



**WINNER OF THE 2016 DEVON AND CORNWALL
POLICE PRIZE FOR HIGHEST ACHIEVING STUDENT
OVERALL IN THE
CERTIFICATE IN KNOWLEDGE OF POLICING
*Rachel Thompson***

After an incredible three years at Plymouth University, in 2016 I graduated with a first class degree in BSc (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies with Psychology. After completing my A-Levels, I was not sure I wanted to go to university, as I did not technically need a degree to get into the career I wanted as a Police Officer; however I am so glad I did. The last three years have given me an irreplaceable experience, whereby I have made lifelong friends, experienced a completely new environment and learnt many valuable skills. The University, Law School and lecturers gave me many opportunities to further improve my career prospects, as well as giving support along the way. One of the most rewarding and useful skills I gained was from my 'Professional Knowledge of Policing' module that I undertook in my second and third years, which is the National Police Pre-Join Award and after completion grants you with the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP).

With the majority of constabularies now requesting that applicants already have, or are willing to undertake, the CKP, the fact that Plymouth Law School offers this to students is a huge advantage for anyone considering a career within any area of the police services, as the knowledge gained is invaluable. The module not only gives an insight into the day-to-day life of a Police Officer, however it also explains the laws involved and generally gives a better understanding of the important aspects and barriers the police service face. Therefore, it is useful for any career within the sector.

Whilst undertaking the module, students were also given other opportunities to volunteer with the Police, such as role playing with drug dogs, as well as being made aware of current vacancies with Devon and Cornwall Police (such as Call Handlers), and given advice on the recruitment process. Thus, not only do you get in-depth knowledge of policing, you also get hand-on experience, and advice for future career applications.

I am currently studying for an MSc in Psychology in order to broaden my understanding of human behaviour, and in the New Year I am planning to begin the 'Direct Entry at Inspector' recruitment process within the police service. I believe the opportunities given to me by the Law School, particularly the National Police Pre-Join Award, will give me the skills and confidence I need to be successful in this application and in my career and, for that, I am extremely thankful.