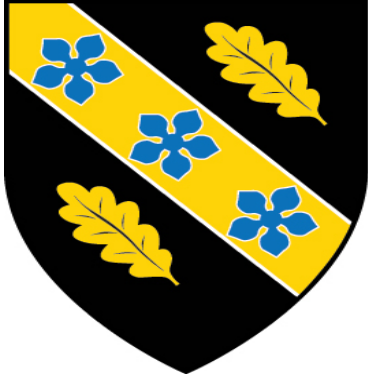




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An investigation into work-related stress in the UK police force: Causes, Impacts and Investigation strategies.

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Declaration

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

Signed: Jordan Garland

Date: 05/01/2026

STATEMENT 1

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

Signed: Jordan Garland

Date: 05/01/2026

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.

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Abstract

Work-related stress is a significant and persistent issue within UK policing, with increasing demands, organisational pressures and police officers being exposed to traumatic incidents. All this impacts police officer's mental wellbeing and operational performance. This dissertation investigates work-related stress within UK police forces, examining the causes, impacts and the effectiveness of organisational and personal strategies to manage stress.

A mixed-methods approach was used using an online survey completed by 15 frontline police officers within a UK police force. Quantitative data abstracted common stressors and impacts, whilst qualitative responses highlighted personal experiences and perceptions. The findings resulted in four main themes: causes of work-related stress, impacts police officers experienced on wellbeing and performance, and the effectiveness of operational and personal support strategies.

Findings showed high workload, organisational pressures, administration demands and staff shortages being a significant cause of work-related stress. Exposure to traumatic events displayed mixed results, depending on the length of service from that police officer. Work-related stress produced numerous impacts such as fatigue, sleep disruption and lack of concentration, all playing a part affecting officers' performance when operational. Organisational support strategies also showed conflicting results, influenced by stigma and lack of acknowledgement from officers. However, personal coping strategies like physical activity and peer support were commonly suggested to manage stress. Overall, the study shows work-related stress is driven by organisational stressors, compared to operational exposure itself.

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List of Acronyms

ACT – Counter Terrorism Policing (UK)

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation

MoJ – Ministry of Justice

NHS – National Health Service

PFEW – Police Federation of England and Wales

PQiP – Professional Qualification in Probation

PTSD – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

RPSO – Roads Policing and Specialist Operations

TFU – Tactical Firearms Unit

TRiM – Trauma Risk Management

UK – United Kingdom

UNISON – Union of National and Local Government Officers

UWTSD – University of Wales Trinity Saint David

WHO – World Health Organization

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Work-related stress has become a significant issue within UK policing, as police officers undergo their duties under a high-pressured environment, due to the increasing demand, limited resources and public scrutiny.

1.1 Research Rationale

Police officers are continuously exposed to pressures within their organisation, stressors such as high workloads, administration demands and staff shortage. Police officers are also subjected to further stressors then when they leave their stations to answer calls, as they are likely to respond to traumatic incidents. Continuous exposure to these stressors is suggested to negatively affect police officers' mental wellbeing and operational performance, posing risks to public safety.

In recent years, stress within policing has become a recognised issue, which is where the introduction of wellbeing support has been a method to tackle work-related stress. However, concerns remain regarding the support's effectiveness and accessibility, focusing more on frontline policing, as this is seen to have the greater demand. Existing research shows frontline policing being a stressful in devours, but further research suggests organisational factors being the main cause of the stress, than just operational exposure alone. The suggestion for further exploration into police officers' personal perception of both organisational and personal support strategies.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this dissertation is the investigation into work-related stress within UK police forces, focusing on the causes, impacts and the effectiveness of existing support strategies. The study focuses on the following objectives: to identify primary causes of work-related stress; to explore the impact of work-related stress on officers mental and physical wellbeing; to examine

perceptions of organisational support and its effectiveness; and to explore personal coping strategies used by police officers to manage stress.

To achieve these aims, the researcher has adopted a mixed-methods approach. Data was collected through an online survey distributed to police officers. The survey included closed questioned to gather quantitative data for the causes and its impact. The survey included open ended questions to capture personal concerns experienced by police officers, allowing a subjective view from participants of the online survey.

1.3 Structure

This dissertation is set out into different categories, which has its own research purpose. The first one being the literature review, which examines existing research into work-related stress within UK police forces, focusing on the researcher objectives. The methodology section is the research design, methods of data collection and ethical considerations. The analysis and results section finds research from existing research and an online survey of police officers (n=15). Lastly the conclusion chapter summarises the key findings, discusses limitations and provides recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

2.0 Introduction

Current research suggests that work-related stress in the Police force is becoming more significant. There are many devised definitions of work-related stress. The National Health Service (NHS) (2023) proposes that work-related stress is related to the pressures people face which may impact their moods and quality of life, affecting physical and mental health. Similarly, Selye (1976) supports this in stating that the condition of stress is linked to a low emotional state.

Work-related stress in United Kingdom (UK) police forces is prevalent as the role of a police officer in its wholeness can be stressful due to the intensity and unpredictability of calls they may be dispatched to. Police officers are constantly exposed to stressors when dealing with calls such as violent life-or-death situations, sudden deaths, mental health cases and much more (Police Care UK, 2025). Furthermore, Purba (2019) suggests officers may also be subjected to organisational stressors such as long working hours, irregular shift patterns, public scrutiny and a lack of support.

This literature review includes existing research surrounding work-related stress in UK policing, the causes and impacts. Research gathered will identify similar themes and or gaps, which will provide further reading and insight on this topic. Understanding the factors highlighted is important in the development of supporting officers' well-being and operational efficiency.

2.1 Causes of work-related stress

The causes of work-related stress in UK policing are suggested to be rooted from the job itself. These stressors are categorised into the following sections: operational, organisational and external (Gavin, et al; 2024).

Operational Stressors

Demou et al (2020) says operational stressors are challenges that officers may experience during their most emotional and intense front-line responsibilities an example of this is the increased and

recurrent traumatic incidents like sudden deaths and cases of domestic abuse. This is supported by Porter, C.N & Gavin, P (2024) where they imply that traumatic events such as domestic violence and deceased bodies are two of the most common causes of operational stressors. UK policing is considered to be very demanding due to the number of reports received daily that are required to be reviewed, risk graded and then for an officer to be dispatched to deal with the incident (Dunnett, et al; 2018). In correlation to this, Police Care UK (2024) highlights that officers don't have enough time to process the previous incident, before they are dispatched to another. Furthermore, Police Care UK (2024) also states *"an officer could see 400-600 traumatic events during an average career"*, suggesting most officers will experience burnout, emotional numbness and exhaustion regularly in their career. In relation to this, officers within departments such as Road Policing and Specialist Operations (RPSO) and tactical Firearms Unit (TFU) will respond to the more higher risk incidents making them more vulnerable to operational stressors (GOV.UK, 2022). Which suggests these units are expected to be alert and continuously making the necessary decisions, even if this involves harm to themselves or others.

Organisational Stressors

Organisational stressors occur from the structure of the police force in the UK including issues like work overload, lack of resources and managerial support and the recovery time between shifts being insufficient (Purba & Demou, 2019).

One study produced by Mind (2022) found that 91% of police officers had reported they have experienced mental health problems linked to their work environment listing the factors mentioned above. Despite this study being related to the UK Police Force, the reliability and accuracy of the study should be considered. This survey is conducted every seven years therefore, posing the question, does the survey need to be conducted more regularly to ensure statistics are kept current and up to date? In addition to this, Car (2023) data was collated regarding probation services in the UK Police workforce where the (Ministry of Justice, 2023) (MoJ) discovered in 2023 there has been a 13.2% rise in probation staff. Thus, due to the decrease in staffing numbers of

more experienced Police Officers meaning they have had to expand the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) programme (Car, 2023). To reinforce this point Fright et al, (2023) provides the following statistic *“the police workforce leaver rate reached 9.6% in 2022/23, the highest level since at least 2007/08.”* This can be considered as a reliable source as it was published for the Government Institution.

Numerous articles have highlighted the current issue with the increased workload that Police Officers are having to endure. A report by Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) (2020) shows that *“77% of officers experienced stress, anxiety, or low mood in the last year, with 90% attributing it to workload and poor work-life balance”*. However, this survey was conducted in 2020 therefore suggesting these statistics may have changed in recent years. Alternatively, a more recent survey conducted by UNISON (2024) states that 57% of front-line officers hold the view that their administrative workload is becoming unmanageable.

External Stressors

Among the internal stressors previously mentioned, external factors can also play a significant role in causing work-related stress. Although some articles have mentioned public scrutiny on the police being one of the causes of external stressors for example Stanislas (2025) states 52% of UK adults had decreasing confidence in their police force tackling local crime comparing the same statistic conducted in 2019 with 39%. This lack of confidence by the public implies that police officers may feel significant pressure when carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Despite this statistic, it is evident that there is a lack of research and data surrounding this factor. In turn, highlighting a gap and need for more research and data regarding the public pressure that police officers receive on a regular basis.

2.2 Impacts of work-related stress

As a result of work-related stress in the UK Police force, the long-term impacts are prevalent for front-line officers which in turn affects the efficiency of the organisation (UNISON, 2024).

Therefore, if there is a lack of efficiency within the force, this can further impact the people in which it serves. Some of these impacts relate to mental health problems (Police Federation in England and Wales, 2020).

Mental health

One of the major impacts of work-related stress is low mental health, leading to symptoms of depression and anxiety. *“Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community”* (World Health Organization, 2022). Jetelina et al (2020) piloted a study which showed that 12% of the participants have received a mental health diagnosis and 26% had on-going mental illness like anxiety. These symptoms of mental illness can later lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (NHS (2022)). NHS (2022) refers to PTSD as an individual experiencing a traumatic or distressing event which can affect their day-to-day life due to symptoms such as nightmares, guilt, concentration, among more. In support of this Police Federation of England and Wales (2024) 14,508 police officers were signed off due to mental health

Physical health

Work-related stress can also lead to physical health problems. Any type of stress can negatively affect an individual's body where they may experience symptoms like high blood pressure, muscle tension, effects on their immune system, headaches, as well as fatigue and sleep deprivation (NHS, 2022). Insufficient sleep and increased fatigue due to irregular shift patterns have been consistently reported by police officers in the UK, which leads to an increased risk of officers regularly commuting between incidents under pressure and at times excessive speed (Taylor, 2023). Thus, suggesting a greater risk for the police officer and other road users. Similarly, College of Policing (2023) corroborates with Taylor (2023) in stating that

“51.9% of respondents had been involved in a ‘near miss’ incident, such as a kerb strike, lane departure or almost had a collision”.

Job performance

Police officers require the skills to think clearly, adapt to everchanging information and have the ability to make rational decisions at a fast pace due to the nature of the job. Nonetheless, work-related stress can hinder these abilities, increasing the risk of poor decision-making further affecting the outcome of the incident (Violanti et al., 2020). Various research has demonstrated the decrease in performance levels of police officers because of the stress factors despite the experience and training most officers may have. Anderson et al (2019) has indicated this within their study. Conversely, Murray et al (2023) emphasised the need for research to focus upon the performance levels of police officers within environments that simulate realistic, stressful incidents that they may face on the job and how this can help them to manage their stress. In correspondence to this, College of Policing (2023) highlight that the significance of stress levels of police officers can have a high impact on their abilities to make rational and ethical decisions when on duty. Additionally, Chikwem (2017) offers the view that there is a lack of research which studies the relationship between work-related stress of a police officer and their job performance.

Organisation impacts

Although work-related stress can majorly affect police officers’ mental and physical wellbeing, it is important to consider the sequential impact this can have on the Police Force service itself. A survey conducted by Cartwright & Roach (2020) which was collated over a timeframe of ten years (2008 – 2018), investigated absences of police officers due to psychological illnesses and found that 8.82% of said absences were due to stress and/ or trauma. Despite these findings, the accuracy of this research could be questioned due to it being slightly outdated. However, a more recent study supports this. The data from 23 UK police forces between the years of 2019 and

2023 underlines a 40% increase (on average) of absences due to psychological illnesses (Quin, 2024), confirming an upward trend in stress-related absences.

2.3 Strategies available to support Police Officers

In recent years the causes and impacts of work-related stress on the UK police force has become more apparent in which strategies have been implemented to support police officers (College of Policing, 2022). However, there is lack of understanding on how effective these strategies and interventions are (College of Policing, 2022). The focal points of this section will highlight both individual and organisational approaches of support, their accessibility and the challenges that may still occur. It is important to note that personal tolerances, environmental factors, and personality traits should factor into the consideration of effective coping strategies (Bongelli et al., 2021) implying that some strategies that work for some people may not necessarily be as effective for others.

Organisational Strategies

One well-known strategy used amongst UK police forces is Trauma risk Management (TRiM) (Watson & Andrews; 2018); a method “to identify risks for people who may suffer poor mental health following traumatic experiences” (England. N, 2020). Moreover, a UK study found that those undertaking the TRiM programme were more inclined to seek mental health treatment but were still negatively subjective to PTSD symptoms (Watson & Andrews, 2018). In light of the TRiM programme, a different study by Hesketh & Tehrani (2018) offers the view that whilst it gives police officers peer support, the long-term effects showed a mixed result in reducing psychological distress and improving sustained mental wellbeing. Thus, implying that the success of this approach will be dependent on the individual and what suits them best.

Another police focussed strategy used to tackle work-related stressors is the Oscar Kilo service whereby their focus is to support police forces in bettering their wellbeing as well as ensuring they are meeting their legal and moral obligations (Oscar Kilo, 2025). A national wellbeing survey by

Oscar Kilo (2023) which received 23, 616 responses from police officers, demonstrated a decline in depressive and anxiety symptoms, an increase in resilience and confidence in carrying out officer duties and maintaining a sense of control when on shift. On the other hand, limitations of wellbeing within the police are still apparent. More specifically relating to police officer perceptions around their force supporting their wellbeing, revealing the need to reduce the stigma around seeking mental health support (Edwards & Kotera, 2020).

Individualised Strategies

Individualised strategies involve processes that an individual may seek independently to reduce their stress levels, with no link to the organisation they work for itself. There are well-documented strategies offered that police officers can implement into their daily lives. These range from peer support, physical activity and exercise, mindfulness, private therapy, among more (Minds, 2022). Nevertheless, individuals may adopt unhealthy habits to manage their stress such as alcohol/drug misuse and/or a sedentary lifestyle (Restrepo & Lemos, 2021).

Casperson et al (1985) define physical activity as “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure”. Although this definition was produced in 1985, World Health Organization (2024) also provide us with this exact definition showing reliability of the source. Research by Alshehre (2023) shows the benefits of physical activity; increases endorphin production in turn helping to reduce fatigue, depression and anxiety symptoms and improves quality of sleep. In correspondence to this research, Oliver et al (2022) carried out a study involving 852 police officers in the UK where their evaluation concluded physical activity improves mood, depression and anxiety.

Private therapy can also be known as counselling. NHS (2023) provides us with the definition that “Counselling is a talking therapy that involves a trained therapist listening to you and helping you find ways to deal with emotional issues”. Otto & Gatens (2025) states that police officers believe that they will be judged and misunderstood by private therapists due to a lack of understanding of the police culture. Similarly, Edwards & Kotera (2020) demonstrates that police officer may be

reluctant to seek help from therapists due the stigma of seeking mental health support, meaning some may view it as being form of weakness. There is limited evidence and research available regarding the positive aspects of private therapy for police officers.

2.4 Conclusion

In summary, these findings have established that organisational stressors such as staff shortages, workload, and shift patterns as well as operational factors like exposure to trauma and public scrutiny are the main stress causes within the UK police force (Purba & Demou, 2019; Gullon-Scott et al., 2022). Research has shown the various mental and physical impact these causes can have on police officers (Minds, 2022; Oliver et al., 2023). Furthermore, numerous strategies and interventions to help support officers with their mental health were also identified, including the TRiM programme and the Oscar Kilo service. These interventions can be referred to as organisational strategies. Findings revealed from studies by Hesketh & Tehrani (2018) mixed results in these strategies to assist police officers in managing work-related stress.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.0 Research Philosophy

This research aimed to investigate the causes, impact and strategies linking to work-related stress in the UK police force with a subjective view. Subjectivity refers the perceptions people hold based on their own values and experiences (Sharp, 2020). To carry out this research, the researcher took an interpretivist approach. This paradigm links to subjectivism as it means people base their opinions and views of society from their own experiences (Bryman, 2016). The relevancy of this approach is significant to this research as it looks at the strategies used to support police officers in the force and how beneficial these strategies are for each officer. Thus, referring back to the idea that different strategies may work for some police officers, but not others therefore the participants of the research may hold different views on these strategies (Bongelli et al., 2021). Not only this, but they may offer various opinions on the causes and impacts of work-related stress from their own experience.

However, there are suggested limitations which may impact the end result of the researcher's data. Self-report bias may affect accurate data, as there is a possibility police officers may under or over report their stressors, due to the stigma surrounding mental health and how others may perceive their answers (Demou et al., 2020). Similarly, the timing of the data collection may also impact results as data will be collected within a specific time frame, therefore, making it difficult to measure changes in stress at different periods of their career (Houdmont et al., 2016).

3.1 Research Approach

To undertake this study, the researcher adopted a mixed methods approach due to the information the researcher aimed to gather based on the questions asked. According to Creswell (1999), a mixed method survey incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data involves the use of numerical data and statistics, providing analysis of relationships between

variables and allows for generalisation of results (McLeod, 2025). However, qualitative involves non-numerical data, exploring human behaviours and perceptions in depth (McLeod, 2025).

The mixed methods approach directly incorporates the researcher's objectives focussing on statistical analysis of stressors and a wider understanding of personal experiences of police officers. This will be carried out using an online survey. A survey can either be a paper copy or online, consisting of a range of open and closed questions linked to the aims of this study (De Vaus, 2014). It was decided that online surveys via Microsoft Forms would suit this study best, as the researcher and participants can be provided with easy accessibility this way (York St John University, 2025). Another benefit of providing an electronic copy is that data can be collected in a suitable timeframe. This is appropriate to this study due to the business of police officers and the pressures they are under, again coinciding with easy of accessibility. TAN et al, (2022) presents a limitation to online surveys. Thus, being that there is a risk of some participants not answering all questions, with some answers lacking depth meaning the study may not gather as much of an insight as sought. To minimise this risk, measurements were put in place. For example, to ensure participants answered questions appropriately before moving onto the next, all questions were set to "required".

Before conducting the research, the online survey was piloted to enable the researcher to make any changes required in order to ensure the structure and flow of the questions were adequate. This was piloted by a peer in the same university course. Furthermore, the sampling method chosen for this study was purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling specifically selects characteristics and criteria relevant to the research topic, rather than a generic selection of random participants (Palinkas et al., 2015). This meant that for the results to be accurate and Align with the research title specific participants were selected. To ensure the results were purposeful and reliable, these participants required 2 years minimum experience. (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016) proposes another benefit to this method, as purposive sampling targets participants who have experience and expertise on the research topic

it can be extremely time and cost-efficient meaning you are eliminating the need for a large sample number of random people. Conversely to this, purposive sampling can present with some limitations. One of the main limitations is that the risk of researcher bias meaning that if the researcher has their own opinion on the research title this could influence the objectivity of the study (Marshall, 1996; Baltar & Brunet, 2012). On the other hand, this can be prevented so long as the researcher is aware of this limitation.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

Prior to conducting the study, the researcher was required to obtain ethical approval by the University Ethics Board. Following this approval, the researcher emailed the online survey and consent form to police officers within the Response department of the County that the researcher works within. Upon responses of these police officers, the researcher obtained a signed copy of the consent form from each participant and once received participant were able to fill out the survey. An information sheet explaining the purpose of the study and a withdrawal form was also provided to the participants. Participants were given the withdrawal form to allow them to withdraw from the study at any point (UWTSD, 2022).

The confidentiality of all participants is significant and should be followed throughout the entirety of the project (Kaiser, 2025). In order to adhere to this, all participants remained anonymous meaning that participants names and any other personal details were not revealed. Therefore, when analysing results, they were referred to as participant A, participant B and so forth. In correlation to confidentiality, it was paramount that a duty of care to all participants with considerations for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). To adhere to this, all data was safely secured on the researcher's OneDrive which is password protected. Any data stored on another software was transferred straight to the OneDrive and later deleted (UWTSD, 2022). In addition, (UWTSD, 2022) strongly states that participants have the right to be protected from harm by the researcher, so for that reason measurements to limit the risk of harm were undertaken. Hence, all participants being provided with the information sheet informing them of the sensitivity

of the topic. To further ensure participants understood the researcher also relayed this through written communication via email.

Chapter 4 – Results

4.0 Introduction

Within the online survey a variety of results have been presented, involving a range of similarities and differences. The analysis of the results from the online survey have been devised into four themes. A total of 15 participants have completed the online survey provided via Microsoft forms. All participants were serving members of Gwent police, and all were categorised in their different serving roles, Constable, Police Sergeant and Police Staff. The participants have diverse experience, ranging between 2 years to 10 years of experience within their roles.

4.1 Overview of participants

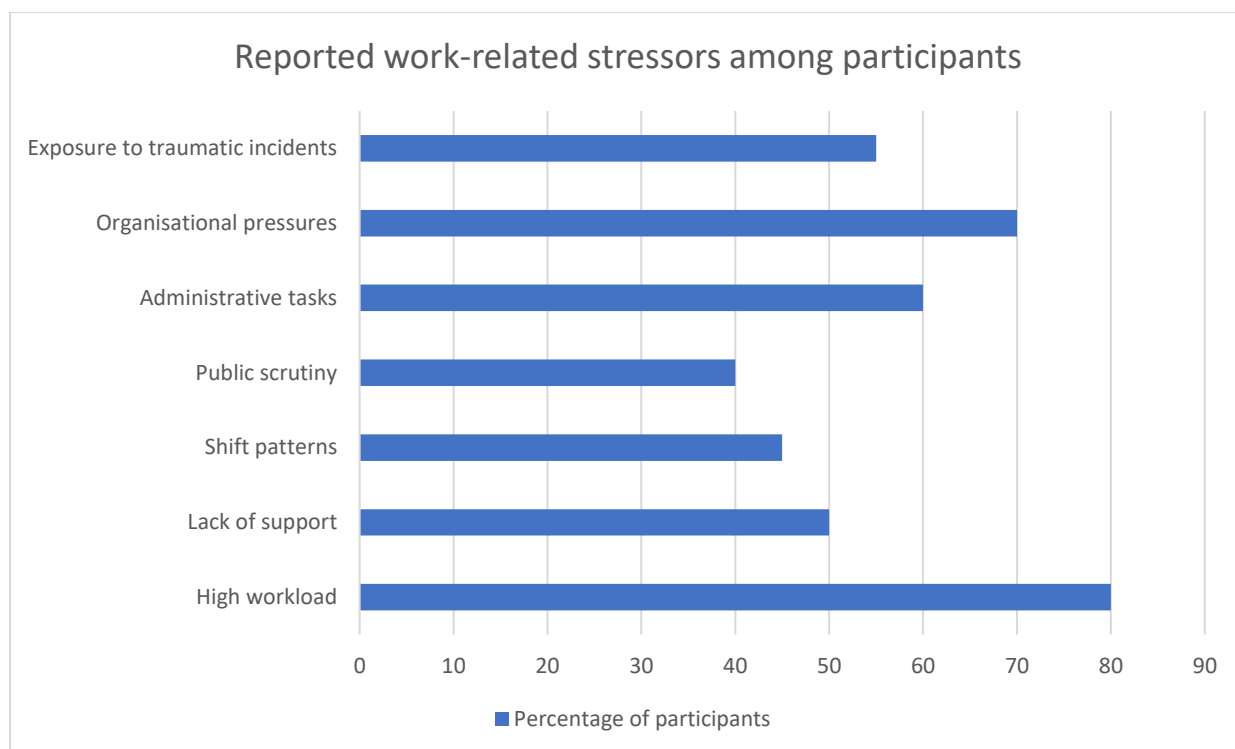
Figure 1: Overview of participants

Participants (P)	Research method participated in	Region	Role	Years of policing experience
Participant 1	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	3 Years
Participant 2	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	2 Years
Participant 3	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	5 Years
Participant 4	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	7 Years
Participant 5	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	10 Years
Participant 6	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	3 Years
Participant 7	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	3 Years
Participant 8	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	4 Years
Participant 9	Online survey	GWENT Police	Police Sergeant	6 Years
Participant 10	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	2 Years
Participant 11	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	3 Years
Participant 12	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	4 Years
Participant 13	Online survey	GWENT Police	Police staff	4 Years
Participant 14	Online survey	GWENT Police	Constable	7 Years
Participant 15	Online survey	GWENT Police	Police staff	5 Years

4.2 Theme One: Causes of Work-Related Stress

The first theme explored the causes of work-related stress within a police force. The findings in the online survey presented a pattern; where participants suggested that the most common form of stress, they were experiencing in their line of duty was the high workload, along with organisational stressors and exposure to traumatic incidents. The table attached to this theme shows the participants opinions on which work-related stressors they feel impact them the most.

Figure 2: Reported work-related stressors among participants



Despite this, the table below demonstrates how participants with the least amount of experience in the force were subject to stress caused by traumatic incidents compared to participants who are less affected by traumatic incidents.

Figure 3: Reported Stress from Traumatic Incidents by Years of Experiences (n=15)



4.3 Theme Two: Impact of work-related stress

In conjunction to theme 1, this theme looked at the impact that the stressors previously discussed had on each of the participants' wellbeing and performance. Findings discovered that most participants showed high impact on both physical and mental health. Looking at the results, mental health received the highest results, with 73% of participants experiencing fatigue, 67% poor sleep and 60% with a lack of concentration. This revealed a trend suggesting a constant cycle of these factors, meaning poor sleep can lead to fatigue and lack of concentration which may affect an officers occupational performance. This proposes that the cycle is the cause of these factors occurring the most. Participants voiced frustration in being unable to "switch off" due to stressors throughout their tour of duty. Further raising concerns that there is not enough time to destress before returning to the next tour of duty.

4.4 Theme Three: Organisational support strategies

This theme discovers participant views on a range of organisational strategies implemented within their force to support them in managing and lowering work-related stress within the police force. Findings in the online survey unveiled that despite being aware of the support services, just 47% of the participants admitted to receiving support from these services in the last year. Moreover, 56% of these participants stated that these strategies were "somewhat effective" and only 18% described them as being "very effective". On the contrary, 26% of the participants expressed that there was little to no impact on these support strategies in reducing or managing their stress levels.

4.5 Theme Four: Personal coping strategies

The final theme is converse to theme 3 as it explores how participants choose to personally cope with work-related stress. Results showed that the favoured coping strategy among participants were physical activity (e.g walking, fitness, sports/ hobbies) with 67%. This data implies that police officers are more likely to gravitate to more proactive methods to reduce their stress. Talking to

colleagues, friends or family also showed a high impact in participants preferring this coping mechanism with 53%. Participants indicated that this was an effective strategy for them due to colleagues sharing the same or similar experiences in dealing with challenging incidents. Furthermore, some participants expressed the difficulties they often face with time constraints and shift patterns within their police force. The difficulties expressed involved prevention of participating in exercise and socialising outside work and that don't necessarily coincide with society norms regarding social hours. This was evident when reviewing question 17 in the online survey, where one participant stated that "due to coming off a night shift I sleep most of the following day, meaning I am unable to spend valuable time with my children." Overall, the data collated shows participants who undertook the online survey demonstrated a positive influx towards personal coping strategies compared to organisational support.

4.6 Discussion

4.6.1 Theme One: Causes of work-related stress

Theme 1 explores the causes of work-related stress of police officers, where it identified that 80% of participants selected high workload as the primary stressor, they felt had the most impact on their wellbeing which coincides with existing data conducted by Police Federation of England and Wales (2020). Similarly to the (Police Federation of England and Wales, 2020) research, where they suggested a negative impact with the increase of administrative workload, this survey showed a high percentage of participants also suggesting their struggles with administrative tasks. Additionally, the results from the survey identified traumatic incidents has a stressor was selected by 55% of the participants. However, it also highlighted that this stressor was dependent on the number of years' experience each participant had, implying that the more experience a participant had as a policer officer the less effected they were by the traumatic incidents. In comparison to this, (GOV, 2022) stated that RPSO and Firearms units respond to the more high-risk incidents, meaning these officers are frequently exposed to traumatic incidents. This presents a limitation to the survey, as all of the participants who took part in the survey are front-line police officers.

Interestingly, only 40% of participant are affected by the pressures of public scrutiny, whereas existing research by Stanislas (2025) where they stated that UK police officers felt these pressures. Therefore, the findings propose that a larger or more diverse sample may display mixed results, as this stressor can be subjective and relevant depending on the personal experiences and resilience.

4.6.2 Theme Two: Impacts of work-related stress

Theme 2 explores the impact of work-related stress upon police officers, and the effects it had on their mental and physical performance when conducting their duties. This was demonstrated by participants of the online survey, as results showed 73% suffering with fatigue. Existing research by NHS (2022) also discusses fatigue and sleep deprivation being a highly reported concern of police officers. Furthermore, 60% of participants reported a lack in concentration, collaborating with research by Taylor (2023) revealing 51.9% of responders being involved in 'near miss' collisions. In turn this can then lead to poor decision-making which could ultimately affect the outcome of an incident (Violanti et al., 2020). The results correspond with this literature as the researcher indicates that there is a common cycle involving the above factors. Overall, this is a significant finding due to the importance of police officers maintaining their attention when making decisions, to complete their duties, adhering to personal and public safety. Findings of shift patterns showed 45% of participants expressed the impact they felt shift patterns had on their physical and mental wellbeing, including rotation and irregularity. In addition to this, the results revealed that some participants felt frustrated due to lack of opportunities to "switch off". However, this was not identified in previous literature. Despite this, the findings imply that due to irregular shift patterns and a lack of opportunities to decompress. These factors may intensify the physical and mental effects of stress, in turn increasing the risk of burnout.

4.6.3 Theme Three: Organisational support and effectiveness

Theme 3 explores the available organisational support strategies, and its effectiveness on police officers' wellbeing in their police force. Participants who took part in the online survey have

displayed conflicting results regarding organisational support, such as Oscar Kilo, TRiM and counselling. Despite the conflicting results, a sample of the participants recognised the effectiveness with these support options, in reducing personal work-related stress. The online survey showed only 18% described the support being “very effective”, and 56% expressing “somewhat effectiveness”. On the other hand, 26% of the participants expressed the support options having no impact. This is also shown within a study by Hesketh & Tehrani (2018), where they demonstrated conflicting results with organisational support in the improvement on mental health. Thus, implying the effectiveness of the support is based on the individual. Additionally, participants also implied little to no knowledge on organisational support available in their police force, or participants not engaging with the support because of ‘stigma’. Edwards & Kotera (2020) highlighted the need to reduce stigma surrounding police seeking mental health. Overall, the survey and existing research suggests whilst organisational support is widely available within police officers police forces, the effectiveness of the support needs further development, moving past individual intervention with the need to address the causes as highlighted in theme 1. Thus, including workloads, police culture and organisational pressures, to better improve its effectiveness against work-related stress.

4.6.4 Theme Four: Personal coping strategies

The last theme discovered participants’ preferred choice of coping strategies being personal to them. Results revealed that physical activity was the main choice of coping mechanism with 67% of participants stating this. Similarly to this, prior research supported by (Alshehre, 2023) and (Oliver et al, 2022) highlighted the benefits of using physical activity as a way to destress. Notably, findings also recognised a trend in participants being subject to seeking support from their families, friends and peers. Participants suggested the importance of peer support as it allows them to share the same experiences and interests. In contrast, limited literature was identified on the benefits of peer support as a strategy to support work-related stress. Therefore, proposing the need for more in-depth research on peer support. Furthermore, research by (Minds, 2022)

discussed the benefits of mindfulness and private therapy, however this was not mentioned by participants within the survey which could insinuate that again these coping strategies could be subject to the officer and their personal life. Likewise, (Otto & Gatens, 2025) posed the question that one reason why police officers may be reluctant to attend private therapy could be due to the stigma around mental health.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the causes and impacts work-related stress has on police officers in the UK. Following this, the study aimed to identify what strategies and interventions were available for police officers to access to allow them to manage their stress and how beneficial these were.

5.1 Main Findings

Overall, the results of the study established that one of the main causes of work-related stress for police officers in the UK were organisational pressures, such as workload, administration and staff shortage. Although traumatic incidents were a strong stressor for police officers, further research suggested this stressor is widely dependent on that individual, and their current length of service, with more experienced officers having a lesser impact than those who are new to their role. This signifies that structural and organisational conditions strongly influences stress for officers, rather than it solely being a consequence of the nature of police work itself.

Moreover, further findings recognised the impacts upon work-related stress on wellbeing and performance. A large proportion of participants raised concern regarding high levels of fatigue, lack of sleep and an impact on concentration. Therefore, suggesting experienced stress has both physical and cognitive challenges which indicates potential for unmanaged stress to have long-term consequences if they are not addressed effectively.

In correlation to support involving the organisation itself, researched acknowledged a range of perspectives based on the effectiveness of current wellbeing strategies including counselling, TRiM, and other programs outside the police organisation. Most highlighted a stigma which was a factor towards limited engagement, and some expressed a lack of knowledge and or limitations with the available support, suggesting these only aided symptoms, rather than the root cause of

their stress. Therefore, suggesting organisational support may be insufficient when carried out in isolation. Despite this, some research suggested it was effective for some officers.

Furthermore, findings highlight the significance of officers finding their own approach to managing their stress, like physical activity and seeking peer support. These approaches were viewed as the most common strategy to help participants destress which ultimately emphasises the importance of social coping mechanisms within policing. Nevertheless, it is important to note that heavy reliance on self-coping strategies alone places excessive responsibility on officers, instead of the organisation addressing it.

5.2 Limitations

Although the aim and objectives of the research was successful on the whole, limitations of the study should still be considered. One limitation being that the study only investigated the views of frontline police officers within a single police force, potentially limiting the generalisability of finding to specific units. As well as this, the researcher used a relatively small sample size which could minimise how these findings reflect wider experiences within the UK police force. Regardless of these limitations, the study does deliver significant awareness of some police officers personal experiences and provides existing understanding surrounding work-related stress.

5.3 Recommendations

Due to the findings of this study, recommendations have been considered to progress in supporting police officers within the UK police force to manage the work-related stress they may experience to reinforce organisational responsibility, preventative approaches, and sufficient support strategies. One recommendation is that forthcoming studies should target a large and more diverse sample size to increase the validity and reliability of the research as this research was conducted on a smaller scale. these studies should include specialist departments for example, Armed Response, Roads Policing and Counter Terrorism Policing (ACT). A larger scale

will allow for a wider comparison between work-related stressors across the whole of the UK police force.

Despite, the study involving participants of varying ages, another recommendation would be to conduct research based over a longer period of time. As this study was conducted based on a single point of time, it could be beneficial for further research to investigate the stress levels and strategies used throughout a police officer's time in the job. This poses the questions would results be different, showing that the stress an officer experiences may fluctuate throughout their career.

While the research demonstrated various opinions of the effectiveness of certain organisational support, future research could analyse these strategies using outcome-based measures like changes in wellbeing, absence rates or seeking support. Finally, the consideration of exploring the role of stigma in influencing officers lack of engagement with organisational support like therapy is relevant. This may include qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups to provide a better insight as to what officer's experience in relation to stress.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research revealed the complexity of work-related stress within the UK police force, largely impacted by organisational structures and demands. Findings imply that there is a need for police forces to move away from police officers managing their stress independently, rather adopt a more proactive and systemic approach to support police officers in managing their stress relating to their job.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Ethical Considerations

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

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.

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".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

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)

1	Full Name:	Jordan Garland			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☒	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student

3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
4	Campus:	Swansea
5	E-mail address:	2236413@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07813524321
For students:		
7	Student Number:	2236413
8	Programme of Study:	BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Kate Coldough

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

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	☐
					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)		☐			

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	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).
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	Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.	
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>	☐

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					
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	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		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	☒

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:	"An investigation into work-related stress in the UK police force: Causes, Impacts and Investigation strategies."		
2	Proposed start date:	9.06.25	Proposed end date:	27.10.25
	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 The purpose of this research is to explore work-related stress within UK policing, focusing on the causes of stress for police officers, the impact the stress has on their wellbeing and work performance and the strategies available to reduce stress. By gathering qualitative data from surveys (which will be conducted by serving members of a UK police force), the results will raise awareness and understanding for police officers' stressors.
4	Research Question The research question will look at the main causes of stress in UK policing, the impacts the stress can have on police officers mental and physical health and what strategies are effective at reducing or preventing stress.
5	Aims of Research Activity • To explore the causes of stress within UK police officers • The effects the work-related stress can have on Police officers in the UK, looking at physical, mental and work performance. • Explore the effectiveness of current support services available for UK police officers • Explore recommendations of stress management methods
6	Objectives of Research Activity The first objective is to create a survey which will be disseminated to serving members of a UK police force. Another objective is to collate survey responses to explore the suggested stress indicators. After this, the researcher will review the current available support strategies provided to police officers within their organisation. The final objective will be to compare and analyse survey findings with available literature to highlight the potential lack of knowledge on the topic question and explore areas of improvement.

	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	The research method used to answer the topic question will be a questionnaire survey which will involve participants who are strictly serving police officers based in the UK. The structure of this survey will be closed-ended questions (e.g a graph or a 1 to 10 rating scale to best answer questions such as how satisfied are you in the job?, what are your current stress level? among others). Open-ended questions will also be considered in order to focus on the identification of personal stress management methods used by the participants. The participants will remain anonymous throughout their involvement in the survey, and all data distributed will be through police networks. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	All research will be focused within the United Kingdom (UK), this will be aligned with participants conducting the survey. Participants will complete the survey aligned with their personal flexibility and timeframe. (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	

	N/a – there will be no research activity outside of the UK. The research is strictly UK based and so are any participants involved. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT 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. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	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:		
	The research conducted relates to A Healthier Wales as the research explores occupational stress and the impacts on Police officers. The research also relates to A More Equal Wales due to the disparities due to the effects that stress has on different groups in the police force. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

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)		
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	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?	The number of participants who will be completing the survey will be between 20 to 40 serving members of a UK police force. (this box should expand as you type)	
11	Who will the participants be?	The participants of the survey will be serving members of a UK police force. The focus will be response department of the police force. (this box should expand as you type)	
12	How will you identify the participants?	The participants will complete the voluntary form which will be sent to a serving member of the response unit in the UK police force. (this box should expand as you type)	

	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			
	(this box should expand as you type)			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
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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>				

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: As the survey involves the effects of work-related stress, and what causes this personal to the participant, they may experience emotional discomfort. The survey may remind the participant about traumatic incidents they responded to which caused them stress. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: The survey will be voluntary, and the participants can withdraw at any time. Not all questions are required, and they will be optional to answer, and therefore, if any question has any affect upon the participant, they may skip it. <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	
	The project will not cover any of the above. However, as stress can be emotionally triggering, participants will be reminded that the survey is optional, and they will not have to complete it if they chose to. <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: There may be emotional discomfort from the review of the participants answers. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: All data collected will be analysed objectively and anonymised. All sensitive information will be handled with care. There will be no direct interactions with participants completing the survey, preventing emotional risk. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: Data protection <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: All data will follow strict data protection and GDPR compliance. The data will be stored on secure platforms. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment:	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: N/a – No risk to environment

	N/a – no environmental risks <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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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?
	At the end of the completed survey, they will receive a "Thank you" message for their participation in the survey. <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.
	Participants will be provided with an information sheet, displaying the aims of the survey and what they are to expect. There will be a consent box which will be required before completing the survey. <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.

	The survey will remain completely anonymous, no personal details or organisation details such as rank or position will be required. (this box should expand as you type)
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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 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	(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:		
	<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):		
	The survey will be completed on online tools such as Microsoft Forms. The survey data will be created and collected using a secure GDPR-compliant online platform. No personal data will be collected such as names, address, ect. The Data will be stored on a password protected software. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher and the academic supervisor of this project will have access to the data. <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:		
	Only the researcher and the academic supervisor. <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.		
	All data will be stored using a password protected OneDrive account. Any data collected will only be stored for one year, following the completion of the academic year. All data will be online, and no paper copies will be collected. <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>		
	N/a <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:	Jordan Garland	Date: 19/05/2025

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.

Appendix B - Blank Online Survey

Work-related stress in the UK police force: Causes, impacts, and investigation strategies

Hi, Jordan. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

1. Please confirm that you have complete consent form and information sheet provided? 

- ☐ Yes (Continue survey)
- ☐ No (If no, the survey will end)

2. Please confirm what force you are a serving member of? 

Enter your answer

3. What is your current role within your police force? 

- ☐ Police Constable
- ☐ Police Sargent
- ☐ Police Staff
- ☐ Other

4. How many years have you been a serving member of your police force? 

Enter your answer

5. What is your current shift pattern? 

- ☐ Day shifts
- ☐ Night shifts
- ☐ Rotating shifts
- ☐ Other

6. Using the scale below, how stressed are you currently in your policing role? 

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all stressed

Extremely stressed

7. Which of the factors below contributes most to your work-related stress? (Select all that apply) 

- ☐ High workload
- ☐ Lack of support
- ☐ Shift patterns
- ☐ Exposure to traumatic incidents
- ☐ Staff shortages
- ☐ Admin
- ☐ Public scrutiny
- ☐ Organisation pressures
- ☐ Other

8. Which of these stressors affect you the most? 

- ☐ Organisational stressors (e.g. Workload, resources, organisational pressures)?
- ☐ Operational stressors (e.g. Call demand, Traumatic incidents, public scrutiny)?
- ☐ Both equally

9. Which of the below options do you experience as a result of work-related stress? (Select all that apply) 

- ☐ Poor sleep
- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ Low mood/depression
- ☐ Lack of concentration
- ☐ Physical health (e.g. illness, headaches)
- ☐ None of the above

10. Do you feel work-related stress is likely to effect your performance and decision-making whilst working? 

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all likely

Extremely likely

11. Select the option below which best represents your overall well-being at work 

- ☐ Extremely well
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Extremely poor

12. Have you had any input on the well-being support strategies available in your police force? (e.g. TRiM, Oscar Kilo, Counselling) 

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. Have you used any of the above support strategies within the last 12 months? 

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14. How effective have the above support strategies been in reducing your work-related stress? 

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Somewhat effective
- ☐ Neither effective nor ineffective
- ☐ Worsened effect
- ☐ Other

15. Which of the below personal coping strategies do you use to help you reduce stress? (Select all that apply) 

- ☐ Physical activity (e.g walking, fitness, sports/ hobbies)
- ☐ Talking to colleagues, friends or family
- ☐ Alcohol
- ☐ Time off work (Annual leave)
- ☐ Private therapy
- ☐ Medication or smoking
- ☐ Other

16. How do you personally cope with your stress at work? 

Enter your answer

17. What factors impact your ability to personally cope with your work-related stress? 

Enter your answer

18. In your opinion, what do you think needs to be done in order to reduce overall stress within UK police forces? 

Enter your answer