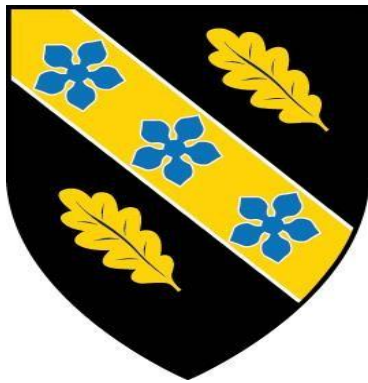




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Do Police Officers Utilise Warning Markers in
Their Perception of Risk of Being Assaulted
Whilst on Duty?

Professional Policing Practice (BA)

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1920836

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Yma o hyd.

Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.



Date: 02/04/2024

STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA.



Date: 02/04/2024

STATEMENT 2

This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.



Date: 02/04/2024

STATEMENT 3

I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for interlibrary loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.



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Abstract

Assaults against police officers are seemingly an unavoidable risk to the policing world. Police are there to put themselves between risk and the public, and to maintain law and order, and public safety. The very nature of policing styles involves people reacting emotionally in a very much dynamic situation, (Sweeney, K., 2022) and the “fight or flight” response will inevitably kick in (Anderson, G.S., Litzenberger, R. and Plecas, D., 2002) There shall always be an element of risk for each call that officers attend, as observed by Bittner (1975).

The aim of this dissertation was to investigate at least, in part, if a system used by Gwent Police, and possibly other UK forces, relating to front line police officers’ perception of the use of recognised warning markers, to the risk of being assaulted whilst on duty.

In order to ascertain how officers perceive the relevance of such markers, a short questionnaire was disseminated to those serving on the front line. When literature was reviewed, it was clearly evident that there were some commonly shared characteristics that people had with whom police interacted with that inherently made them become more violent. Such things included the consumption of alcohol, the use of drugs and the use of weapons. These characteristics are also widely reported on to create aggression and violence in any situation, not solely when police are involved.

These characteristics became bound together and known as the aforementioned Warning Markers. Relevant literature was reviewed, and objectives met, namely how Gwent police officers perceive the reasons behind they themselves becoming a victim of an assault whilst on duty.

The penultimate chapter will further say that within the literature that had been reviewed, there is a relationship between what would make people aggressive and uncooperative in general, act the same way that they would when in conjunction with an interaction with police officers.

The final chapter will conclude the dissertation, bringing together any supporting evidence from the study, whilst identifying that police offices often value the importance of warning markers being passed to them before they attend calls. It will also show how consideration made to how they approach the calls dependant on the markers being read to them. the advantages and pitfalls of the study, whilst providing a setting for further related studies to be built upon.

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Introduction

The intention of the research is to further develop some understanding into assaults on police officers whilst performing their duty at work, whilst answering the question of “Do Police Officers Use Warning Markers in Their Perception of Risk of Being Assaulted Whilst on Duty?” The first chapter of this dissertation will give an insight and contextual background into this question and will explore the importance of this research partaken and why this is a research worthy topic.

An assault on a police officer has been defined as “an offence of common assault, or battery, that is committed against an emergency worker acting in the exercise of functions as such a worker.” (CPS, 2024)

“An assault on any individual or citizen in our society is a terrible thing, but an assault on an emergency worker is an assault on us all. They protect society. Therefore, an attack on them is an attack on us all”. (CPS, 2024)
The act itself of assaulting an emergency worker is an offence under the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act, 2018.

The more serious levels of assaults such as a section 20 Actual Bodily Harm, or a section 18 Grievous Bodily Harm of the Offences Against the Person Act (1861), will also apply, but these will be aggravated offences, should the officer be performing their duty at the time of the Assault.

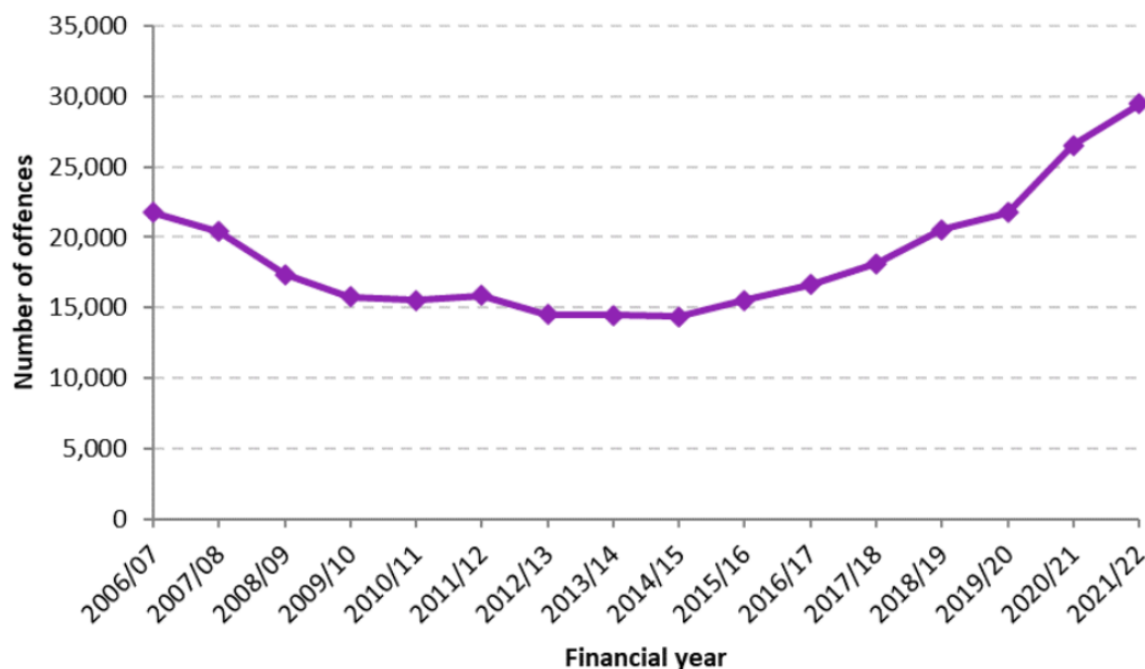


Figure 1.1 Number of recorded assaults on UK police officers 2006-2022 (UK Gov, 2024)

The above graph appears to show that between 2006—2011 the number of reported assaults on officers appears to be steadily declining from 21000, to just over 15000 during this time. The level does not change much then until 2015, where it begins to rise at a modest rate. The most notable rise then begins when the

COVID pandemic struck in 2020. The Police Federation stated that official figures demonstrated that there was an increased level of violence shown towards officers, with more than 100 recorded each day. There was to be an increased level of officers being spat at during this time, and such assaults resulted in 1688 charges between just April and September of 2020.

The subject of assaults on police is one of great importance. As noted already, they appear to be dramatically rising as well as reports of most crimes are also on the increase. (Anser, M.K., Yousaf, Z., Nassani, A.A., Alotaibi, S.M., Kabbani, A. and Zaman, K., 2020) The types of crime that have had the most significant increases are those such as fraud, theft, shoplifting, and violence against another. (ONS, 2023) The researcher has personal experience of being both assaulted whilst on duty, as well as being the Officer in Case, investigating when colleagues have been assaulted. Neither of which contribute to poor officer mental health. The research carried out was therefore at times highly emotive, and the subject of officer assaults can often seem to hit those in the policing world quite hard. (Basinka, N. A., and Wicak, I., 2014) This is potentially due to being them having been assaulted themselves, maybe needing to take time off work to recover, or having seen or heard a colleague become a victim. (Rees, 2021)

The aforementioned graph is solely indicative of assaults on officers without injury. There will not be a follow-up graph depicting the number of injurious assaults on officers over the past 15 years as there is not available, however, it has been reported that in 2019 “there were over 30000 recorded assaults on police in force across England and Wales (including British Transport Police). Of which: 20,578 were crimes of “assault without injury on a constable” recorded across all forces (including British Transport Police), a comparable increase of 13% to 18,138 in the previous year. 10,399 crimes of “assault with injury on a constable” recorded across all forces (including British Transport Police), an increase of 27% compared with 8,157 in the year before.” (UK Gov, 2023)

The reasons behind the researcher’s personal rationale for looking into just a small element as to why there can be such aggression shown towards police officers on duty is mainly down to the fact that there appears to be a disturbing upwards trend in incidents whereby officers are being assaulted. Given the graph above depicting the overall reported figures for assaults at work for officers, there will naturally be a considerable amount more who have not reported. (Peek-Asa, C., Howard, J., Vargas, L. and Kraus, J.F., 1997) Some may see the necessary laborious injury on duty forms as a reason to not report assaults, they may see it as a source of embarrassment having been assaulted (Arbarbanel, 2021) especially as policing is seen to be a tough job, anyway. Others may see an injury on duty that they may have been subjected to as a necessary part of a particularly aggressive person who resists arrest. (Crawford, C. and Burns, R., 2002) This itself is a specific offence that falls under section 89 of the Police Act (1996) which amounts to Resisting Arrest.

Offences whereby police officers are the victims are tried in court differently to assaults on the general public, as officers are seen as Servants of the Crown, meaning one of our primary functions is to protect the public from such offences. Perceived leniency towards perpetrators has been so that officers are now deciding not to arrest offenders under suspicion of assault, and with the aggravated factors that assaulting an officer would carry (Weeks, C. and Broughton, T., 2022) despite the increase in potential jail terms emerging from 2021.

Another reason for this research to take place was a personal exploration to why officers feel that they are at risk of assault on duty after being a victim of assault on multiple occasions, as have colleagues and it appears to affect each aspect of the officers’ lives. (Rees, B. and Smith, J., 2008)

The main objectives to this quantitative study have remained the same throughout this project.

- A) To conduct primary research on the amount of officers who participated in this study and ascertain if there is any correlation to the trend of officers reporting being assaulted UK wide.
- B) Which warning markers are seen to be the most relevant by officers who have partaken in this study
- C) Does the dissemination of warning makers change the behaviour and attitude of attending officers

This dissertation will be formally and academically structured in order to achieve the objectives. This chapter, being chapter one, has specifically introduced the reader to the primary objectives of the dissertation and the background to the reasoning for why this was deemed to be a worthwhile study..

Chapter two presents the reader with a review of academically relevant literature, showcasing what research currently exists regarding assaults on police officers whilst at work.

Chapter three will then concentrate on the reasoning behind the methods chosen to accumulate data displayed within the primary research.

Chapter four will show analysis of the aforementioned data that has been collated from examining chapter three and identifies any common theme(s).

Chapter five will bring the dissertation to a close and highlight any shortfalls that may have been identified in the previous sections and provide recommendations and learnings of the study.

Literature Review

This chapter aims to support the dissertations question and provide an analytical review from a range of academically relevant sources of literature, covering papers that have been written by peers, relevant theories and schools of thought that have been developed as well as findings that have been published. Alongside academic text, relevant literature from professional bodies will be included in the review.

The literature review is focussed on the subject of assaults on police officers whilst on duty, and more specifically, if any recognised factor which could affect the officer's risk of being assaulted on duty, actually plays a part in the risk of becoming a victim of an unlawful assault.

An assault on a police officer is an aggravated offence in which any person is guilty if the assault a constable in the execution of his duty. (National Archives, 2023) Studies show that a police officer is assaulted every 20 minutes, (Bierie, 2017) and the likelihood of an officer being assaulted at work appears to be on the increase. (Whitaker, 2023)

In excess of 43000 assaults were recorded against British police officers in 2023, (More than 700 per month (Whitaker, 2023) with the overall figure likely to have been both under reported, and played down in terms of severity. (Shjarback, J.A. and Maguire, E.R., 2021) Of those assaults, 11235 reported to have been an assault with an injury. (Home Office, 2023) This may have been overshadowed in the mainstream media by incidents whereby major injuries have been sustained by the officers, as well as any injury caused to subjects by police. The latter being the more widely reported upon by both mainstream and social media. (Mullis, 2009)

Such reports do not detail how serious the injury was, and only in the most severe cases will it ever be brought to light what lead up to the incident that has resulted in an officer being injured, such as the tragic incident involving PS Matt Ratana, who was fatally shot inside a Metropolitan Police custody unit in 2020. (BBC, 2023) The alleged perpetrator was said to have been diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome some months prior to the shooting. (Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, 2023) The defence lawyer for the perpetrator, had said that the reasoning behind the detainee shooting his concealed gun within the custody unit, was due to "an autistic breakdown" (Court and Tribunals Judiciary, 2023), however, the judge in this case had stated that the circumstances surrounding both the arrest, and procedure up to the point of the shooting, would not have triggered a breakdown. There is obviously the added element of the failed search of his person being incorrectly facilitated by officers prior to his arrival at the detention suite.

Autism and other such neurodivergent conditions will be contained within the 'ailment' Warning Marker, and detailed with whatever the person has previously disclosed to police when dealing with them. There has been an incredible rise in people with a neurodiverse condition such as ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia and some learning disabilities. (Chou, J.Y.H., Moody, C., Keyler, C., Lerner, J., Gonzalez, S., Fisher, K. and Laugeson, E., 2022) and this has been something that police forces have had to have at least a working knowledge of. (Siberry, A., 2020)

Medical research has repeatedly recognised that trauma and psychological ill-health to a young person at an impressionable age can lead to a wide range of behavioural, physical and psychological issues, as well as social problems. (Dalglish, T., Black, M., Johnston, D. and Bevan, A. 2020) A study in 2023 by Trauma agencies in the USA declared that trauma at a young age should be treated as a worldwide health pandemic. (Trauma Informed, 2023) Prolonged exposure to such events can often lead to the most severe of issues. (Liming and Grube, 2018) Such behavioural issues can obviously lead to violent outbursts, with those who suffer at the

worst end of trauma more likely to go on to harm themselves, assault not only those known to them, but also authoritarian figures such as their teachers and police officers (Tallieu, T.L., Davilla, I.G. and Struck, S., 2020) Likewise, there has been much research publicised about ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) whereby, there are a range of negative events, all of which have varying levels of trauma, that can have a hugely detrimental effect on a person, (Van der Kolk, B.A., McFarlane, A.C. and Weisaeth, L., 1996) with studies showing that the more adverse incidents that a person is exposed to, as well as the length of time that they are exposed to the experiences at a young age, the more problematic their later lives can be. (Belis et al., 2014) This can also be seen with things such as drug use and socio-economic deprivation. (Daniel, et al, 2009)

The range of adverse experiences extend from a young person seeing someone close to them become reliant on alcohol, drugs, or be incarcerated, or they themselves having been victim of an emotionally or physically neglectful upbringing, or physical, sexual or emotional abuse. (Finkelhor, 2020)

The ACES that children acquire would clearly fit into the mental health category of warning marker.

Such adverse experiences can manifest themselves into not only a physiological issue, but also a psychological one. (Pilkington, P.D., Bishop, A. and Younan, R., 2021) These can range from being at an increased risk of heart disease, Type 2 Diabetes, and be at an increased risk of developing behaviours that are detrimental to them such as becoming addicted to alcohol, smoking, or drugs, or living a life where they are more susceptible of becoming involved in a violence. (Health Scotland, 2021)

Independently, each of the factored markers individually have the potential to affect how people react when they encounter police, and the threats they pose towards officers, themselves, or any persons who may be in the vicinity (Archer, J, 2020) . In 2020, a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimated that police were at a 60% chance of being assaulted by a person, if that person had taken an unknown quantity of drugs. The very same study said that the risk increased to 64% if the person had engaged in both drug taking and consuming alcohol. The figure for other combinations of risk factors cannot be found online, although issues surrounding how conflict can worsened or decreased exists. (Hecker, T, and Haer, R. 2015)

From sources of 10 trials, evidence has shown that police use of body worn cameras had increased the risk of assaults, whilst having no effect on the officers decision to utilise use force. (Ariel, B., Sutherland, A., Henstock, D., Young, J., Drover, P., Sykes, J., Megicks, S. and Henderson, R., 2016)

In another such article, Barack, et al., note that the proposal of body worn cameras was to reduce the use of force and reduce the assaults on police officers. However, it is to further note that another key aspect of body worn cameras was for transparency of officers (Tregle, B., Nix, J. and Pickett, J.T., 2022) and their decision making process if they deem there is threat or harm present and use force. It can justify the use of force and having an activated recording camera should not dissuade the officer from use. Further to this, it implies that cameras do not deter individuals from carrying out assaults, (Biere, 2015) numerous factors or circumstance of the individual may increase aggression towards police such as their awareness of the camera, being under the influence of drink or drugs, their age, and mental capacity (Biere, 2015) it was found that serious assaults linked with older adult offenders and minor resists were linear in juvenile offenders; female offenders were found more likely to be non compliant. (Trupin, E.W., Stewart, D.G., Beach, B. and Boesky, L., 2002) Male offenders were shown to have an increased association with violent crimes, however there has been no clear gender factor contributing to assaults on officers (Biere, 2015). This also affects how there was not a question within the questionnaire relating to a correlation of perceived gender of offenders.

Studies performed in the United Kingdom show the direct correlation of drug use affecting the rate of crime. (Ignaszewski, M.J., 2021; UK Government, 2021) This would naturally suggest that drug users would encounter

police officers more often than those who did not partake in drug use. Even as far back as 1963 there had been links made to drug use and “deviant behaviour” (Becker, 1963)

There have been several studies that have shown a direct correlation between people who had consumed alcohol and injurious assaults occurring during or after the consumption of alcohol (Navis et al, 2007) This study was a controlled experiment whereby males inside a young offenders institute were asked to compare and contrast their behaviours where they could document where they felt their aggression and anger would turn into a violent situation after drinking alcohol to an excessive level. This is one of the warning markers that the writer is making a point of questioning. Navis et al., also states that the males in the study generally exhibited more aggressive behaviour when there were more males present within the group. Crowds are another such marker.

Crowd behaviour has been studied by psychologists since 1886 with Cesare Lombroso and others stating that the behaviour of a crowd was determined on their biological makeup (National Library of Medicine, 2014). It has then gone on to be a firm favourite to study. There is one theory that suggests that people act irrationally as they come under the hypnotic influence of a crowd (Drury, J., Ball, R., Neville, F., Reicher, S. and Stott, C., 2020) With crowds being another example of a warning marker with the force, it makes more sense having read this theory. The same could be said for football crowds and the hooliganism that can exist within and reproduce itself at fixtures. (Drury, 2020)

The sociology and psychology behind crowd behaviour can be traced back as far as early 1885, when Gustav Le Bon studied how crowds would modify their behaviour to be more inline with the masses. This was true for emotions such as elation, but more so for violence. The reason for violence was often not expressed beforehand, and Reicher (2018) calls crowd behaviour both “monstrous” and “something beyond normality” suggesting that the behaviour of a crowd and those therein should not be considered as their regular behaviour. This may also tie in with the Bystander Intervention Theory, posed by Latane and Darley (1989) This is far from a psychology or sociology degree, however this was most noteworthy to mention.

The one warning marker which is a little out of context is that of the need to show that a person has certain ailments. The force has extended this marker to include what ailments or health complications the person has. Dyslexia being a risk to attending officers had always been a confusing anomaly. However, multiple studies suggest that those individuals with dyslexia can find themselves being more aggressive in certain situations. (Yasir, W., Iqbal, M., Jamal, B., Taseer, N.A., Masqood, A. and Kazami, F., 2020) It appears that dyslexia can often be worsened by stress, and simultaneously, stress can be worsened in a situation whereby a person whom is diagnosed with dyslexia is present and where police are required. (Chown, N., Debbaudt, D., Beardon, L., Cossburn, K. and Scott, J., 2021)

By examining the research by scholars and peers, the researcher intends to find answers to the question of this dissertation, whilst providing data or findings which could fill a gap in existing knowledge, or even go on to potentially aid officer safety, or resourcing issues that are faced by police forces around the United Kingdom. The researcher hopes that the findings from this dissertation could go some way towards improving officer safety whilst on duty, or, at the very least, officer awareness to warning markers and how they could influence violence towards them.

(Macdonald, 2010). In this study, it was shown that those with dyslexia struggled to comprehend why they felt the way they did towards officers, when there was no literature involved and there was no precursor of violence offered to them. Be this at an emergency situation or just in general. This was one of the warning markers that initially did not make sense to the writer, but after reading this paper, and learning how the person who has dyslexia can feel towards officers and stressful situations, the writer can now understand why this may be a relevant piece of information that may be passed to officers who are attending a call.

One of the most relevant studies to this dissertation is by Johnson, L.A., who in 2019 submitted a post doctorate paper which studied injury in duty forms submitted by Lincolnshire Police officers who stated that they had been assaulted whilst on duty. The researcher then conducted interviews with those who volunteered and examined how and why they became victims of violence.

This study has fallen way short of that level of detail, but aims to give some local context into how and why the officers of Gwent Police Force see that they have been assaulted. In the future it may form a platform on which to base a study into if and how the warning maker system could change to benefit the front line officers.

Methodology

This chapter will explore the choices made in relation to what type of research will be used, along with any potential drawbacks, pitfalls and positives about the chosen methodology.

Methodology is often seen to be one of the most informative sections of a dissertation. (Kallet, 2004)

The very essence of research is defined by Hampshire College, 2019 as “a process to systematic inquiry that entails collection of data; documentation of critical information; and analysis and interpretation of that data/information, in accordance with suitable methodologies set by specific professional field and academic disciplines”. Similar research has concluded with coincidental results (Lamb, H.R., Weinberger, L.E. and DeCuir Jr, W.J., 2002) whereby scholars have identified that those who are at crisis point, or are experiencing extreme emotional distress due to negative mental health episodes, can often lash out at attending police and healthcare workers, whilst they are being cared for and treated. (Del Pozo, B., Sights, E., Goulka, J., Ray, B., Wood, C.A., Siddiqui, S. and Beletsky, L.A., 2021)

The research was not based on an initial theory to prove or disprove, rather the objective question of “Do Police Officers Use Warning Markers In Their Perception of Risk of Being Assaulted Whilst On Duty?”, was to be explored. Due to this, non theory based approach was used in order to collate findings and feelings within the force that the researcher works for.

It was then that the findings were published and the results could potentially go on to further develop more research in the future.

Whilst developing a strategy for data collection, an article was read regarding a widely used approach titled ‘The Research Onion, and Your Dissertation Findings’ (Saunders, et al., 2022) The “Onion” is a decision making process that researchers meet when faced with options upon which to start and carry through their decision making process in regards to their academic research.

Strategies of research are utilised to collect data in order for it to be analysed to reveal and uncover new information. (Booth, 2018) The way in which this research project was initiated and designed, was in order to minimise the complexity of not only designing the questionnaire, but also to answer it. This was mainly due to time constraints felt by the researcher, and on behalf of the participants.

Quantitative research was the chosen approach to collating data as the potential scope and recording of answers pertaining to a qualitative approach were far too wide for the researcher to fully give justice to, with having several external commitments, as well as also being a new student officer. The desired direction for the research was to achieve the goals set at the beginning of the dissertation. By limiting the answers to the short survey sent out to participants, this was achievable with the above restrictions

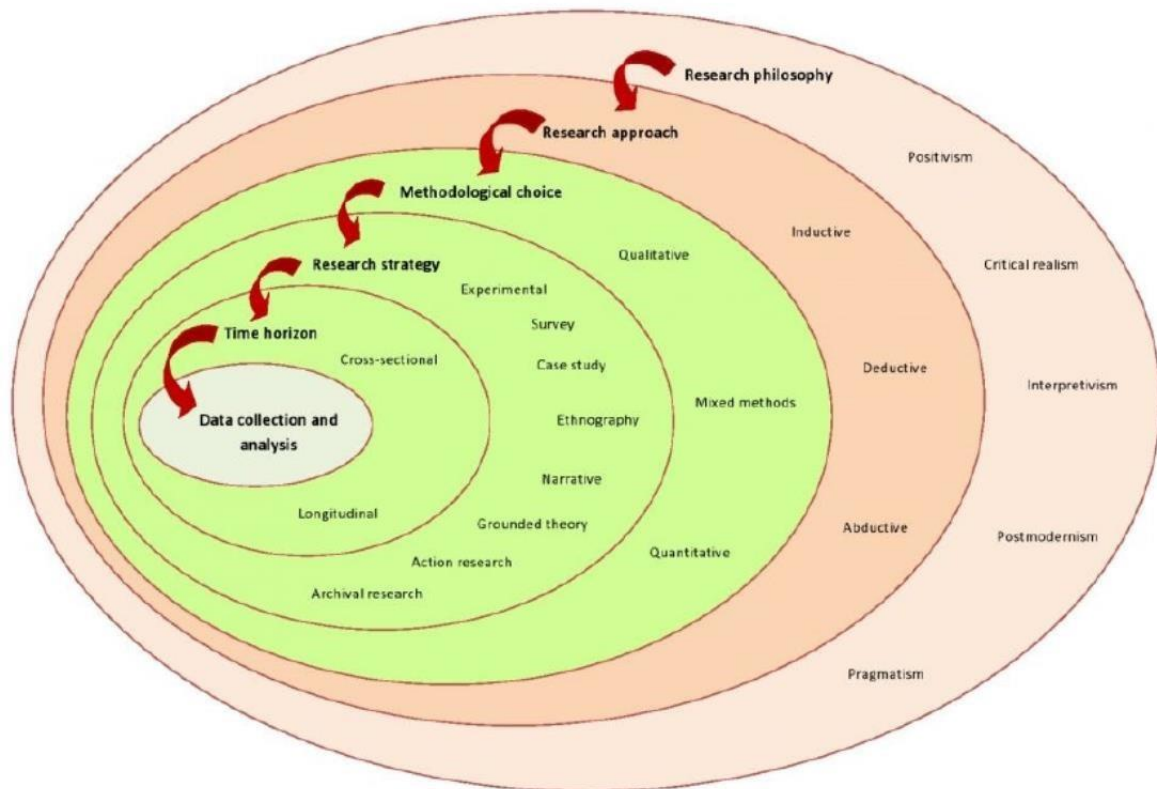


Fig 1. The Research Onion of Mark Saunders

As this project is based on a simplistic approach to data collection mainly due to time constraints, the decision to adopt a quantitative style of research was made. The decision to base the dissertation on this method was mainly down to personal preference of not having to spend too much time on data gathering, and with having to combine personal factors, with job related stressors and not having enough time to dedicate to having to interview people who may also be faced with a limited amount of free time in which to conduct said interviews. The use of a quantitative approach was essential to get the volume of data required within a short space of time and was a simplistic way to identify trends within pre-written answers. The above model reflects that the moment the method is chosen to gather the data, that this is the 'third' layer. This layer being known as the Methodological Choice. This approach would see the research informed by the first layer of the 'onion' and work productively alongside the positivist philosophy of quantitative research. (Melnikovas, 2018) Given that there are so few studies as to why officers get assaulted at work, (Bierie, 2017) this research was completed in order to support further research into the upward trend of assaults on police.

The research was conducted using only a short, multiple choice online questionnaire. A pre-existing online survey tool, called SurveyMonkey was chosen to conduct the research. Having used this service in a former professional capacity, therefore having prior knowledge that it had very good free software was the main reason. It is also a well-known and trusted site, (Gjylbegaj, 2018) which staff in the force have also used previously to conduct research.

By further using the research onion, when the researcher got to the fourth layer (The Research Strategy layer) a simple survey was the chosen method of data gathering. This then meant that adopted approach significantly influenced the outcomes and interpretation of study results needed to answer the objectives.

Through a systematic data collection as seen in the questionnaire, the researcher hopes to unveil patterns that would fall in line with existing data gathered.

The researcher found that the main drawback of SurveyMonkey, was that in order to utilise the free version, the package is limited to 10 questions per survey. An additional option under consideration was the utilisation of an alternative being Google Forms, which would have facilitated the incorporation of an extensive array of questions, alongside accommodating various styles of questioning and corresponding responses. However, with restrictions on not being permitted to use a personal Google account on company laptops and writing this dissertation on said laptop, it could have meant having to create a second account with a personal phone which would not have been appropriate. Particularly given that this approach to data gathering was used in order to save time.

The choice of an online questionnaire as a sampling method, as well as pilot size determination played a crucial role in gathering the results required to support the literature reviewed prior to this study and gaining validity to the research goals. (Meeker, W.Q., Escobar, L.A. and Pascual, F.G., 2022) By using this method, it somewhat reduced the risk of bias and error by remaining anonymous, thereby strengthening the robustness of conclusions found in the study. (Wu, X., Nethery, R.C., Sabath, M.B., Braun, D. and Dominici, F., 2020) The risk of bias in the sample was reduced by posting the survey anonymously. It was not known, a priori, whether there were adverse feelings toward the researcher among potential participants which could have led to sabotage. Conversely, participation by officers close to the researcher might skew the results if they were aware of the hoped for outcomes of data collection. (Elston, D.M., 2021)

Within the second layer of the research onion, it was identified that an approach using a singular inductive approach would best suit the researchers needs. (Flick, 2011)

The idea of combining multiple choice questions with open ended items, and limitless space style answering of questions, was considered for this study, however, due to time constraints on both the researcher and the officers on whom the study was being conducted, a simple “mono-method”, single approach was taken and a quantitative questionnaire consisting of six questions was constructed.

The fifth layer of the research onion, or the ‘Time Horizon’ saw the researcher question the timescale in which this project was due, as well as having to realistically examine how much time the findings would take. Due to the limited amount of time given to the research project, and the time available to conduct data collection, a simple questionnaire was utilised. This has been deemed to be a much more simple way of collecting data for those with tight time constraints. (Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., Titz, W. and Perry, R.P., 2002).

Officer workload was a major contributory factor in how the questionnaire was promoted. In order to access the main working applications, Gwent officers must load the internal intranet via homepage – The Beat. Within The Beat there is a comments section that is promoted to a very visible part of the web page. Within this section, staff can pose questions and are able to give information regarding who the relevant people are on a certain team for the day, and other such information. This area of The Beat is viewed by almost every officer on duty each day in order for them to access their work, and this is why this was the chosen place for the question to be posed to people if they were willing to commit to the research survey within this dissertation.

This was pertinent in the decision to adopt this approach as the researcher is also a front line officer, who has the workload and staffing level issues to contend with.

Officers receive numerous emails each day, regardless of their role. Some directly relevant to their job, and some less relevant. Having excessive and regularly unnecessary emails can be a source of stress. (Kushley, K. and Dunn, E.W., 2015) It was only fair that the request to participate in this study was not a request via an email that could have got lost, or even been an extra source of stress for an officer, who with an already highly

stressful job, (Mark, G., Iqbal, S.T., Czerwinski, M., Johns, P., Sano, A. and Lutchyn, Y., 2016) an alternative option to disseminate the survey was sought. (Mark, G., Iqbal, S.T., Czerwinski, M., Johns, P., Sano, A. and Lutchyn, Y., 2016) Therefore, a link on the most frequently accessed page seemed an efficient and time effective way of collating data that would maximise the exposure to officers on duty.

The choice to email those who took part in the initial pilot sample, was ethically considered, given the above. It was considered that as those who were chosen were of a group that had essentially volunteered to help with the project, and that they had agreed to be emailed regarding the project.

Modern day response officers are also so much younger, and not only in career terms, but also in age (Levy, R.J., 2020) with the average age of a response officer in Gwent police now being just 26.3 years old, as compared to 31 years old in 2015. (Gwent Police, 2023) The researcher did not know how well younger officers would react to being interviewed or being given long winded questionnaires having seen how young in both age and service the majority of response officers are. Given the extra workload that officers seem to have at the moment due to not only staffing levels and the attrition rate being at an all time high, but also the university commitments that new starters have to contend with as well as the intricacies that policing comes with. If a combined approach to data collection had been chosen, it could have meant that officers would have needed to have used their spare time outside of working hours in order to assist.

The pandemic seemingly changed the approach to group research. (Wildman, J.L., Nguyen, D.M., Duong, N.S. and Warren, C., 2021) With many people still not wishing to interact with those unfamiliar to them. Even though the local, national and international lockdowns have now been lifted, there certainly seems to be some segments of the community, both professionally and nonprofessional, still appearing to be wary around non-essential face to face meetings and contact (Healthline, 2023). The fact that the data collected is of the quantitative quality, it is also more achievable with short and succinct questions which are easily disseminated via links on email, text and on the force intranet. The time limitations that the researcher faced with the aforementioned restraints also affected the ability to perform interview style questions to obtain data and answers. COVID-19 also changed the way in which people communicate and conduct such exercises like interviews and data collection. (Bongelli, et al., 2023) Whilst so many more face to face activities are resuming now, it still proved difficult to imagine how such questionnaires could be posed in a more intimate fashion.

Within the request for participants, the researcher stated that the only criterion to join the study was that response officers partake in the questionnaire. In this study, age, gender, and years of service were irrelevant to the investigation. The fact that it was a necessity for the respondent to be a response officer was mainly down to the amount of calls that department attend, in comparison with specialist departments such as Firearms, Roads Traffic Policing, or CID. The group of response officers would naturally be more at risk of an assault purely down to the amount of calls they attend, but would also encapsulate the immediate effect that officers carrying lethal weapons would have on a situation, just by their presence. (Ariel, B., Lawes, D., Weinborn, C., Henry, R., Chan, K. and Brants Sabo, H., 2019). Such departments would see those officers on Armed Response Units as well as dog handlers. (Burrows, C., 2007)

There have been several studies into how specialist departments such as Firearms, or Dog Handlers, even just by their sheer presence, can de-escalate violent or tense situations. (Schaffer, N.C., 2023) The mere sight of a team of armed officers, or a Belgian Mallinois has often been proven to make the aggressor bring down their levels of violence as they not only feel that they could not match the force of said officers or their options, but also these such officers also have more protection by means of personal protective equipment (Kepp, J.J., 2024)

At this moment in time, only one in six officers in the Gwent Police force area carry taser, and studies have shown that just by someone seeing an officer who is carrying Taser, it can de-escalate situations (Keating-Jones, 2019) thus defusing some of the aggression potentially shown at calls.

In the conducted research, a pilot group comprising of ten participants, who were all serving police constables within the same force as the researcher, was established. The officers had varying lengths of service, but at the time were all frontline response officers, with some being carriers of Taser. This group was presented with a set of eight questions. Upon completion of this pilot study, two questions were excluded from the final dissertation due to their perceived lack of relevance to the overarching study. Specifically, one of the omitted questions inquired about the threshold of warning markers which are produced within the force. prompting the need for a request for an additional officer during a call by an already attending officer. The decision to exclude this question aimed to ensure the questionnaire's alignment with the primary focus of the dissertation. The other appeared to duplicate a response for an earlier question.

The data was collated, and an email sent to the responding officers for their thoughts of this pilot survey. The overwhelming feature was that another of the questions was "too wordy". That question was reconsidered and improved upon, then added to the final version of the questionnaire. This was then run past the entire pilot group once more, who all stated that the amended version was better suited. The remaining questions were designed to address aspects directly pertinent to the study's objectives. The results from the pilot have been discarded, and do not contribute to the final results.

The final questionnaire consisting of six questions was then formatted onto the aforementioned web survey creator that was also used in the pilot study. This survey software has the ability to convert the collated data into a table, or graphs and can reflect the frequency of answers chosen. The researcher requested that the platform only use the data when all 6 questions gained a response with the ones that did not get a response to all 6 questions be omitted from the final results.

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Analysis of Results

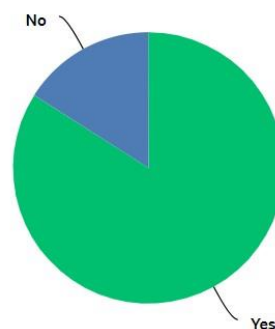
This chapter will discuss findings directly derived from quantitative analysis of the questionnaire, highlighting key insights into the research objectives. This section aims to offer the reader a clear and comprehensive overview of the evidence gathered from participants, which will develop a deeper understanding of not only the objection of the dissertation, but also the ever growing phenomenon of officer assaults, concentrating on Gwent Police.

The data collection process employed in this study was quantitative, utilising a structured questionnaire with several predefined purposeful response parameters. The questionnaire focussed on obtaining numerical responses in order to gauge individual police officers' perspectives on questions with specific significance of warning markers when dealing with individuals in a policing context. This covers when officers are dealing with calls that they are attending, from emergency graded calls, to diarised ones which are seen to have a much lower probability of threat, harm and risk. (Emergencies are usually where the officer does not know what they are going to be dealing with, or whom could be at the address. (Science Direct, 2020) Typically, this reflects a response officers role). The subsequent analysis aimed to reveal basic insights into the officers' opinions regarding the relevance of such markers in their professional assessments.

This investigation into the prevalence of assaults on serving police officers yielded noteworthy results, particularly with regard to the inquiry concerning the percentage of officers who had encountered such incidents while on duty.

Have you been assaulted whilst on duty?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	84.00% 21
No	16.00% 4
TOTAL	25

Figure 2. Question 1

The analysis revealed that 84% of respondents to the online survey affirmed experiencing assaults during the performance of their duties as police officers. This aligns with the broader trend of escalating officer assaults, as evidenced by the alarming 41000 recorded instances within the police forces of the United Kingdom in 2022 (College of Policing, 2022). It is imperative to note that these reported cases exclusively pertain to physical assaults and do not detail the level of severity of assault nor injury. Neither does this study attribute

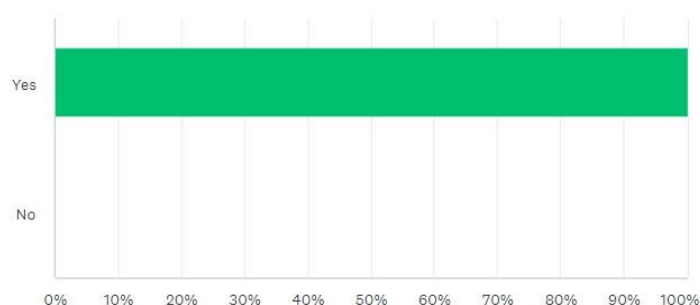
the number of times that any responding officer has been assaulted. This merely asks about the incident that the officer considers the worst assault that they had endured.

The quantitative data extracted from the online survey underscores the pervasive nature of such assaults. While the collected data does not delineate the specific modes or severity of these assaults, the unanimity of respondents reporting incidents is not representative of national statistics. In 2022, the United Kingdom had a total of 142,145 full-time equivalent police officers (Home Office, 2022). The recorded 41000 assaults, therefore, indicate a disproportionality that warrants careful consideration.

Gwent Police has a total of 1927 response officers employed. Based on the above research, this would suggest that 1618 of the total officers have been assaulted on duty. This is comparable with data from the Metropolitan Police which stated that in 87% of their police officers had been assaulted at some point of their front line duty. (Metropolitan Police, 2024) The Metropolitan Police being the biggest police force in the United Kingdom and having 22 times as many front line officers than Gwent. (Statista, 2024). Given the direct link between inner city violence and distrust of police (NPCC, 2024), there is little doubt as to why there is a slight increase with the Met data.

Are you aware of people having warning markers on their police records?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 25
No	0.00% 0
TOTAL	25

Figure 3. Question 2

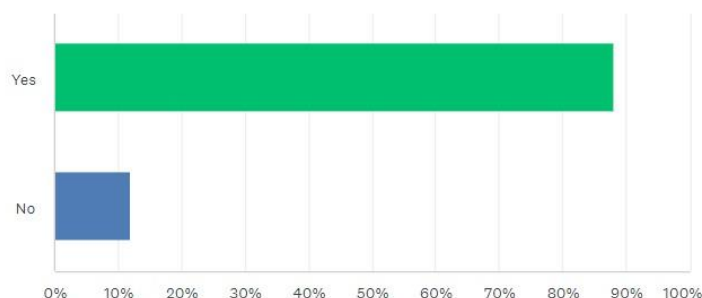
This question was included but does not hold any validity to the overall question of if police officers utilise markers in their perception of risk of being assaulted whilst on duty. It would have been a great shock if respondents did not know that people held such information upon their forensic records. The warning markers are deleted when each department of the policing world is dispatched to a call, it is not a luxury solely afforded to front line officers. Even when Community Support Officers are dispatched to a call, these markers will be read aloud and also be visible on the persons police record within the force. It was added to ensure that there was not a training need. All respondents answered that there were aware of such markers.

As previously detailed, these markers can range from someone being known to associate with gang members, to having an ailment, to being reliant on alcohol or drugs, so the dissemination of such information can be

vitally important to those attending in order for them to make an informed decision about how they may go about attending that particular call.

Have you been made aware of a persons warning markers before attending a call that they are involved in?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.00%	22
No	12.00%	3
TOTAL		25

Figure 4. Question 3

The survey results unequivocally illustrates a prevalent practice within policing, where officers commonly receive warning markers pertaining to individuals associated with a dispatched call. This information is disseminated, regardless of whether the call warrants an emergency response or holds a lower priority grading. Warning markers are also given when witnesses or other people in general are linked to the call, are mentioned to the call handler. The data that is given verbally to officers over police radio is also embedded within the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) log which controls officer deployment, should other officers who are able to view the details before going, be able to read beforehand.

The data underscores that named individuals within the call log or reporting persons often have their warning markers transmitted to officers during the call briefing prior to attendance. Notably, instances arise where historical information about residents at a specific address is conveyed to officers, even if not explicitly mentioned in the call or report. This practice is particularly valuable when individuals are deemed to pose a substantial risk to officers. This does not always occur, and this study will not investigate the results of what happens when potentially serious warning markers are not passed to attending officers, resulting in them getting assaulted. This may also prove that the force control room within Gwent Police are actively making an effort to communicate to officers the warning markers that people have.

For the 3 respondents who have stated that they were not passed the markers before a call, this could have been because the incident may have been self generated, and the control room would not have been able to give the markers as a result of this.

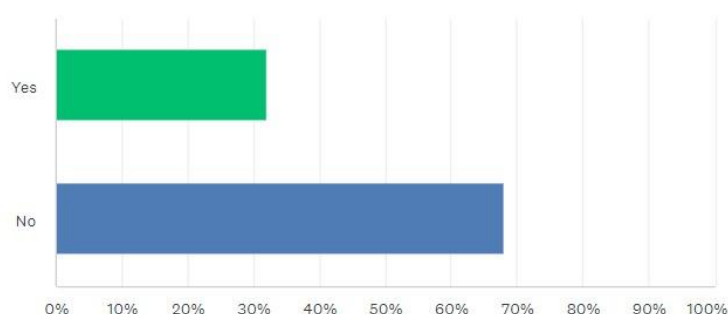
Other reasons for markers not being passed could be attributed to someone having a common name, no date of birth known, the person not being known to police so therefore not on police databases, or even a

temporary issue with police systems. Such things happen at both scheduled and spontaneous times, due to all the information it holds and needs to update. (Liou, 2019)

The question was added more so out of personal curiosity to the researcher, rather than to add further validity to the study.

Thinking of the worst assault you have suffered, did any of the forces' recognised warning markers play a part?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	32.00%	8
No	68.00%	17
TOTAL		25

Figure 5. Question 4

The investigation into officers' recollections of their most severe workplace assaults revealed that 60% of responding officers have reported experiencing such incidents without the presence of recognized and pre-existing warning markers. It is crucial to emphasize that the data collected is exclusively quantitative, omitting inquiries regarding the temporal context of the assaults, the existence of warnings, or their efficacy and importance during policing incidents. This limitation emphasises the need for further qualitative exploration to elucidate the nuanced dynamics surrounding workplace assaults on police officers within the United Kingdom.

The researcher was unable to gain knowledge from within the force as to when any warning markers were added to the list, or when the last ones had been included, despite asking several times. The researcher also asked why markers were deemed to be of such importance, or what threshold needed to be hit before a characteristic would be included.

The foundation of warning markers is rooted in prior encounters and information provided by staff and officers from experience and intelligence that they gain from dealing with people. Such markers encompass diverse aspects, and can include medical conditions, ailments, prescribed medications, mental health

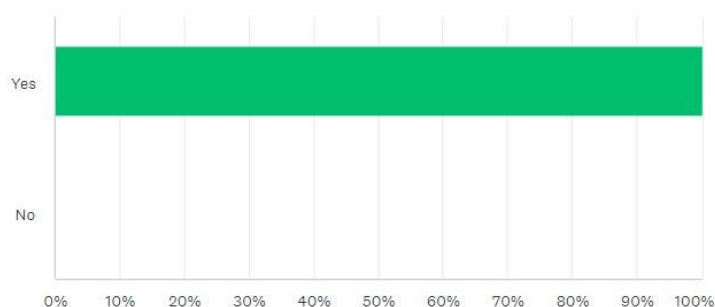
diagnoses or suspicions, as well as indications of drug or alcohol dependency. The survey attests to the utility of this information, with implications for determining the appropriate officers to deploy during an incident. For instance, previous incidents involving a person carrying a weapon or assaulting officers upon arrest may influence the choice of officers assigned. This may necessitate the requirement for units such as firearms to be deployed to certain situations.

The six markers utilised as responses to the above question, are without question, the most common heard on police radio systems, and also contributory factors to the assaults in which the researcher has suffered. There are markers which pose no significant danger to officers or others in general such as having dyslexia. In no policing context is dyslexia seen to be a threat to anyone's safety or likelihood of being assaulted, (Selenius, H., Hellstrom, A., Belfrage, H., 2011) There could also be the possibility that the officer had suffered their most grave assault before the force initiated warning markers. The Gwent Police policy of having such markers for those who officers have encountered previously only came into play in 2012. Given the amount of frontline officers who are so young in service and also encompassing those who have may transferred in to the force from other areas and who not entirely know what the term 'warning marker' refers to as it could be known by another term elsewhere.

This question was included within the survey to ascertain if there was a link evident between assaults and the type of calls that are more prevalent within the increasing violent modern world of policing. (Cartwright, A. and Roach, J., 2021)

Do you approach a call differently if you are aware of a person who is there has warning markers?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	25
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		25

Figure 6. Question 5

The survey results revealed a significant finding, with 100% of respondents expressing an inclination to alter their approach to attending calls if made aware of specific markers. This trend holds particular relevance for registered Taser officers. Considering the widespread deployment of Tasers, with 31,000 officers equipped throughout the United Kingdom as per The Home Office data, the likelihood of this trend gaining momentum is reinforced. Furthermore, the anticipated increase in Taser deployment over the next five years, in alignment with the UK Government's strategic plan outlined by the College of Policing, underscores the potential impact on officers' response strategies. The implications suggest a heightened propensity among officers to employ measures for subject and situation control in their handling of calls.

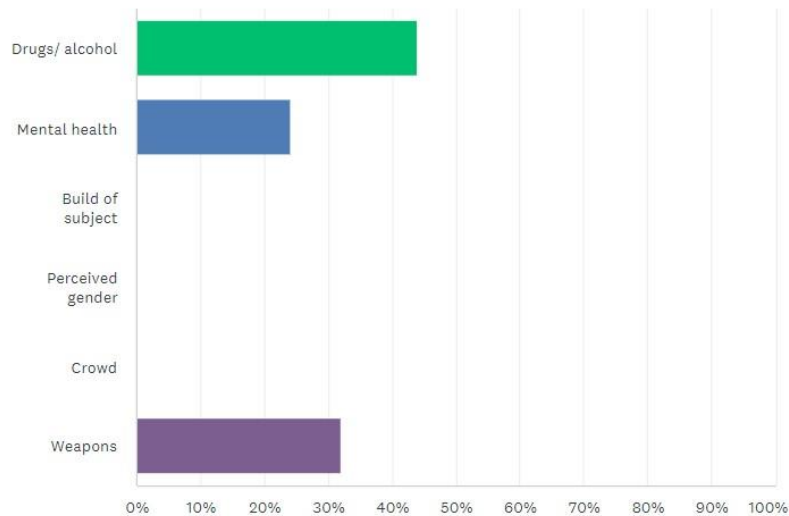
The examination of officers' perceptions regarding the risk associated with the dangers they encounter yielded intriguing results. Surprisingly, an equal number of respondents opined that individuals likely under the influence of alcohol or drugs posed a threat comparable to that posed by weapons. This unexpected outcome diverged from the researcher's initial hypothesis, which anticipated a higher consensus attributing greater risk to individuals displaying warning markers for weapons. This unexpected response prompts further exploration into the nuanced dynamics of officer risk perception in varied scenarios.

The question was worded this way and added to the final survey was to potentially open a door for further research. Had this been a mixed method approach to data gathering, this could have been a channel in which to ask officers if they had used the Five Step Appeal in which officers are trained to de-escalate situations by utilising a conflict management tool that aims to support non physical elements of policing which focus on utilising officer awareness, knowledge of subject, and officers confidence in their communication skills in situations likely to end in violence (Engel, R.S., Corsaro, N., Isaza, G.T. and McManus, H.D., 2022)

Without attempting to delve into the realms of a psychology dissertation on behavioural analysis, the fact that 100% of participants have said that they approach a call (Of any grade. Emergency to diarised call) differently if they know that anyone inside the address has warning markers, is quite telling of how important passing them to officers is. Hypervigilance has been shown to increase the persons awareness of violence by 5.5% as observed by Ingram. (2021) This is clearly beneficial to all those perceive that they attend calls differently with a pre-warning. This could mean that they are wearing their correct personal protective equipment, have their body worn camera fully charged and ready to record, or even call for backup before they attend.

Which of the recognised warning markers do you think carries the biggest risk of being assaulted?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Drugs/ alcohol	44.00%	11
▼ Mental health	24.00%	6
▼ Build of subject	0.00%	0
▼ Perceived gender	0.00%	0
▼ Crowd	0.00%	0
▼ Weapons	32.00%	8
TOTAL		25

Figure 7. Question 6

The six chosen warning markers that the researcher gave for participants to choose from are what the researcher has picked up on from being on the job, and inherently would bring more risk to any situation, such as alcohol or drug use; mental health or weapons. (Katainen, A., Lehto, A.S. and Maunu, A., 2015; Fagan, 1993; Maden, 2007) This is based on what had played a part in some of the assaults suffered by the writer, so it has a personal connection.

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Alcohol plays a major part in not just violence against officers, but also other types of crime, with 49% of violent crimes committed in Wales whereby the subject was deemed to be intoxicated. (Alcohol Change, 2023) Alcohol further lowers the inhibitions of those under the influence, and the consumption of excess alcohol remains one of the biggest contributors to public violence and aggression. (Barton and Husk, 2012) Dutch research revealed that 42% of subjects involved in violence in nightlife when drunk admitted to being aggressive when they used alcohol. (Spapens et al., 2001) The likelihood of police being deployed to a rowdy pub where the patrons are intoxicated is high. There are likely offences of public order, drunk and disorderly, assault, and criminal damage when combined with persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs, so it is not

surprising that 50% of respondents said that alcohol or drugs was the biggest threat to them in regards to being assaulted.

Conclusions, recommendations and findings

This chapter of the dissertation will present the findings that have been delivered via the projects research via the way of a quantitative survey that a request was posted for those who wished to participate.

This section will provide the reader with a conclusive answer not only to the main research question of “Do Police Warning Markers have any Bearing on Officer Assaults Whilst On Duty?”

Such things as warning markers may be known by other terms in other forces, and this is one reason why participants were only requested from within Gwent Police. If the study was sent out throughout the United Kingdom, it would have much more validity in the study if the results were akin to this study.

It is hoped that the techniques used in this survey could be expanded upon and used in consideration for further research to take place in conjunction with this, in order for an improved understanding of assaults on offices on which take place. Transparent reporting of methodology of this study will ensure the reproducibility of research findings and can facilitate critical appraisal and evaluation by peers. Thus, establishing a coherent link between the chosen quantitative methodology and the obtained results, is essential for generating credible and impactful contributions to the body of knowledge in the respective field of issues that policing faces within the United Kingdom.

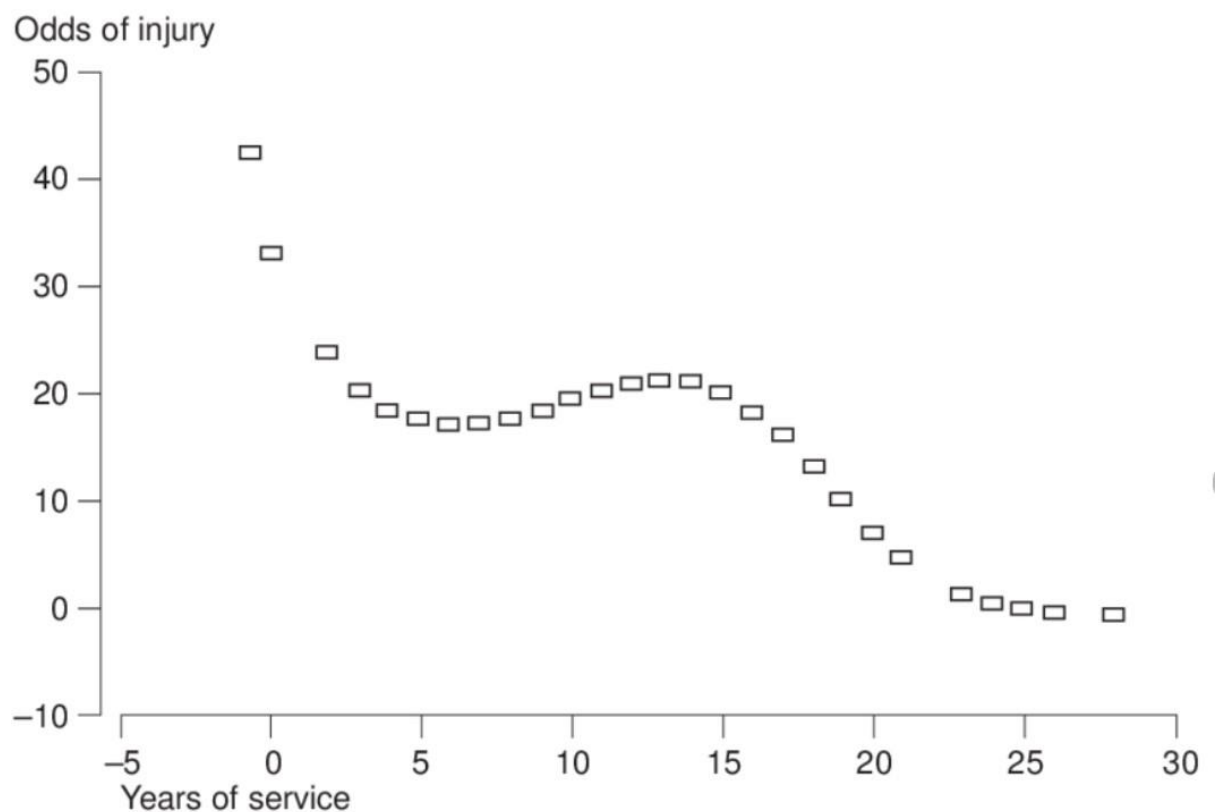


Figure 8. Years of service v odds of getting assaulted

The above would be something that would pique many researchers interest. Maybe it could be tied in with what warning marker the subject has vs how many years of service the officer has in. This idea of the researcher has come from the age old statement of “There were never this many people suffering with poor mental health when I first started in the job.” This is a sentiment sometimes shared with those who may have

many more years service than most as a frontline officer. (Crane, L., Adams, F., Harper, G., Welch, J. and Pellicano, E., 2019) Yet now, given the sharp increase on all frontline services, the world of policing seems to be picking up more and more of the calls that perhaps the national health service would have been picking up pre-COVID? (Aghasi, A. and Beaudoin, J., 2021) The addition of a marker for mental health is clearly one that Gwent Police feel has been justified in using as a warning for officers. It is not known as to how many incidents need to have occurred in order for something to be picked up on a level that would necessitate a warning marker being created, but with the additional policing need to attend calls where mental health is the trigger for the call being initiated, it is without a doubt useful to attending officers to know and be aware of. (Koziarski, J., 2023)

24% of those that answered the questionnaire within this study have attributed their assaults to mental health related incidents, yet up to 40% of calls that a typical police force within the United Kingdom take, are related to mental health issues (Quinn, B., Laville, S. and Duncan, P., 2016) This finding from this study may not see that any alcohol or drug induced psychoses is actually borne of mental health, or if the officer perceives the issue to be in fact, drug, or alcohol related. This would also be another valid source of further research.

The passing out over police radios of unnecessary, or less worthy warning markers would also yield interesting results if this study was able to be actioned. Conversely, if someone had thought at the beginning of the study, like the researcher did, that a warning marker for dyslexia may have been a waste of time, then seeing the direct correlation of those who have the condition and the prevalence of violence towards others in a stressful situation, may think differently. (Selenius, H., Dåderman, A.M., Meurling, A.W. and Levander, S., 2006)

There appears to have been much research conducted on factors that contribute to violence, but not much in terms of violence towards police officers. There certainly does not appear to have been previous research carried out in the Gwent police area. In order for the data to be fully validated, the findings would need to be reproduced on a larger sample.

The main finding within the results captured from this dissertation is in fact that Gwent police are most certainly in line with the trend that covers the whole of the United Kingdom with the phenomenon of police officers suffering an assault whilst performing their duties at work. This is both a stark fact, and an alarming reminder that police, are in fact, as Robert Peel once said, “the public, and the public are police” despite many factions of the community and media, saying otherwise.

Through meticulous detail and adherence to best practices in quantitative research, as with everything policing related, scholars can advance understanding and evidence- based decision making processes which will inevitably benefit not only the officers who are most at risk of being assaulted whilst on duty, but also the public which they serve. It may also help implement safety features on police systems in regards to potentially violent subjects.

This can be done by officers being less likely to be assaulted and will therefore be less likely to take time off work due to mental health or physical issues (Davidson, L., Dennis, A. and Hesketh, I., 2023) By officers requiring to having less time off due to potentially avoidable situations such as assaults, it could also potentially help save money for forces who are struggling with less funding in the current economic climate. (Foley, J. and Massey, K.L.D., 2021)

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Appendix**Sample questionnaire****ASSAULT ON POLICE (WARNING MARKERS)**

* 1. Have you been assaulted whilst in duty?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 2. Are you aware of people having warning markers on their police records?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 3. Have you been made aware of a persons warning markers before attending a call that they are involved in?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 4. Thinking of the worst assault you have suffered, did any of the forces' recognised warning markers play a part?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 5. Do you approach a call differently if you are aware of a person who is there has warning markers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 6. Which of the recognised warning markers do you think carries the biggest risk of being assaulted?

☐ Drugs/ alcohol

☐ Mental health

☐ Build of subject

☐ Perceived gender

☐ Crowd

☐ Weapons

Ethics form**APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL**

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within **SIX** months for full-time students and **TWELVE** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

Once complete, submit this form via the ***MyTSD Doctoral College Portal*** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales
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Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

4	Campus:	Trinity St David			
5	E-mail address:	1920836@student.uwtsd.ac.uk			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07944 048561			
For students:					
7	Student Number:	1920836			
1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☐	NO	☒

1	Full Name:	Rebecca Murphy-King (Professionally known as Rebecca King)			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☒	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.
Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

				Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐	
Institute Research Committee		☐		
Other (write in)		☐		
8	Programme of Study:	Professional Policing Apprenticeship		
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Fay Cosgrove		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution					
	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.					
1	<u>UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice</u>				☒	
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy				☒	
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>				☐	
2	Contact person name					
3	Contact person e-mail address					
4	Is your research externally funded?		YES	☐	NO	☐
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?		YES	☐	NO	☐
6		Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐

9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐
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Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☒
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Do Impact Factors of subjects affect the likelihood of officer assaults on duty?		
2	Proposed start date:	10/09/2023	Proposed end date:	
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			
3	Purpose of Research Activity I am hoping to write my dissertation in 2023/24 on a topic which holds a place in each police officers mind, be it consciously or not. The threat of being assaulted on duty seems evermore likely in todays world of response policing. I wish to research any links between perceived impact factors such as gender, size, prior knowledge and drug or alcohol use, and any direct link to an officer reporting being assaulted on duty. For this, I propose my title to be: Do Impact Factors of Subjects Affect the Likelihood of Assaults on Officers on Duty?			

	I aim to carry out the research using a pre set questionnaire, which will be sent out via an electronic link. Participants answers will be collated randomly and each question will add to the research I wish to carry out, and paint an overall picture for which will help define a pre set idea, and ideally, to assess front line policing can be improved to not only lessen the likelihood of an officer being assaulted on duty, but also to minimise any unnecessary risk to the public by establishing any links to impact factors and assaults. This subject is a hot topic at the moment and rightly so with data such as that gathered by the National College of Policing in 2023 which stated that in 2022, in excess of 41000 officers were assaulted in their line of duty, showing a dramatically sharp increase. In line with the existing research that exists, I wish to add context to an exploration of a topic that aspiring officers are told is “just a part of the job” and to “get used to it” (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question Do Police Warning Markers Have any Bearing on Officers Being Assaulted on Duty? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity I aim to develop knowledge around the much broader subject of officer assaults and further any study that is already taking place. I aim to answer the main title of the dissertation and any sub questions that I feel would be relevant in progressing this study (this box should expand as you type)
6	Objectives of Research Activity To see if there is a correlation between the warning markers that Gwent Police use on their records, have any correlation to officers being assaulted To see if the trend of assaults on officers within UK policing has extended to Gwent (this box should expand as you type)

	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)
	Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	I aim to gather the data for my dissertation in an ethical manner, which does not discriminate against any participant. I will ensure total anonymity and provide a way in which participants can see the data collected if they so wish post submission. I will be gathering the data for this dissertation solely using quantitative data via an online questionnaire which does not leave any kind of ID stamp. I will be producing a multiple choice questionnaire, with up to 15 questions that I see relevant to this subject area. I will disseminate the questionnaire via an online survey / questionnaire building tool such as SurveyMonkey or Google Forms. I also do not wish to collect face to face data as the threat of Covid still lingers. Many people, since the pandemic have chosen to not return to how interpersonal their lives may have been prior to the pandemic. The good use of time is also essential for me, Knowing how busy frontline officers are, and how heavy their workloads can be. I will allow any data from a person to be withdrawn prior to the data being analysed and finalised. I do not intend on using qualitative data as the subject matter is very divisive, and can lead to very long conversations of which I do not intend on having with participants. The use of police appointments and non lethal options such as Taser most certainly divides people with groups such as Amnesty International, who review and keep track on use and any ethical implications that it throws up. Yet there does not seem to be any group that do a similar thing for serving officers other than the Police Federation of England and Wales. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.

8	The sole location for data collection will be within Gwent Police. All of the data that will be collected from questionnaire participants will be done via the internet, but still all persons involved will be within the UK. No face to face data collection is required for this.
	(this box should expand as you type)
	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	There is to be no research undertaken that involves anywhere overseas (this box should expand as you type)

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <u>NOT</u> publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. (this box should expand as you type)		

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☐	☒
14	A healthier Wales	☐	☒
15	A more equal Wales	☐	☒
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒

19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:
	(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	☒
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.		
	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)	☐	☒

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

Who are the intended participants:		YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.		
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)	☐	☒

Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?		
10	How many participants are expected?	I shall be testing the pilot questionnaire on 10 people. I would then like my data capturing questionnaire to be collated from 25 participants. Once the first 25 people have answered the questionnaire, the software will cease recording the answers and the final data will not be affected. (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be?	The participants will all be front line serving officers within Gwent Police. I shall not be asking for any particular gender of officer, nor time served in police, nor which department they work within. As a front line officer, the participants will most likely be mainly police constables, with the opportunity for Sergeants to participate if they so wish. (this box should expand as you type)

12	How will you identify the participants?	By sending the link to the questionnaire to those who are assisting with the pilot study. When the final questions have been decided upon, I shall put an anonymous link onto the force intranet and ask for participants who are solely front line. This will then ensure anonymity from both sides.
		<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☐	☐	☒
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☐	☒	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☒
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	Consent will be implied when the participant takes the survey			
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	Risk to participants: risk of PTSD if officer has been victim of assault or seen an assault on a colleague. The subject matter is highly emotive. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i> Providing a list of services/ helplines that participants could use should they feel necessary should any past trauma need addressing. I will also mitigate any potential bias by being anonymous <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
3	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities		
	As above, helpline numbers and links to relevant places will be added to the bottom of the survey link. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest		
	Risk to the investigator: Emotional distress from results and reliving assaults incurred.	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: As above and some self help techniques that I have learnt which help me from my time as an officer. Should I feel upset, I	
	(this box should expand as you type)	shall contact my doctor and Occupational Health within the force. (this box should expand as you type)	
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection		
	Risk to the University: No risk to University. (this box should expand as you type)	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: (this box should expand as you type)	
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems		
	Risk to the environment: No risk to environment. (this box should expand as you type)	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: (this box should expand as you type)	

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☐	☒
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	The ability to see results and read dissertation in full will be offered via another anonymous link to all participants at the end of my year 3. The dissertation will be free to read and will be advertised as so. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	If a person wishes to assist me in my research, they will imply their consent by clicking on the link to take them to the survey and completing it. They will then become a participant. The data will remain anonymous and the publishing of the data will also remain anonymous. Any questions that participants do not wish to answer they will not have the option to move to the next and their data will not be included in the final submission. This will be explained and will again hold no bias as the participation is voluntary and no personal details will be required in order to participate in this data collection. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	Completely anonymous. No IP addresses/ names/ dates of birth/ officer ID will be taken <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	☐
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	This is No but I cannot put a x in the box (this box should expand as you type)		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☐
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	Again “no” but could not fill box (this box should expand as you type)		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	☒

10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All data gathered will be on the survey creation site. The data gathered will not have any identifying requests and will be stored until I delete the survey once my dissertation has been sent in and marked, <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
20	Data archiving?	☐	☒
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	Data will be transferred from survey site into packages that will create graphs <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself Web creators of survey templates <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself Web creators of survey templates <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

24	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	Data will be kept for a maximum of three months on the survey site post dissertation submission date. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	No <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:		Date: 20/09/2023

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☒	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.