

Over 200 police recruits pass out at Tulliallan



The latest generation of officers to join the ranks of Police Scotland passed out from their initial training yesterday.

222 recruits, who began training in September, took to the Parade Square at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan, this morning in the presence of Assistant Chief Constable Gillian MacDonald, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, Derek Penman, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Michael Matheson, senior officers, invited guests as well as family and friends.

Among the newly passed out officers are a number of colleagues who took part in Police Scotland's Introduction to Policing course, which was developed earlier this year to encourage black and minority ethnic (BME) candidates to find out more about joining the police.

The four-week programme, led by the service's Positive Action Team, offered potential applicants an insight into day-to-day life as an officer and an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the application and selection process as well as provide peer support to each other during the process via a closed Facebook group. The first participants passed out in September, and the second course, which today's recruits took part in, resulted in a further increase in the number of BME applicants seeking to join Police Scotland. A third course has also been held in Aberdeen.

Assistant Chief Constable Gillian MacDonald said, "It is always wonderful to see the efforts our new recruits put in over the course of their 11 weeks of training at the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan. Their dedication and enthusiasm

is inspirational and I am delighted to see them passing out today in front of their family and friends, who should all be very proud of their loved ones' achievements.

"The work being done by our Positive Action Team to encourage more members of our BME communities to consider a career in policing is clearly paying dividends as we continue to see an increased number of applicants and students coming through basic training.

"These new officers have a crucial part to play in the future of policing in Scotland: they will help to keep people safe; they will break down perceived barriers to joining the police service; they will build relationships in communities; they could make a critical difference to someone's life at a time of crisis; and they can build trust and confidence."

"We are now seeing a force that is increasingly reflective of a modern Scottish society with new officers from Pakistani, Indian, Polish and other non-Scottish backgrounds taking post over the past year."

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said, "In the past week I have attended two ceremonies aimed at highlighting the bravery of current serving officers and am in absolutely no doubt about the dedication and professionalism of Police Scotland.

"This year has seen a service that is increasingly reflective of a modern Scottish society with a strong proportion of female recruits and new officers from Pakistani, Indian, Polish and other non-Scottish backgrounds taking up posts.

"The shape of the policing workforce is being adapted to meet future demands and the Policing 2026 strategy aims to ensure the right skills mix going forward. However, operational policing capacity is to be increased and officer numbers will remain well above 2007 levels.

"I would like to wish these new officers the very best of

success for their new career and hope to see them active in keeping Scotland's communities safe in the coming months and years."

All of the newly qualified constables will now move onto local training for a week before hitting the beat in policing divisions across the country for their two year probationary period.

Police Scotland remains keen to receive applications from people interested in joining the service across Scotland, and in particular women and people from under-represented groups including the BME communities.