations, and police and crime commissioners. ▪ Evidence of a decision-making process to consider the outcomes of any quality assurance activity. ▪ Evidence of how the force standardises implementation in steps one, three and four, particularly where any of the activity is devolved from a central input – for example, regional standardisation meetings. ▪ Evidence of the manager's leadership and responsibility in information management and quality assurance covering all four steps. (This must evidence managers' practices in step 1 and the use of the College step one confirmation of eligibility form to confirm candidates eligibility. If the College form is not

	<p>used, forces must upload their own step one form and show that all College listed eligibility criteria appear on their form.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of how the force plans and prepares the implementation of a step three activity – for example, briefing activities or training for staff involved.
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Criterion	A.5 Reasonable adjustments
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain how the force manages requests for reasonable adjustments in relation to steps one, three and four. Step two reasonable adjustments are dealt with under the NPPF step two candidate handbook, as issued by the College of Policing.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples of any reasonable adjustment requests from candidates and how they were processed. ▪ Examples of force policies and procedures on reasonable adjustments or the equivalent.

Criterion	A.6 Appeals
Explanation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explain the appeals system in place for steps one, three and four of the NPPF. b. Step two appeals are dealt with under the NPPF step two candidate handbook, as issued by the College of Policing.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of examples of appeals processed under NPPF (provide some different examples) and how the outcomes affected the implementation of the NPPF. ▪ Examples of force policies and procedures on appeals or equivalent.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces should ensure that they comply with paragraph 9.5 of the operating manual.
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Step one

Competence in current rank

Criterion	B.1 Line managers are sufficiently skilled to carry out their duties
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the force assists line managers in undertaking their role in relation to step one.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of briefings provided to line managers on the NPPF process adopted by the force – in particular, step one.

Step two

Legal knowledge examination

No specific criterion under this quality assurance framework.

References have been made to step two in some of the criteria above that must be considered.

Step three

Assessment against rank-specific competencies and matching to vacancies

Criterion	D.1 Detailed explanation of force implementation of step three
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the design and implementation of the force's approach to step three. This should refer to a sergeant's and/or an inspector's promotion process. Any differences between the two approaches should be explained.

Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of the behavioural competencies used. If the force does not use the College's national CVF, the force must map across the force's competencies against the competencies in the national CVF. ▪ Evidence of how the force plans and prepares to implement a step three activity – for example, briefing activities or training for staff involved. ▪ Evidence of how the force standardises implementation, particularly where any of the activity is devolved from a central input, including how outcomes are considered and acted on. ▪ Evidence of debriefing activity and the decision-making process for identifying successful candidates. ▪ Evidence of stakeholders' involvement in the design and implementation of the chosen approach.
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Criterion	D.2 Evidence of how the 'pool' of successful candidates are managed, including the rank ordering of candidates
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An explanation of how the force manages the pool of successful candidates at step three, including how it manages extensions to a candidate's time in the pool. ▪ Explain who is responsible for the management of the pool.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of how the system is communicated to candidates – for example, a candidate handbook or a procedure document. ▪ Evidence of a transparent decision-making process regarding the time candidates are held in the pool or promoted.

Step four

Temporary promotion and work-based assessment

Criterion	E.1 Awarding body registration
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the registration process of candidates with an awarding body as they start their period of temporary promotion.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed registration forms. Provide copies of online registration forms. Evidence must be anonymised.

Criterion	E.2 Opportunity planning for candidate success
Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the force ensures that all candidates have the opportunity to achieve the required Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) units or the equivalent for Wales. Explain who is responsible for coordinating roles.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of how candidates are managed so that they are provided with the correct opportunities to achieve the various units – for example, redacted completed PDRs. Give an example of how information based on promotion opportunities are provided to potential and existing candidates.

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.

college.police.uk