Evidence-Based Policing (EBP) Maturity Model

BetterEvidence for BetterPolicing ™ — College of Policing

	Level 1 - Limited	Level 2 – Initiated	Level 3 – Defined	Level 4 – Developed	Level 5 – Integrated
Culture	• No attempts to use EBP in practice and decision-making • Staff don't value research evidence and its potential benefits, relying only on professional judgement to inform decisions and practice • Perception that 'EBP isn't for the frontline' and is the responsibility of staff with strategic responsibilities • Pressure to rush problem diagnosis and move to developing solutions so as to be seen as 'getting on with it'. Research evidence not used as part of this process • Target-driven culture dominates leaving little or no room for EBP. Learning not generated through sharing of experience	• Efforts to implement EBP are uncoordinated and ad hoc • A minority of staff recognise benefits of research evidence for decision-making and practice • Engagement with EBP restricted to isolated individuals / teams. No effort to increase organisational buy-in • Little attempt made to diagnose problems specific to the force; tendency to apply a generic template that has worked for other forces and push to solution design quickly • Some interest in evaluation and learning but unproven initiatives are used without testing and there is a lack of recognition in the value of learning lessons	• Evidence of EBP principles being applied at some levels yet organisation still lacks confidence • A growing appetite towards research evidence to inform decision-making and practice but hasn't permeated to all levels and areas of work • Staff engagement with EBP is growing with increasing receptivity to its use across the force • There is recognition that multiple evidence sources should be used to identify issues specific to the force, where this is proportionate to the issue being explored, although these are not always considered in practice • The force is prepared to learn from interventions that work and don't work	• Implementation plan for EBP created. Organisation gaining confidence and actively considering methods to introduce evidence-based approaches • There is a commitment among staff to the value of research evidence, but this is not always evident in practice and decision-making • Staff encouraged to adopt an evidence-based approach and are recognised and rewarded for doing so • Issues specific to the force are sometimes identified using multiple evidence sources proportionate to the issue being explored • Force creates opportunities for experimentation and innovation. Evaluation is valued and encouraged and individuals are recognised for significant contributions in this area	• EBP embedded at all levels of the organisation and consideration given to risks and benefits of conducting research • Staff at all levels value research evidence to inform decisions and practice • Across the force staff motivated to actively engage with EBP • A proportionate number of evidence sources are routinely used to identify and inform responses to specific force problems • Learning and innovation drives the organisation; evaluation is routinely used to understand, assess and develop practice
Capability	• Staff lack skills and knowledge to find, appraise and use research • No capability provided by force for developing skills and knowledge to find, appraise and use research • No protected time or opportunities for staff to develop EBP approaches • No capability to use research and analysis tools and techniques	• Ability within force to find, appraise and use research is limited to specific roles • Limited capability within force for developing skills and knowledge to find, appraise and use research • Minimal investment in time and opportunity to develop EBP approaches • Marginal capability to use research and analysis tools and techniques	• Some staff across varied roles have skills to find, appraise and use research • Capability for developing skills and knowledge to find, appraise and use research is uncoordinated and inconsistent • Some ad hoc investment in time and opportunity to develop EBP approaches • Capability to use some research and analysis tools and techniques but not always applied appropriately	• Many, but not all staff have the ability to find, appraise and use research • Established capability for developing skills and knowledge to find, appraise and use research; mechanisms in place to facilitate this • Purposeful, structured investment in time and opportunities to allow selected staff to develop and adopt EBP approaches • Capability to use a range of research and analysis tools and techniques exists but not used consistently	• At all levels, staff have the capacity to find, appraise and use research • Embedded capability across the force to develop the skills necessary to find, appraise and use research • Embedded and sustainable investment at all levels for force to adopt and deliver EBP approaches • Force has capability to use a range of research and analysis tools and techniques; applies consistently
Structure	• Where links exist with academics, these tend to be at an individual level • No process or systems in place to identify and prioritise research evidence gaps • Analysts are limited to using existing force administrative data, resulting in frequent use of proxy measures to assess impact • No identified point of contact accountable for the promotion and development of EBP • Force lacks any formal mechanisms to capture and share research evidence and learning. No records of research evidence available for staff use • EBP is not considered within the force continuing professional development (CPD) procedures	• Some developing links with academics usually at an individual project level and based on specific policing problems or issues • Informal processes only for identifying and prioritising research evidence gaps • There is pressure to assess impact soon after implementation with limited attention to the sustainability of changes • Force has a small or informal network of individuals championing EBP who work in an uncoordinated manner • There is some effort to develop mechanisms to identify and capture research evidence and learning but these are little known and difficult to use, resulting in limited sharing • No formal recognition of EBP within the CPD procedures but considered by some individuals	• Force coordination of links with academics and higher education institutions lack consistency and effort is disjointed • Processes in place which identify and align research evidence gaps to force priorities. Not widely used or actioned • Reasonable time periods (3-6 months is standard) allowed before assessment of impact is made • Central team/department in force promoting EBP but may not be widely known • Mechanisms for identifying and capturing research evidence and learning exist but there is limited awareness of these and they are underused • EBP considered within CPD processes for specific specialist roles and/or teams	• Force academic partnerships exist but lack of mechanisms to support their sustainability • Formal process in place for identifying and prioritising evidence gaps and research requirements, that support routine force activity • Attention paid to sustainability of changes following impact evaluation; final assessments might take place 12 months later • Coordination of EBP extends to force wide with a network of champions as the catalyst for promoting and developing EBP • All staff have access to mechanisms for identifying and capturing research evidence and learning but these are not routinely used • EBP starting to be recognised as a key part of workforce development. PDR objectives relating to EBP considered for all roles but not fully integrated	• Formal and sustainable academic partnerships in place with clearly defined parameters aligned to the institutional priorities and expertise of all parties • Process for ensuring evidence gaps and research findings systematically appraised, considered and inform force initiatives • Robust impact evaluations routinely carried out with comparison sites used to allow stronger causal links to be made and changes given enough time to embed before impact tested • Force has core EBP function responsible for coordinating and implementing EBP strategy • Mechanisms exist to enable easy access to a comprehensive range of research evidence and learning which is routinely used, promoted and shared by staff • EBP is integrated into CPD and essential to recruitment and promotion processes and staff are expected to demonstrate EBP skills and knowledge
Strategy	• No real interest in or commitment to EBP at a senior level • Little or no financial investment in EBP initiatives and activities • Force's strategic vision and aims do not encourage use of research evidence to inform policy, practice or decision-making; EBP happens in isolation to business objectives	• Some senior leaders interested in EBP. Partial endorsement limits the spread of engagement • Some buy-in to the principle of investing in EBP but little financial investment in practice • EBP mentioned in strategies but little evidence of use in planning, commissioning or implementation	• Senior leaders support EBP and its use but pockets of resistance exist; understanding has not fully permeated the organisation • Some financial resource for EBP but is inconsistent and seen as expendable when priorities shift • Discrete EBP strategy exists but not directly aligned with other force strategies	• Senior leaders promote examples of EBP, communicate the benefits and are comfortable appraising and interpreting research evidence • Force has dedicated funding to resource EBP across the force • Force's strategy incorporates a shift towards EBP which is clearly articulated, and directly supports its organisational goals	• Senior leaders champion EBP, providing authority and motivation to staff. They use EBP to convince others of the legitimacy and credibility of their approach • Evidence of significant investment in EBP; key consideration in budget planning process and clearly aligned to force strategy • EBP integral to force strategy, business planning and commissioning decisions. All staff fully appreciate benefits and apply EBP. It is actively promoted at all levels and influences local plans