

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 4 - 40 Credits

Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 1 (PCDA)

**(SOUTH WALES POLICE, GWENT POLICE AND
UWTSD)**

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 1 (PCDA)

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

The purpose of this workbook is to enable learners to demonstrate and provide evidence of how they meet the learning outcomes set by the College of Policing, for the BSc programme. Essentially, you are being asked to outline your experiential learning based upon your theoretical understanding in a range of operational situations.

Area of Professional Practice covered, (called elements in your module descriptor):

- Wellbeing and Resilience
- Communication Skills
- Managing Conflict
- Valuing Difference and Inclusion
- Criminal Justice
- Decision making, discretion
- Conducting Investigations
- Criminal Justice (Managing offenders)

You may wish to use the same incidents as you've outlined in the Occupational Competence Portfolio.

How should the workbook be presented?

Blank electronic copies can be found on Moodle of this workbook. You must submit this document electronically therefore it is important that you save your work regularly and upload the final typed version through Turnitin on Moodle.

Word count policy can be found in chapter 7 of the Academic Quality under section 7.7 (this applies to presenting work above and under the specified word count).

https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/agh-chapters/chapters---en/Chapter_07_Assessment-Taught_Programmes_Pages_72-79-UPDATED-05-11-2019.pdf

Reflective practice is a core aspect for your workbooks and although there is a variety of useful resources on Moodle, there is one particular book, that is specifically based on reflective practice in policing, here is a link to one chapter from Selina Copley's Reflective Practice for Policing Students:

https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/298870/mod_resource/content/1/Reflective%20Practice%20for%20Policing%20Students%20-%20Selina%20Copley%20Chapter5.pdf

How is the workbook assessed?

Advice and support about the completion of this workbook will be provided by university staff as part of your initial training day. Your tutor constable and in-force

training staff will not be involved in assessing or marking your workbook after it has been submitted.

Dates of workbook submission will be made available during the initial training day and posted on Moodle.

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

It is important that no individual can be identified either directly or indirectly from the information in the workbook. Therefore, you must:

- adhere to guidance in the Student Handbook about unfair practice and plagiarism;
- not identify individuals including witnesses, victims or offenders by name;
- not write information that enables any individual to be identified indirectly through the description you provide. This includes references to names, colleagues, places (including hospitals, schools, town, villages, streets) specific incidents which were high profile and could be identified due to past publicity, other professionals or any other personal information including medical or other conditions;
- take personal responsibility for adhering to confidentiality rules.
- not include any dates of any incidents or anything that specifically identifies an actual incident.

Please be aware that any content that is deemed to be inappropriate, disrespectful, or abusive will not be tolerated. Following review of any content of this nature the information will be shared with the employer of the student responsible.

Should any health and wellbeing concerns be raised because of disclosures made by the student within this workbook, the employer of the student will be informed.

NOTE

Your workbook will be submitted electronically via Turnitin on Moodle. Guidance on this is in the Student Handbook.

Remember that the workbook is YOUR responsibility you must not rely on the assessor or anyone else to pick up any confidentiality breaches as this is your work and you must accept full responsibility for confidentiality. Meeting all the confidentiality requirements is very important.

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

If you have any condition that you feel may affect your ability to deal with any part of the programme, please see the Student Handbook for further guidance. The University has a Student Services Unit that may be able to help but ***it is the learner's individual responsibility to contact them.***

Guidance:

- *Your workbook must contain the items specified in the table below (clearly identified and in the order given);*
- *You should use this particular document to insert your text / answer within each section of this workbook;*
- *You should upload your completed document as a saved pdf of this workbook; if this is not possible then a Worddoc file is acceptable. Do not send a scanned file from a photocopier, an apple.dot file, or a Microsoft publisher file as Turnitin will not be able to assess them despite you being able to upload them.*

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	Confirmation of Confidentiality and Plagiarism <i>This is confirmed by submitting through Turnitin</i>	

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Wellbeing and Resilience

Guidance:

Focussing on your initial 6 months of learning and since being attested as a Police Constable, outline the coping strategies you have applied to develop resilience and minimise stress.

1000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Stress has been defined by the Lexico Dictionary as “a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.” (Lexico.com, 2022). In some cases, it can be a positive influence as it can motivate us to perform to the best of our abilities. However, if it is not managed in a healthy manner it can lead to serious consequences, particularly among police officers. In turn, this could affect the wider communities that police officers serve. It is therefore important to take a proactive approach to minimise stress and to develop resilience whilst in the role of a police officer. Cherry (2021) further highlights the importance of developing resilience by arguing:

Resilience is what gives people the psychological strength to cope with stress and hardship. It is the mental reservoir of strength that people are able to call on in times of need to carry them through without falling apart.

During my initial six months of training, there were undeniably times of stress and hardship. These were caused by being placed into a new role which was completely different to anything that I had done before, and one which carried an enormous sense of responsibility that I had not previously felt. Here, I will discuss how I used exercise and healthy eating to minimise my stress, alongside regular meditation and listening to inspirational podcasts to develop resilience during my initial six months of learning.

According to research conducted by Greenwood and Fleshner (2011, pp. 140-149), exercise can reduce stress levels. I believe that regular exercise is not only

beneficial for us physically, but it is also one of the most effective ways of building mental resilience and coping with stress. Therefore, at the start of my initial six months of training I decided to set myself an exercise regime with clear and achievable goals. From experience, I knew that this would keep my mind focused and give me something to work towards. By achieving my goals and exercising regularly I knew that I would keep myself motivated towards my studies, particularly when things would inevitably become stressful and overwhelming. My regime consisted of running seven kilometres and participating in press up challenges on alternative days. As a result, not only was I exercising my body daily, but I was also pushing myself mentally every day by setting myself new goals to improve after having achieved the previous day's goal. The time that I spend running enables me to gather my thoughts and to reflect on recent events clearly. This allows me to reflect on where I am currently, and where I want to be in the future. Running also gives me time to set myself small goals, such as pushing myself as hard as possible from one section of my route to another. When I do this, despite being physically exhausted and at the time thinking that I cannot push myself any harder, it helps to build my resilience. The sense of achievement gained from pushing oneself through something difficult and getting better builds a resilience (Connaughton, Hanton and Jones, 2010, pp. 168-193) which naturally lends itself to academic work.

In addition, prior to beginning my initial six months of training, I also decided to improve my diet, as it is widely believed that healthy eating can reduce stress. Kuchan (2018) has concluded that 'eating a healthy diet can reduce the negative effects of stress on your body'. I learnt new recipes for healthy eating and decided to take a prepared lunch into work every day as I knew that this would reduce temptation for me to purchase unhealthy food during lunchtime. This led to lower levels of stress and physical changes in my body after the first four weeks of the course which gave me more confidence and energy. I also cut down my intake of alcohol and carbonated drinks which led to better sleep and further minimised my levels of stress.

I also decided to increase the amount of time that I spent meditating to practice mindfulness and to keep my stress to a minimum. Research shows that mindfulness

can help us to deal with stress and build resilience, as is supported by the following quote:

Mounting scientific evidence from hundreds of universities...strongly suggests that mindfulness gently builds an inner strength, so that future stressors have less impact on our happiness and physical well-being (Alidina, 2019).

I found that meditation stopped me from feeling overwhelmed, thus developing a resilient mindset and minimising my stress.

I also listened to motivational podcasts to build resilience. Before the final exam I had feelings of self-doubt due to the amount of content to learn and elements of the course being self-taught at home due to Coronavirus restrictions. I was very concerned about how I was going to pass, however, the podcasts frequently discussed resilience and showing adversity when things are difficult. I used this to develop and maintain a positive mindset throughout my preparation towards the final exam. This resilience that I had developed not only got me through the final exam, but it also helped me to overcome the challenge that I faced and to achieve a higher mark than I had achieved in my first exam.

To conclude, the resilient mindset that I developed during my initial six months of training and the coping strategies that I applied to minimise stress have helped me greatly and will continue to help me throughout my career. The direct results that I gained from them such as improved physical fitness, more energy, greater mindfulness and a more positive mindset have taught me the importance of continuing to apply these strategies and to develop them more deeply as my career progresses. This will allow my personal performance to improve as time goes on which will also positively impact the performance and development of the organisation.

Word count: 976

Task 2

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Communication Skills, Managing Conflict, Valuing Difference and Inclusion

You must choose **a policing incident involving conflict** in which you played a significant role with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of the incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Review the fundamental elements of effective communication used (verbal, non-verbal, active listening skills, open and closed questions, building rapport and negotiation skills).

Describe the process for determining whether the use of force was necessary in a conflict situation (including any theories or models underpinning the causes of conflict within policing interventions – e.g. Betari's Box, The Drama triangle, Emotional versus rational brain) and provide a reflection on the outcome of the incident.

Your reflection must illustrate your understanding and application of core principles of ethics, equality, diversity and human rights, as well as any relevant Code of Practice considerations, culturally sensitive practice and language preference.

1500 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

As a police officer, it is important to deal with conflict in a way that respects the views of all involved whilst ensuring that the most effective outcome is achieved. I've taken as an operational example my attendance at a stop and search in which my colleagues and I experienced conflict from a male who was suffering from poor mental health. To inform my reflection I have been guided by Borton's Reflective Model (Physiopedia, 2022) and have taken specific questions from Driscoll's Adaptation (NursingAnswers.Net, 2022) to illuminate my thinking.

Firstly, I will discuss the 'what' element of Borton's reflective tool in relation to this incident. My colleague and I responded to a call for assistance in which a double-crewed unit of officers had been requested. There had been a report from our colleagues that a male who was suffering from poor mental health had been acting erratically and was in possession of a bladed article in a public place. We were also

advised that our colleagues already at the scene had tried to take the article from the male but they had been unable to do so as he had taken it back and walked away from them.

Whilst enroute I began to consider the key aspects of the situation which were: the potential weapon, the risk of danger to the public, the male's poor mental health and the public's perception of our interaction with the man. I considered the issue of using force against the male by handcuffing him to conduct a search and how that would fit into the wider social context in which this incident sat. I noted previous incidents such as the death of Olaseni Lewis who was a mental health patient. Olaseni died at the age of 23 in 2010 as a result of enduring prolonged restraint that had been applied by police officers. The inquest into his death later deemed that the restraint which was used was 'excessive, unreasonable and disproportionate'. (Mind.org.uk, 2018).

On our approach to the scene, I considered how I would factor this into my use of the National Decision Model. Using the information and intelligence that I had so far, I assessed the threat and risk by considering that the male was in a busy public place. I realised that there could have been a risk to the public if the situation escalated. Taking this into account, I developed a working strategy where my aim was to build a rapport with the male immediately to conduct a compliant stop search under section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

I also thought about the offence that the male had potentially committed. I believed that the male could have been guilty of having an article with a blade or a point in a public place, contrary to section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988. I considered that if my search revealed that the male was in possession of a bladed article, I may have needed to use my power to arrest the male under section 24(1)(b) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Upon arrival at the scene, the male was aggressive and appeared to be hallucinating. He stated that he would not let us search him ourselves as he believed that we were trying to steal his possessions. By speaking to the male in a calm and

respectful way, I was able to get him to the point where he was emptying his pockets for us. After the male had emptied his pockets, we realised that our colleagues who made the call for assistance were mistaken and what was believed to be a bladed article was a folded piece of tin foil. As no offences had been committed, we had no grounds to arrest the male and at the end of the encounter we made sure that he had somewhere safe to go to and sent him there.

I will now review the fundamental elements of effective communication that I used. I firstly used my negotiation skills with the male to get him to a point where he was cooperating with us and emptying his pockets fully. This worked well as it allowed us to achieve our overall goal of searching the male and removed the need for use of force. It also established a level of trust between us. I engaged him in conversation by asking him open questions about what his name was and what he'd been up to that day. This also worked well as it allowed me to build a rapport with him. I used a calm voice and allowed the male to speak freely whilst using my active listening skills.

My approach worked well here in comparison with that of my colleague's, who began to take a more forceful approach with the male and advised him that if he didn't hurry up he would be handcuffed. I believe that my colleague was too forceful here as this aggravated the male and took us closer to a situation in which force would be required. I remained calm and continued to speak to the male to reassure him, to which he responded positively. I ensured that I used calm body language throughout the encounter by always keeping my hands open and in front of me, and showing the male the palms of my hands. This showed the male that my intentions were not aggressive. This had a positive effect and our rapport became stronger as the encounter went on. By the end of the encounter we were calling each other 'mate' and a trust between the two of us had been established. We thanked each other and left on positive terms.

I will now describe the process that I went through for determining whether the use of force was necessary in this incident. I considered section 117 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 which states that a constable may use reasonable force to exercise powers granted within the Act. However, as I was able to gain the male's

cooperation by using my communication skills, I did not feel at the time that the use of force was justified or necessary.

I was able to influence his behaviour by using Betari's Box (College of Policing, 2020). I used this model to consciously focus on my attitude and behaviour throughout the interaction, which worked well in enabling me to positively influence the male's attitude and behaviour towards myself and to break the cycle of conflict.

I will now reflect on the outcome of the incident by looking at the 'so what' aspect of Borton's Reflective Tool and will answer specific questions from Driscoll's Adaptation. At the time of the incident I felt that I was doing well to build a rapport with the male. Having since reflected on the outcome of the incident, I feel that my actions had a positive effect on the situation generally as we achieved the overall aim of ensuring that the male was not in possession of a weapon in a public place and were able to do so without using force against him.

My actions were in line with the core principles of the police Code of Ethics which lists equality and diversity as a standard of professional behaviour (College of Policing, 2014). The Equality Act 2010 also lists disability as a protected characteristic and protects those who have a disability from discrimination. I took this guidance and the male's mental disability into account when deciding not to use force against him. Furthermore, my actions were also in line with the fourth standard of professional behaviour within the Code of Ethics which states 'you must use only the minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the required result'. (College of Policing, 2014).

I also believe that applying handcuffs to the male who was already cooperating with us would have been excessive and potentially could have been a breach of Article 3 of the Human Rights Act 1998 which states 'No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.'

However, when answering the question 'what troubles you about it?' I now feel as though I was submissive towards the male and was not in control of the interaction. He spoke over me and I let him continue to talk to keep him at a level that I could

control with my verbal skills. I feel as though I let the male lead the interaction and that I should have taken a firmer stance by conducting a thorough and hands-on stop search to my own satisfaction. I have since reflected with my colleague on my approach during the incident, who agrees that a more robust stance should have been taken. We both believe that the male should have been handcuffed for our own safety and searched effectively.

I now conclude by looking at the 'now what' element of Borton's Tool. The implications and consequences of the approach that I took are that I did not take full control of the encounter and I could have potentially left the male with something else prohibited that we were not necessarily looking for, such as drugs. From this encounter, I have learnt that it is important to build a rapport with the person in question from the start of the interaction to get them on-side. I have also learned however that I need to be more assertive in my actions. If faced with a comparable situation in the future, I will adapt my approach by taking control of conversations and ensuring that if someone needs to be searched, I will search them thoroughly myself in a fair and respectful manner to ensure that they have no prohibited items in their possession. By searching people thoroughly every time I will make sure that the public, the person in question, my colleagues and myself are safe.

Word count: 1648.

Task 3

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Criminal Justice, Valuing difference and inclusion

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a significant role with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of a relevant incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Explain and reflect on your responsibilities and procedures in line with the relevant Codes of Practice to support victims and witnesses through the criminal justice system.

Illustrate how policing values were engaged, as well as any other considerations including culturally sensitive practice and language preference.

1500 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales (Victim's Code) defines a victim as "a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence" (Ministry of Justice, 2021). In a recent incident which I attended involving domestic violence, I dealt with a victim who had suffered from all these things. In my answer, I will reflect on my actions throughout the incident by using Gibb's Reflective Cycle (University of Edinburgh, 2020).

I will firstly discuss the 'description' stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. The incident took place between a same-sex couple at the victim's home. My colleague and I responded as there had been a call reporting assault and criminal damage. Looking at the social context in which this incident sits, the Office of National Statistics (ONS, 2021) has reported that 'the number of police recorded domestic abuse-related crimes in England and Wales rose 6% in the year ending March 2021'. Not only this,

but when looking at the same period the ONS has also suggested that there is 'perhaps an increase in the severity of abuse being experienced'. With the issue of domestic abuse being so prevalent at present, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was introduced to tackle the rise in cases and to safeguard victims.

Upon arrival, the victim identified herself as mixed race and disclosed to us that the suspect had used racial slurs towards her. I initially considered that the assault and criminal damage could have been hate crimes, however the victim did not feel that the suspect's criminal actions were motivated by her ethnicity.

The victim told us that the suspect had left the property and that she did not know where she had gone. Here, I used the National Decision Model (College of Policing, 2013) to decide how to proceed. The information I had was that we were dealing with a vulnerable victim who had been assaulted and racially abused. I considered that there may have been a risk to the victim if we left her on her own to search for the suspect. I therefore developed a working strategy of requesting that two of our colleagues searched the area for the suspect and my colleague and I stayed with the victim to provide support. The victim told us that she had suffered a history of serious abuse from the suspect. I conducted a risk assessment by going through the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment risk assessment questions and deemed that the victim was at high risk. I also submitted a Public Protection Notification to inform partner agencies of the circumstances and to provide additional support.

Whilst taking a statement from the victim, the suspect was walking around outside. I approached the suspect and arrested her on suspicion of assault, contrary to section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, and criminal damage, contrary to section 1 of the Criminal Damage Act 1971 by using my powers under section 24 (2) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. My colleague and I conveyed her to custody where she was interviewed the following day. Whilst the suspect was in custody, I returned to the victim's property and updated her on what had happened to the suspect. I finished taking the statement from the victim and left her with my contact details and the crime reference number.

During interview, the suspect denied the offences and use of any racial slurs. She was released with bail conditions not to contact or approach the victim, pending advice from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). My colleague and I discovered that the victim withdrew her complaint the following day and denied any knowledge of the incident. We later discovered that less than a week later, the victim had allowed the suspect to move back into her property and had been assaulted by her again.

I will now discuss the 'feelings' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. Once we had arrested the suspect, I felt that we had provided a good result for the victim. However, I now feel disappointed as the suspect withdrew the complaint and denied any knowledge of the incident. I feel that our actions weren't enough to keep her safe long term.

I will now reflect on my actions by looking at the 'evaluation' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. The Victim's Code gives victims of crime twelve rights which support them through the criminal justice system. The Code must be followed by all criminal justice agencies to ensure that victims are given the highest level of service from the moment they report a crime to the point where an offender has been convicted. During my initial attendance, I acted in line with the Code. I ensured that the victim understood everything that I was saying and that I understood her. I provided her with the crime reference number as written confirmation that her report had been recorded, and I included what she told me in a witness statement. I explained the criminal justice process to her and referred her to victim support services with her permission. I also identified that the victim was vulnerable due to ongoing mental health issues and intimidated due to the nature of the offences and the history of violence between her and her partner. Due to this, I determined that the victim was entitled to an 'enhanced service' and provided support that was tailored to those needs by referring her to Victim Focus. I acted in line with the Victim's Code further by advising the victim of special measures which would help to improve the quality of her evidence should the matter have gone to court. I also provided her with information about how to claim compensation. Additionally, I kept her up to date by telling her that the suspect had been arrested and that she was due to be interviewed. I also gave the victim the chance to write a Victim Personal

Statement to explain how the incident had affected her, which she accepted. As the complaint was withdrawn by the victim before the case went to trial, the remaining rights of the Code were not applicable. However, I feel that my performance was good in terms of adhering to the Code as I followed all applicable rights to support the victim through the criminal justice system.

Additionally, the actions that I took were in line with the police values of impartiality and public service, as set out within the Competency and Values Framework (College of Policing, 2022). As sexual orientation is listed as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it is imperative that we deal with incidents under such circumstances with impartiality to ensure that we do not discriminate. I showed impartiality by acting fairly and objectively in the way that I conducted the initial investigation for the victim and in the way that I dealt with the suspect. I also acted in line with the value of public service as I treated the victim with respect and adapted to address her needs.

Furthermore, I adapted my approach when speaking to the victim about the racial abuse that she had endured to show empathy and to ensure that I did not cause her any further distress. I was sensitive in my style of questioning, and this demonstrated culturally sensitive practice. This strengthened our rapport and the victim responded more positively towards me as a result.

I will now further my reflection by addressing the 'analysis' stage of Gibb's Reflective cycle. The way in which my colleague and I dealt with the initial call worked well to provide initial safety for the victim. However, only a week later the victim was assaulted by her partner again and so I now believe that not enough was done to protect her long term. I should have considered the fact that there was a history of violence between the two and should not have assumed that the actions from one night would resolve the problem permanently. I realise that it was the victim's choice to allow her partner back into the property, however I feel that if I had provided further support, she may have been in a different mindset when making the decision to withdraw her complaint and allow her partner back into the property.

I will now address the 'conclusions' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. I could have put additional safeguarding measures in place such as Police Watch or referred the case to Wales Integrated Serious and Dangerous Offender Management (WISDOM). Police Watch would have ensured that there were regular police patrols around the area and WISDOM could have worked with the suspect to help her to change her behaviour. I also could have looked at exploring the victimless process for this case. Another option could have been requesting to have a Domestic Abuse Protection Order put in place, which would have ensured that the suspect would not have been able to contact the victim for 48 hours and could possibly have been extended for up to 28 days if a Domestic Abuse Protection Notice was granted by the court. This would have allowed the victim an element of relief to make an informed decision about how she would have liked to proceed with the relationship and the investigation.

I now conclude by looking at the 'action plan' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. I have learned from this incident that I need to provide more long-term support for vulnerable victims. I realise that due to the requirements of my role as a Response Officer, I may not be able to be the person to provide such long-term support. Therefore, I will achieve this by implementing Vulnerable Victim Action Plans where necessary and having welfare checks put in place to ensure that vulnerable victims receive ongoing support after my initial contact with them ends.

Word count: 1,649.

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Decision making and discretion, Conducting Investigations and Criminal Justice (Managing offenders)

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a significant role with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of the situation including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues. **Reflect** on how you applied the National Decision Model (NDM) to assist in resolving this incident. **Consider** the role of discretion in the decision-making process.

Explain your responsibilities with regards to the provision of the CPIA when conducting this investigation including when managing the offender and suspects and recording and retaining significant information.

Illustrate how policing values were engaged particularly through an **analysis** of the potential impact of bias on the decision-making process.

1500 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

As a police officer, the ability to effectively exercise discretion is critical.

Consideration must be given to the public perception that will follow a decision that we make and the impact that this will have on our relationships with the communities that we serve. In my answer, I will reflect on how I used discretion and applied the National Decision Model (NDM) (College of Policing, 2013) to provide an alternative resolution to an incident involving an assault between two children. To guide my reflection, I have used Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (University of Edinburgh, 2020).

I will firstly discuss the 'description' stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. My colleague and I responded to a report of an assault where the suspect had knocked the front door of the victim's home and assaulted him in his doorway before leaving. Upon arrival, we learned that the victim and suspect were both children. Looking at the social context in which this incident sits, it is important to note that violent offences committed by children are on the rise. This is highlighted by the Youth Justice

Statistics 2019/20 report for England and Wales which looked at offences committed by children. The report states:

Violence Against the Person offences have seen the greatest increase in proportion, gradually increasing from 20% in the year ending March 2010 to 31% of proven offences in the latest year. (Youth Justice Board/Ministry of Justice, 2021).

The report also states that the main offence type committed by children in 2020 was Violence Against the person. This data shows that violence amongst children is a significant issue and it therefore requires a well-considered remedy.

I was advised by the victim that this was an unprovoked attack and that he and the suspect used to be friends. I considered that the suspect was potentially guilty of assault, contrary to section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, and that I had a power to arrest him under section 24 (2) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. We began to search for the suspect with the intention of arresting him. However, during the search I had time to reflect and used the NDM to consider alternative options.

I decided that the most effective course of action would be to arrange a voluntary attendance interview between the suspect and myself, and so I arranged this when we found him. During the interview, the suspect made a full admission of the offence and explained that he assaulted the victim due to an argument that they had over social media. He advised me that he had since apologised to the victim and that they were now friends again. I spoke to the victim after the interview who agreed that this was the case.

I referred the suspect to the Youth Offending Team who offered him courses to stop him from reoffending. I spoke to the victim and his father who advised that they were happy with the resolution.

I will now discuss the 'feelings' stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. During my initial encounter with the victim, I feel that I was too narrow-minded as I did not consider all

the factors and the implications that making an arrest would have had on the suspect and the victim. I now feel that I provided the best resolution for all involved.

I will now reflect on my actions by looking at the 'evaluation' stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. I applied the NDM when deciding how to resolve the issue. The information that I had was the assault, the age of both parties, the fact that they used to be friends, the fact that the victim had no visible injuries and the fact that the suspect had no previous history of offending. I assessed the threat and realised that there was a risk of a future assault by the suspect, or a retaliation from the victim if a suitable resolution was not implemented. I developed a working strategy of arranging a voluntary attendance interview with the suspect and referring him to the Youth Offending Team. I considered that I had a power to arrest the suspect, however upon reflection I did not feel that this would be the most effective course of action. Following the NDM and using my discretion ensured that I made the most effective decision possible.

It is important to consider the role of discretion in the decision-making process. It has been argued that:

It is often necessary for officers to apply discretion (...) This is broadly a good thing, but such discretion also allows an individual's personal biases, whether conscious or unconscious, to affect decisions. (Gov.uk, 2020)

It is true that discretion gives way to the potential of making biased decisions. However, I believe that by using my discretion I provided a resolution that was unbiased and beneficial towards both parties. Using discretion allowed me to tackle the root of the problem in a positive way that provided long-term support for the suspect. Additionally, it allowed me to provide justice for the victim in a way that avoided him the distress of providing evidence in court.

I also followed the Code of Practice under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (Ministry of Justice, 2020) when conducting this investigation. The Code sets out the responsibilities of investigators to ensure that investigations are carried out to the highest standard. It states, 'in conducting an investigation, the investigator

should pursue all reasonable lines of inquiry, whether these point towards or away from the suspect.' I pursued all lines of enquiry by conducting house to house enquiries, investigating the argument over social media and allowing both parties to have their say. Following this guidance ensured that my investigation was as transparent as possible and it allowed me to manage the suspect fairly.

The Code also gives guidance on the recording of information. It states that if any material relevant to the investigation exists in a non-recorded format, it must be recorded in a durable or retrievable form. I followed this guidance by recording the victim's account in a written statement as well as recording my interview with the suspect. This ensured that the limited amount of evidence that I had was secured.

Additionally, the Code gives guidance on the retention of information. It states that relevant information obtained during an investigation must be retained until the accused is either acquitted, or at least six months from the date of conviction. I retained all relevant material on our database until a decision had been made. By adhering to my responsibilities within the Code I laid good foundations at the start of the investigation. This maximised the opportunity for a successful outcome as the suspect was very forthcoming with me and made a full admission.

Furthermore, I acted in line with the police value of impartiality, as set out in the Competency and Values Framework (College of Policing, 2022). Biases have the potential to impact the decision-making process, as is highlighted by the College of Policing (2016) which states 'biases can have discriminatory effects, whether that bias is conscious (explicit) or unconscious (implicit)'. Both conscious and unconscious biases have the ability to interfere with our impartiality and fairness whilst going through the decision-making process. Conscious bias is defined as 'biased attitudes about a certain group we are aware of' (Pediaa.com, 2021). Unconscious bias on the other hand is potentially more dangerous, as it has been defined as 'bias that we are *unaware of*, and which happens outside of our control'. (Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2022). As it is more difficult to control unconscious bias, we must adopt an objective stance and take all factors into account when making decisions to ensure that we do not let it influence us. I identified that it would have been easy to develop my own biases towards the

suspect as I was initially led to believe that this was an unprovoked attack. I avoided these biases by being unprejudiced towards the suspect and giving him an equal opportunity to give his account during the voluntary attendance interview. I listened to what he said and valued his perspective, giving equal consideration to his point of view and factoring that into making an objective decision.

I also acted in line with the police value of transparency (College of Policing, 2022) when relaying the rationale for my decision to the victim and his father. I clearly stated the reasons for my decision and ensured that they understood why the decision to refer the suspect to Youth Offender Services rather than a prosecution had been made.

I will now further my reflection by addressing the 'analysis' Stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. The outcome of this investigation was successful because I followed the NDM and used my discretion. I believe that had I chosen to arrest the suspect without considering alternative options, this would have had a detrimental effect on both the suspect and the victim.

I will now address the 'conclusions' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. From this incident, I have learned the importance of applying the NDM and using discretion to provide alternative solutions. I have also learned that making an arrest simply because the grounds to do so exist is not always the best course of action. By acting on impulse without considering alternatives we may potentially make poor decisions and so this must be avoided.

I now conclude by looking at the 'action plan' stage of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. When dealing with future incidents, I will ensure that I apply the NDM as my initial approach to providing a resolution. I will achieve this by recording my decision-making processes in my pocket notebook when dealing with each incident until I reach the point where applying the NDM becomes my automatic reaction before making a decision. This will ensure that I always make the most effective decision for all involved.

Word count: 1,646.

Task 5

Personal Development Plan (PDP) / Learning Plan.

As part of your reflective process, please use this table to aid you in identifying the next steps for development. This is equivalent to 500 words. Please note that this not the actual number of words you need to use, the wordcount reflects the thought and research you put into it.

Identified area for development	How it will be achieved	Who can provide support?	Timeline
To conduct thorough and hands-on stop searches when the search of a person is required. This will ensure that I do not leave people in possession of prohibited articles and that myself, my colleagues and the public are kept safe.	By being more assertive in my actions, explaining my rationale to the subject of the search and using force to conduct the search if necessary. I will measure this by recording how many hands-on stop searches I complete against how many hands-off searches I complete.	My tutor, colleagues and sergeants by recommending me to calls where stop and searches are likely to be required so I can develop my skills.	I will apply this change immediately and ensure that it is an ongoing process. I will review my performance every two weeks.
To provide additional long-term support for vulnerable victims than just a Public Protection Notification. This will ensure that vulnerable victims receive further ongoing support after my initial contact with them ends.	By also implementing Vulnerable Victim Action Plans and having welfare checks put in place. I will measure this by recording these additional actions in my pocket notebook and on the specific details of incidents on our internal database.	The Public Protection Unit can provide me with further guidance for supporting vulnerable victims. PCSO's can also help by carrying out welfare checks. I can also refer to my tutor, colleagues and sergeants for any additional recommendations that they may have.	I will apply this change immediately and ensure that it is an ongoing process. I will review my performance every two weeks.

To apply the National Decision Model as my initial approach to providing resolutions to incidents. This will ensure that I always make the most effective decision.	By recording my decision-making processes in my pocket notebook until applying the National Decision Model becomes my automatic reaction before making a decision.	My tutor and sergeants by having weekly reviews with me to ensure that I am recording my decision making processes.	I will apply this action immediately and will review my progress in four weeks. If at that point I am not automatically considering alternative resolutions when dealing with incidents, I will continue to record my decision making processes for a further two weeks and review my progress again.
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The bibliography should only include sources referenced within the workbook using the Harvard referencing system. Information about referencing in written assignments and how to avoid plagiarism can be found on Moodle. It is important that you are aware of the importance of ensuring that the work submitted is your original work.

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Recognition and Confirmation of the progress on the Occupational Competency Portfolio (OCP).

By signing the section below you are acknowledging your progress on O.C.P. This is recognised by the university as work that is fully supporting this module and is equivalent to 500 words towards the overall wordcount.

I confirm that I am progressing with the Occupational Competency Portfolio (OCP) in accordance to the regulations.

Signed: Owen Sellars

Date: 25/01/2022