Chapter Five

Findings and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents, assesses and analyses the data gathered during the course of the interviews with trainees and teacher/trainers and surveys with trainees against the backdrop of the issues raised in the review of literature and the case study of the Garda Siochana and its training environment. From the outset, I was conscious that I was about to set sail for uncharted waters. The respondents displayed a generosity and openness I could not possibly have hoped for. Such was the level of data gathered that it reached far beyond the remit of this study. It became very clear to me that this research area requires ongoing investigation. For the purpose of structure and clarity, it is proposed, to set out the findings from the research data under thematic headings which relate to the research questions and objectives, rather than a particular time period and/or trainee programme.

This thesis has also examined the procedures, theories and practice of police induction in the context of the ethos, function and culture of a national police service and its training environment. As the findings and analysis covers 91 years and three training programmes a summary of the programmes will be presented for reference, the four (4) objectives are also set out for reference.

Summary of the Garda Siochana trainee environment

1st Programme

1922 – 1988 (inherited from the Royal Irish Constabulary)

- Training through discipline, rote learning, physical exercise and drill
- Updated through new legislation and social demands (limited)
• Existed for 67 years with little or no change to overall structure
• Criticised in the Walsh Report for its outdated methods and not fit for purpose

2nd programme (from Walsh Report 1985)
1989 – 2003
• Introduced a 5 phase trainee programme with experiential learning (2 years)
• Introduced Social Studies and Communications
• Emphasis on integrating theory and operational skills
• Existed for 16 years – terminated with the introduction of the Keating Report
• Criticised in the Keating Report for failing to deliver on its aims and objectives

3rd programme (from Keating Report 1999)
2003 – Present
• Same structural time frame as the 2nd programme
• Introduced competency development to all phases
• Introduced pass/fail examinations on phase 2, the experiential learning phase
• This programme was subject to a government policy of accelerated recruitment
• Criticised in the Nolan 2009 Report for a lack of quality in delivery of the programme which affected many subject areas

Research objectives:
1. How, and in what direction, will this research into the accelerated recruitment 2004-2008 enhance understanding of the delivery of Garda education and training (and police education and training generally) over the period concerned.
2. Pursuing the perspective that Garda Teacher/trainers influence trainees in their initial phases through their previous operational experience. The completion of this objective will enhance our understanding of how the programme is communicated and what the broader implications are for policing Ireland, and for our understanding of police education and training generally.

3. To research the differences, if any, in developmental paths of trainee’s pre and post the introduction of the current competency based programme.

4. To analyse the critical success factors of the trainee programmes, if any and to what extent were they met or not met.

Existing salient literature in police trainee programmes and policy in a number of progressive countries was also researched. Moreover, the thesis has argued that to fully comprehend this existing literature, the practices and policies of police trainee induction must be applied to the theoretical work surrounding the subject. In order to achieve this increased understanding, the thesis as stated utilised a case study approach as a central part of its methodological framework. This provides a further degree of validity and triangulation for the study’s findings.

The findings

The findings allow for a further critique (and therefore better understanding) of existing theories on police trainee education, training and a better understanding of the dynamics of exchange between all respondents in this research. The findings also allowed better understanding of key theories on police trainee induction through a wider analysis of
these theories. By analysing the findings in this perspective, a clearer understanding of
the impact and outcomes of trainee induction theory and practice is established.

1. Training for recruits and trainees and the changes from one programme to the
next

In the 1st training programme, the major theme to emerge from the respondents’ data was
that of a severe disciplinary environment. The data also states this partially existed for a
period of the 2nd programme, due to the continuation of employing Garda instructors
from the 1st programme. As these instructors retired or left the training environment, the
severity of discipline eased and eventually stopped. This disciplinary environment did
not exist in any format for the current competency programme. The majority of the
respondents who experienced the 1st and the 2nd programmes stated this type of training
did not prepare them for operational policing as they had little or no acquisition of skills
but knew how to take a direction from authority.

The majority of the respondents from the 1st and 2nd programme stated this type of strict
disciplinarian type training ensured they would become part of the Garda organisation
regardless of their personal views. Recruits from the 1st programme were told by training
staff they would be different, they were no longer attached to civilian life and they
existed only as Garda members. The following two quotations represent the majority of
the responses:

‘Institutionalised training, - learn it of by heart ensured this’ (r1),

‘Individuality did not exist’ (r6).
Respondents stated this form of training left an indelible mark on their learning experiences. The majority of respondents resented what they had to go through in training as it has led many to hold certain values on life, work and family commitments that are difficult to maintain especially within their personal lives. The majority of respondents (serving and retired Garda members) felt as respondent (r23) stated “the job intruded on their whole makeup and it never leaves you”. The majority stated they still feel overwhelmed by this culture of fear, aggression and bullying that they were forced to endure by the training staff of the Garda Training Centre.

The data also suggests that this culture of assimilation started to ease and/or disappear and not as disciplined coming towards the end of the 2nd programme (the last three years 1985-1988). This fear of the training environment and/or Garda College staff did not surface or feature as a theme in the current trainee programme. Data from teacher/trainer respondents state this disciplinary culture was eventually wound down more by retirements of older members of staff than any other format of change. One trainee respondent in the current programme (cr2) stated: “Yes it was like any other college apart from the fact you were in a police college, no major difference”. This comment would represent the experiences of the majority of trainee respondents.

The current programme trainee perspectives on the Garda Siochana, i.e. personal development, operational work in the experiential learning environment and their rights as trainees and individuals, were very different from Garda respondents in the 1st and 2nd programmes. The removal of fear and strict discipline allowed the current trainees to view their respective roles from a) an individual point of view and b) as a group member,
something that was unheard of in the 1st training period and the majority of the 2nd programme.

The majority of the respondents in the 1st and 2nd programmes found the physical exercise tough, but it allowed them to get fit. The physicality of drill marching that was required for their passing out parade helped their personal physical frame which most pointed out they still had to day, “standing straight and walking tall” (r22). All respondents stated that when they put on their drill display on their passing out day it was a very proud moment for them, “hours and hours of practise to show off” (r3). Respondents found it was great as their families were there to watch, two of the respondents stated:

“Two hours of PE each day – no choice in the matter, you became fit” (r17),

“The passing out parade consisted of 28 minutes of a full drill display and we were good” (r11).

These experiences change quite dramatically in the current programme. The data states physical exercise and drill was not ranked as very important by the majority of trainee respondents. A minority of the trainees would have preferred more time for PE with a call from the majority of female trainees for more self-defence lessons. Teacher/trainers stated that the death of a young trainee in the Garda College in the 1980’s while doing physical exercise changed the mindset of authorities. As a result, less emphasis was placed on pure physical fitness, the new policy after this unfortunate death concerned health and safety issues which were work related i.e. stopping vehicles at a check-point, arresting offenders.
2. Catholic Church involvement

In the 1st and 2nd programmes, attending Catholic Mass on Sundays and holy days was a requirement for catholic recruits/trainees while in the training centre. Priests were regular visitors to the training centre to give sermons and hear confessions. Attendance at these religious events was mandatory and the sermon by the priest in the Mass was regarded as part of the curriculum. The majority of the respondents were quite bitter in their responses to the involvement of the Catholic Church in their training. Respondent (r42) stated:

“consider the times we were in, recruits had to do what they were told and without failure followed the orders of the Garda Training Centre staff to the letter, to do otherwise meant being disciplined”.

The following description identifies many of the responses and easily remembered by the author, respondent (r33) stated:

‘we had to march to 9am mass on a Sunday morning, the whole training centre who were catholic, all the people in Templemore used to come out to watch us and the noise of our own steel tips, making the crunching noise it was like an army marching. Mass was regarded as a lecture because of the priest’s sermon and had to be attended, you would be blocked (disciplined) if you refused. We went down at a normal 120 steps to the minute and came back at 140 steps to the minute gallop so we could get to the train to Dublin and out of the place’.
The majority of the respondents also stated that they were also required to attend various religious vigils that were held within the Garda Training Centre on holy days and the same principles applied; you failed to attend and you were on a disciplinary inquiry. Some of these requirements appeared for those who trained in the early years of the 2nd programme, but not as forceful as in the 1st training period. Religion did not surface in any format in trainees’ data from the current programme.

3. Recruit/trainee personal and professional development

The majority of respondents from the 1st training programme stated they would have preferred to learn law and criminal procedures in a different format instead of attending class day after day with the same instructor. The majority stated they learnt everything off by heart as recommended by their ‘Garda Police Duties Instructors’ as it was the easiest way to pass the examinations. The majority stated that their instructors just wanted the trainees to pass the examinations and not cause any problems. The majority also stated they were informed by their policing instructors, the Garda Siochana was not looking for academics but practical level headed Gardai that could do the job on the street, respondent (r7) stated:

‘All classroom work, criminal law and procedures from handout lectures’,

‘learn it boy, was the message from the instructor’ (r14),

‘Training consisted of continuous theoretical classroom work with war stories from the instructors to give a practical side to the theory’ (r13).

The majority of the respondents in the 2nd and current programmes stated feedback was never given concerning their examinations and/or their development. Respondent (pcr5)
stated it was ‘horrendously bad’, respondent (cr3) stated ‘no feedback at all’. The data states the only time a trainee might receive ‘some’ information is if that person failed an examination. This lack of feedback involved: a lack of information on examinations results, a failure to have past papers available for perusal, the Garda College staff not supervising trainees who were assigned to them and a lack of supervision on the experiential learning diary.

The majority of the trainee respondents stated these communication barriers involved comments from college staff such as:

‘You will learn more on the outside’ (cr14),

‘The general feelings that staff had no time because we were only phase one trainees’ (cr20).

All teacher/trainers stated the increase in trainee numbers in the current programme did cause the lecture theatres to be overused in delivering the curriculum, but as T/T11 stated “it was not always about large trainee numbers”. Accelerated recruitment did stop the personal flow of information from them to trainees that was available in the classroom environment in the 2nd programme. However, a major problem also existed in Garda College staffing levels. The majority of teacher/trainers stated there was a lack of feedback at times due to a ‘lack of staff’, which would not have been known to the trainee population. Another issue that teacher/trainers stated caused ‘anxiety’ in trainees was the non-existence of a centralised administration of past examination papers. Each section or school looked after their own administration and examinations. All trainee
respondents in the 2nd and 3rd programmes stated that social and psychological studies’ section were the most difficult to deal with in achieving results and feedback.

All trainee respondents in the current programme stated that apart from the legal studies, feedback was not offered from other subject areas, trainee respondent (cr4) stated:

‘You were told your result and that was it, many trainees wanted their results re-examined because they felt they were too low but to be honest it was not encouraged’.

Seven trainee respondents in the current programme stated they did request information in writing on their examinations and case studies, but they did not receive it and no explanation was offered outside of being informed that college staff were too busy, respondent (cr1) stated ‘they were too busy all the time!’ . The majority ‘felt cheated’ as stated by respondent (cr2), because they knew they were coming back to the college and they would undergo more examinations, (cr4) stated to the author: “I spent four years in University College Dublin and hold a first class honours degree – while on phase one you’re just a number’.

The majority of trainees from both programmes also stated some college staff, as (pcr1) stated were ‘condescending and patronising’. Respondent (pcr3) stated:

‘the rest of the sections, you just turned up, learned the best you could, it was like secondary school, rote and surface learning, they may call this a third level college but it isn’t, this is still a training centre’.

Trainee respondents regarded constructive and frequent feedback as a key weakness in both programmes. Trainees stated understanding difficulties that they experienced went
from a healthy key strength in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme to a major key weakness in the current programme due to volume of trainees in the programme. Trainees from both programmes further explained that legal studies and PE&HS staffs were available most of the time for guidance on phase one and, they were only the only section to do this.

The majority of the teacher/trainer respondents found the current programme phase one trainees exhibited a lack of development in Garda practises and procedures and certain training skills. The majority also stated that trainees from the current programme were only partially developing in line with the designed competencies for phase one, again the majority blamed the influx of large trainee numbers. Everyone further stated the trainee programme as a whole was only partially balanced, teacher/trainer (T/T6) stated, ‘theory and experiential integration was not established on phases one and three, to many trainees in the college’.

All teacher/trainers argued that phase one did not achieve its potential. In the beginning of the programme (2003) great effort and thought was put into development. However, as time went by the programme lost its impetus because of changes in trainee numbers, the curriculum, the programme time structure and changes to the delivery/facilitation of the programme. The majority of teacher/trainers stated these types of changes had happened before and caused the eventual demise of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme. Teacher/trainer (T/T6) stated ‘finance and intrusion’, teacher/trainer (T/T8) stated:

‘this time around it was not a lack of finance, in effect there was too much, the concern was about getting the level of the Garda Siochana up to 14,000 and to maintain that number’
Six of the teacher/trainers stated the general quality of the current programme has partially improved since the Walsh (1985) programme because of: a) the changes to the experiential learning diary, b) the introduction of phase two assessments, c) the introduction of self regulation for the trainees in their development and d) the introduction of single and group case studies and role plays. The remainder (six teacher/trainers) stated the quality of the programme had slipped because of all the changes made. Four stated the content of the current programme has improved slightly however, eight stated they cannot see any difference because accelerated recruitment changed so many different educational issues.

Teacher/trainers further stated the ratio between teacher/trainer and trainees has also increased due to accelerated recruitment and made their teaching and administrative roles difficult. Six of the teacher/trainers stated originally they were under professional pressure because of the above changes to the current programme. All teacher/trainers in divisional training centres found their administration increased dramatically because of the geographical spread of trainees in their respective divisions. They also stated there were no expenses for trainees to get to their respective training office for their phase two classes and various other developments were hampered because of this.

The vast majority of trainee respondents stated they attribute their professional development to legal studies and the staff in this section. Trainees stated their phase one development by legal studies staff was due to the content of the lectures and most importantly the style of delivery coupled with examples from real life situations, “war stories” (cr2). The majority of the teacher/trainers on this point stated the planning and monitoring tools for teaching staff to guide their respective section in the current
programme were only partially implemented. They were forced to improvise by using their own personal experiences of operational policing, hence the use of war stories. An example of this partial implementation was the new teacher/trainer certificate. This received satisfactory reviews from all, but was regarded as only a stepping stone and that more should be offered by the Garda Siochana for teacher/trainer development.

The majority of teacher/trainers stated the administration time required for competency development was not available to develop the experiential learning diary, the portfolio of learning and implementation of the competency based assessments on phase two. A number of other significant issues on skills’ development training were raised by the teacher/trainers. Everyone referred to the downgrading of skills development in the curricula because of the financial cost of training, value for money and its cost effectiveness.

The majority of teacher/trainers stated they saw great potential in the competency based approach. But they believed it was too early to see a lasting impact of competency development as it would take a generation of the new style programme to sit comfortably in operational policing to erode the mentality of older Gardai who would have a very conservative view on what is required in operational policing. Teacher/trainer (T/T4) stated he had heard statements from operational members which were quite common, such as ‘this is how it is done; you’re not in the white ivory tower now’. Everyone agreed that this culture as teacher/trainer (T/T6) called it: ‘them (college) versus us (operational world) is what a lot of guards think’. Teacher/trainer (T/T7) described it as the most difficult challenge of all and will be difficult to change considering that many

\footnote{The Garda College is sometimes called the ‘White Ivory Tower’ in operational policing circles}
Garda members feel: ‘College life is not the real world it is just a means to an end – it is what you learn outside that counts’.

All Garda teacher/trainers in this research have experienced both trainee programmes and believe that even though the current programme is regarded as facilitative, it became strongly didactic very quickly. Everyone stated this is what happened (not including the effects of accelerated recruitment) to the 2nd trainee programme; facilitation of the programme disappeared which when translated as teacher/trainer (T/T1) called it “educational drift”. Changes that removed it from a trainee centred programme to a teacher centred programme. All teacher/trainers stated this will happen again if the current programme is continually undervalued by changes to the original design.

Teacher/trainers further believed the 2nd and current trainee programmes concentrated too much on just delivering theory. Too much emphasis was placed on the syllabus, and not enough emphasis was placed on integrating operational skills training with the theory provided, especially on phase three. The majority of teacher/trainers stated they received training in the new programme which was adequate and beneficial at the time however, a lack of continuous professional development has caused difficulty with regard to their own time management.

The delivery of subjects by teacher/trainers in the current programme and the extra administrative responsibilities had to be completed after normal working hours without any reward. In their view, the current programme was introduced, initial training was given on the rationale, concepts and the benefits of competency development were
outlined. Teacher/trainer (T/T9) stated “the large trainee numbers took over and most things just went out the window”. From a trainee perspective, responses produced high positive experiences for legal staff involvement in their development on phase one in the 2nd and 3rd programmes. However, the major increases in positive experiences (20%) in the current programme are not associated with training staff but with probationary Gardai, senior trainee Gardai and fellow Garda trainees in the experiential phase two.

Garda College staff received a higher positive rating in the 2nd programme however, this changed in the current programme where divisional training and operational staff received a higher positive rating (12%). The Garda College lost ground to operational staff involvement in the current programme by 8%. Trainee respondents’ data from this programme states that generally they found they were not developing in the Garda College on phase one. Trainees stated this was due to a lack of communication from teacher/trainers, no feedback and general overcrowding. Trainees used the experiential learning phase to make up lost ground in professional development, and temporary attachments to regular uniform units provided a close working environment. With trainee numbers high in the majority of operational stations only one logical conclusion happened from this frame of mind (under-development on phase one), trainees found trainees and probationary Gardai easy to access for advice and encouragement. Put the above measures together with active young tutor Gardai (which was the norm in the accelerated period) and attachment to regular uniform units, trainees had a close knit group offering encouragement and development. The high positive ratings from trainees on working with the regular unit and tutor Garda support this, the only down side to this
for trainees’ development is that cultural influence would be strong from operational Gardai.

4. Garda Training Centre/Garda College infrastructure since 1964

All respondents from the 1st training period found the Garda Training Centre old, cold and decrepit. Those in the accelerated recruitment period of this training period in the early 1980s found the Garda Training Centre old fashioned with poor buildings, it was overcrowded and not enough sleeping facilities. They were bussed back and forth to the main town of Thurles (30 miles round trip) where there were sleeping facilities provided in an old seminary. Everyone found that the supervision at the old seminary was akin to being in the army; according to members interviewed, some of the Garda supervisors took their roles and subsequent actions too far, i.e. severe discipline.

All respondents from the 2nd programme stated the college was a nice environment; the buildings, grounds and gardens were well maintained. Everyone stated there was plenty of space and room to study, no major queuing for meals, plenty of classroom space and the one lecture theatre at that time was only used when the whole intake was to be addressed on some issue. All the trainee respondents in the current programme shared the same views on the presentation of the college as the 2nd programme participants however, everyone stated two issues which may not seem important to the Garda College or the staff, became problematic over time for them, parking their private cars outside the college and queuing in the canteen for meals. Trainee respondent (cr3) summed up this feeling when he stated ‘was something you would only see in the movies’ (cr3 interview). Both social integration and opportunities for social contact was regarded as a key strength

Staff from the Garda Training Centre
of the college on phase one and three. Trainees stated the small size of the college, its exclusivity for them and the town of Templemore (where trainees mainly socialised) allowed them integrate well amongst themselves.

In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme, suitable graduate working space was a key college strength on phase one, however this dropped by 63\% in the current programme. The majority of the current programme’s trainees referred to the large numbers in the Garda College using all available public space for carrying out research and/or trying to obtain a computer station. Access to equipment and information resources was a college key strength in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme, this dropped by 60\% in the current programme. Technical support was a positive experience in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme, this dropped by 85\% in the current programme. Financial support was positive experience in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme and this increased by 30\% in the current programme however, trainees stated financial support was connected to personal loans from the Garda Credit Unions, not the trainee allowance from the government.

All teacher/trainers stated the Garda College infrastructure did not take the burden of accelerated recruitment well; both teacher/trainers and trainees suffered, regardless of the new and impressive buildings that have taken place over the last number of years. All teacher/trainers stated the main issue here was the policy of accelerated recruitment “quantity over quality” (T/T2). Everyone stated that personal space and its associated infrastructure for trainees and for teacher/trainers was not really important, if it was, management of the Garda College would have known that there were serious problems like this in the accelerated period in the early 1980s.
All teacher/trainers stated when there are new leadership agendas in educating and training, trainees and college staff can be pushed to one side very quickly when the Garda organisation deems its personnel is required to accept what’s given for the development of the organisation. All Garda teacher/trainers stated this behaviour from management/leadership can be classed as the “old type culture” of the Garda Siochana “never say no, get on with it” (T/T6) which was prevalent for those who trained in the 1st training period, as T/T 3 stated: “This is currently the vast majority of leadership of the Garda Siochana - job first, individual second” (T/T2).

The majority of teacher/trainers stated that if leadership and management are under a flag of reform, it must have only involved their own positions as they did not allow reform to filter down to the main body of the organisation where certain cultures are most prevalent and needs most attention to stamp it out. Teacher/trainer (T/T7) summed up teacher/trainer feelings by stating: “It would seem a paradox exists, do as I say but don’t do as I do, seem to be the message from the bosses”.

Legal and PE&HS studies curricula were the top two strengths for phase one in both trainee programmes, due to staff using operational war stories to compliment the delivery of theory. A 90% positive experience from trainees in the 2nd programme and 70% in the current programme, a decrease of 20% (using lecture theatres instead of classrooms accounted for this drop) with the introduction of accelerated recruitment. Social and psychological studies curriculum due to a lack of communications (curriculum delivered in lecture theatres with no discussion) and feedback (no information on examinations, projects, essays and/or grades achieved) from teaching staff in that section were the top
two weaknesses on phase one, at 100% negative experiences in the 2nd programme and a 93% negative experience in the current programme.

5. Respondents on development in the Garda College and current programme

As the Garda College is now a 3rd level institution the majority of the teacher/trainers stated a master’s degree should be the minimum requirement to teach and lecture. The current programme demands it and it should be any different to the rest of the third level colleges/academic institutions in Ireland. The majority referring to the university standard now required for nursing in Ireland, T/T (10) stated: ‘A master’s degree in specific areas with a high level of skills specific knowledge for others i.e. technical’.

All teacher/trainers stated one dedicated Garda College is enough for the Garda Siochana because of the organisation’s compact size, personnel numbers, the size of the country and the location of the present Garda College. All Garda teacher/trainers stated the use of the college by other Garda members regardless of the course or rank is somewhat beneficial for trainees who can meet and chat with them. They also believe that trainees will see and may adapt more quickly to the practices and procedures of the Garda Siochana in this environment. However, they do see the logic of social inclusion, of possibly allowing trainees attend other colleges or part of their course at one college.

The civilian teacher/trainers at the Garda College did not understand and/or agree with these internal ‘practices and procedures of status, rank, operational experience, war stories’. They are totally against this culture and firmly believe some practices and procedures are very archaic and arbitrary and at times unhealthy for trainees because of the stringent hierarchical structures involved.
Garda teacher/trainers are happy to see civilian teacher/trainers on the college staff as they are experts in their respective fields and give a different character to the programme as T/T 10 stated “it is no longer one dimensional”. The vast majority of trainees found having a police college “cool” (cr11) however; the majority stated that the college should be relocated to Dublin for ease of access for all concerned. The majority also stated that because the programme course is 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, there should be no requirement to live in unless it was absolutely necessary.

All teacher/trainers stated when the new Nolan (2009) programme for trainees is implemented; sections of the course should be delivered in other institutions, i.e. a city based college or university. The two main subjects mentioned for this outsourcing was social and psychological and management and organisational studies, provided it does not affect their own personal working environment (civilian staff stated they did not want their contracts terminated as they all relocated when they secured employment in the Garda College). Teacher/trainers’ thinking behind outsourcing is from an overall development purpose, trainees would have contact and communications with other civilian students and college staff and, development would be inclusive and not secluded behind the “blue walls” (T/T9) of the Garda College.

6. Fear of Garda training staff, its disappearance, job security, discipline, career, friendship

All respondents in the 1st training programme stated the training centre was poor in every aspect when they trained there and many felt this represented their thoughts on the vast majority of the training staff. Everyone stated the staff of the training centre, especially
certain senior staff members ( sergeants and inspectors ) were impossible to deal with, ( r44 ) stated:

They were lost in a time warp, they were not approachable and you could not talk to them or really ask any questions.

Respondent ( r6 ) stated:

‘ Its amazing what you learn after you leave the training centre, the only reason some of the older members were in the Training Centre was that they could not be allowed out on the streets, at some stage they were blocked ( disciplined ) or ran into problems with drink, it was one of the two places to put them, and then what happens they become instructors and institutionalised and it becomes a vicious cycle ’.

According to the respondents, if possible you avoided contact with them but when spoken to you followed their orders to the letter, two respondents stated:

‘ Some of the training sergeants were dinosaurs ’ ( r29 ),

‘ the sergeants were gods there; some were okay but most were from another time ’ ( r21 ).

Respondents’ data suggests this theme was still an issue in the first number of years of the 2nd programme, but not as severe, and the total opposite in the current programme, trainees felt secure with college staff, especially staff from the legal section. All respondents in the first two programmes stated that one had to remember the time period in question, 1960/70s and 1980s, there was very little work in Ireland and to be selected for the Garda Siochana was a major bonus and great family pride was involved when selected, you had full time work, a good medical aid scheme, a pension after thirty years.
However, this also had a negative effect because as recruits they were afraid to lose their job or do anything which might result in discipline, so you did what you were told by the training staff. Dismissal from the Garda Síochána “was a life sentence” (r45) and made your chances in Ireland very difficult in obtaining another job, three respondents stated:

‘you really had to buckle down and do what you were told because you did not want to lose your job or get thrown out of the Garda Síochána because it would be hard to get work and harder if people found out you were dismissed or sacked’ (r19),

‘cause any problem even if you were right and they would make you pay at some stage, win the battle but lose the war’ (r41),

‘there were times I was actually afraid of the training sergeants, I did what I was told and everything went okay, some of the instructors were bullies, it annoys me to this day’ (r37).

This was not an issue in the current programme. The data suggests that trainees felt secure in the knowledge their jobs were safe and the fear that respondents had for authority in the first two programmes did not exist in any format.

The majority of respondents would recommend the Garda Síochána as a career but with reservations. The majority also stated it was the one career they wanted from a very young age. The 1st training period respondents’ feelings of fear, injustice and general attitude were based on that period of time that they trained. The majority informed me this differs from the operational/administrative career path they have experienced. There was overwhelming support from the respondents in 2nd and 3rd programmes to recommend the Garda Síochána. However, it was noticeable from the majority of the answers; a paternal instinct appeared in the form of subtle warnings that it is a career worth having but the education and training is difficult and the eventual lifestyle. The
security of the Garda career as a government position, benefits and pension are also mentioned as forms of extra security.

In the 1st training period, instructor’s intimidation, fear, casual fear and verbal abuse by those in supervisory and command positions dominated all data with respondents stating that at the time of their training, severe discipline was just the way of the majority of the training staff and the Garda organisation. The majority of respondents stated it was like a military boot camp. All stated quite forcefully they would not under any circumstances today allow other members go through what they went through, two respondents stated:

‘Full uniform inspection every morning from head to toe – a nightmare’ (r16),
‘full room inspection every Monday night white gloves on staff carrying out inspection to find dust, I remember we had to wash the linoleum on the floor and then wax it, you hoped it was good enough or you were in trouble’ (r45).

Several respondents stated their own children have joined the Garda Siochana. In the beginning, the main worry for them was the training period in the Garda College. However, on listening to their family members’ positive experiences and enjoying this period within the training programme they are very pleased with the changes there. All respondents in the 2nd programme experienced strict disciplinary practices when they arrived in the Garda College, but the data suggests not as severe as the 1st training period. These similar attitudes did not prevail in the current programme; all the trainee respondents stated if you got into trouble the disciplinary regulations were severe. One trainee respondent stated: “If you messed up or became subject to the disciplinary regulations, it was your own fault” (cr2).
From a different perspective, the majority of trainee respondents in the current programme stated the college staff sometimes failed to be firm on issues relating to their development, two respondents stated: ‘Concentrated on the wrong things’ (cr5), “Some lecturers not able to control a class/lecture when students acted up” (cr3). The majority of trainee respondents stated alcohol was the main culprit for getting trainees into trouble, respondent (cr4) stated: “A good few were disciplined for alcohol offences, you were given enough rope to hang yourself, and anybody found offside it was their own fault, plenty of warnings given”.

The majority of trainee respondents also stated that discipline was not uniform in its approach, some staff were very strict and some staff were not and the trainees came to identify these very quickly. The majority of respondents in the 1st training period stated on finishing their training they walked away from the Garda Training Centre and never contacted their training sergeant or any member of the training staff, they just wanted to put that part of their life and the experiences behind them.

Assigned to the ‘Fat Club’ from PE&HS section in the current trainee programme

One aspect connected to PE&HS section came up in the group interview from one of the respondents from the current programme which was then discussed by all respondents and referred to as ‘The Instructors Fat Club’. The respondent who brought this subject up for discussion stated that participating in physical exercise i.e. running with certain teacher/trainers of this section used to make the respondent physically sick with worry. The respondent while speaking, was supported by the rest of the respondents who informed me that a small number of the Garda teacher/trainers used to pick on trainee(s)
if they found they were not within the weight and height guidelines and assign them to their personal ‘fat club’.

The trainee(s) in question were put to one side of the main group or class before the class began and informed in front of the rest of the trainees that if they did not lose weight and achieve the correct standard they would have them reverted or dismissed. Trainees would remain in the ‘fat club’ until they achieved the correct guidelines. A number of the other respondents in the group interview confirmed this type of action took place regularly and many trainees reported sick to avoid these classes. They also informed me it was common knowledge within the trainee body that two PE teacher/trainers in particular were to be avoided at all costs.

7. Accelerated recruitment impacting on trainees and teacher/trainers

Trainee respondents in the current programme stated accelerated recruitment did create problems in their personal and professional development. Two respondents stated: ‘continual time table problems’ (cr5), ‘always lecture theatres, no free classrooms to receive tutorials’ (cr1). The majority of trainee respondents stated there were poor research facilities, poor information technology and its associated supports. The majority found studying in their private rooms difficult as there was ‘a lot of noise in the dorms regardless what time of the day’ (cr3). The dormitories were not heavily supervised except possibly of a Thursday night after the disco or a function.

The majority of respondents from both programmes stated that the phase one programme was covered but ‘very rushed at times’ (pcr1). All trainees stated too much information was pushed on the theoretical aspects of law and procedure’s in the lecture theatres. This did not allow other skill-based training to take place, ‘there was no asp training, no hand
cuff training and not enough self defence training, just a lot of law’ (cr4). One trainee respondent stated he was nervous about going out on phase two because:

‘I did not really know what to expect on phase two, regardless of the small lecture we were given before we left the college— if they had from a practical point of view brought us to a district court or shown us the asp or some form of defence this would have been good’ (cr2).

In the current programme all teacher/trainers stated accelerated recruitment affected their working environment, ‘the ratio between instructor and student was too high for competency development’ (T/T12). Garda College teacher/trainers found the sharp increase in trainee numbers especially between 2006 and 2007 put a strain on the delivery of the programme when a large number of the intakes were going through at the same time. Teacher/trainers were forced out of the classroom and into the lecture theatres to deliver the programme. Changes to mid and terminal assessments were also required which all teacher/trainers stated did not suit the competency development framework.

All teacher/trainers from the Garda College stated that in their experience phase three rather than phase one became difficult to manage with the large trainee numbers. Many classes designed for integrating the modular structure of the phase had to be facilitated in the lecture theatres because of a lack of staff and classrooms. The majority stated many of these concerns were expressed at Garda College meetings but very little changed in practise.

All divisional teacher/trainers, especially in the large city centres found the goodwill of the operational Gardai and civilian staff and those in specialised units tested on
occasions, as these members tried to complete their own work and deal with the continuous turnover of trainees appearing for a week here and there and trying to facilitate their needs and development:

‘When the number of people increases there is always the risk that some students who need greater support will not get it’ (T/T6).

All teacher/trainers found it difficult to place trainees with experienced Tutor Gardai, ‘number of students was too much’ (T/T7). As a result teacher/trainers were required to use junior Gardai, with some just out of the Garda College and still in their probationary period. For the social and specialist administrative placements, ‘it was like an automated factory, the worry for me was where the quality control was’ (T/T11). Teacher/trainer participation and facilitation became increasingly difficult and as a result development for all suffered, three respondents stated:

‘Yes, crowed classes, led to some students being lost in the programme’ (T/T7),

‘Yes, moved from classroom to lecture theatre (T/T6),

‘The level of interaction between students and staff at phase one is very limited and this is a weakness in the induction phase’ (T/T10).

8. Experiential learning diary and examinations

The majority of respondents in the 2nd and current programmes stated the Garda College had no interest in the effort trainees put into the diary and received very little assistance concerning their development. The majority of trainee respondents stated the experiential learning diary was not useful for development on phase one. Respondents including college staff and operational staff stated the ELD should reflect the following:
• Entries to reflect the reality of what competency development means.
• Entries to reflect the phase they are studying in, i.e., the Garda College is a sterile environment and makes some entries in the diary difficult to complete.
• The diary to reflect its true purpose – assisting development in trainees and not to be used as a weapon of discipline.

There was a mixed reaction from teacher/trainers on the question of the experiential learning diary. Four of the Garda College teacher/trainers said it was now used as a disciplinary tool and the original concept on its development use is gone. Ten of the teacher/trainers stated the development use of the experiential learning diary on phase one was poor/fair and two stated it was satisfactory. The teacher/trainers who stated the development aspects of the experiential learning development were poor/fair blamed the sterile environment in the Garda College which did not allow trainees develop through the designated competencies. Teacher/trainers believe the experiential learning diary should be redesigned to reflect the non-operational status of trainees in the theoretical college environment.

Teacher/trainers who stated it was satisfactory believe the opposite has taken place, trainees know they are in a college environment and have adopted their learning requirements to reflect this. They further state the Garda College may not be operationally active, but it is a live environment which should not stop competency development taking place. All teacher/trainers heard that many of the trainees were making up entries for the experiential learning diary or using information from previous trainees from phases one and three. The majority of teacher/trainers stated the
experiential learning diary lost its way within the accelerated recruitment period due a lack of personal attention from Garda staff and Garda College management.

The majority of trainee respondents from the 2nd and current programmes stated some staff in Garda College informed them the experiential learning diary would be of more benefit in their experiential learning phase. This data was strongly supported by trainee respondents in the group interview. The majority of trainee respondents stated the experiential learning diary was not developmental on phases one and three, especially for entry number three, the examples required were just not available and as result ‘many of the students just made up entries’ (cr2).

9. Garda College information technology and supports

In the 2nd programme 62% of respondents found the Garda College IT and Supports, a key strength. This positive rating fell by 50% to 12% positive experiences in the current programme. IT equipment and technical support were key strengths in the 2nd programme; both fell by 60% and 85% respectively in the current programme. All trainee respondents in the current programme found the information technology system in the college very poor or nearly non-existent. 40% (approx) of trainee respondents attended other colleges and universities before entry to the Garda Siochana and were used to a higher format of access to information, (cr5) stated:

‘the Garda College system is a joke, I was in an Irish university where they went out of their way to ensure the IT was up to date, progressive and readily available, but not in the Garda College, we (trainees) are expected to do well with very little help’.
All trainee respondents stated that they were informed on numerous occasions throughout their phases that the college was implementing a state of the art ‘IT system’, but it did not happen and they regarded this as a serious failure to assist in their development. The majority of trainee respondents stated that it was ‘dreadful’ (cr4) trying to get some of their assignments done because in their view, the library was limited and the ability to research was nearly non-existent. All trainee respondents stated that it was one area that the college should upgrade immediately. Trainee respondent’s general comments were: ‘No WIFI in this day and age, a 3rd level college, no way’ (cr2), ‘No computers and no printers’ (cr2). The basis for this criticism is the requirement for trainees to research and produce case files, essays, projects and dissertations.

All teacher/trainers stated they were aware that there was serious discontent amongst trainees with the lack of IT facilities in the Garda College. Teacher/trainer (T/T6) stated:

“\textit{We have at present many handouts for students when they enter the college and the orientation week is where they receive most of their information. However, to make the college a friendlier and a more professional environment consideration should be given to the production of a booklet incorporating everything we currently give students. Many of the problems we have are around for many years and are well known to all, if one was to take an example; a dedicated web site for the college would be of immense value to students}”.

10. The curricula - mode of delivery and facilitation

All respondents in the 1\textsuperscript{st} training period stated classroom work was regarded as boring. For the majority of their classes they had the same policing duties’ instructor for their 6
months in the Garda Training Centre. All respondents stated they would have preferred a mixture in the delivery of subjects. All 2nd programme respondents stated the use of classroom with small numbers was the preferred option in their development; there were different teacher/trainers for each subject area. In general, they did not receive too many lectures in the one lecture theatre as there were plenty of available classrooms.

The majority of trainee respondents from the current programme stated the use of classroom was the preferred option, three of the respondents stated:

‘Because you could ask questions’, (cr1),

‘The classroom environment was more interesting and at times there could be one to one interaction’ (cr4),

‘In the large lecture theatre everything was impersonal’ (cr5).

All respondents from the 2nd and current programmes agreed that the current format of the programme suited a classroom environment as opposed to lecture theatres. The majority of the teacher/trainers stated the current syllabus needs to be redeveloped and brought into line with the original submissions to HETAC. In their view most of the subject areas due to the pressure applied by the accelerated recruitment are not conforming to any set syllabus and the majority of the changes to the modules have not been validated.

Teacher/trainers also stated the subject matter was not meeting the learning objectives; the quality assurance that was promised by Garda College management was not meeting the needs of the trainees and teacher/trainers and the needs of the organisation. All stated they have not participated and/or witnessed a review of the subjects, evaluation of
teaching methods and or assessments, since accelerated recruitment began. Teacher/trainers further stated that it was general knowledge amongst training staff that a number of the subject areas on phase one had no set syllabus.

The following tables presents trainees positive experiences on the phase one subjects in the 2nd and current programmes.

Table 5.1 - 2nd programme trainee positive experiences on the phase one subjects

Overall there is a 63% positive experience reported by the trainees. The Legal/GPPS studies received the highest rating at 88% with Social and psychological studies receiving the lowest at 12%.
Table 5.2 - Current programme trainees’ positive experiences on the phase one subjects

Overall there is a 58% positive experience reported by the trainees. The legal/gpps studies received the highest rating at 88% with social and psychological studies receiving the lowest at 2%. The overall positive experience by trainees is 60% for the curriculum subjects in both programmes. There is a decrease of 8% in positive experiences in the current programme which may reflect the increased trainee numbers in the college for this period and the changes caused as a result.

Responses regarding social and psychological studies varied from a) the type of topics covered and b) the level at which the subjects were delivered, ‘it was just impossible to follow some of the subjects, people just switched off’ (cr18). The majority of the trainees stated the programme was delivered continually in lecture theatres, no
questions and answers sessions and very few handouts which trainees’ state led to communication barriers. Overall, the majority could not find purpose; aims or objectives to the content delivered which would assist them in their roles as future Gardai. On this subject area teacher/trainer (T/T6) stated:

’in relation to phase one and phase three social studies programme, the input from the teacher/trainers and external speakers is not assessed and that the staff attached to social studies over the years have designed their own programmes based on their specific areas of expertise which is then delivered. When they leave or are transferred they take their expertise and their programme with them. The new person coming in has to design his/her programme; this information is common knowledge and goes back to the Walsh Report’.

Teacher/trainer (T/T4) stated:

‘something similar happened with MAOS however, the section made some changes in late 2006 because of failure rates. The section found the programme lacked practical application, formal lectures were presented to students in the lecture theatre to cope with the large numbers and there was no tutorial follow up’.

All trainee respondents stated contextual policing studies’ curriculum was poor and regarded it as (T/T3) stated “a farce” with very few classes. All teacher/trainers stated the legal studies curriculum was very good “it is interesting to us and the students need to know the law’ (T/T8).

The PE&HS curriculum also received a good rating by teacher/trainers, ‘a little more could be given here especially in relation to health and defence tactics’ (T/T2). All of
the teacher/trainers stated that in general, any curriculum will change over time. However, it is important that the Garda College and HETAC approves these changes as they take place rather than letting them happen with time and teaching staff. Teacher/trainers also stated that the delivery of curricula subject’s was weak/fair due excessive use of front loading in the lecture theatres. All agreed that on phase one, that a substantial proportion of the course is theoretical however; too much time was spent in lecture theatres. Further to this, all teacher/trainers stated trainees on this phase did not require knowing every piece of legislation, practise and procedure going out on phase two, it is a step programme and trainees would develop with each phase.

Everyone stated the development process of each phase, except phase one is just about right in study material and time assigned to it. Teacher/trainers have experienced mature trainees having difficulty adjusting and/or re-adjusting to college life after many years away from studying. All teacher/trainers firmly stated that trainees have an eagerness to know everything immediately about the Garda Siochana, law, practises and procedures before they go out on phase two but this is impossible given the time frame and hours assigned to phase one. Teacher/trainers understand the concerns of trainees wanting all possible knowledge for their phase two experiential learning. In their experience no trainee has ever overly suffered from a lack of training and knowledge leaving the college.

The majority of the teacher/trainers stated the provision of tutorials were poor to very poor. Many of their modules were designed particularly for smaller classes so interaction and facilitation could take place. The large numbers of trainees, lack of
class space and a lack of teaching staff dictated that tutorials were not continued as the main educational tools to be used in a programme.

The majority of teacher/trainers were clearly annoyed with changes to the format of assessments on phase one, from objective testing and case studies back to written examinations. Objective testing was replaced as it was found that they could only produce so many questions to build up a bank of questions and there was only a limited amount of case studies that could be produced regardless of the subject area. Teacher/trainers viewed this slip back to written examinations did not test trainees deeply enough. Bearing these changes in mind, all teacher/trainers felt the quality of the new assessments may not have been up to standard and trainees may not have been tested to their fullest.

Eight teacher/trainers stated trainee time management was fair with four stating it was good. All teacher/trainers believed that trainees used their time wisely, relaxed when it was appropriate, studied when required and were available when needed.

All teacher/trainers stated the subject content in phase three was good and up to date. In their view, it was not the content but the delivery locations (lecture theatres) that killed the integration process for this phase. The majority stated many factors contributed to this non-integration of the subjects. Accelerated recruitment forced issues with the time-table; classes were cancelled, there was double booking of rooms, a lack of staff and insistence by some subject areas that they could only facilitate the time-table at certain weeks within phase three. All teacher/trainers were
aware of serious discontentment from other Garda College staff members on these issues.

The majority of the teacher/trainers stated the assessments on phase three were fair and in general terms they received no major complaints from trainees, in their view most did very well. Teacher/trainers ensured each assessment was judged within context, that it was set properly and always on subject matter that was taught on phase three, (which changed at different times). Compared to the Walsh (1985) programme, there were fewer examinations and very few trainees failed the examinations. For those who did fail it was normally just once, very few failed twice, which meant they would fail the programme completely and were required to leave. Teacher/trainers stated in the beginning of 2003, when the programme was implemented there was a very good mixture of examinations from written tests, objective testing, case studies and role plays. But over time this became unmanageable and they resorted back to written examinations to cope with trainee numbers. They also pointed out that the original concept of mixing the examinations was one of the few areas they found better than the Walsh (1985) programme.

All teacher/trainers stated the delivery of lecturing from a professional point of view on phase three was satisfactory however; the locations at times did not suit them or the subject area as they spent most of the time in lecture theatres. Everyone stated that the delivery of tutorials on phase three was satisfactory however, very few were given because of the large numbers of trainees, ‘forced out of the classrooms into the lecture theatres’ (T/T4).
Teacher/trainers found the implementation of the Keating (1999) report difficult because of the new assessment procedures, new structure and format to the experiential learning diary, the concept of competency based training and its administration. Within the accelerated recruitment period of the current programme everyone found their workloads doubled which further hampered their abilities to implement the current programme as was specified. Teacher/trainer (T/T2) stated:

“The competency programme was only bedding in 2003 with the first couple of intakes when the government decided on accelerated recruitment, so in fact all teacher/trainers’ experiences of the competency programme are really only with accelerated recruitment”.

Teacher/trainers stated their administrative and teaching practises with the implementation of a competency framework came under severe pressure from the accelerated recruitment of trainees ‘the number of students has dramatically increased and so has the workload’ (T/T4). This involved administrative changes to the programme content, phase two competency based assessments, changes in the college curriculum and examinations and finally, the frustration of gaining space and time on the weekly time-table.

Teacher/trainers in divisional training centres found their administration increased because of the new assessment procedures, an increase in class numbers and the preparation and planning of getting all participants for the assessment meetings. One area that generated a very positive attitude and a feeling of accomplishment was the
competency based assessment interviews. Teacher/trainers spoke at length about them and stated regardless of the extra work involved in their preparation, it was one area of development they found the most valuable for trainees.

In response to the current one-week residential teacher/trainer programme, teacher/trainers stated it took one week to one year before a course was offered by the Garda College. They stated this delay was associated with recruitment of staff, transfers of staff in and out of the college and how many would be available to do the course. The in-house one week course offered by the college came in for a scathing attack from all teacher/trainers, two teacher/trainers stated: ‘Not acceptable – it is not detailed enough and doesn’t involve ‘hands on’ trainer assessment’, (T/T7), ‘The one week orientation training is very unacceptable’ (T/T6). Teacher/trainers stated the average time from date of application for obtaining the 3rd level Certificate in Adult Education and Training was two years. All stated the certificate was good to very good in developing their teaching skills.

The new teacher/trainer certificate received satisfactory reviews from everyone, teacher/trainer (T/T11) stated: ‘The NUIG T/T programme is a good concept, however, for newly inducted staff; the one week orientation training is very unacceptable’. Teacher/trainer (T/T2) stated ‘started off well, but typical garda, failed to keep the quality alive’. Teacher/trainers stressed that the offer of twenty places per year for this course is not enough. It should be on offer to all teacher/trainers from the moment they are offered a post in the training environment. Eight teacher/trainers said the Garda College only partially provides the education/training tools to guide the new system. The lack of continuous professional development
especially in the areas of coaching and mentoring negated the initial thrust given to the current programme.

Teacher/trainers stated the Garda College did not provide constant continuous professional development. The only real development was a one day course on the supports required for ethnic and religious minorities joining the Garda Síochana (Cultural Diversity Awareness Programme). Teacher/trainers also stated they were never consulted on any accelerated recruitment or the changes required for it. They were expected to continue their work even though the numbers doubled within a short-time frame. Teacher/trainers stated many issues surrounding competency development were pushed to one side to cope with trainee numbers, “too many at the one time, something had to give” (T/T6). The majority feel the trainee’s development was affected by all the mentioned changes. “With 250/275 trainees arriving at the Garda College every 12 weeks on top of other intakes already in the system showed there was a lack of in-house accommodation, a lack of classrooms resulting in the overuse of the three lecture theatres resulting in a lower level of instruction given to trainees and then there was the major building works” (T/T7).

Teacher/trainers believe the extra 2000 trainees caused a dip in the quality of standards provided by the Garda College, three of the teacher/trainers stated:

‘A drop in standards from the college’ (T/T3),

‘because teacher/trainers were unable to give personal attention, classroom instruction gave the student a great opportunity to ask questions and engage with the system, much of this is lost in a lecture theatre’ (T/T9),
‘Yes there has been a loss of opportunity to engage in qualitative training, personal engagement and mentoring as a result of volume’ (T/T10).

For phase one, the majority of teacher/trainers stated that the competency development programme is only partially fulfilling its commitment to trainees’ progress because the ratio between teacher/trainer and trainee is too wide due to accelerated recruitment and makes their role difficult, two teacher/trainers stated:

‘The ratio between teacher/trainers and students is far too great to evaluate full competence development; this is especially true of the college phases’ (T/T1), ‘Ratio between coach and student is far too great, it was hard to cope, we knew it and so did management’ (T/T2).

Teacher/trainers from the divisional training centres also agreed that the ratio had grown too wide on phase two which put tremendous pressure on their administration to provide continual quality placements, ‘because it lacks controlled field training by training staff’ (T/T10). Teacher/trainers attached to divisional training centres agreed, that in general the phase one trainees coming out on to phase two exhibited a lack of development with regard to Garda practises and procedures.

The majority of the teacher/trainers stated that in their opinion trainees were only partially developing in line with the designed competencies for phase three, ‘student numbers too big for personalised attention, especially for monitoring the diary’ (T/T8). This was coupled with the lack of response from Garda College management to recognise the importance of what constitutes integrated competency development for trainees and the framework required for it, ‘too much front loading in the lecture
theatres’ (T/T6). However, teacher/trainers stated that in an overall context, phases four and five (probationary Garda sworn phases) of the programme allowed trainees to make up development time which should have taken place on the trainee phases one, two and three and by doing so provided a balance.

The majority believed when accelerated recruitment stops competency development will achieve its real and full potential for the trainee phases of one, two and three. In response to the programme achieving a balance between theory and practise, all teacher/trainers said it was partially balanced and in this regard very similar to the Walsh (1985) programme.

Teacher/trainers stated time was taken away from skills based learning and the use of practical demonstrations that were used in the 2nd programme, i.e. road traffic accident scenarios, three teacher/trainers stated: ‘We need to re-establish practical policy and assessments’ (T/T4), ‘Overall it is a well balanced programme however, many traditional policing values are now lost’ (T/T12), ‘too much emphasis on non-policing issues and this stretches the course beyond its remit’ (T/T9).

For phase one and three, six of the teacher trainers stated the quality had partially improved for certain subjects such as legal and management studies for phases one and three with the introduction of single and group case studies, role plays and court practicals, two teacher/trainers stated:

‘phase one and three programme does to an extent address some of the value based issues which the programme prior to that appeared to give little attention to on a formal footing’ (T/T11),
‘The quality of the programme has improved and I would be for competency development training. However, the emphasis on non policing issues on phases one and three is a serious cause for concern’ (T/T8).

The remaining six teacher/trainers stated they believe the quality of the subjects was similar to the Walsh (1985) programme but with less emphasis on skills based training.

Teacher/trainers stated they had not been involved, approached and never asked to participate in any quality assurance measure for the new programme. They witnessed changes taking place Garda College (exam formats) and the experiential phase two (using trainees in non developmental roles) and sometimes without consultation from Garda authorities. Teacher/trainers stated they are not aware of any quality assurance being carried out since the introduction of the current programme in 2003. Four teacher/trainers stated competency development has slightly improved the standard of trainees because of self regulation. Eight teacher/trainers stated they cannot see any major difference with those trained under the Walsh (1985) programme, two teacher/trainers stated:

‘the same information is coming back that existed in the Walsh programme – there is a serious lack of the fundamentals such as preparing case files, students communication skills’ (T/T1),

‘It is not that the quality of students is poor; it is that we have not done enough for the students’ (T/T10).
Four teacher/trainers stated the subjects’ content has slightly improved in certain areas such as legal/gpps studies and Maos studies. Eight teacher/trainers stated they cannot see any difference from the previous Walsh (1985) programme, teacher/trainers stated:

‘I know for a fact one section of the college in particular is totally disliked by the students and it’s down to the content of their course’ (T/T 1),

‘The content has changed over time because of the large numbers’ (T/T9),

‘We had to try and change it to suit the lecture theatres, it did not always work’ (T/T7).

Eight teacher/trainers stated the current programme was not easier to facilitate due to the use of lecture theatres. Two teacher/trainers stated the facilitation was similar to the previous Walsh (1985) programme. Two teacher/trainers stated they do not see any difference. Two teacher/trainers stated: ‘I would prefer the classroom to teach in’ (T/T10), ‘To an extent students have taken ownership of their learning, however, I wonder are we (teacher/trainers) keeping our end of the contract’ (T/T3).

A number of significant issues were raised by the teacher/trainers which are what Fielding (1988) and Southgate (1988) contend could judge the effectiveness of training. These broad issues concerned financial cost of training, value for money and its cost effectiveness, and secondly the quality of policing being achieved. The majority of teacher/trainers over the course of the interviews admitted it was too early to see a lasting impact of competency development. It would take a generation of the
new style competency based education to erode the old operational mentality of ‘forget the college you are now in real life’ (T/T4) and ‘this is how it is done’ (T/T5).

The Garda teacher/trainers, who have experienced both education programmes, believe that even though the new programme is regarded as facilitative with adult education methodologies, it became strongly didactic. Many indicated that this is what happened (not including the effects of accelerated recruitment) to the 2nd trainee programme. Policy changes (internal and external) removed it from a trainee centred programme to a teacher centred programme. Teacher/trainers believe this will happen again if the current programme is continually undervalued by Garda leadership.

The Keating (1999) report insisted that three educational components must be intertwined through the competency based educational processes – “skills, knowledge and attitude”; these were discussed in detail by the teacher/trainers. Everyone believed they did reasonably well on the first two but the teacher/trainers had no idea how to move on attitude when dealing with Garda College management. On this issue all teacher/trainers used examples and stated the reforms of the current programme were just pushed to one side when a single leadership decision was taken to double the recruitment. Past experiences such as the problems associated with accelerated recruitment in the 1980’s were never considered. Views and opinions of staff were outweighed by providing for the Garda organisation as a whole, the individual did not matter. Everyone further believes the syllabus for phase two did not change and subject contents are the same since Walsh (1985). Teacher/trainers found this alarming considering it is the preferred phase by trainees.
Teacher/trainers further stated some topics (all relating to legal) from different subject areas are covered repeatedly across all three phases. Teacher/trainers insist this is not the developmental approach that should be in place and firmly believe these changes could have only been put in place by staff in those respective subject areas. Everyone stated competency development requires the Garda Siochana to ensure there are quality audits and assurance procedures to focus its future learning and development strategies back onto the trainee. Only then, will trainee competency development take place. Teacher/trainer T/T7 stated to the author at the end of our discussion:

“As can be seen from our discussion, my answers to questions are not black and white. Some areas are working very well in the new system and some are not. Maybe the training review will answer these areas”.

The majority stated that much of what was anticipated for phase one and three, ‘went out the door with accelerated recruitment’ (T/T6). There was supposed to be increased facilitation and discussion by using tutorials, the experiential learning diary was seen as a major tool in judging and assisting in trainee development. The use of written examinations was to be scaled back in favour of a mixed examination format, so that problem based learning could be completed individually and within groups. Trainees were to receive more personalised attention in the format of coaching and mentoring which would guide their development on a progressive level. Teacher/trainers were of the view there were very few advantages to phase one and three in the current programme due to accelerated recruitment. Everyone believes the current programme became too theoretical in the college phases one and three. As a result,
this prevented establishment of a closer link between the Garda College and the divisional training centres.

All Garda teacher/trainers believed the extra Garda stations declared suitable and developmental for trainees had supervisors in the operational field who never received training in competency development. Four of the teacher/trainers informed their authorities that the selection of these stations were not suitable however, they were still opened for trainee development.

Human rights and cultural diversity awareness training

The recruits from the first training programme stated they never received any format of training on human rights or diversity awareness; it just did not exist at that time. Trainees from the 2nd programme stated they did receive classes on human rights training that involved legislation; where it came from, and why it existed. In respect of cultural awareness they had lectures from outside agencies such as ‘PAVEE Point’ for the Travelling Community on phase three.

Trainees from the current programme stated, they received many classes on human rights and cultural diversity. Each of their subjects or modules was laced with human right issues. Cultural diversity was also given by many outside agencies while they were on phase three. They also stated that phase two classes always had elements of human rights and cultural awareness attached to them. The majority also stated that their respective Tutor Garda and/or Unit sergeant often brought up the subjects of human rights/cultural awareness when briefing their units due to the amount of people who immigrated to Ireland from countries in Europe and Africa. The vast majority of trainees were happy with their training in these two fields. Trainees also informed that
it was very much part and parcel of their upbringing and life before they joined the Garda Siochana.

11. Social and specialist placements and unit work on phase two (experiential)

The majority of the respondents in the 2nd and current programmes agreed the specialist placements concerning operational policing were excellent. Everyone stated that many of the specialist units that concerned administration/office work were boring and the work they completed was monotonous, the following trainee respondents stated:

‘My specialist placements in administration were pointless and I didn’t gain very much from it’ (pcr9),

‘Certain sections didn’t want you – the only good thing was they let you finish early, I was glad getting out of them early’(cr4),

‘All I did was destroy old files’ (cr3),

‘several specialist placements were not very satisfactory because there was not much for us to get involved in as they were to busy to assist us’ (pcr131).

Everyone stated that the office staff in question just did not want trainees there, trainee respondent (pcr 119) stated:

‘many of the placements were poor, doing a week in the public office, collators office, fines office is very monotonous, I feel that a day or two in each of this would suffice’.
Everyone felt they were in the way and the work they were given was ‘made up work’ (cr1) or work that no else wanted to do or work that was put on the long finger. All agreed these placements were not developmental, trainee respondent (cr155) stated: ‘Some of the specialist placements such as the district office had no time for students and you had no beneficial work to do there’. The general agreement from all trainee respondents was that the specialist placement involving clerical work should be restricted in time because as one trainee (cr1) stated: ‘put in sergeant’s office for a week with nothing organised for me, spent most of time photocopying or reading ancient files, no relevant experience gained here’.

The over all positive experiences from all trainee respondents was one of belonging, real life learning on the job and seeing a cross section of Irish life that most had not encountered before. All agreed and stressed more time should be given with the unit for phase two, the following trainee respondents stated:

‘Excellent you couldn’t get better’ (cr1),

‘senior students and probationers very helpful’ (cr4),

‘My sergeant was great for giving advice and making sure you were looked after’

(cr5).

All trainee respondents agreed that if they were allowed to spend the full 20 weeks with their unit they would have ‘accepted it hands down’ (pcr7). Trainees stated this was the best part of their phases, ‘it was a time to learn without responsibility’ (pcr6).

The specialist placements in the current programme concerning (detective offices, drugs units and traffic units) received a 5% higher positive experience at 70% than the
2nd programme at 65%. Teacher/trainers view on administrative specialist placements was comparative with trainees, four teacher/trainers stated the specialist placements were good and eight stated the specialist placements were fair to poor. The eight teacher/trainers in last category stated little change took place since the Walsh (1985) programme, administrative offices are what they are, ‘administrative’ (T/T4). They did not blame the specialist administrative office but rather the pressure placed on the placement by the large influx of trainees. Some specialist administrative placements resented the turnover and interference within their office when trying to complete their own work and facilitate the development of a new face every couple of days. All teacher/trainers indicated they would like to re-evaluate these placements but the current numbers going through cannot be facilitated elsewhere and much more to the point, there is only a limited amount of specialist placements in every district. Everyone were aware that some placements were not fully developmental and at times the trainee became the ‘go-for’ or the mover of files’ (T/T6). However, trainee positive experiences on learning developments on phase two increased up by 8% in the current programme.

To further their development on phase two, trainees’ recommended that they should be provided limited powers equivalent to Garda reserve. Trainee respondent (cr16) comments represent the feelings of the current competency trainees,

“The fact that you have no powers at all even to sign a passport form makes you feel that you are getting in the way at times, because everyone is so busy. It would be great if you had some powers to help out’(cr16).
In the current programme, trainee respondents’ positive experiences on working with the regular unit increased by 9%, beat patrol duties increased by 6%, fulfilling their competency development by completing station duties increased by 15%, patrol car duties by 8% and correction of their diary by their supervisory sergeant by 10%.

Trainees regarded working with the regular uniform unit and rapport with Tutor Garda as excellent. The overall positive experience rating for working with the operational uniform unit in various policing capacities was 10% higher in the current programme. In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme, 76% of respondents stated working with the regular uniform unit was the best development with 24% stating their period with certain specialist operational placements was the best development. This is comparative to the current programme; the regular uniform received 70% with 30% for specialist units (detective, traffic, drugs units). The following trainee comments represent the above statistic:

‘\textit{Working with the unit is everything}’ (pcr16),

‘\textit{I got to see how the job worked}’ (pcr34), ‘\textit{A chance to see aspects of the job}’ (pcr12).

The overall positive experience rating for the regular unit is 73% from both programmes with 27% for operational specialist units. The specialist Garda administrative placements regarded as non developmental by trainees and teacher/trainers were: warrants office, communications, centres/command control centre in Dublin, general clerical duties, fines office, district office, sergeant’s office, warrants office, communication centres/command and control in Dublin, immigration, vetting office (security clearances), general clerical duties and fines office.
The social placement received a negative rating from the majority of trainees, 86% of respondents in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} programme and 95% in the current programme. Trainees stated the social placements and specialist administrative placements were the weakest developments on phase two. 78% of trainees stated the two week placement was too long, 50% stated they were relevant and 31% stated they were not relevant, 45 % believed their position as trainee did contribute to the placement and 41% believed their position as trainee did not contribute. Trainee respondent (pcr61) stated:

‘I spent two weeks peeling veg in a kitchen in the mornings and in the afternoons. I worked with a homework club and because the kids in the club did not like Gardai I was not allowed to mention being a student garda’, trainee respondent (cr11) stated:

‘I was there for two weeks and did nothing but watch others do work in the woman’s refuge; I felt it was of very little benefit to me’.

The majority of trainee respondents believed they would have learned more on the regular unit, (pcr 43) stated:

‘my social placement, although enjoyable, it was 2 weeks I think could’ve been spent on a specialist placement or unit where I would probably have benefited more’.

Trainee respondents found their respective social placements non developmental because they were not geared towards a policing role, (cr5) stated in her interview:

‘the people in my placement wouldn’t allow me do anything because they stated I was not covered by insurance so I had to sit and watch’. Everyone stated that they had heard horror stories from other trainees on what was expected of them at times ‘washing windows, peeling spuds’ (cr2). All agreed this placement needs to be
reviewed or terminated from the programme, ‘2 weeks was too much, fairly boring’ (cr21). Teacher/trainers had a mixed view on the social placements with six teacher/trainers stating the social placements were fair and six stating they were satisfactory to good. Everyone stated two major problems gave rise to the current dissatisfaction from trainees, they are as follows:

- The lack of social placements and the number of places in that placement,
- Not being able to facilitate trainees with their first choice of social placement.

Teacher/trainers stated rural districts have a limited number of social placements. These placements may not be overly police orientated but they do provide trainees with a different view or perspective on their own position as a Garda and the relationships required between different service providers who work closely with the Garda organisation. While there may be more social placements within urban areas, each of these placements has a limited number of places. With the accelerated recruitment numbers, new social placements were obtained but possibly without a history of Garda contact and/or involvement. As a result, of this these placements may not have been focused on Garda administrative and/or operational matters like the older placements. However, teacher/trainers believe they do provide an alternative perspective and in this regard are valuable in a learning and development capacity.

Teacher/trainers were aware that there was serious discontent within the trainee population on various aspects of work within certain placements regardless if it was urban or rural. Teacher/trainers involved in phase two stated they had done their best to locate and develop suitable social placements given the changes that were forced
on this phase. Everyone believes that trainees are very eager to learn and sometimes impatient if a placement is not fulfilling what they believe as development per the learning outcomes requirement, “not all students can be facilitated within the high adrenaline fire brigade and ambulance services” (T/T10).

The majority of the teacher/trainers stated competency development has improved the quality of phase two; by a structured development through real life examples combined with the structured layout of the experiential learning diary. Everyone stated the assessments made a big difference in judging and evaluating a trainee’s progress both for the organisation and the trainee. All agreed there was a need for assessments on phase two and the assessment interview was the correct method.

However, there was one area that teacher/trainers raised concerning these assessment interviews, their ‘implementation’. From their experiences, the assessment interviews were conducted differently throughout the operational divisions and this concerned; 1) the location of the interview, 2) who was present at the interview, 3) the time element of the interview and 4) the types of questions used and the marking scheme used. Teacher/trainers laid these differences squarely at the door of the local district officer and/or acting district officer, two teacher/trainers stated:

‘Not as effective as interviews on phase four. However, phase two assessments are necessary in some format’ (T/T2),

‘In general a good idea, but much depends on the competency of the divisional training sergeant and his/her belief in the system’ (T/T1).
The majority of teacher/trainers support the current assessment procedures on phase two provided the standard remains the same in each location and within the guidelines. Everyone stated to ensure uniformity takes place; the only true measure would be to set up a unit to audit and monitor the assessments. This would ensure that trainees are receiving proper assessments in line with competency development.

Teacher/trainers on phase two found the weekly class (which are quite small in numbers compared to the Garda College) kept the trainees’ minds fresh. Role plays and case studies were used to supplement the standard content which to an extent had not been overly changed since the previous Walsh (1985) programme, ‘phase two meetings, assessment methods for phase two has improved the quality of development’ (T/T6).

All teacher/trainers view competency based learning as adult centred and self directed. The framework for the competency development programme learning outcomes, when used correctly was good for pointing trainees in the right direction to prioritise their development. In this regard, trainees in the competency programme know what they had to achieve due to the development documentation that is required for the competency based assessments.

Teacher/trainers stated they did keep learning material up to date, by incorporating new legislation and Garda practises and procedures when the Commissioner’s internal HQ circulars were issued. The majority stated that the current programme has developed as far as it can go because of the large trainee numbers; there is no room for any other developments. Further to this, the majority of the teacher/trainers also
believe certain subject areas such as social & psychological studies and management and organisational studies on phase one and three can not be developed any further due the limitations on time-tabling large intakes. The requirements for other subject areas such as legal studies and PE&HS take precedence.

All teacher/trainers stated the work of operational supervisory management (sergeants) was very good. Teacher/trainers stated that if trainees were asked to choose any form of development, they would choose to work with the regular unit and supervisory sergeants. However, teacher/trainers did state that they were aware of individual cases where there was poor communication between supervisory sergeants and a trainee but these were isolated cases.

Teacher/trainers stated extra administrative policing portfolios that were originally carried by inspectors are now with sergeants. Divisional teacher/trainers stated that in the last number of years, the devolving of these portfolios from inspectors to sergeants placed extra pressures and responsibilities on supervisory sergeants as a whole especially in large inner city stations. Divisional teacher/trainers praised operational sergeants’ professionalism and support. Seven teacher/trainers stated Garda management involvement was satisfactory with five stating involvement was good/very good. All stated that local Garda management helped trainees in every way possible and in their view this was a major cultural shift for management. Teacher/trainers stated this change has happened because of the new developments in selecting and educating management, they also see a new breed of younger caring and communicative members in these ranks.
The majority also stated that in the beginning between 2004 and 2005 it was difficult at times to get local management to buy into the procedures of the assessment interviews. Teacher/trainers attributed this to a lack of knowledge by Garda management on competency development procedures. However, this changed when it was realised that under the Keating (1999) report operational management had a say in the development and progression of trainees; they were no longer excluded as was the case with the Walsh (1985) programme. Teacher/trainers in summing up this position stated that management at district and divisional level were busy people and in teacher/trainers’ experience would like to have more time with trainees but there was not just enough time in the day to do everything.

12. The failure of modules to integrate in phase three of the programme

The following development modules introduced by the Walsh (1985) report decreased in positive experiences in the current Keating (1999) programme, each module went down by 10%:

- Scene management; preservation of scene and its subsequent written management
- Witness statements; written/oral, locations, correct times, and children
- Interviewing suspects; audio visual regulations and oral/written statements
- Road traffic accidents; investigation, H&S, first aid, and investigations
- Road safety; directing traffic, check-points, presentations to schools
- RTA practical scenarios
- Lecture theatre
• Tutorials
• PE&HS; level of fitness, nutrition, first aid and self defence

Modules 1, 2, and 3 are directly related to mainstream operational policing and as teacher/trainer T/T 2 stated ‘are the bread and butter of policing’. These modules involve data collection for case files and eventually, the presentation of evidence in court; they are regarded as vital for young Gardai in an operational setting. Modules 4, 5, and 6 are connected to general road traffic enforcements; again this is practical frontline operational policing in which junior Gardai will face everyday. Modules 7 and 8 relate to teacher/trainers facilitation of the programme and the location in the Garda College where subjects were delivered. Module 9 is delivered under the subject area of PE&HS. Analysis of the decrease in positive experiences suggests the facilitation/delivery and the location of subjects (no. 7 - lecture theatres) is the key to understanding the decrease in positive experiences in the majority of the other modules.

In normal circumstances (without accelerated recruitment), these subjects require hands on instruction in a classroom environment and/or by using practical scenarios. The continual use of lecture theatres by college staff over classroom work or the non use of practical scenarios to deliver the phase three programme suggests the inputs required from staff for these subjects did not allow trainees to develop and achieve positive experiences. Overall, the development modules, facilitation by teacher/trainers and location received between 31% and 59% positive ratings in the current programme with an overall average of 41% positive rating.
The 2nd programme positive ratings were between 50% and 71% with an overall average of 62%. Trainee positive experiences decreased by 21% with the introduction of the Keating (1999) report. The decrease in the subjects of PE&HS is reflected in the lack of self-defence classes and those trainees that were assigned to the ‘fat-club’. All trainee respondents recognise that the first six modules are important areas to achieve competence in for a junior Garda. Trainees regard them as necessary for operational policing and are required for the work profile of a junior uniform member of the Garda Siochana.

Accelerated recruitment by the government and implemented by the Garda Siochana placed extra Gardai into operational policing quickly. However, both failed to recognise the recommendations governing the basic tenets of education, training and development ‘quality over quantity’. Reform is generally regarded as taking place in recruitment policy, supervisory level, management and leadership. However, the 21% reduction in trainee positive experiences in the current programme suggests the reform movement stalled or was allowed to stall in the induction process. Overall, positive experiences decreased by 5% in a trainee phase designed to integrate development directly before operational policing.

Out of 32 modules, the analysis states the 2nd programme produced 28 higher positive experience development ratings than the current programme for phase three, with only 4 higher positive experiences from the current programme. The combined positive rating from both programmes is 56.5% for the phase three learning modules. The court practicals module in the current programme received the highest rating at 48% with the station administration module the lowest at 33%. The remainder of the
modules received ratings between fair and poor. The overall positive experience from trainee respondents in the current programme on integration of subjects and modules is just 39%.

All teacher/trainers state the facilitation/delivery of the subjects/modules combined with the general changes demanded by the large trainee numbers did not allow proper integration. Teacher/trainers believe this could have been avoided if 1) quality assurance measures had been applied, 2) stopping the overuse of lecture theatres, 3) allowing more facilitation by teacher/trainers and finally, 4) if Garda management had listened and acted on the concerns of Garda College staff. Teacher/trainers believe that if the above 4 areas had been acted upon; the ethos of reform in the Keating (1999) report would have being implemented.

The best development aspects for phase three in the current programme were different from the 2nd programme. Trainees in the 2nd programme stated the best aspects were learning legislation at 58% and completing case studies at 24%. The current programme trainees stated court practicals at 54% followed by case studies and file preparation at 32%. The reason for this difference is that the implementation of court practicals (using real barristers and retired judges) was only introduced by the current programme, the 2nd programme respondents would not have experienced this module.

The findings on the least useful development of the phase were again different. In the 2nd programme 66% of trainees stated phase three was too long in duration and the last two weeks boring. This was followed by group case studies at 20% and European
languages at 12%. In the current programme, trainees stated European languages at 25%, general theatre and classroom weaknesses at 10%, social & psychological studies at 12%, dissertation studies at 9%, contextual studies at 12%, Irish studies at 6%, management and organisational studies at 10% and single themes 16%.

Analyses of the differences suggest the current programme suffered a lack of integration of modules and subjects due to facilitation of the programme taking place in lecture theatres. The majority of the trainees in the current programme spoke about the fragmentation of this phase in their development. A comparative recommendation for improvement came from both programmes with 80% of respondents from the 2nd programme stating the college should have used more court practicals, file preparation and legal tutorials, the current programme trainees recommended the same at 63%.

13. Tutor Gardai

In the first training programme, tutor Gardai did not exist however, depending on your location you might have had a chance to shadow a sergeant for the first four weeks. Only ten of the respondents from this programme had this chance when they were originally attached as recruits to suburban stations in Dublin. Those who were stationed in city centre stations or in rural divisions found themselves on the beat or another duty on their own from the day they left the training centre. The characteristics and demographics of Tutor Gardai are comparative for each programme, except in the area of Tutor Garda service; there was a major 55%
increase in Tutor Gardai with less than two years service in the competency programme after acceleration recruitment was implemented in 2005.

The first competency intakes in 2003 were non-accelerated and did not experience having very junior Gardai as Garda tutors; the average service was between 7 and 10 years. Divisional teacher/trainers in their interviews took a very strong view on this negative development area. They highlighted this decrease in service by stating that they were left with no option but to employ young Garda members, with less than 2 years service and still in the probationary period as Tutor Gardai. The majority (ten) of the teacher/trainers stated the work of the Tutor Garda was satisfactory to good with two teacher/trainers stating very good. The Keating (1999) report insisted that Tutor Gardai should have a minimum of five years operational service, but this was impossible with the large volume of trainee numbers. All teacher/trainers also stated the drop in service also placed extra pressure on unit sergeants and unit members especially if the Tutor Garda was only a short time out of the Garda College and still a probationer.

Teacher/trainers stated the middle service Gardai (10 to 20 years service) were all assigned to specific specialised units such as community policing, traffic units and crime units and could not be used. They further stated that with the accelerated recruitment, specialised units were created and/or filled with experienced Garda members which left the ordinary regular units devoid of experience. All teacher/trainers stated Garda management at the Garda College, divisional level and district level knew of this situation and no action was taken to rectify it. All trainees in the
group interview stated their Tutor Garda was very junior in service but provided assistance at all times and were quite happy with the arrangements provided by them.

The majority of respondents from the 2nd programme were at one time and still are Tutor Gardai themselves and enjoyed this aspect of their work when it was presented to them. They informed me they did not apply for the position, they were as one put it very aptly ‘nominated by your sergeant and that was the end of that’ (pcr8). The vast majority of trainee respondents in the current programme stated, that they had excellent and wonderful experiences with their Tutor Garda;

‘being with my Tutor Garda as he always explained what was going on and was very helpful’ (pcr10),

(cr7) stated: ‘guidance from my tutor was very good. She came across as very mature and showed great time in teaching and showing me what I expected from phase two. I was never afraid to ask for advice from her’.

The overall positive experience rating from trainees was 71% from both programmes.

The use of Tutor Gardai is recommended by the main four reports used in this research. The Patten Commission’s (1999) recommendation on using Tutor Constables was implemented as the best way forward in the experiential learning environment. Their present tutor police development course is two weeks in length with terminal (finishing) examinations and continuous professional development each and every year. The Garda Siochana tutor Garda course is two days, without
assessments. A one week course was originally considered but never implemented, there is no further continuous professional development given on its completion.

Both Walsh (1985) and Keating (1999) stated how important the selection, operational experience and training of Tutor Gardai would prove in the development of trainees. However, the data from the trainees and the teacher/trainers state Tutor Gardai in the current programme had very little experience to take on this role. Concerns were expressed by teacher/trainers to management but were not taken on board. Again the reform element of the programme has been put to one side.

Analysis

The first recruit programme – adopted and adapted from the R.I.C.

Evidence from the research suggests the 1st recruit programme was simply an unthinking continuance of RIC methods and that its existence is testament to the subservient and submissive from the Garda Siochana to government direction. The 1st recruit training programme instilled fear into recruits, resulting in a very submissive and inward looking Garda force at that time. Development was based on rote and surface learning leaving the curriculum underdeveloped which in turn stopped individual development and that of the Garda organisation. This singular approach produced what was required most at that time; subservient Garda members. This one dimensional development can be described as a restricted vocational path with a deep rooted culture of generic protection for the organisation, in essence, the organisation came first and its personnel came second. This type of training with the severity of discipline from teaching staff prevailed for a number of years into the 2nd trainee
programme, regardless of programme reforms, changes to subjects and delivery methods.

**The Walsh Report (1985) – 2nd trainee programme**

The Walsh (1985) report introduced the social sciences with experiential learning also taking place in the live operational environment to take cognisance of the Garda function and individual development in tandem with the organisation and society. A new vision for the Garda was signalled in the hope that modern training methods would restore confidence in its policing. Evidence from Keating (1999) suggests a lack of will combined with excessive red tape and a lack of quality assurance measures for the programme’s content, delivery methods and assessments prevailed. There were constant rotations of an ‘underdeveloped’ Garda teaching staff that ensured this trainee programme lost its impetus within a few years. This resulted in programme and trainees’ underdevelopment for many years of its existence. The programme eventually reverted to a teacher centred programme as was the case with the first programme.


The Keating Report (1999) was recommended and established by senior management in the Garda College in early 1997. Competency development was being introduced into recruitment criteria under a report conducted by Saville and Holdsworth in the late 1990’s. Competency development was also being introduced for internal promotion. From the 3 reports published to date it falls into the category of being
solely led by Garda management. All members of the project board were ranking
Gardai with the exception of one, who was academic attached to the University of
Limerick. Its introduction did not affect the structure of the programme as the Keating
introduced competency development and its associated development steps, a pass/fail
(academically) on the experiential learning environment that did not exist in the
Walsh (1985) programme (Programme Development and Implementation Unit Project
Papers (2003). The Keating Report (1999) can be judged as an internal document as it
did not affect recruitment, Garda numbers and the financial cost of training. Shortly
after its implementation the government introduced a policy of accelerated
recruitment to cater for indigenous growth and the exceptionally high numbers of
inward migration to Ireland.

The current programme with the exception of a short period in early 2003 was always
subject to a government’s policy of accelerated recruitment. This policy interfered
with and at times stopped development of trainees and continuous professional
development of teacher/trainers. It pushed subjects (mainly social based subjects) to
one side which became peripheral to the core subjects of legal and policing. It also
removed essential learning objectives of competency development from the Garda
College and the experiential learning environment. However, accelerated recruitment
was only a part of the problem, analysis has shown that yet again the Garda College
(since the implementation of the Walsh Report (1985) in 1989) failed to invest in
quality assurance measures, and failed to recognise that the continuity of staff at the
College was of utmost importance as stated in the Keating report (1999).
Trainee’s views and experiences of the current programme

In the current programme, trainees’ major concern was their lack of individual and professional development in phase one and three at the Garda College. This finding is the direct opposite to the findings from trainees in the 1st and 2nd programmes where submission through fear of authority (not as severe in the latter part of the 2nd programme) rather than development was the dominant theme. In the current programme accelerated recruitment did not allow the methodologies to flourish through facilitation by teacher/trainers which stopped self and directed development and learning by trainees. All respondents stated trainees failed to develop in the competency based programme.

The Irish reports on the Garda Siochana training environment

Both Irish reports - Walsh (1985) & Keating (1999) state the Garda Siochana as an organisation is not overly dedicated to producing trainee programmes of substance. The three trainee programmes suffered from different formats of external and internal policy changes. These ‘changes’ are connected to human resource management transfers, a lack of quality audits, accelerated recruitment, operational infringements and leadership and management mistakes and/or failures.

Change and reform

Changes and major reforms to improve the ability of the Garda Siochana to provide effective, accessible and visible policing became an urgent call from the mandarins in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 2005 (due to various scandals on corruption and mismanagement a few short years before). The reform and change
process was underpinned in the main by the Garda Siochana Act 2005, which was based on the recommendations from the Morris and Barr Tribunals of Inquiry. The data from teacher/trainer respondents suggests the amount of reform required for the main body of the organisation left the training environment vulnerable to changes from government policy i.e. accelerated recruitment and subsequent Garda policies i.e. quick and forced amendments and/or a return to the old hierarchical ways in managing and delivering a competency programme under accelerated recruitment.

Teacher/trainers state Garda leadership and senior management at the Garda College should have known and/or realised the negative consequences of what accelerated recruitment would do in terms of trainee development in a new and un-tested competency development framework. Teacher/trainers further state a major reform package was expected from the Keating (1999) report however, the expected developmental progression through competency development in the current programme did not materialise.

Teacher/trainers stated information on the ‘assembly line production of Gardai’ and the possible consequences of quality defects in mass production was made available to Garda College management and leadership from many meetings that took place between them. This information concerned four major issues;

(1) Not allowing the competency development programme develop,
(2) The question of too many trainees at the one time,
(3) Not enough teacher/trainers in the system and,
(4) Not enough space for teaching in the college.
Based on these issues there was a strong sense amongst teacher/trainers that the pendulum of reform was in danger of moving too far in the direction of specialisation (creation of a Traffic Corp – 1200 personnel, increasing the National Bureau of Crime Investigation (NBCI) ‘elite investigation units’, (personnel numbers are not published) and the creation of an Immigration Unit for administration, airports and ports policing roles, (numbers in this unit is also quite high), to the detriment of core police education and training at induction and within continuous professional development.

According to teacher/trainers, these new developments are regarded as breeding a new culture of excessive specialisation in young sworn Gardai, as many with very junior service were being selected. In normal circumstances it would take many years to be judged as experienced for specialised units. They saw this emerging from 2004 due to an increase in the manpower numbers but at what cost to the standard advancement of the ‘uniform section’ necessary for public policing and enhancing the community policing initiatives. Teacher/trainers stated it is internationally recognised that the uniformed branch of any police service is the lifeblood of the organisation.

In line with Patten (1999) and HMIC (2002) report on probationer training, the process of civilianisation from top to bottom has been recognised as enhancing management and training by placing civilian experts in positions for which they are better skilled. An organisational shift of this nature may seem radical but not to the teacher/trainers and trainees in this research. All respondents stated this would bring major improvements to training standards in the Garda Siochana and improve the
organisation’s employment structures in line with common practice in modern police services.

Analysis of the data further states that by removing a substantial part of the induction programme to other colleges would be developmental however, teacher/trainers stated this will never happen with the current financial crisis, and more importantly, the inward looking culture of leadership is still prevalent and would stop this initiative.

**Failure or success for trainees, trainee programme and teacher trainers**

The trainee development (college and experiential) perspectives of the Garda College for the period 2004 to 2008 were non effective on various sections of trainee development. This can be summed up by saying the objectives of the current trainee programme were lost for this period of time. This also suggests a failure of government and Garda leadership to ensure sufficient resource investment (building works completed and a substantial increase in teacher/trainers) was available before and not during accelerated recruitment. The rather obvious lesson learned here is that the quality of programme suffered. Leadership, by not allowing change and reform and/or suspending these advancements in the training environment allowed trainees into the operational field without being fully competent for their expected trainee duties on phase two.

While reform was being implemented through the organisation to better facilitate the policing service to the Irish public, Garda leadership’s ready adoption of accelerated recruitment at the expense of the needs of the competency programme reflects excessive subservience to government policy (instilled by the disciplinary training
regime from the 1st programme, where the majority of leadership was trained) failed to recognise that providing a quality education and training programme for trainees would assist in providing that enhanced community policing service that the Garda Siochana is still striving to produce under the 2010 community model of policing.

Analysis of the data suggests Garda leadership at that time (2004-2008) was not in tune with the realities of modern policing by accepting a government policy of accelerated recruitment without staff and infrastructure in place. Further analysis suggests that if Garda leadership was under a flag of reform, this reform did not manifest itself for the organisation’s junior Garda members in training. The root cause was Garda leadership having a lack of experience and/or knowledge in the field of ‘competency development and competency frameworks’. Trainee findings also support this; the majority believe competency levels were not fully developed in the Garda College and experiential environment. The Nolan (2009) report discovered this in its research and published it in its findings.

To put this period in perspective, 4,000 Gardai (28%) of the current Garda sworn membership since 2008 were educated and trained when the objectives of the programme were lost and/or subdued due to poor policy decisions. Yet again, the critical success factors of the Garda organisation in trainee development only established new policies, implementation of those policies failed.

**Changes to trainee induction programmes**

The Garda organisation in this period had many ‘demanded’ reform purposes, possibly too many to handle at one time and as a consequence something had to
suffer. From a government and an organisational perspective, the accelerated recruitment drive produced extra Gardai quickly; however, as the data states the level of competence acquired by trainees was reduced.

Teacher/trainers state the offer from government of 2,000 extra Gardai could not be refused by Garda leadership. Any reform taking place in the Garda Siochana trainee environment could and was dispensed with by Garda leadership quickly through the hierarchical chain of command steeped in ‘an inward looking culture’. There was little or no thought processes for those serving at the coalface (teacher/trainers) and those (trainees) seeking development. However, this culture guaranteed government policy was implemented; this can be easily summed up: *do as we tell you but don’t do as we do.*

The majority of the teacher/trainers raised one other pertinent question during my interviews; what will happen to the new Nolan (2009) programme that is awaiting implementation? Analysis of this position suggests the true test will come when all sections of the Garda Siochana are vying for a place at the Garda table for recognition. Further analysis of this position also suggests major changes will be required to policies governing recruitment and training as ethnic and religious minorities are under-represented in the Garda Siochana.

If the current trainee programme structure and philosophy could be changed and dismantled quickly because of government’s insistence on accelerated recruitment, one has to ask, was reform really taking place. Analysis suggests true reform has not happened, *a too little too late mentality* and an unwillingness to commit to reform has
ensured the Garda Siochana organisation has escaped the full implications of reform in the training environment.

The analysis further suggests the competency programme’s philosophical approach became secondary to the organisations ‘endeavours’ on other reform. In effect the new competency based approach was subdued and pushed to the background in this period. This shift in focus from leadership and Garda College management eventually produced more change than one would normally expect: These will be bullet pointed for ease of reference:

* The Garda College failing to convert the Programme Development Implementation Unit (PDIU) to a dedicated trainee quality control unit (QCU) as recommended by the Keating (1999) Report
* Allowing continual staff shortages
* A shortage of civilian expertise in the Garda College and no civilian expertise in the experiential learning environment
* Placing time constraints on intakes to the Garda College
* A lack of classrooms to exist in the Garda College
* Opening up Garda stations for experiential learning deemed unsuitable for trainee development during the Walsh programme – up to 2002
* Changing the programme structure
* Forcing teacher/trainers to use incorrect delivery and facilitation methods
* Changing assessment procedures
* Forcing the continuation of a communications barrier, between Garda College staff and trainees, that existed from the previous programme.
• Not providing proper research facilities and IT structure and supports
• Using young Garda members with less than 2 years service as Tutor Gardai for phase two trainees
• Failing to provide suitable social programmes for trainees on phase two

These suggested miscalculations on induction policy had only one logical conclusion; the stopping of any possible advancement in trainee development as promoted by the Keating (1999) report. The result was that best practises by using change management were ineffective which caused a downward spiral in trainee development in the current programme.

There was a major divergence from the planned competency path shortly after the programme was implemented in 2003 due to Garda leadership’s commitment to a government policy of accelerated recruitment. Dubois et al (2004) states competency and its framework competencies must be developed and implemented effectively; all must be involved, if not success will not be achieved. The decision to accept accelerated recruitment led to the first impact ‘stopping integration of subjects and modules’ on the trainee curriculum.

This programme which was developed over the previous 12 months by the Programme Development & Implementation Unit & heads (senior sergeants) of subject areas failed to merge the major process of community police training with human rights and diversity awareness training. The required classroom and tutorial presentation, discussion and analysis for small trainee numbers never materialised and resulted in the loss of job differentiation, coaching and mentoring for trainees.
This impact allowed outdated behavioural, rote and surface learning associated with previous programmes that adversely affected attitudes, emotions, perceptions and conceptions return quickly which is described in the work of Palmitto et al (2002) as negative learning. The major example in this reversal of methodology is the social and psychological studies programme; trainees found it devoid of development as there was a lack discussion, feedback and development of topics in the subject areas.

Experiences and views of the competency framework in the current programme

Culture experienced by trainees

Analysis of trainee data for the current programme shows exposure to different aspects of an operational style policing culture appeared early in trainees, this supports the earlier work of Nally (2009), i.e. a preference for law enforcement, a distain for the social service side of policing and a distain for theory which is supported by Chan et al (2003). The data states this early exposure to cultural norms came from one specific subject area ‘legal and policing studies’ due to Garda teacher/trainers using war stories from the operational field to support theory being delivered. The delivery of this programme which was changed by the demands of the accelerated recruitment also heightened the culture exposure by the use of lecture theatres over the use of classrooms on phase one, the hands on delivery of the programmes was made redundant. The perceived loss of development by trainees made them over reliant on the operational Gardai on phase two. This was compounded by tutor Gardai having very junior service with most coming through the accelerated period themselves. When trainees returned to the Garda College for phase
three, the experiences from their phase two ensured they found the further delivery of
the programme (again through lecture theatres) not conducive to their development.

As a result of this influence, other subjects in the trainee programme were regarded by
trainees as ‘peripheral’ to their development. This cultural influence on trainees was
then extended and developed further on phase two by contact with regular Garda units
and specialised operational units. This is supported by trainees producing
overwhelming positive experiences for experiential learning, to the extent that one
might say created a ‘tunnel vision’ approach to their development.

Analysis of trainees’ data (to counteract a perceived loss of development on phase
one, especially in the social studies programme) found they were dependent on young
inexperienced Tutor Gardai and operational Garda members on phase two. These
Garda members, who were not attached to the training environment, provided them
with the way and method of policing from an operational perspective rather than from
an educational and training perspective. The literature review states this operational
perspective is where policing culture is strong and vibrant in every sense. The
findings in Chan et al from 2003 supports this catchment area of influence in an
operational setting; cultural norms are strong, not easily penetrated and expressed as
troubling and cohesive as stated in Morris (2005).

This ‘quick’ introduction to cultural norms of operational policing for the current
programme trainees was created and developed due to a lack of co-ordination of the
programme in the college environment. This subsequently had a knock on effect and
another avenue of endeavour appeared; it allowed trainees on their return to the Garda
College from six months experiential learning to instinctively know that the phase three education and training modules were weak and below par with their development and experiences from the operational field. The phase three modules of learning were not integrated with little or no development through case studies, problem solving and/or scenario based problems.

Trainees found the development offered on phase three too theoretical and delivered continually in lecture theatres. It was not synchronised for what trainees considered should have been a deeper level focus on operational policing. The skills’ attainment they expected to further develop and participate in at classroom level was lost or subdued as the programme was delivered in lecture theatres. The framework that should have existed for integration in the classroom was not utilised either by design, internal pressures, overcrowding, and/or a lack of knowledge on competency development methods.

Changes to the original implementation

Change took place in early 2004 with lecture theatres becoming the dominant mode of delivering the programme regardless of subject area. The original implementation design by the Programme Development and Implementation Unit (PDIU) in early 2003, ensured each subject area on phase one and three was assigned individual hours for classroom work and tutorials with short periods in lecture theatres (for theory) on the time-table. The selection of these hours reflected the different educational and skills acquisitions components of the subject areas.
Teacher/trainers experiences and views

Teacher/trainers confirm the use of classrooms with small numbers as time consuming (not from teacher/trainers but from Garda College management) and not as efficient as putting large trainee numbers in lecture theatres. Teacher/trainers found they had no choice and as such tutorials were no longer deemed as an equal partner in the development modules of ‘training and teaching trainees in a specific method’, ‘performing a task’ and ‘responding to a given situation’.

The normal skills’ based approach that is required until skills become second nature and reflective in essence was not practised by trainees. Both teacher/trainers and trainees stated this failure was caused by changes to the designed curriculum which in turn stopped subjects/modules from integrating. Teacher/trainers also recognised that the removal of four weeks from the phase three programme which was placed in the probationary phase four under the control of divisional training sergeants created disorganisation of the phase three development timeframe and modules. This lack of skills attainment as Bayley et al (1984) states is a paradox where police training is concerned, because many programmes are very behaviourist and mechanistic training environments. Elias et al (1995) states that there will always be police trainers who cling to the notion that we should not tamper with what has worked in the past.

Teacher/trainers state the competency programme is only a cosmetic enlargement of the 1st and 2nd programmes rather than a true planned transformation. This was based on changes to the programme framework and recognition that their own development was downgraded which left their teaching positions vulnerable to the major changes to
the programme. In their view, this involved increasing the level of academic learning which is now self-evident. With little continuous professional development for increasing their participation and facilitation in ‘skills attainment’, teacher/trainers believe they failed at times in their teaching roles which they saw as a ‘systems failure’ created by Garda leadership.

*Competency development*

Whiddet et al (2003) state the introduction of competency development is highly important for a) general processes and procedures, b) the mission statement, c) the vision, principles and values of the organisation. However, analysis of the data in this thesis clearly states the current programme does not reflect the above and skills based training through ‘self directed adult learning remained’ is absent.

This lack of skills based training in the current programme was a major finding in the Nolan (2009) report. The report states it will be re-introduced in their proposed ‘hybrid model of problem based learning’ (PBL). Further analysis of the data states the current trainee programme was originally designed to meet and remain in touch with a fast moving and technologically driven Irish public. However, there is very little difference in trainee values, experiences, attitudes, education, training and development with the Walsh programme (1989-2002).

*The demise of the Walsh 1985 programme and the Keating 1999 programme*

Teacher/trainers state both the Walsh (1985) and the Keating (1999) programmes lost their development structure over a short time period. This loss of structure left the programmes in a constant state of flux which in turn prevented the implementation of quality assurance measures. Continual transfers and rotations of Garda teacher/
trainers in and out of the Garda College stopped continuity for the programme, subject areas and a lack of communications between staff and Garda College management.

A transfer in and out of the Garda College is controlled by Garda HRM policy which provides short term contracts of between 1 and 2 years for Gardai. Both reports recommended 3/4 year contracts however; this recommendation was never implemented due to complaints from the Garda Representative Associations. Cooper et al (1997) state, two ingredients must be in place for success, a competency statement and that the assessors are trained so they can measure competency development. Dubois et al (2004) in agreement state, correct implementation and its continuation covers all the necessary ingredients for development: knowledge, skills behaviour and attributes to achieve effective performance. The policy of Garda HRM does not support this and is counter to the ingredients required and analysis of teacher/trainers data confirms this. This data is bullet pointed for ease of reading:

- Constant rotation and redeployment of Gardai staff
- A poor induction week for new (Garda/civilian) staff at the Garda College
- No quality assurance measures for the programmes
- A lack of continuous professional development for teaching staff
- Continual management changes to the trainee programmes
- Educational and administrative burdens associated with accelerated recruitment.

Also, the original instruction on the competency framework provided by the Programme Development and Implementation Unit (PDIU) to Garda College staff
was stopped when the unit was disbanded. New teacher/trainers (Garda/civilian) arriving at the Garda College were left without explicit training in the competency programme.

Analysis also shows the Garda Siochana did not decide between the narrow education and training currently used for Garda trainees and the broader education and training for comprehensive development in their future operational policing roles. The processes of problem solving must take place within the 62 week trainee phases of one, two and three however, this did not take place as the system was over burdened and pushed the individual trainee, teacher/trainers and the Garda College administrative structures to a misplaced comfort zone, i.e. from the recommended adult and trainee centered learning to a traditional pedagogical, rote and surface learning environment which eventually caused a teacher/trainer centered environment to emerge similar to the first 2 trainee programmes.

This change in development status was not welcomed by teacher/trainers as they regarded it unsuitable to the ethos, values and development of the competency programme. Teacher/trainers state quite clearly they were required to use a pedagogic approach in the current programme (against their better judgement) which was dominant in the first training programme (1964-1988) and prominent in the Walsh (1985) programme. In their opinion teaching through andragogy was part of the correct formula (the proposals from Walsh (1985) and the Keating (1999) even though they did not use the term Andragogy), it was self-directed and allowed the trainee to take control of his or her learning, and allowed the teacher/trainers to facilitate their development.
**HETAC and quality assurance measures**

The change over from NCEA to HETAC created new policies for the government’s accreditation body. It placed the emphasis for quality control on the service provider. However, with the closure of the Garda College Programme Development and Implementation Unit (PDIU) the quality assurance mechanism was lacking in uniformity and direction and lost its impetus. This left a void, and as a result the different subject areas were left to instigate their own personal developments.

**All** teacher/trainers state they were never approached by management to participate in quality assurance measures. This served to undermine morale in their development and the quality of their participation in trainee learning and development. This is also confirmed in the data findings from phase one respondents in the current programme, trainees found only Garda teacher/trainers from the legal studies section with some Garda teacher/trainers from the PE&HS as the main drivers for trainee development. Other subject areas became peripheral and measurable performance criteria in some subject areas could not be implemented due to a lack of quality management and review, not applying standards to the curriculum and resource development and a lack of a linkage between the workplace competencies and the college curriculum. Further analysis of data from teacher/trainers states the quality of teaching practises, their lack of communications and the provision of feedback to trainees at the Garda College was undermined.

Knowles (1984) emphasised that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for decisions and adult learning programs must accommodate this
fundamental aspect with instructors adopting a role of facilitator or resource rather than lecturer or grader. The Keating (1999) report research into the Walsh (1985) programme found the two years education/training period sufficient to meet their needs. It also considered the three trainee phases as appropriate. However, Keating (1999) opened operational Garda stations deemed unsuitable for trainee development for the Walsh (1985) programme (inspections carried out by the college at that time).

Changes/amendments to the programme

Changes and/or amendments for phase two may be contributing factors to producing negative experiences in clerical administration and social placements development. Placing these negative values together highlighted that competency development procedures were not properly implemented for phase two by the Garda College. This is the direct opposite of the research from Kirschner et al (1997).

In the Garda College, the integrated modular system for the current programmes phase three did not achieve its full developmental value; the positive experience rating was a low 39%. Analysis of trainee responses for phase one show high positive experiences for legal studies and teacher/trainers from both programmes (88% plus). Legal studies’ dominance within phase one for both programmes, placed this section and staff on a pedestal with analysis pointing to an early introduction to the Garda culture of ‘operational policing’ for trainees

Analysis of phase two supports the findings in Chan et al (2003) where trainees preferred the operational environment as the main method of development. As a result Garda trainees showed they had a different perspective on what their
development in phase three should entail. They regarded the ‘adopted’ pedagogic approach forced on legal studies staff to use lecture theatres as a limitation to their personal development.; Trainees found the programme too theoretical and repetitive due to the time spent in lecture theatres as opposed to problem based learning, case study approach, practical scenarios and classroom instruction. Palmitto et al (2002) attributes this type of attitude or a removal of attitudes (forced or unforced) to a didactic and pedagogical format of instruction which is what happened to this phase of the trainee programme.

Further analysis from teacher/trainers data shows a domino/ripple effect happened on all aspects of the trainee programme (especially in the Garda College) which eventually curtailed the programme developing in line with the original innovations. To understand this trainee underdevelopment in the Garda College, one has to look at the high positive data on experiential development produced by trainees for phase two. Trainees state they found solace and safety in the experiential assistance/teachings of the Tutor Garda/operational staff on phase two. Trainees felt secure in this environment however, on their return to the Garda College they reacted to phase three as a form of restriction on their development, there was no integration of the programmes modules and subjects which they had experienced on phase two. In effect their learning on phase three was not fused with the new experiential development of phase two. There was no discussion and analysis from their experiential learning which could be incorporated into their competency development.

Trainees regarded the majority of subjects in both programmes as peripheral to the core subjects of legal and policing studies and PE&HS (at times). Social and
psychological studies and management and organisational studies which Keating (1999) considered the core of professional police practice that would place the profession of policing in an appropriate context, were treated rather superficially. Analysis of the data shows that communications and feedback from teacher/trainers in these subject areas was underdeveloped over the course of both programmes.

Analysis suggests there were failures and/or a lack of willingness to rectify these by Garda College management; rather they were allowed to exist over a twenty year period in two programmes. Again, this finding supports the findings in Chan et al (2003), who found when didactic or rote learning on a specific subject exists, it can and will isolate and dominate certain subjects on the curriculum. Analysis further suggests the adoption and/or a return to rote learning methods forced on teacher/trainers in both trainee programmes was absorbed by trainees (they had no option), which caused them eventually to regard the majority of subjects as peripheral.

Lack of communication/feedback

The lack of communication, feedback and subject(s) delivery from the social and psychological studies component produced a positive experience rating of only 12% that decreased to 2% in the current programme. Yet again an educational deficiency found by Keating (1999) in the Walsh (1985) programme has been identified and continued as a developmental deficiency within the current programme. Contextual studies (introduced by Keating (1999), a subject bordering the social sciences produced a low 23% positive experience rating in the current programme because it
was regarded by trainees as non developmental and conducted in lecture theatres and as such became a peripheral subject.

These results alone suggest the ethos and values of the period under research was dominated by a behaviourist approach to teaching and assessment processes in the Garda College. This further suggests the Keating (1999) and Walsh (1985) reports original trainee centred approach for the college environment has gone full circle and replaced for a second time by a teacher/trainer centred programme, but not designed or sought by teacher/trainers. Analysis of the data places this reversion at the door of Garda leadership’s failure to implement necessary change management processes.

Reiner (2000), Savage et al (2000), Chan et al (2003), Haberfeld (2002) and Mulcahy (2006) state when there is conflict in training programmes the organisation will be susceptible to external shocks. This causes internal strife and the direction of the developing skills is thwarted and relationships suffer. Analysis of one major theme: a lack of communications (advice & feedback) from teacher/trainers also suggests trainees did not receive certain subjects well, due to the content, the type of delivery and/or the lecture theatres used for delivery.

The majority of respondents found this communication lapse was applicable to certain subjects in both programmes, e.g. social and psychological studies on phase one and legal studies on phase three. This downward spiral in acceptance from current programme trainees especially for established subjects (social and psychological studies & legal studies) supports the above theorist’s recommendations for developing practical knowledge through tutorials, classroom and practical work. Analysis of the
data also suggests the teaching methodologies used in the lecture theatres with little or no handouts and follow up tutorials was not developmental for trainees.

Regardless of the effects blamed on accelerated recruitment, analysis of teacher/trainers data shows clearly; the style, content and delivery method for the current programme was designed for close communications between teacher/trainers and trainees; not the methods they were forced to use. These forced measures placed on teacher/trainers gave rise to serious discussions on the style, the strategies, the methods and teacher/trainer courses (in-house residential week and certificate in adult training and education). Analysis of the findings from these discussions suggests teacher/trainers positions were removed from the facilitative element required in competency development which produced negative experiences from trainees for the subjects on the curriculum in the college.

The 2nd programme respondents produced a 63% positive experience for subjects on phase one. Trainees in the current programme produced a 55% positive experience, a drop of 8% in positive experiences due to poor experiences with the social studies programme. Phase two secured a measure of success in both programmes falling in the category of very good (70%), with reservations on certain developments connected to administration duties in specialist placements and their participation in the social placements. Analysis of phase two trainee experiences show the development structure was designed for learning to be more open-ended than just task accomplishment and to encourage generative thinking and quick learning from experience. The data analysis also suggests certain development sections were found
to be non-developmental i.e. the social placements and certain administrative specialist placements in Garda Stations.

Teacher/trainers also state certain Garda Stations were opened up for trainee development in the accelerated recruitment period that should have not been opened as they were considered non-developmental in the past due to a lack of operational supports.

_Phase two – the experiential learning phase_

Phase two is also regarded by all respondents as the most rewarding in terms of skill acquisition and communications’ development. Analysis also states that trainees tend to have a preference for one or perhaps two elements/activities (development through operations with regular unit work and certain specialist placements). Analysis of the data results on the competency based assessment interviews on phase two (and the Garda College PDIU results from the non accelerated intakes in 2003/04) state the two interviews for progression were well received by trainees; both assessment interviews produced very good positive ratings from trainees in the current programme. Divisional teacher/trainers found that there was some ‘non-standardisation’ in conducting the interviews due to what they termed as ‘parochial influence’. This they believed at times undermined the core principles of competency based learning, and this type of influence(s) can be very strong on trainees.

_Phase three_

Phase three was regarded as the weakest in development terms. Respondents in the second programme produced a 61.5% positive experience for the phase three learning
areas. Trainees in the current programme produced a 51.5% positive experience for the phase three learning areas, a drop of 10% which is connected to the forced delivery of the modules in lecture theatres. Analysis further suggests this lower positive rating in the current programme was also due to a lack of integration of theory and practice which did not develop on par with that envisaged by Keating (1999).

Analysis of the data further states it undermined the basic concepts of the integrated modular framework on phase three in the college, because this phase was not strong enough to assist development of trainees on their return to the Garda College. Phase three was supposedly focussed on future operational policing through integrated modules of learning in its curriculum. Regardless of its disappointment to trainees, all found this phase difficult and demanding but viewed the whole process as non-developmental.

Analysis states the learning material trainees required for development at this stage must be relevant to operational duties. The lower positive experience ratings produced for this phase by the trainees and teacher/trainers suggests this is not the case. The data suggests (in line with Chan et al 2003) a distain for theoretical concepts given in lecture format; trainees favour a smaller setting of classroom or tutorial style classes. Chan et al, (2003, p137) states, ‘Data suggest that members of the cohort tended to value what they perceived as operationally relevant material (i.e., as opposed to theoretical).
The teaching/lecturing on the social/public service side of policing on phase three produced a slightly higher positive experience rating than phases one or two, analysis suggests this was attributable to use of outside public agencies (women’s aid, ALONE) and expert speakers (on suicide, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), PAVEE Point for the Travellers association) who dominated the learning portfolio of social and psychological studies on phase three. Analysis also suggests this was attributable to trainees focusing on what they perceived as more operationally based commitments to the social/public service side of policing after experiencing the realities of life on phase two. Classroom tuition was the preferred choice of trainees which is comparative to the findings of Chan et al 2003 as it had a more practical style content of facilitation and questions and answers appropriate to competency development as opposed to what was used; pure theoretical knowledge in lecture theatres.

This type of teaching caused strain for teacher/trainers which eventually created unease because personal attention was difficult to give to trainees. The individual trainee ceased to exist for them, there was no discussion and analysis, no questions and answers sessions, very little feedback given by teacher/trainers and changes were required for the exam structures which eventually made the programme impersonal and repetitive. Over a short period of time, short cuts were the order of the day; these were inserted by teacher/trainers as the system became overburdened. Teacher/trainers also stated that many of the problematic areas (i.e. entries for the experiential learning diary in the Garda College, subject content, exam problems) identified by many members of the college teaching staff in the early part of the implementation of the
new programme were left without resolution. In their view Garda leadership focussed solely on increasing trainee numbers, without full consideration for trainee development.

The Catholic Church involvement in the trainee programmes

Analysis of the findings from trainees suggests the Catholic Church had a major input in the education and development of trainees in the 1st and 2nd trainee programmes. This fact is generally known throughout the Garda Siochana however, what is possibly new is the context of the bitterness and resentment expressed by the majority of respondents on this involvement. Analysis also shows the Catholic Church does not dominate the Garda Siochana and/or its members in the current trainee programme. Religion and/or the Catholic Church did not surface or come under discussion by those involved in the 3rd programme.