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# Definitions of Police Training, Education, Development & Learning

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## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This project, commissioned by Public Safety Canada, focused on research and analysis dealing with the formulation of definitions (or conceptual frameworks) for the following key terms:

- Police training;
- Police education;
- Police development; and
- Police learning

Additionally, the research took into consideration several other related terms directly relevant to the concepts noted above, including: mandatory training; e-learning; m-learning; blended learning; and distance learning.

The research combined a detailed literature review with feedback provided through focused interviews with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who attended the Police Education & Learning Summit held in September 2013 and a follow-up review of the Summit held in December 2013.

## STUDY AIMS

The overall aim of this study was to analyze these terms and how they have been used in a variety of ways in support of policing in Canada. It has been challenging for police organizations when reviewing their ongoing investments, in any of these various activities.

Therefore, both practitioners and academics are hoping to bring greater clarity to what is meant when police training, education, development and learning are being designed, delivered and evaluated within the Canadian policing community.

## METHODS

This research project was completed through nine (9) phases:

1. Discussion with Public Safety Canada;
2. Literature Review (including policing literature & interdisciplinary literature);
3. Preliminary Research Report
4. Consolidation of Public Safety Canada input;
5. Conduct Subject Matter Expert Interviews [semi-structured];
6. Preparation & Submission of Draft Final Research Report;
7. Consolidation of additional input from Public Safety Canada;
8. Submission of Final Project Research Report; and
9. Project Follow-up & Presentation Materials

## FINAL REPORT

The final report for this research project includes 'working definitions' for the key terms outlined in the Introduction & Background section of this poster. However, it was apparent that these definitional "anchors" continue to be problematic, and this research may serve as a foundation for further discussion and dialogue on these important terms for ongoing professional development in Canadian policing.

The final report is structured as follows:

- Summary of the Literature Review;
- Key Themes for Consideration;
- Subject Matter Expert Interviews;
- Framing of Key Definitions;
- The Way Forward;
- Selected References; and
- Annex

## DISCUSSION

Of particular importance for this research project were the 'Key Themes for Consideration' that evolved from the Literature Review, as well as the SME interviews. The SMEs represented a wide range of Canadian practitioners deeply involved with police training, education, development and learning. This included police academies, colleges, individual police services and the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN). The diversity of perspectives resulted in the following themes:

- From Craft to Profession;
- Policing Competencies;
- Locus of Police Learning;
- Police Instructional Personnel;
- Critique of Police Training; and
- New Modes & Orders: What's in the Future?

## SUMMARY

In summary, this research project consolidates a wide range of available literature from both policing and interdisciplinary realms to assist in the process of arriving at clear definitions for the key terms it identifies. The extensive, semi-structured interviews with a broad range of Canadian SMEs in this field, have demonstrated that establishing precise definitions for these key terms remains challenging and will complicate the overall process of arriving at both performance measures and specific costs for the complex web of training, educational, developmental and learning initiatives undertaken by Canada's police services.

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