

# *Policing in Scotland: the role of higher education in supporting police officer development and partnership work*

Larissa Engelmann

Ph.D. Research Student

Edinburgh Napier University

[Larissa.engelmann@napier.ac.uk](mailto:Larissa.engelmann@napier.ac.uk)

@larissanapier7

Supervisors:

Dr Andrew Wooff

Dr Liz Aston

Dr Katrina Morrison & Dr Martha Caddell

The Scottish Institute  
for **Policing Research**

# Outline

- Why look at police learning and development?
- What skills and knowledge are important within the policing context?
- Higher Education, Professionalization and the Police
- What do we think we know?
- My Project
  - Research Aims & Questions
  - Methodology
- Conclusions

# Initial police training across the world

	Scotland	Iceland
Field training education		
Length of in-school training		at (University)
Total length of programme	2 Years	3 Years
Academic Status	No (possibly modern A in future)	Diploma option to get a Bachelor

## Research Question:

How do police officers assess their engagement with internal and external training and education opportunities in relation to rank, years of experience and educational background?

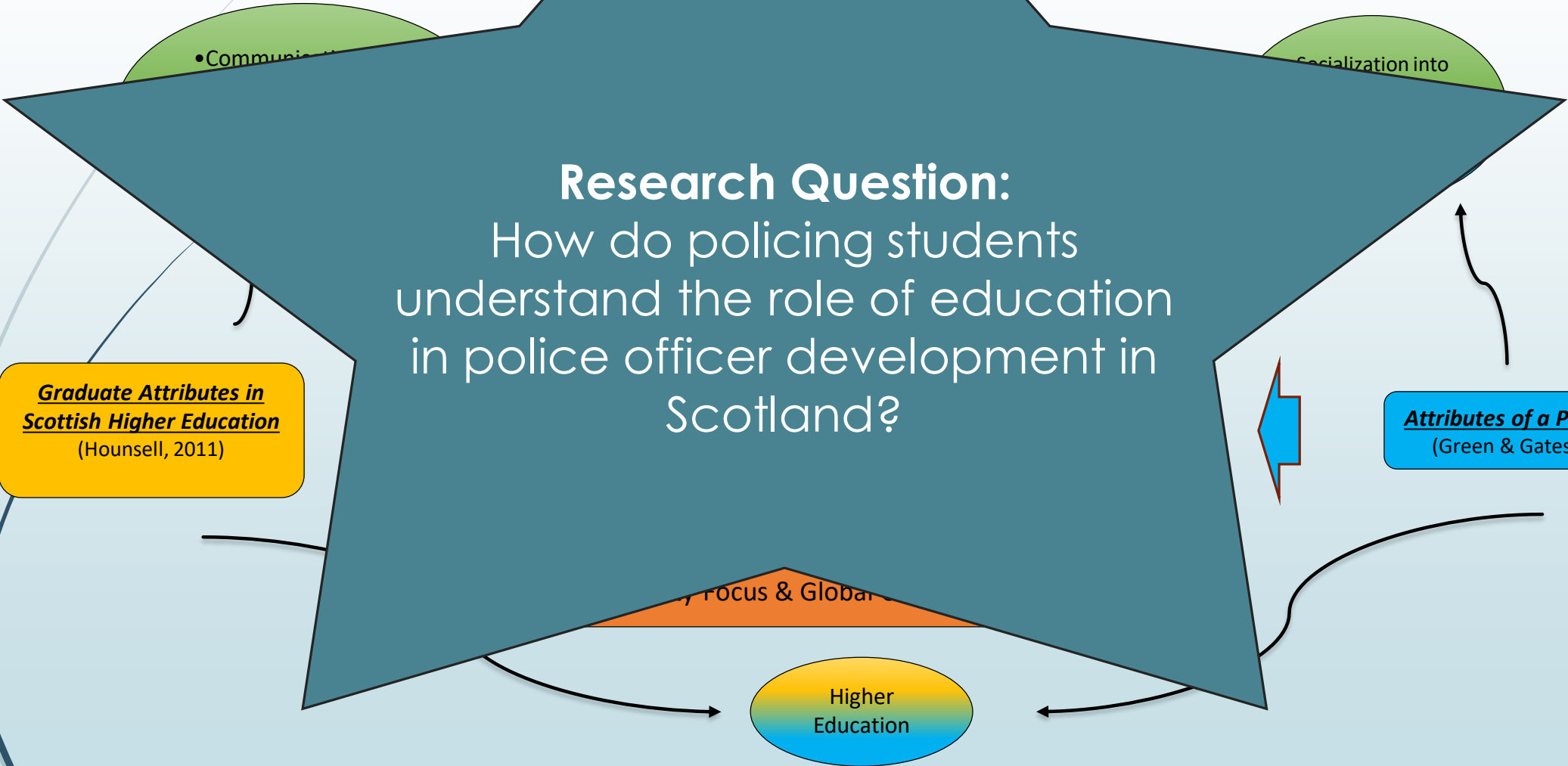
What skills and knowledge are  
important within the context?

**Research Question:**

What are police partner  
professions perspectives on their  
own learning opportunities and the  
role of education and learning in  
police officer development and  
partnership work?



# Why growth in education within police



# Police – Science Gap

Police	Science
Experience	Knowledge
Reduces complexity	Introduces complexity
Based on hierarchical thinking	Trying to irritate hierarchical structures
Reactionary	Proactive
Short term planning	Long term planning
Little systematic evaluation	Constant systematic evaluation
Practices often implemented with little evidence	Practices based on clear evidence
Drill type training	Andragogy and innovative learning approaches

# Police & Higher Education partnerships: new pathways?!

- ▶ Not new – so what needs change to make them meaningful?
- ▶ Not a priority
- ▶ Luxury not essential
- ▶ Magnifying glass
- ▶ Need to learn from police research
  - ▶ find shared language
  - ▶ Shared spaces, terminologies
- ▶ Complacency: the death of progress
- ▶ “the shared culture, the shared space is worth it” (Bartkowiak-Theron, 2018)

## Aim:

# Critically assess the role of education in the training and development of police officers in Scotland



1. How do police officers view their engagement with internal and external education and training opportunities in relation to rank, years of service and educational background?



2. In what way does Police Scotland see themselves as a professional learning organisation and how are possible changes to police education and their impact understood by police officers?



3. What are police partner professions' perspectives on the role of education within Police Scotland, police officer development and partnership work?



4. How do policing students understand the role of education in police officer development?



# Conclusions

- ▶ Police education needs to adapt to modern approaches to learning and teaching
- ▶ Higher Education might not be the answer to all police problems but could support
- ▶ Questions left to be answered
  - ▶ Does Police Scotland have a realistic understanding of where they are now and how innovative and relevant their training is?
  - ▶ How can we ensure that education and learning is happening from the bottom-up and top-down to ensure that not only leadership positions benefit from further engagement with learning?
  - ▶ How can we make police learning, training and education a priority for Police Scotland, the government and other key stakeholders?

# Questions?



If you're a professional working with the police or a Scottish Police Officer and want to be part of this study, please get in touch.

Larissa Engelmann

PhD Student & Associate Lecturer  
Edinburgh Napier University

Twitter: @larissanapier7

[Larissa.engelmann@napier.ac.uk](mailto:Larissa.engelmann@napier.ac.uk)

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