



College of
Policing

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Direct Entry Superintendent National Assessment Centre: What to expect

2019

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Welcome to the National Assessment Centre

Congratulations on reaching this stage of the selection process for the Direct Entry Superintendent programme. The assessment centre has prepared exercises designed to assess your skills and suitability for the role of superintendent in the police service, and the potential to reach at least the chief officer ranks during your career.

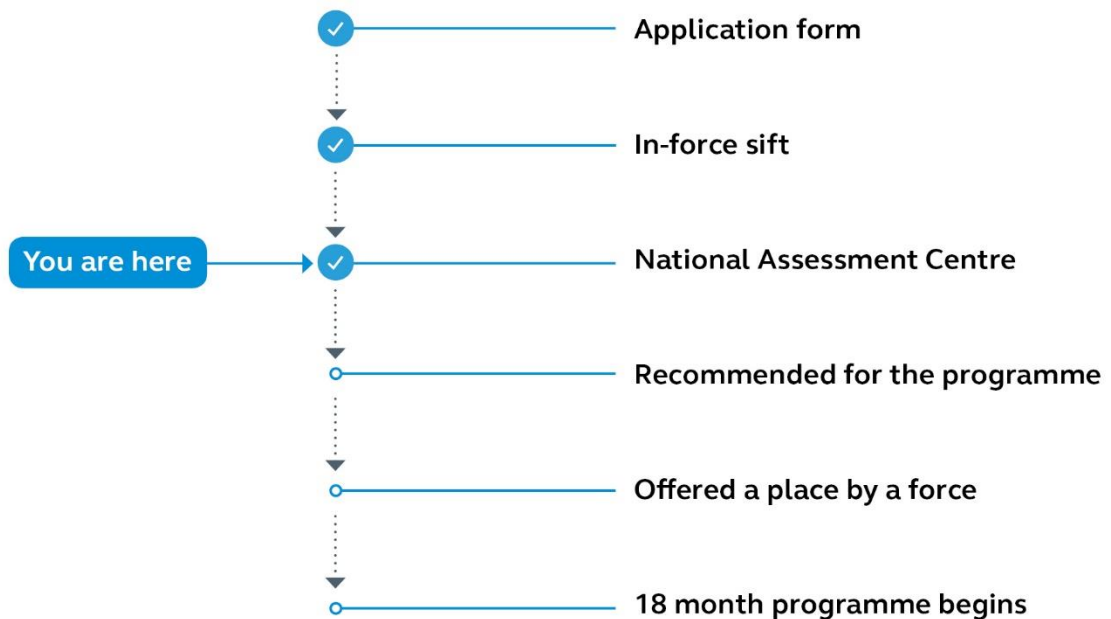
The aim of the programme is to:

- Identify talented individuals who will bring new perspectives and diverse backgrounds to support the continuous development of policing, and impact on the management and culture of the service.
- Support individuals' development to perform effectively at the role of superintendent.
- Support individuals' continuing development to reach at least the chief officer ranks during their careers.

Successfully completing the assessment centre brings you one step closer to starting the Direct Entry Superintendent programme, where individuals will hold the rank of superintendent from the beginning, and undergo operational rotations at the rank of constable, sergeant, inspector and finally, superintendent. The programme focuses on the development of leadership, management and operational skills to equip individuals with the knowledge and experience required to perform effectively at the role of superintendent.

Individuals will be supported by their force and undergo classroom learning with operational training and regular assessments, where they will need to meet set standards to remain on the programme.

Where you are in the process



Please note that in order to successfully gain a place on the Direct Entry Superintendent programme you must be both 'recommended' at the national assessment centre **and** be selected by a force. Hiring forces may choose to interview recommended candidates before offering a place.

The National Assessment Centre

Where to go

College of Policing
Harperley Hall
Fir Tree
Crook
County Durham
DL15 8DS

Travel

Car: Free onsite car parking is available.

Train: The closest train stations are Durham and Darlington. Taxis are readily available from outside the stations or you can pre-book a taxi (see below). Journey time is approximately 30 minutes.

Air travel: The nearest airport is Newcastle Airport and it takes approximately 50 minutes by car or taxi to get to Harperley Hall.

Taxi: To pre-book Moore's, the local taxi company, call Steven Moore on 01388 763271 or email moore-steven@btconnect.com. When booking your taxi please specify that you are an assessment centre candidate.

Accommodation

Onsite accommodation will be provided for you on the first and second night of your assessment centre. All rooms have an en suite and a double bed and contain towels, a hairdryer and tea and coffee making facilities.

Onsite facilities

WiFi: Free internet access is available in all rooms and breakout areas. Please ask for the WiFi password at reception.

Restaurant: Meals are served in the restaurant at the following times:

Breakfast: 7:00 – 8:45

Lunch: 11:45 – 14:00

Dinner: 17:30 – 20:00

Licensed bar: There is a licensed bar available from 7.00pm

Takeaway options: Reception will be able to provide details of local takeaway options.

Hot drinks and vending machines: These are available throughout the site.

Bank and credit card facilities: We advise that you have some cash available as Harperley Hall does not have a cash machine. However, you can pay by 'chip and pin' in the bar and restaurant. The nearest cash machine facilities are in Crook, which is approximately three miles away, where there are TSB and Barclays branches. There is also a cash machine at the local petrol station.

Gym: There is a small onsite gym with standard equipment, open 24/7.

Laundry and kitchen area: Every floor has a communal kitchen and laundry room which includes a fridge, microwave, washing machine (we advise you to bring your own detergent), an iron and ironing board.

Stationery: Stationery will be provided for your use at the assessment centre, however you can use your own stationery should you wish. A standard pocket calculator will be issued for use in exercises where you may need to work with numbers, however you will not be permitted to use your own calculator at the assessment centre.

What to wear

During assessment hours the dress code is business attire. During leisure time there is a more relaxed dress code.

Timetable

Day one: Arrive and register at 20.00. You will receive your personalised timetable followed by a candidate briefing.

Day two: Full day of exercises.

Day three: Half a day of exercises. You will be finished by 13.30.

We have included an example timetable below. Please note, this is not your timetable, but an example of what to expect. You will have breaks, and we encourage you to consider ways to relax during this downtime.

Example timetable:

DIRECT ENTRY SUPERINTENDENT NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Friday 14th June

TIME	EXERCISE	ROOM
20:00 – 20:30	CANDIDATE REGISTRATION	Conference Room 2
20:30 – 21:00	CANDIDATE BRIEFING	Conference Room 2

Saturday 15th June

TIME	EXERCISE	ROOM
07:45 – 08:45	VALUES EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area
09:25 – 10:35	COMMUNITY PANEL EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area
11:25 – 12:50	PRESENTATION & INTERVIEW EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area
12:50 – 13:20	LUNCH	Restaurant
13:45 – 15:55	WRITTEN EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area

Sunday 16th June

TIME	EXERCISE	ROOM
07:45 – 08:40	PARTNERSHIP EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area
09:25 – 10:55	ABILITY TESTS	Candidate Waiting Area
11:10 – 12:25	OPERATIONAL BRIEFING EXERCISE	Candidate Waiting Area
12:25 – 12:55	LUNCH	Restaurant

The assessment

Competencies and values

During the assessment centre you will be assessed against all of the competencies and values within the Competency and Values Framework (CVF). In order to ensure you are able to perform at your best at the assessment centre you are advised to use the CVF to prepare alongside this overview document, which can be found using the below link.

https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Documents/Competency-and-Values-Framework-for-Policing_4.11.16.pdf

Each competency is described at three levels which reflects the increasing complexity of the associated behaviours. You will be assessed at level 3 of the relevant CVF competencies. The example behaviours shown under each of the levels are examples and not an exhaustive list. The description and why it is important sections of each competency are also central to understanding what is being looked at. However, the values are not split into levels as they should be demonstrated at every level in the same way.

The competencies assessed are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emotionally Aware• Take Ownership• Collaborative• Deliver, Support and Inspire• Analyse Critically• Innovative and Open-minded
The values assessed are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impartiality• Integrity• Public Service• Transparency

Assessors will be looking for behavioural evidence which demonstrates the appropriate competency and values during the relevant exercises. Your own focus during the exercises

will be on achieving the aims of the tasks, but an understanding of the CVF competencies and values will help guide your actions and decisions as you work through the exercises.

Self-assessment against the CVF can be a useful way to prepare for your assessment centre and gain familiarity with the competencies and values. Think about your performance in your current role:

- How do you demonstrate these competencies/values in your current role?
- Which competencies/values are strength areas for you?
- Which competencies/values are development areas for you?
- What do others see as your strength and development areas?

Who are the assessors?

At the assessment centre, you will be assessed by a number of different assessors. All our assessors are trained in the principles and skills associated with objective and fair assessment. Assessors also receive further training in the specific exercises used at the assessment centre. For every exercise you will be assessed by two assessors – one service assessor (from a force in the United Kingdom) and one external assessor.

The service assessors are:

- Currently serving or recently retired officers at the rank of superintendent or above
- police staff members at the equivalent rank of superintendent or above

The external assessors are:

- individuals entirely independent from the police service who are involved in selection at senior levels within the public and/or private sector.

What are the exercises?

There are **seven exercises** in total. These are not linked and have been designed to be independent of one another.

There are five 'work sample' exercises that are designed to closely reflect the tasks that a senior police officer performs. These are:

- an operational briefing
- a written in-tray
- a community panel exercise

- a partnership meeting
- a values exercise

The operational briefing, written in-tray, community panel, partnership meeting and values exercises are not set in a policing context. This is to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your management and leadership skills against the role you are aspiring to rather than specific policing experience.

For these exercises, you will not be expected to be fully familiar with policing terminology or have any specialist knowledge, but the exercises do closely reflect the types of tasks expected of a senior police officer.

The other two exercises are:

- a presentation and interview
- cognitive ability tests.

An overview of the content for these two exercises will be provided later in the document, but please note these are also set in a non-policing context aside from the presentation element. All exercises will each measure some of the competencies and values. For each exercise you will be given a grade for each competency and value it measures and an overall exercise mark to reflect how well you completed the tasks. [Appendix B](#) details the rating scales for these.

The assessment centre exercises have been designed around the priority areas generated from research into the leadership challenges facing the police service (see [Appendix A](#)).

Exercise Preparation

You will prepare for the exercises with other candidates. This will be led by a candidate coordinator who will give you all of the materials you need for the preparation stage and take you to the activity room, where you will be assessed. You will be given time to read a set of candidate instructions before beginning each exercise preparation. You will be able to take any notes you make during the preparation stage into the activity stage but you will not be able to take any notes made prior to the assessment centre into any stage of the exercise.

The exercises

Operational briefing Exercise

40 minutes – preparation

20 minutes – briefing and questions

You will be given information about a fictional scenario and **40 minutes** to prepare and read through the candidate materials. You will then be asked to give a briefing to two assessors on how you intend to address the issues in the scenario. You will have **10 minutes** to give your briefing, followed immediately by a further **10 minutes** in which the assessors will ask you questions about your briefing.

Competencies and values assessed:

Competency	Take Ownership
Competency	Deliver, Support and Inspire
Competency	Innovative and Open-minded

Written in-tray exercise

2 hours – to complete the exercise

You will be provided with a set of documents which you are required to work through in order to complete a number of tasks.

You will be required to type your response to the written in-tray exercise tasks and will be provided with a PC laptop and a separate keyboard and mouse. The laptop computers contain Microsoft Word® word processing software which will have all the usual functions enabled (for example, spelling and grammar checking, word count, etc.). You will also be provided with blank paper response sheet documents should you wish to include any additional information that you would prefer to handwrite rather than type (such as diagrams or tables).

You should also be aware that the laptop computers run the Microsoft® Windows 8.1 Operating System and are installed with MS Office 2013®. Whilst you will only be required to type onto a blank MS Word® word processing template, if you are not familiar with this operating system or version you may want to explore this in advance of the assessment centre so that you feel confident using it when you are on-site.

Your written script will then be printed and given to your assessors who will assess it the

following day.

Competencies and values assessed:

Value	Transparency
Competency	Emotionally Aware
Competency	Deliver, Support and Inspire
Competency	Innovative and Open-minded

Community panel exercise

30 minutes – preparation

30 minutes – meeting

You will be given information about a fictional scenario and asked to host a community event to address the issues presented. Actors will perform the role of characters within the scenario, for example community members in the area. Before the panel, you will have **30 minutes** to read through your candidate materials and prepare for the panel. The panel will last up to **30 minutes**.

Competencies and values assessed:

Value	Impartiality
Value	Integrity
Competency	Emotionally Aware
Competency	Take Ownership

Partnership meeting exercise

25 minutes – preparation

20 minutes – meeting

You will be given information about a fictional scenario and asked to hold a meeting with two individuals to address the issues presented. Actors will take the role of characters within the scenario, for example a partner from a different organisation. Before the meeting, you will have **25 minutes** to read through your candidate materials and prepare for the meeting. The meeting will last up to **20 minutes**.

Competencies and values assessed:

Competency	Emotionally Aware
Competency	Collaborative
Competency	Analyse Critically

Values exercise

20 minutes – preparation

10 minutes – briefing

15 minutes – questions

You will be provided with information about a fictional scenario and you will have **20 minutes** to read through the materials and prepare. You will then be asked to give a briefing to the assessors for **10 minutes** on your views, plan of action and rationale. The assessors will then have **15 minutes** to question you further about your actions and rationale.

Values assessed:

Value	Impartiality
Value	Integrity
Value	Public Service
Value	Transparency

Presentation/interview

30 minutes – prepare presentation

10 minutes – deliver presentation

10 minutes – questions

20 minutes – interview (approximately five minutes per question)

You will be given **30 minutes** to prepare a presentation on a contemporary policing topic that is sufficiently generic to avoid requiring specialist knowledge (you may wish to refer to [Appendix A](#) for information about the priority areas and challenges facing leaders). You will have **10 minutes** to deliver your presentation and then the assessors have **10 minutes** to ask questions.

The exercise will continue straight into an interview, which will last for **20 minutes**, with four interview questions (approximately five minutes per question). The questions focus on previous experience and situations that you may face in the future.

Presentation:

Value	Public Service
Competency	Innovative and Open-minded

Interview:

Competency	Collaborative
Competency	Analyse Critically

All four competencies and values will be combined to award a single exercise mark for the exercise

Cognitive ability tests

You will sit three pen and paper cognitive ability tests:

- **A verbal critical reasoning test**
 - 18 minutes for 32 multiple choice questions
- **A numerical critical reasoning test**
 - 20 minutes for 20 multiple choice questions

- **An inductive reasoning test**
 - 20 minutes for 40 multiple choice questions

The cognitive ability tests are delivered under examination conditions. Before the start of each test you will be able to complete practice questions.

Before the assessment centre: All tests are provided by the test publisher SHL, who offer free practice tests to help candidates prepare for their ability tests. These can be accessed any time prior to your attendance at the assessment centre here:

<https://www.shldirect.com/en/practice-tests/>

Please note that unlike the practice tests you will take at the assessment centre, these tests may not reflect the exact type and difficulty level of the test you will take at the assessment centre. However, these tests will allow you to gain a 'feel' for completing cognitive ability tests.

Verbal critical reasoning test

This measures your ability to evaluate and draw conclusions from written statements based on workplace experiences. The tasks in this test involve reading a passage of text, and using that information to decide whether a given statement is 'true', 'false', or if you 'cannot say' from the information given.

This test has been selected because the following tasks are critical aspects of the role: analysing and interpreting written and oral information, preparing written documents or preparing and delivering presentations. You will have **18 minutes** to answer 32 multiple choice questions.

Numerical critical reasoning test

This measures your ability to make correct decisions or inferences from numerical or statistical data. The test measures your ability to work with numerical data in a realistic workplace context. The tasks in this test involve analysing data in the form of a graph or chart, performing some kind of calculation and answering a short question.

This test has been selected because the following tasks are critical aspects of the role: analysis and interpretation of numerical data (for example, crime figures, budgets, costs and data trends). You will have **20 minutes** to answer 20 multiple choice questions.

Inductive reasoning test

This measures your ability to draw inferences from, and understand relationships between, various concepts. The tasks in this test involve working out the pattern(s) in a set of images, and identifying the correct next image from the given options.

This test has been selected because the following tasks are critical aspects of the role: dealing with new concepts and approaches, answering questions of 'why' and 'how', and resolving complex and ambiguous problems. You will have **20 minutes** to answer 40 multiple choice questions.

What's next?

When will I get my results?

Once all the exercises are finished, your overall performance is considered. Candidates who reach the necessary standard will be 'recommended' for the Direct Entry Superintendent programme. Those who do not reach the standard will be 'not recommended'. Your results will be emailed to you in July 2019.

No final decision will be made until you have completed all of the exercises and your performance on each has been evaluated. You are not expected to pass every single exercise or all of the competency or values areas in order to achieve a grade of 'recommended'. Even though you may feel you haven't performed as well as you could have in a particular exercise, across the seven exercises you will have ample opportunity to demonstrate your capability. Therefore, it is important to try not to dwell on any exercise you feel did not go as well as you wanted it to.

Forces will then decide which of the recommended candidates they wish to offer places to and they may decide to conduct interviews or a further selection stage at this point before offering places to candidates.

Feedback

You will receive written feedback within four weeks of receiving your results, regardless of whether you are recommended or not. You will receive a personalised written report on your performance in each of the exercises and a breakdown of the competency and values grades, and exercise marks that you were awarded. Your results and feedback may be made available to members of the College Talent team to assist with your progress through the programme.

Assessment centre staff and visitors

At the assessment centre there will be some visitors as well as a number of staff who keep the process running smoothly:

On-site management

In order to ensure the accuracy, consistency and fairness of the assessment centre there is a dedicated on-site management team. This team is made up of the quality assurers and site-coordinators. The quality assurance team are psychologists from the College of Policing who are responsible for training the assessors in the specific exercises they assess. The team of psychologists then monitor the assessment process by observing live exercises to ensure assessment processes are being followed accurately, standards are maintained and also support assessors in completing their role. The Quality Assurance Co-ordinator (QACO) has overall responsibility for the assessment centre whilst on-site.

The site-coordinators support the logistics of running a large scale assessment centre, supporting both candidates and assessors at the assessment centre and ensuring it runs as it should.

Director and co-directors

The role of the directors (eg, Chief Constables/Officers) is primarily one of quality assurance, to ensure common standards across all candidate groups, but also to assess the process on behalf of the police service.

Visitors

The Direct Entry Superintendent programme is of interest to a number of key stakeholders involved in policing. As a result, there may be visitors interested in observing the process. They will have no input whatsoever on how the assessors evaluate your performance and are not there to make an evaluation of you.

How are the exercises designed?

The psychologists from the the College of Policing use a structured exercise design model for the basis of the exercise development.

The exercise design model consists of a series of stages that each exercise goes through to create a set of exercises that are reliable, valid, relevant, realistic and fair to all candidates. The design model starts with 'stakeholder consultation' and progresses through a series of subsequent stages which include 'critical scenario interviews', 'exercise writing', 'exercise consultation', 'pilot' and 'training development'.

At each stage, senior police officers and stakeholders from England, Northern Ireland and Wales are consulted about the content of the exercises, and their associated marking guides, to ensure that the exercises are realistic and relevant to the target level. The content and design of the selection processes are thoroughly checked by the College's Legal Services team to ensure that any legal, equality, and diversity content is in line with the College's values and is legally accurate.

Questions and further information

Please send any questions or queries to: seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk

or

Senior Selection Team

College of Policing

Central House,

Beckwith Knowle,

Otley Road,

Harrogate,

North Yorkshire

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Appendix A

Priority Areas for the Direct Entry Superintendent Programme

This information will be used alongside information from role holders on the tasks that are critical to successfully performing as a senior officer to help inform the types of tasks and the content of exercise scenarios that candidates will be set.

Future challenges facing the Police Service over the next 5 years

1. Maintaining service delivery during on-going austerity.
2. Changing types of crime (eg, cyber, cross border, population demographics).
3. Internal organisational change needed (eg, structure, service length, low morale, continuing professional development culture).
4. Need for wider and deeper collaboration (eg, new partners, mergers).
5. Effective use of new technologies by the Police.
6. Responding to increased scrutiny, accountability, and demands for transparency.
7. Increasing influence of the political environment.
8. Maintaining public confidence.
9. The need to redefine success.
10. Increasing demand beyond just 'cutting crime'.

The abilities, skills and characteristics needed by future leaders to deal with the challenges the police service will face

1. Personal integrity and commitment to public transparency (eg, exemplary personal integrity and actions, able to communicate and set standards for others, greater demonstration of transparency).
2. Flexible transformational leadership skills (eg, move beyond command and control, trusting staff to get on with their jobs and applying discretion, empower and engage staff, leading a corporate organisation over operational management, able to create effective senior teams and manage greater accountability).
3. Resilience and positivity (eg, a positive attitude to making things work, able to work under pressure and with uncertainty, staying calm under pressure and stick by decisions).
4. Internal business and financial skills (eg, business acumen, deal with the challenge of on-going budget reductions, able to hold deliverables to account, understanding commissioning and procurement).
5. Building integrated strategic partnerships (eg, develop partnership working on a strategic level outside policing, more radical and integrated collaboration, sharing power and autonomy with others, utilise a collective leadership style to build alliances, engaging partners in solving problems).
6. Able to lead effective organisational change (eg, positive to create momentum for change, able to 'pitch' new ideas convincingly and sell the benefits, comfortable with facilitating organisational change, leading and motivating staff through change, using continuous improvement).
7. Holding a long term, strategic, vision (eg, thinking about the longer term benefits for the organisation/service beyond personal tenure, a strong vision with the ability to translate this, consider alternative strategic visions and how they may be achieved).

8. Creativity and innovation (eg, demonstrate agility and flexible thinking to identify new ways of doing things, create new opportunities).
9. Open-minded and willing to challenge existing culture and practice (eg, look beyond what has always been done, creating opportunity rather than waiting for it, open to new perspectives and diversity of thoughts, adapt quickly to new circumstances, challenge the status-quo, learning from mistakes rather than seeking to apportion blame, a willingness to challenge authority).
10. Humility and self-professional development (eg, reflective of own practice and influence from others, learning from mistakes rather than seeking to apportion blame, a willingness to compromise).
11. Political astuteness (eg, greater political awareness at local and national level, a more outward facing approach politically, how to influence and persuade political leaders, working together with political leaders to build relationships, understand and engage with the relationship between policing and politics).

The abilities, skills and characteristics that are desirable for candidates on the Direct Entry programme

1. Challenging existing culture and practices (eg, prepared to think independently, ask why things are done this way, less deferential to rank).
2. Taking learning from other organisations (eg, an outward focus to learn from other organisations, experience of how things can work differently, sharing best practice).
3. Greater creativity and innovation (eg, able to think of new ways of solving problems, radically innovative, willingness to take risks, supporting the ideas of others).
4. Leading effective organisation change (eg, positive about change and able to persuade others of its value, able to implement transformational change, delivering rapid change).
5. Financial confidence and commerciality (eg, commercial awareness and confidence, entrepreneurial skills).
6. Able to lead staff through challenging times (eg, able to adapt leadership style, making bold decisions, inspire others to achieve goals, have a greater influence).
7. Supportive staff management (eg, effective general management skills such as performance management, welfare, and development, able to engage staff).
8. Political astuteness (eg, understanding the political dynamics, able to operate in a more political environment).
9. A focus on customer service and victim support (eg, understanding victim experience, listening to the public, ingrained customer service ethos).
10. Comfortable with accountability and transparency (eg, comfortable with public scrutiny, understand public perception of what is acceptable, honesty when mistakes are made).
11. Effective internal and external communication skills (eg, using language the public understand).

Appendix B

Rating Scales

The assessors will use the ORCE (Observe, Record, Classify & Evaluate) model of assessment, which is a universally recognised and applied model for assessing. The model promotes objectivity and fairness in assessment.

The assessors observe your performance and make a record of what you said and did; then they classify this evidence against the competency or value related criteria. Once assessors have done this they evaluate your performance in each competency or value area using an A to D rating scale (see below). Assessors then award an overall exercise mark using a 1 – 6 Exercise Mark scale (see overleaf). Assessors initially decide upon grades and exercise marks for your performance independently of one another and then collectively agree final competency grades and exercise mark for you for each exercise.

Competency and Value Grade Scale

This scale requires assessors to evaluate both the quantity and quality (strength) of the evidence provided when awarding grades.

A	Substantial positive evidence of the competency or value observed with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence, and few or no areas for development observed.
B	Positive evidence of the competency or value observed and some areas for development, but on balance more positive evidence with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence.
C	Some positive evidence of the competency or value observed, but on balance more areas for development with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence.
D	Substantial areas for development identified and little or no positive evidence of the competency or value observed, with regard to the quality and quantity of the evidence.

Exercise Mark Scale

The Exercise Mark Scale is used to award you with an overall exercise mark for the exercise. The two statements at each point on the Exercise Mark Scale are intended to be considered together and not as separate statements.

1	<p>Very Effective Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task very effectively and almost entirely achieved the aims of the exercise. Performance on competencies/ values was exclusively high grades.</p>
2	<p>Effective Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task effectively and mostly achieved the aims of the exercise. Performance on the competencies/ values was mostly high grades.</p>
3	<p>Satisfactory Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task to a satisfactory standard and met some of the aims of the exercise although some elements were not satisfactory. On balance performance on competencies/ values was more high grades than low grades.</p>
4	<p>Just Below Satisfactory Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task to a below-satisfactory standard overall and did not quite meet the aims of the exercise, although there were some areas that were effectively handled. On balance performance on competencies/ values was more low grades than high grades.</p>
5	<p>Ineffective Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task largely ineffectively and did not meet the aims of the exercise, although there were some areas that were acceptable. Performance on the competencies/ values was mostly low grades.</p>
6	<p>Very Ineffective Task Performance</p> <p>The candidate performed the task very ineffectively and did not meet the aims of the exercise, although there may have been some minor areas that were acceptable. Performance on the competencies/values was exclusively low grades.</p>

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