

Memorandum of understanding

College-run online assessment process including national sift

Essex Police

Ref. no.: SL1328

Version: 2.2

Date: 2023/2024

Contents

1. Control	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Scope of service	4
3.1 Hosted platforms	4
3.2 Event creation	5
3.2.1 National sift	5
3.2.2 Online assessment process	6
3.3 National sift and online assessment event delivery	6
3.3.1 Reporting during the national sift	7
3.3.2 Reporting during online assessment	7
3.3.3 Reporting after the online assessment	7
3.4 Exercise materials	8
3.5 Management of associates	8
3.6 Quality assurance	8
3.7 Marking of national sift and online assessment and feedback of candidate performance	8
4. Force responsibilities	9
4.1 Post-online assessment in-force interviews	10
5. Charges	13
5.1 Candidate fees	13
5.1.1 National sift	13
5.1.2 Online assessment process	13
5.2 Charging point	13
5.2.1 National sift	13
5.2.2 Online assessment process	13
5.3 Invoices	13
5.3.1 National sift	13
5.3.2 Online assessment process	14
6. Security and data protection	14
7. Availability	14
7.1 Planned outage	14
7.2 Unplanned outage	14
7.2.1 Recovery point objective	15
7.2.2 Recovery time objective	16
7.2.3 Exclusions	16
8. Further reading	16
9. Summary, agreement and signature	18

1. Control

January 2023	Version 2.2 Created
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2. Purpose

This memorandum of understanding (MoU) sets out the service provided by the College of Policing in delivering the national sift and online assessment process. The intention is to provide clarity for each party, specifically defining the scope, timescales, responsibilities and charges related to the delivery of the service.

This MoU agreement supersedes product licence PL-M-101 'Recruit and Selection Processes' and all prior agreements, arrangements and understandings between the parties concerning this subject matter.

This MoU document is not legally binding. However, it does offer a statement of serious intent and is agreed to voluntarily by equal parties.

The College delivers the online recruitment process nationally where consistency is paramount. This MoU is therefore accepted as a national standard with Home Office police forces in England and Wales.

The terms of this agreement are included in the 'Summary, agreement and signature' section.

3. Scope of service

3.1 Hosted platforms

The assessments are delivered using three platforms.

- Talogy is the platform used to deliver the national sift assessment to candidates.
- Launchpad is the platform used to deliver the online recruit assessment to candidates. This is a product of OutMatch, for this document the platform will be referred to as OutMatch.
- Assessment Information Management System (AIMS) is an event management system that allows the College to manage recruitment and assessment-related events digitally (such as recruitment and exams for current police officers). AIMS is a bespoke system

built by a company called QuickCase. It has been designed with input from forces and has been built to meet forces' requirements and to deliver effective and efficient assessment and exam management processes.

The College will:

- manage the relationship with Talogy, Outmatch and AIMS providers as part of our procurement contract
- manage the Talogy, Outmatch and AIMS application programming interface (API)
- continuously review and refine the recruitment platforms to improve the ongoing experience of users, whether they are candidates, College users or forces users
- ensure that the latest versions of documentation and guidance can always be found in the relevant Knowledge Hub groups (login required)

For assistance, force users can contact onlineforces@college.police.uk

3.2 Event creation

3.2.1 National sift

No event setup is required to run the national sift. National sift functionality has been switched on in agreement with each individual force and is designed to be as automated as it can be. Candidate registration arriving in AIMS will be validated automatically through the system. Once validation has been completed, the system will release an invite email to candidates, which will begin their national sift seven-day window. National sift delivery is to be managed by the force, including managing a candidate's extensions, withdrawals and progression. All candidates applying to Police community support officer (PCSO) and Special constable roles will complete the same National Sift as Police Officers, and all references to National Sift within this Agreement apply to all roles

The College will:

- manage the thresholds for national sift
- ensure that the force has the force-specific link to allow candidates to register on AIMS

The force will monitor the 'created' state on AIMS, where any candidates who are flagged during the automatic validation will sit. The force must resolve any issues or warnings raised by the system in order to either progress or withdraw the candidate. These issues

or warnings will occur if there are registration detail issues, such as the central candidate record details needing to be amended, or where the candidate falls within the resit policy. Forces should not bypass the resit policy warning on a candidate without consulting with the onlineforces@college.police.uk team to seek support around the circumstance.

3.2.2 Online assessment process

To run the online assessment process for police constables, the College team sets up events on the AIMS and Outmatch platforms to manage and process cohorts of candidates.

The College will:

- agree, in advance, the assessment timescales with the force and highlight critical deadlines for action
- agree the accurate and final number of candidates to be invited to a cohort for online assessment (by the required deadline)
- provide the force with a range of guidance documents and information relating to the assessment booking – these will be maintained and hosted on the Knowledge Hub
- flag for exclusion, automatically via the AIMS platform, any candidate who has undertaken either the national sift or online assessment process within the last three months or twice within a 12-month period
- issue invites to the candidates, on the agreed go-live date, to complete their online assessment

3.3 National sift and online assessment event delivery

The force will:

- ensure that candidates are validated successfully in AIMS to complete the national sift exercises, including managing timescales of national sift and any candidate 48-hour extensions
- guide candidates to seek technical support from either Talogy support (available in business working hours Monday to Friday for national sift) or Outmatch support (available 24/7 for any online assessment support)
- ensure that all candidates are allocated in advance of the online assessment delivery

- ensure that candidates have access to – and have been provided with – supporting documentation, such as the candidate guidance documents and candidate supporting videos, via the College of Policing website

The College will:

- ensure that candidates are invited to complete the online assessment within the agreed timescales with the force
- guide candidates to seek technical support from either Talogy support (available in business working hours Monday to Friday for national sift) or Outmatch support (available 24/7 for any online assessment support)
- ensure that the force can generate reports relating to the progress of candidate completion for both the national sift and the online assessment process (see the reporting subsections below)
- ensure that any candidates are reinvited to complete the online assessment process within the agreed timescales automatically where retakes are required – for example, technical issues resolved during the assessment window where possible
- ensure that any candidates are provided the extension time to complete the online assessment process within the agreed extension timescale, based on information provided by the force within the completed post-assessment candidate status report

3.3.1 Reporting during the national sift

Forces can generate a candidate status report, which is a snapshot in time of a candidate's progress during the national sift. This will also show any candidates located in the provisional rejection state. Forces can generate a pass or fail report, which will show all candidates within the selected period with a complete result.

3.3.2 Reporting during online assessment

Forces can generate a candidate status report, which is a snapshot in time of the candidate's progression.

3.3.3 Reporting after the online assessment

The College will remind the force to produce a candidate status report one working day after the online assessment deadline. The force is given a window of three working days to

send through any retakes or extensions based on the report content after engaging with candidates. If this is not returned, candidates are marked as 'incomplete/no show'.

3.4 Exercise materials

The College will:

- design and develop the assessment materials
- periodically refresh assessment materials
- retain ownership of intellectual content of assessment materials, which should not be used or shared without prior written agreement

3.5 Management of associates

The College will:

- select, maintain and support a pool of associates
- support associates in their development, to enable them to consistently assess candidates
- reimburse associates at the standard national day rate and for any expenses incurred

3.6 Quality assurance

The College will:

- complete quality assurance on the online assessment process at a minimum 10% proportion of candidate assessments

3.7 Marking of national sift and online assessment and feedback of candidate performance

The College will:

- ensure that forces have access to the national sift marking explanation document, which will detail the process for scoring candidates through the national sift process, as well as the online assessment marking explanation document – these can be located via [Online assessment – delivery \(Knowledge Hub\)](#) (login required)
- allocate assessors to score the candidates' online assessments
- allocate assessors to score the extension event candidates' online assessments

- consolidate all marking scores provided by assessors
- analyse the results data
- provide the force with instructions on how to generate a list of successful and unsuccessful candidates from AIMS for the online assessment process
- provide the candidate with their personal feedback report
- forward any appeals from candidates to the force and offer support where needed
- provide the force users with access to Outmatch to complete relevant candidate identification checks once all results are issued (note that access is **only** for users with returned declarations for access)

4. Force responsibilities

Prior to a **College-run** assessment process, there are a number of critical milestones that both the College and the force **will need to commit to**. These will ensure that the process is delivered efficiently and within the timescales highlighted in this document, alongside the force assessment guidance document and assessment timeline.

The force will need to review this information before progressing with any assessment. Crucially, the force will also need to ensure full understanding of the information and timescales contained in this document, as well as the force assessment guidance document, as they are essential in ensuring a smooth assessment delivery.

The force will:

- advertise the assessment to potential candidates
- ensure that candidates have been provided with the current version of the candidate guidance and frequently asked questions (FAQs), along with appropriate instructions and communication of timescales of the national sift and online assessment window
- ensure that candidates are registered on AIMS, via the force registration link, in advance of the process
- identify an internal force liaison officer or contact point for candidates and ensure that candidates are made aware of whom to contact in force

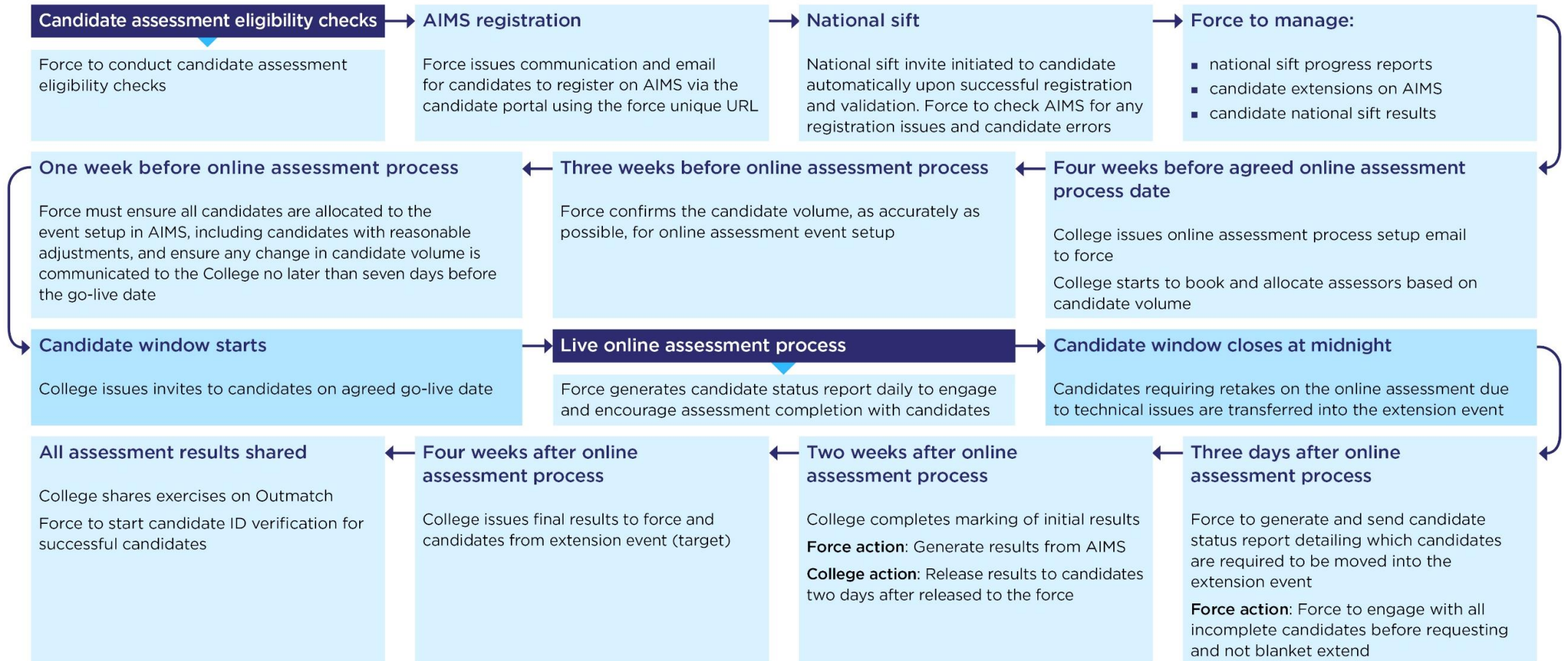
- be responsible for ensuring that candidates are validated correctly and for managing the national sift process, including issuing 48-hour candidate extensions where required
- confirm accurate candidate volumes for online assessment within the third week before the agreed online assessment date and confirm any reductions no later than one week before the go-live date
- be responsible for allocating candidates to the correct online assessment event setup created by the College
- gather and assess reasonable adjustment (RA) candidate evidence, determine the adjustment to be provided to the candidate, and notify the College of any candidates requesting or requiring RAs within the assessment process and timelines set out
- advise the College of candidate withdrawals and make the necessary adjustments to administrative arrangements
- notify respective candidates of the outcome of appeals
- review end of assessment reports and notify the College within the required deadline of any candidates who require an extension or whom the force wishes to withdraw from the process
- complete candidate ID verification on all successful candidates against the Outmatch assessment platform on all video exercises, to ensure that the candidate who completed the online assessment is the same candidate who provided photo identification (specific guidance is provided within the Knowledge Hub group)
- meet the timescales and deadlines highlighted in the force guidance document and the pre-assessment correspondence with the College (a high-level visual timeline is shown on the next page for reference)

4.1 Post-online assessment in-force interviews

If a post-online assessment in-force interview is included in a force's recruitment process for the selection of police constables, forces are required to use the interview process (set out within the guidance document). It is important for forces to ensure that the in-force interview is standardised, is fair and reflects best practice assessment principles. Having a robust in-force interview process will ensure that candidates are assessed to the same standards nationally.

Further guidance is available on Knowledge Hub (login required).

- **[Post-online assessment in-force interview guidance](#)**



5. Charges

5.1 Candidate fees

5.1.1 National sift

All candidates who are invited to the national sift will be charged at a rate of £2.99.

5.1.2 Online assessment process

The College will charge forces in line with the costings communicated to forces in December 2022. Forces will be charged for the number of candidates that they confirm to the College for event setup, as noted, six working days prior to the assessment window. If no confirmed number is provided by this date, the College will charge in accordance with the planned number provided by the force during assessment date booking, except for where the actual number of candidates is higher. This charging model is subject to change (such as an annual price adjustment).

5.2 Charging point

5.2.1 National sift

The College will run a quarterly report detailing the volume of candidates invited to undertake the national sift across all entry routes. This forms the number of candidates to be charged.

5.2.2 Online assessment process

The College will request confirmed candidate numbers within the third week prior to the assessment window opening. The charging point will be on candidate numbers confirmed at six working days prior to the assessment window opening, and this will be the number of candidates charged for.

5.3 Invoices

5.3.1 National sift

The College will issue a quarterly invoice to the force, which will include all candidates identified at the charging point.

5.3.2 Online assessment process

The College requests forces to provide a workflow purchase order for all online assessments for the full year. Where this is not provided, the College will request a purchase order seven days after the start of the assessment process based on the number of candidates identified at the charging point. To prevent resources in chasing any overdue purchase order requests, we encourage forces to use a workflow purchase order.

6. Security and data protection

The existing data protection impact assessment (DPIA) and joint controller agreement are retained as individual documents located on the following group (login required):

[Online assessment – delivery \(Knowledge Hub\)](#).

All users who are provided access to the Outmatch platform will be required to complete and return a confidentiality declaration to the College. The force must notify the College if a user no longer requires access to the system, or if it is no longer appropriate for a user to have access to the platform. The College will control access for all users.

All users who are provided access to AIMS will be required to complete and return a user request form to the College. AIMS users must complete the relevant access form, signed with recruit manager approval. Users will be required to notify the College if they no longer require access to the system, or if it is no longer appropriate for them to have access to the platform.

7. Availability

7.1 Planned outage

When planned outages are communicated to the College by our third-party suppliers, we will endeavour to inform all force contacts who may have a live assessment during the outage. We will work with affected forces to minimise disruption.

7.2 Unplanned outage

To ensure that your issue is resolved as quickly as possible, please contact the relevant system team for support.

- **National sift** (Talogy): Technical issues during the national sift process can be resolved by contacting the platform support team at support@cubiks.com – this service will respond within four (support) hours of receiving the request. Support hours are 9am to 5.30pm on UK working days (Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays).
- **National sift and online assessment process** (AIMS): As the administrative system for the assessment process, AIMS is only used in business hours by the College and by forces. Support is available via College AIMS Support (AIMS.support@college.police.uk).
- **Online assessment process** (Outmatch): The Outmatch system is the candidate assessment platform, which can be used 24/7, 365 days a year by candidates. There is support to cover any unforeseen technical support queries experienced by candidates directly with the supplier, who are available 24/7 and aim to respond to queries within 30 to 60 minutes (support@outmatch.com).

7.2.1 Recovery point objective

The recovery point objective (RPO) is 20 minutes. This means that in the event of a catastrophic failure at our hosting partner location, Outmatch will be able to recover all data that was committed to our databases up to 20 minutes prior to the failure.

The architecture of Outmatch will resend data via the API (call-backs) for an eight-hour period. Any failures beyond this will be discussed on an individual basis with the force.

Talogy provides clients with assurance that the services provided will not be disrupted, nor will the confidentiality of their data be affected in business continuity circumstances. Talogy has a worst-case RPO of 24 hours. This is the point in time at which Talogy will have all data recovered to resume ICT services.

Talogy will resend any failed call-backs over a 24-hour period with 31 attempts before giving up. Any failed call-backs past this point are stored in a dead letter box and reviewed by Talogy. Any failures beyond this will be discussed on an individual basis with the force.

7.2.2 Recovery time objective

Outmatch has a goal of meeting a four-hour recovery time objective (RTO). This objective is the time it will take for incident identification, systems hardware replacement, data restoration procedures and/or failover to the disaster recovery facility to have a fully operational suite of solutions.

Talogy's business continuity plan provides for contingency operations that will ensure the continuity of services provided to us. This plan encompasses a comprehensive strategy for the restoration of processing capabilities at a remote site for critical systems, as well as long-term plans to restore the facilities if necessary. Talogy's continuity plan will ensure that a complete recovery from the loss of extended access rights to the premises or catastrophic disasters will occur in a timely fashion.

Talogy has a worst-case RTO of 24 hours. This is the target time set for resumption of product, service or activity delivery after an incident.

7.2.3 Exclusions

Any third-party vendors engaged directly by Talogy or Outmatch will remain outside of the scope of this document, although it should be acknowledged that they might form a critical prerequisite of the service.

8. Further reading

All further reading is maintained and hosted in the relevant Knowledge Hub groups (login required).

- All force recruit leads are recommended to have membership of the Knowledge Hub groups and to encourage their force recruit supervisors to be active members in the group. It is the **force recruit lead's responsibility** to inform the College online forces of any change in force personnel who no longer need access to the groups.
- Please refer to the force guidance document, which has been uploaded onto the Knowledge Hub within the group '[Online assessment – delivery](#)', to ensure that you fully understand the requirements for a successful national sift delivery and online assessment process. This group contains specific guidance on the results process, candidate transfers between forces, candidate ID validation checks and system use.

- Guidance on RAs, including policy and forms, is located in the Knowledge Hub group **'Online assessment process – reasonable adjustment'**.

9. Summary, agreement and signature

Background	Essex Police, whose principal place of business is Essex Police, Police College, St Margaret's Road, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6DS (the 'Customer') has requested the provision of Services (as defined below) from the College (as defined below) subject to the provisions set out below.
The College	The College of Policing Limited , incorporated in England and Wales under company registration number 8235199, whose registered office is at Leamington Road, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Warwickshire, CV8 3EN (the 'College')
Service location	Virtual environment
College contact name and contact details	Recruit operations manager onlineforces@college.police.uk
Services	The College shall provide the following Services to the Customer: Provision of the design and delivery of an online assessment process and national sift for the customer to be delivered in 2023/24 (the 'Services')
Purpose of the services	Online assessment process and national sift (the 'Purpose')
Deliverables	The Services shall generate the following deliverables: Provision of the online assessment process and national sift in cohorts as agreed with the force (the 'Deliverables')
Start date	Work of the Services will commence on: 1 April 2023 (the 'Commencement date')

Completion date	Work on the Services will be: Completed on 31 March 2024 (the 'Completion date')
Key personnel	The Services shall be provided by Online assessment process team psychologists, technical officers and assessment support, digital support – College staff
Payment details	There is a fixed price of £2.99 per candidate for the national sift and £184.00 per candidate for the online assessment process.
Method of payment	The Customer shall pay the fee to the College: Within 30 days of the date of an invoice (the 'Payment period')
Expenses	The College shall be entitled to charge the Customer additionally for expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of the Services: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Order and reference numbers	Customer purchase order number: A call off purchase order will be provided by the force for the full year to cover all recruit online assessments.
Signature	
Completion, signature and electronic submission of this form signifies your acceptance of the General Conditions enclosed.	
Name	[insert details]
Organisation and role	[insert details]
Email	[insert details]

Phone	[insert details]
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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