

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

**Workbook title: Competency Based
Workbook 3 (PCDA)
8000 Words**

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

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 3 (PCDA) BMPP6000D

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.

- Understanding the Police Officer role
- Modern Professional Police Officer
- Strategic Role of the College of Policing
- Communication Skills
- Social Media
- Leadership and Team Working
- Leadership style
- Flexibility and Leadership Strategy
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Professional and Organisational goals
- Assessment

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/aqh-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 was provided by university staff as part of your initial training day and further help and advice is available on Moodle.

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 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 document (electronically on Moodle) - insert your text / answer within each section of this workbook.*
- *You should upload your completed document as a saved pdf file of this workbook; if this is not possible then a Word Doc 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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Task 4	Coaching, Mentoring, Assessment	2000
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	Total	8000

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Understanding the Police Officer Role.

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

Critically evaluate the strategic role of the College of Police in professionalising policing in the U.K.

Evidence how you are working to fulfil the role of a modern professional police officer now that you are in your final year of probation.

Critically reflect upon how your final year of probation has seen your role as a police officer change.

Consider the strategic Policing requirement, Policing Vision 2025, the Workforce Transformation 2018 and the College of Policing's 5 Year Strategy.

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

As frontline police officer I am constantly engaging with the public, requiring professionalism. Professionalism is defined as constantly achieving high standards, both visibly and in the work undertaken behind the scenes (Mind Tools, 2025).

I will evaluate the role the College of Police play in professionalising police in the UK and how my role as a constable has changed during my probation. I will use the Gibbs Reflective Cycle for reflection (The University of Edinburgh, 2020).

Investing in training can be beneficial. Upskilling and training employees help organisations evolve and supports workers improvement, with new skills (Tyler, 2020). Within my final year of probation, I have seen my role change as I feel more confident and skilled. I am now a certified taser carrier and emergency response

driver, better equipping me to manage incidents. The dynamic of my team has also changed, and I am no longer one of the youngest in service.

Policing is constantly evolving and changing. Society is changing radically along with its use of technology, and policing will be left behind if change is not embraced (The Police Foundation, 2019).

Futureproofing is important based on how society is expected to evolve. The National Police Chiefs' Council or NPCC (2016) has set out a ten-year vision for policing. The mission involves upholding the law, being fair and firm, keeping communities safe, managing antisocial behaviour, and ensuring criminals are brought to justice.

Community policing to pro-actively prevent crime is addressed. I feel this can have a positive outcome and not affect community cohesion. Jonathan-Zamir & Perry (2021) supports this by stating that pro-active policing can be effective, without impacting communities. Place-based approaches are mentioned, focusing on areas where crime is prevalent. During a plain clothes operation in an area of Cardiff known for high volumes of crime, I arrested a wanted male and stop searched individuals suspected of being in possession of drugs. They were searched under Section 23, Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971, where drug paraphernalia was found. This had a positive impact resulting in members of public commenting on our presence in plain clothes on the street. This shows how being pro-active gets results.

The NPCC (2023) have added to their 2025 vision. This has been split into pillars and objectives. The first of these is keeping communities safe, focusing on safeguarding, reducing serious crime, supporting victims, increasing public engagement and ensuring police are seen to be inclusive, fair and anti-racist. For communities to feel engaged, community policing must be transparent. Being accountable and effective within communities can promote stability during volatile situations (Holmer & Deventer, 2022). This is crucial to engage with diverse communities for positive outcomes, especially during situations that may otherwise turn volatile. An example is the recent assassination of Charlie Kirk in America. He once commented that when people stop engaging about their differences or

concerns, violence starts. Whilst extreme, it emphasises the importance of clear communication with each other, especially in a role where decisions I make can ultimately change people's lives.

The second is preventing crime and criminality, including collaborating between forces, driving public health, using multi-agency data, neighbourhood policing, and pro-active evidence-based policing. This is crucial to work together to get the best outcome. I have personally used Neighbourhood Policing countless times to assist me in identifying offenders.

The third is responding effectively to demand and bringing perpetrators to justice. This includes adapting to change in crime, addressing hate crime, using science and technology evidentially, producing high quality data and contributing towards the Criminal Justice system reform. With crime ever changing it is extremely important to evolve to tackle this. Having had experience of managing victims and offenders through the criminal justice system, I think police can work much closer to make the experience smoother. An example of this failing was a victim of domestic assault I recently engaged with, who dropped charges because of the amount of time her case was with the Crown Prosecution Service.

The fourth is developing and inspiring workforce culture. This includes attracting the best candidates from various communities, establishing a strong ethical and professional culture, encouraging colleagues to improve their workplace, developing effective leadership, and safeguarding the workforce. This is very important as due to the amount of time spent in work, I like to know that I can be involved in improving the workplace and be supported with my mental health.

The fifth focuses on embedding a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in policing. This includes effective problem solving, developing evidence learning, having data literate leaders, being sustainable, and having an efficient and productive force. Coming from retail I understand the importance of a data-based approach to understanding how efficient you and your peers are. I feel I would benefit from knowing how I am performing based on data.

Future planning is important as well as having an organisational structure to follow. Following a transformational framework can provide better consistency in personal and organisational development, whilst promoting change management possibilities (College of Policing, 2022). Culture is discussed as the heart of the framework and has the power to be beneficial or detrimental. Work culture can be described as management concepts that centres around the beliefs, attitudes and workers perceptions of their organisation's principles and practices (National Library of Medicine, 2024). Culture is key to success and the College of Policing helps instil this in recruits.

Professionalism is always at the forefront of my mind. An example of this is whereby there were concerns for an individual's welfare. Mental health is a rising issue within the UK. Mind (2020) found that people with mental health problems have risen by 20% between 1993 and 2014. 1 in 5 people have suicidal thoughts and 1 in 14 self-harms. Mental health is ever more prevalent in the role when dealing with individuals.

The right support is crucial for those in need. The College of Policing (2023) has published a 'Right Care, Right Person' toolkit which aims to get vulnerable individuals support from the right emergency services. This is important to know that vulnerable individuals are signposted to the most suitable help and how to support them.

On arrival I was unaware if the individual was within his premises. Information received was that the individual was suffering with their mental health and hearing voices. Earlier that day they had climbed on the roof of their block of flats as they thought they were being followed. I was buzzed through the communal door and therefore had a belief that the individual may be inside the address. After trying to gain access by knocking and asking concerned family members, I made the decision to gain access under Section 17, Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984.

The individual was not inside which caused concern. I arranged for safeguarding of the property and conducted a local search. A brief time later the individual returned, and emotions were high. I made sure to remain professional and calm to manage

the situation and the individual was left in the care of his family once the situation de-escalated. Staying professional and calm is extremely important within the role.

The College of Policing (2023) aims to ensure that professionalism is followed in policing within the UK and that there are clear guidelines to adhere to as police. To do this the college follows five strategic ambitions with a five-year ambition plan aimed between 2022 and 2026.

The first is building trust and a culture that is fair. They state that recruitment investment and updated vetting processes can help maintain strict standards and reduce officers unfit for the role. Being trustworthy can build authentic relationships with others and help build reputations (RoryMcIntyre, 2021). I feel that building genuine relationships with the public and having a better reputation within the communities served, is positive. This is equally as prevalent with colleagues. Due to the very nature of the role, I am responsible for keeping my colleague safe, as they are of me.

The second is transforming police leadership and looks at providing the correct skills to manage staff effectively, whilst focusing on leadership abilities. Having a strong leader can improve motivation, efficiency and improves communication. Siena Heights University (2022) looks at 10 reasons that strong leadership can be beneficial. This includes effective communication, motivating staff, understanding staff, and working more efficiently by getting the most out of them. This is crucial, being in a position where I am now trusted to patrol with colleagues younger in service than me. I take lead at certain calls and am confident that the colleagues I work with, trust my judgement.

The third is supporting career-long professional development and ensuring police can reach their full potential. Career development can improve both the individual and the organisation they work for. Serbes (2017) focuses on the impact of career development for the organisation and the individual not only in their place of work, but the quality and impact on their life outside of it. I resonate with this point, as I took a pay cut to become a police officer which temporarily affected my lifestyle outside of work.

The fourth is boosting core skills of police and focuses on correct training to equip officers to manage everchanging situations. I feel empowered to complete my role and confident in asking if I require further training. An example of this is mandatory public protection safety training that I complete yearly, to assess my skills in a variety of scenarios.

The fifth is strengthening innovation and implementing what works. This focuses on being innovative on the job and using techniques that work. The organisation regularly shares best practices and reviews the way we work effectively, and an example of this is structured briefings when changes are put in place.

Whilst professionalism is key, I must also be acutely aware of threat and risk. Police are at risk of being assaulted, due to their line of work. In the UK, police officers are assaulted every 10 minutes, with over 55,000 assaults over the last year (Surrey Police Federation, 2025). Weapons can be used to assault police officers, especially with high risk / wanted offenders. Haoran, Verhage & Vandeviver (2022) found that premediated offenders who wanted to escape arrest were more likely to use vehicles as weapons, and those who were motivated to conflict resolution, were more likely to use sharp objects. This shows that when police are coming up against offenders that do not want to be caught, they are at a higher risk of being violently assaulted.

It is crucial to be aware of the risks and serious threats that could be posed. The Home Office (2023) posted the Strategic Policing Requirement with an aim to address the most serious national threats to public safety, by establishing clear priorities and capabilities of the forces expected to manage them. These include terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber incidents, child sexual abuse, public order, civil emergencies and violence against women and girls. Framework is provided to assist police in managing these. This helps ensure that situations that are serious are dealt with in the correct manner, mitigating mistakes and reducing risk. As a trained Police Support Unit (PSU) officer, I am fully equipped to mobilise in dangerous situations that spontaneously arise. Incidents can escalate quickly and require immediate response to try and keep the public safe. A recent example of

this were the Ely Riots after the death of two young males. Several cars were burnt, police officers were injured, property was damaged, and residents were scared to leave their home due to rioting in the streets (South Wales Police, 2023). This shows how quickly and dangerously a situation can escalate and the importance to have specially trained officers available.

Evaluating and analysing my experience within the last year of probation I feel I have come a long way. I have upskilled, meaning I have exposure to incidents that I previously did not. Whilst I feel I have come a long way as a police officer I also think the college of policing has helped guide me through my journey over the last three years. This includes immediate training provided, along with future visions clearly set out.

In conclusion my final year of probation has seen my role change. I have become a more competent and trusted officer with new skills acquired and have become more pro-active within the role. The College of Policing has assisted me with guidance as the expectation of policing evolves. Professionalism is at the core of everything done and this improves interaction between police and the communities I serve, reducing the risk in my role. Crime is ever evolving, and police need to evolve with it, by future planning. Structure is clearly in place to improve policing from an organisational level, and it is crucial that individuals with the right work ethic are employed to safeguard communities.

For my action plan, I will continue to educate myself with any new College of Policing materials.

Word Count - 2163

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Communication Skills, social media, Communication Strategy

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

Critically evaluate your experience of the use of social media as a means of informing and engaging with the community and promoting policy initiatives.

Consider the force policy on using social media for professional information and engagement purposes.

What social media platforms are used by policing?

What are the benefits and risks of using social media?

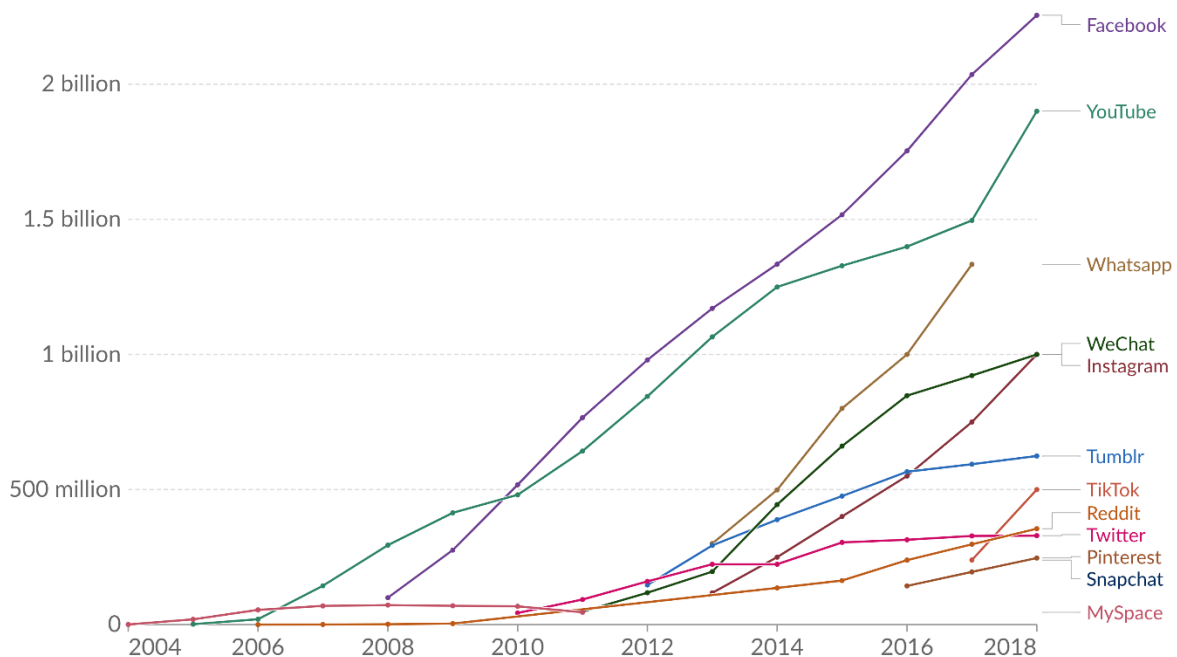
2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Within my current role as a police officer, I am constantly aware of the impact and benefits of social media. Social media use has increased drastically since its inception. The below table shows the increase in various social media platforms (Our World in Data, 2019).

Number of people using social media platforms, 2004 to 2018

Estimates correspond to monthly active users (MAUs). Facebook, for example, measures MAUs as users that have logged in during the past 30 days. See source for more details.



Source: Statista and TNW (2019)

OurWorldInData.org/internet • CC BY

I will review social media usage within the police as a tool to engage whilst providing examples of social medias benefits and negatives. I will also discuss an example that involved using social with an aim of finding a high-risk missing person. I will use the Gibbs Reflective Cycle for reflection (The University of Edinburgh, 2020).

Dealing with missing people plays a big part of a police officer's role. There are over 300,000 missing person reports made to police on a yearly basis and in England and Wales, with someone reported missing every two minutes (Doyle, 2022). These figures show how frequently police deal with missing person cases.

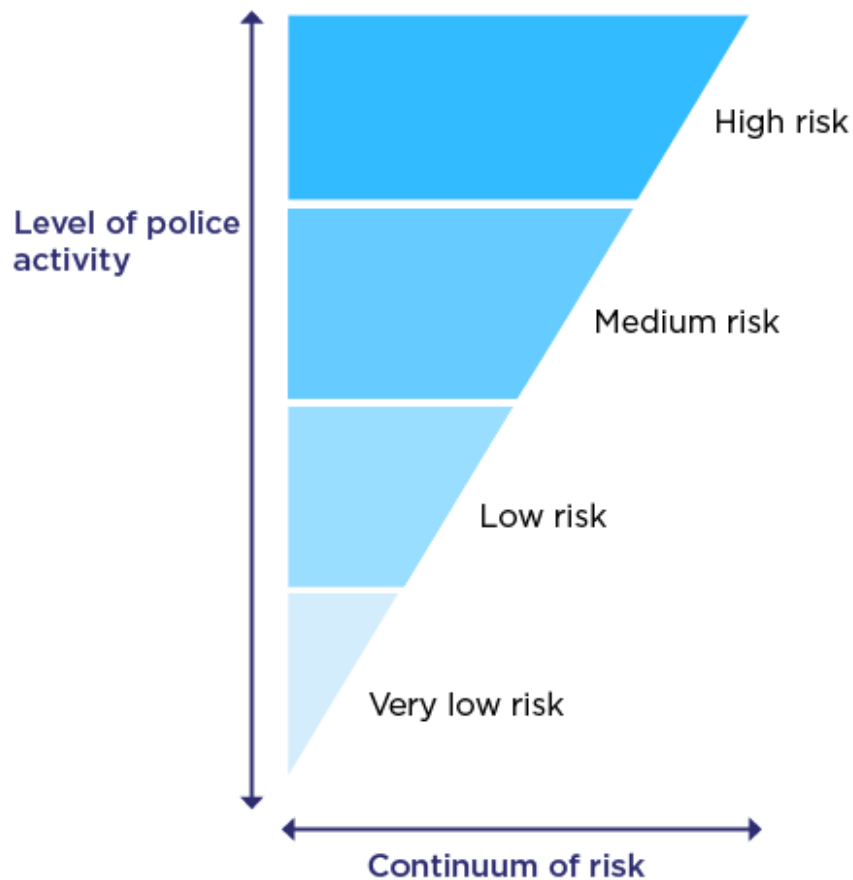
I attended a welfare call for a female who had made concerning comments to her family and who they could not get hold of. People go missing for several reasons. Reasons for people going missing could include runaways, throw aways, push aways, fall aways or take aways (Halford, 2024). After speaking to worried family members, I established that the female had dropped the children off to their fathers and had been struggling with a recent break up. I feel like this would categorise her as a 'push away' due to leaving her family home over family pressures.

The female had called her mother and apologised for not being a better daughter. This caused panic among family members, and no one was able to get access into her property. There were clear warning signs that she had dropped off her children and family also made me aware that her mental health had decreased recently due to the breakup, along with suffering from post-natal depression. Post-natal depression can cause extreme lows in parents. Mind (2024) describes symptoms of post-natal depression as feeling empty, numb, isolated, and suicidal. Knowing this I decided to gain immediate access to the property, due to a concern for the female's immediate welfare.

I made the decision to enter the property under Section 17, Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984. The reason was to save life and limb. After being unable to gain access, I asked for assistance from local firearms units, who can use the lock snapper and replace the lock. This was the least intrusive way to gain entry leaving the least amount of damage. I gained access and after thoroughly searching the property, did not locate the female. Her medication was on the kitchen side, and her passport was located. This was key because it ruled out her leaving the country.

With this information I changed this call from a welfare concern to a missing persons case, due to the risk. As seen below the College of Policing (2016) splits risk from very low to high, with the grading determining the level of police response. In this situation I decided to grade the female as high-risk due to the information passed to me.

Missing definition



Neighbours confirmed the female had left in a vehicle and provided me with a vehicle registration. Considering this and the amount of family members that were attempting to contact the female via phone and social media, I gained permission from immediate family, to use social media to post our concerns for the female.

Considering the vast number of users on social media, it is useful as a tool to reach a wider audience quickly. The use of media coverage can also be beneficial to reach a wider audience. An example of a high-profile media case was Gabby Petito, who was reported missing in 2021. After her disappearance, users of TikTok had viewed the hashtag #gabbypetito over 800 million times, intensifying interest, and media attention (Dana, 2025). Whilst on-going media attention from police, media and the public ended with the finding of Gabby, tragically she had been murdered. Dana also raises the argument that race may have an impact on how much exposure a missing

person has, based on their race or ethnicity. Furey, et, al (2025) also focused on the Gabby Petito case, by specifically focusing on the news coverage compared to other missing women of different ethnic backgrounds. She supported the above argument that people may receive more attention based on their ethnicity and in this case via the media. This shows the importance of treating everyone equally, and whilst social media can be excellent in making a wider audience aware of concerns quickly, it is imperative that it is used fairly and unbiasedly.

I was keen to try and locate the female and requested a social media appeal. There are multiple social media platforms used by members of the public daily. Examples of these include Facebook, YouTube, X (Formally Twitter), Snapchat and Instagram. Along with members of the public, police forces can use social media to engage with their communities. Hu & Lovrich (2019) state that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were the three most common social media platforms used by American police in 2015. A survey found that over 90% of police forces used Facebook, over 70% used twitter and around 40% used YouTube. This shows that social media use can be utilised to reach out to the public by using various platforms.

Cartwright & Shaw (2020) conducted research of resident's perception of police Facebook use. 95% of respondents had seen posts published by their police force, but only 70% of residents followed their local police force. Over 40% of respondents that did not follow their police force, stated this was due to irrelevant content. This supports the point that for social media to be effective it must be engaging. It does however refer to the positive impact social media can have for building relationships. Nearly 90% of the respondents that did follow their local police force on Facebook, reported having their perception positively changed due to posts. This shows that if social media is done right, community relationships can be built.

I considered social media platforms and decided to use Facebook. It is imperative that anything posted to a wide audience by the police, follows strict parameters. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO, 2013) published guidelines for police forces in England, Wales & Northern Ireland to follow. The guidelines looked at the potential benefits and risk which I will review below.

The guideline first reviews potential benefits of using social media. This includes the use by the Neighbourhood policing teams. Social media can help them reach out to previously hard to reach communities, whilst engaging real time with the public when incidents of public concern are happening. Further benefits also include promoting transparency and accountability via the use of social media. Reaching out to communities for support in cases can promote community togetherness. An example of reaching out to communities is the current disappearance of Charlene Hobbs from Cardiff. There have been over ten media appeals, 400 individuals spoken to, over 600 properties visited to conduct enquiries, over 1000 hours of CCTV viewed and over 3000 documents recorded (South Wales Police, 2025). I feel that social media has been used positively to try and engage with the public around Charlene's disappearance. I have seen firsthand the community support for her and when entering various establishments and places that Charlene previously frequented, I have seen posters up asking for information to help find Charlene. This shows that if used properly social media can be a positive driving force to help.

Whilst there are many benefits with social media the guidance also looks at the risk, by categorising this into 5 areas. The first is breaching trust of confidence based on information shared online. Lost confidence based on information being shared, is extremely hard to regain. A recent example of the impact of misinformation shared online was the tragic murder of three young girls in Southport in July 2024. Rumours spread around the reasoning for the murders which resulted in 12 days of rioting across England and Wales (National Police Chief's Council, 2024). This shows the potential consequences of misinformation and how quickly rumours can turn into public disorder.

The second is unauthorised disclosure of personal data and the effect of breaching the Data Protection Act. The Data Protection Act 2018 exists to protect individuals' data and give them more control over what is shared. As a police officer who has access to individuals' personal information when dealing with calls I understand the need for guidelines around Data Protection.

The third is bringing discredit to the police service and includes police officers' behaviour on or off duty, in relation to social media use. Officers who use social media

to commit crime or cause offence, bring negative press and feelings towards the police force. An extreme example of this is Lewis Edwards who is a former South Wales Police officer. Lewis used Snapchat to pose as a teenager to groom young girls between the age of 10 – 16. Lewis was jailed after admitting over 160 offences of child sexual abuse (CPS, 2023). I feel that whilst this behaviour is not commonplace it can cause serious distrust of police amongst communities.

The fourth is revealing personal information which could lead to harassment, corruption, or extortion. Leaking personal information could have profound consequences for people. An example of this is in 2022 when over 18,000 Afghan citizens details were leaked by the British government, who had worked with or for the UK government during the war (Ministry of Defence, 2025). This caused serious security risks for those individuals' details that had been leaked via insecure email. This shows how easily someone's personal information can be leaked and the risk that is constantly posed by this. I always ensure I am conscious of any emails I send.

The fifth is revealing operational material or tactics which could affect investigations. This is self-explanatory as tactics can never be truly beneficial if suspects have prior knowledge or warning.

By focusing on the risks and putting guidance in place I feel that social media can be used for the better, whilst ensuring the police do not fall foul of the laws we try and enforce. I was confident that Facebook was the right platform and that the message needed to be written in a way that prevented panic.

The Police Foundation (2014) focuses on three broad categories when looking at the use of social media in the police. The first is to provide information and focuses on the benefit of sharing specifically target information quickly and cheaply to a wide audience. In this example I was able to share information surrounding the female to not only family members but various members of public that may know her.

The second is engagement within communities and members of the public, enabling relationships to be built. The use of a social media post was successful as shortly after being posted, the female contacted a family member and started open dialogue.

The third is information and intelligence being shared, and the benefit of this being done in real time. As above, due to the information being shared online a response was gained from the female quickly.

Social media can only be beneficial if engagement is there from those who share and receive information. Fernandez, Dickinson & Alani (2017) argue that whilst police forces use social media to improve engagement, studies show that the engagement from the public is infrequent. This shows the importance of engaging correctly with the target audience. Social media posts are ineffective if those they are trying to reach, do not engage. In this scenario the use of social media was beneficial and got the contact we had been trying to make.

The female started messaging family members and we were able to get a rough location of where she was, based on where her phone had last recorded as being used. This gave me a radius of where the female was, based on knowing she was using her phone.

The female was located shortly after sending a photo of her location and was returned to family safe and well.

Evaluating and analysing the situation I managed the concern well and due to quickly raising the alarm as a high-risk missing person, and utilising social media, I was able to track and locate the female safe and well.

In conclusion, social media is a valuable tool that can be used by police to reach wider audiences in real time. It is therefore crucial that clear rules exist to ensure that anything posted, is professional and does not breach Data Protection laws. The benefits must outweigh the risks and posts must be clearly scrutinised before being shared with the public. With the use of social media rising every year, social media will be a tool used by police much more to solve cases, especially when people are missing.

For my action plan, I will continue to use other departments that can help me get positive outcomes.

Word Count - 2180

Task 3

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Leadership and Teamworking

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

Critically evaluate and **evidence** your flexibility in leadership style.

Critically analyse leadership strategies that you have developed to manage a range of different operational situations.

Consider leadership models commonly used in policing.

How were you able to apply a change in leadership style/strategy to reflect changing circumstances?

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Being a police officer requires leadership and teamwork. Leadership can align people in the same direction, allowing them to work together in ever changing situations (McKinsey & Company, 2024). This is prevalent in the police as the situations we find ourselves in are ever changing.

I will review leadership strategies I have developed to manage various situations and how these can change. I will discuss an example whereby I showed leadership

qualities, during a stabbing. I will use the Gibbs Reflective Cycle for reflection (The University of Edinburgh, 2020).

Leadership styles can vary and those at the top of the organisation must lead by example. Leaders within the police may use transactional or transformational leadership to manage staff (Vito, et al, 2014). Transactional leadership is characterised in numerous ways including contingent based rewards, management by exception and acting when problems arise. Focusing on action-based rewards can limit growth and impact engagement. Transactional Leadership can limit individuals' innovative potential, hamper engagement and fail in rapid changing scenarios (Murphy, 2025).

Transformational leadership is characterised by using charisma, inspiration, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation. This form of leadership can be mis-used for self-gain. Transformational Leadership can become pseudo-transformational leadership where leaders abuse the style for selfish purposes (Guo, Cui & O'Brien, 2024). I respond better to transformational leadership, and this gets the best out of me. Whilst it comes with its own drawbacks, this is more suited for my development.

For Leaders to excel they need to be respected their workforce. Hoggett, et al (2019) argues that the direct entry route for leaders to enter leadership roles within the police, is disliked by the peers they lead. The point is made that due to not having a policing background they may be seen as lacking credibility when making decisions. I feel that whilst a great leader inspires those around them and can in-fact draw upon the experience of others, due to the role we are in and scrutiny we face, a basic level of policing could be beneficial to have effective leadership.

Police officers should feel empowered and suitably trained to show leadership qualities, whether they are new recruits or senior management. A leadership programme has been designed to cover areas that help reduce crime and improve performance. These include problem solving, leading high-performance teams, effective communication, decision making skills, team wellbeing, resilience, and challenging unacceptable behaviour (The College of Policing, 2023). It is important

that leadership starts from the bottom. I find myself in many situations where I need to take lead and see it as a positive that leadership from all levels is being invested in.

The example I will discuss where I showed great leadership was during an incident where I responded to a call of a male that had been stabbed by his partner. Due to the potential risk to life and threats of a weapon, I was deployed as a taser carrier.

There are situations in policing where one officer assumes total control. Autocratic leadership works when taking absolute control of a situation is necessary and critical (Corrady, 2021). I was crewed with an officer who was not a taser carrier and therefore I decided that I would adopt an Autocratic leadership approach straight away. Previous experiences around leading others can help within the role. A leaders' conception of how they should behave is based on their prior experiences with leadership, their own characteristics, and their observations of the organisation (London & Sherman, 2021). Prior to joining the police, I had 13 years' experience in managing staff within retail. Due to this, managing situations and taking the lead comes naturally to me.

When responding to any policing incident officers must follow a structure, to ensure outcomes are fair. The College of Policing (2013) has set out the National Decision Model or NDM. This framework is centred around the police 'Code of Ethics' and forms a base for all decision making. The framework consists of five parts that are considered when forming a decision. These are gathering information and intelligence, assessing threat, and risk & developing a working strategy, considering powers and policies, identifying options and contingencies, taking action, and reviewing. In this example the information and intelligence suggested that the victim had been stabbed by his partner and had a wound to the leg. It was unclear at the time as to whether the partner still had the knife and how bad the injury was. I explained to my colleague that the working strategy would be to locate the male immediately to identify the level of injury. I explained I would take lead as a taser officer in-case the subject still had a knife present. I considered my powers and policies available and was conscious I wanted to use the least force possible to achieve my goal of safeguarding the victim and effecting an arrest on the subject. I

was aware that I was covered under Section 24, Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984. This gave me powers to arrest anyone who I had reasonable grounds to suspect had committed the offence. The options were clear to me that if the subject were still there, I would be arresting them and that I would act as soon as practicable.

On arrival I saw a male flagging me down outside. The male approached the driver side of my vehicle. He was clearly distressed and had blood on him, with a cloth wrapped around his bloodied leg. My immediate attention drew to his wellbeing, but I was also aware of the risk posed by whoever had inflicted the injury. I followed the male around the car and asked him to stay still so I could establish the facts. I asked the male repeatedly who had caused the injury and whether they were still in the house, as there was still a substantial risk posed. The male pointed past me and said words to the effect of "It was my girlfriend, she's there." I turned behind me and located a female stood directly behind me with blood on her clothing.

Policing comes with many risks and officers put themselves in danger daily. Surrey Police Foundation (2025) reported that over 55,000 police officers in the UK were assaulted in the past year. As soon as I noticed the female behind me, I felt nervous and scared as I did not know if she had a weapon on her. Fear can cause a multitude of responses and is the bodies reaction to sensing danger. Marschall (2024) splits fear responses into four 'f's. The include fight, flight, freeze or fawn. I took the fight response by immediately arresting the female on suspicion of an offence. Due to visible injuries and the indication that it was caused with malicious intent I arrested the female for Section 18, Grievous Bodily Harm, Offences against the Person Act, 1861.

Situations within policing can change rapidly and requires leaders, who are able to guide those around them. Kippenberger (2002) defines leadership as being split between property and process. Property includes a set of characteristics, patterns of behaviour and personal attributes of the leader, which makes certain people more effective of achieving goals that have been set. Process includes the effort of the person leading to steer others towards a common goal. Further to this, situational factors are discussed whereby there are three intertwining points of interaction that define leadership styles. These involve the character type of the leader and follower,

along with the situation. In this example I was acutely aware that I had less service than my colleague, but as the only taser carrier, I took lead due to the risk of harm and the risk of a weapon. My colleague was happy to follow my lead and understood the reasons for this. The situation itself and the immediate presence of the potentially armed suspect dictated that I had to act fast.

There are various leadership styles that can change based on the situation. Kansas City (2018) details eight common leadership styles that can be used. The first is charismatic behaviours and involves influencing others by acting energetically and relying on personality. I have used this style when I was at a call with a colleague who was in tutorship. Tutorship requires certain actions to be completed such as a stop search. The individual I was with conducted a stop search but forgot the points that had to be relayed before doing so, visibly affecting their confidence. I energetically spurred on the colleague to search another individual. The results of this were that a perfect stop search was conducted, and I could see their confidence return.

The second is innovative behaviour and involves taking control of the entire situation and understanding when something is not working, thus bringing new thinking and action into play. Referring to the example regarding the stabbing, I quickly ascertained that a female officer was needed, to assist in the search of the subject and requested a female colleague to attend. I directed my colleague that was on scene to tend to the victim until ambulance arrived and requested further units to help.

Even when leading, letting colleagues participate in decision making can be beneficial. Democratic leadership can be described as participative leadership where everyone participates in decision making (Cherry, 2024). When further units arrived, I sought advice on how to secure evidence quickly. By adopting a democratic leadership and involving my team who have various levels of service I was able to create a collaborative environment where everyone played a part. The victim was provided first aid until ambulance arrived and the scene where the stabbing had taken place was secured, for evidential purposes.

The third is command and control behaviour and involves following the rules and expecting others to. After taking control of the situation, I switched to this behaviour. I instructed and managed my colleagues to complete various urgent tasks that were required. Although I am not the longest serving officer in my team this adaptation was required as I was managing the situation as it unfolded.

The fourth is laissez-faire behaviour and involves knowing what is going on without being directly involved. An example of this is when other officers have requested me to assist searching for evidence. Whilst not involved in the initial investigation I can assist after and trust that they know exactly what evidence is being sought and why.

The fifth is pace setter behaviour and involves setting exacting standards of oneself and colleagues. An example of this is the de-brief that I conducted with my colleague after the stabbing incident. When reviewing body worn camera footage, I noticed that the suspect spoke to my colleague before following behind me in a blind spot. De-briefing can assist in positive and constructive learning. The College of Policing (2013) recommends following the NDM to pro-actively de-brief where suitable. I conducted a de-brief with my colleague and followed the NDM, discussing risks posed to ourselves and the public around us, by not stopping the female immediately. This emphasised the importance of being aware of my surroundings.

The sixth is servant behaviours and involves putting others before yourself and including the whole team in decision making. An example of this is when I am paired with colleagues who have less service than me and giving them the opportunity to take lead.

The seventh is situational behaviours and involves behaviour matching the readiness of colleagues to complete a task, whilst remaining encouraging. An example of this is reflecting on the de-brief provided to my colleagues after the stabbing incident. Everyone gave their opinion, and positive learning outcomes shared.

The eighth is transformational behaviours and involves teams transforming even when uncomfortable. An example of this is when I lost experienced colleagues and

became one of the more knowledgeable officers on shift. Whilst uncomfortable at first, I feel this has helped me grow.

Leadership styles evolve and change. Adaptation and transformational leadership are beneficial, along with less authoritarian styles of policing (The National Policing Improvement Agency, 2011). Due to the very nature of the role leadership styles need to change to adapt to the scenario faced. I find collaborative leadership over dictating, a more powerful learning style.

Evaluating and analysing the situation, I showed true leadership qualities and was able to adapt to overcome the situation I faced. I was able to identify learning and share this with colleagues.

In conclusion leadership is a trait that is crucial within policing. Whilst at times leadership involves one person taking complete control of everything, without collaborative working between colleagues, leadership styles can fail. No one leadership style suits every occasion and police officers must embrace a chameleon like approach where leadership and teamwork are adapted based on the environment. Being a leader does not require a certain level to be held within an organisation and leadership starts from the first day of a job to the last.

My action plan will consist of always putting myself in a position where I am able to see any potential risks around me as to best manage the situation and reduce the risk of harm to myself or others.

Word Count - 2190

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Coaching, Mentoring, Assessment

Critically reflect upon your three-year probation:

How have you benefited from mentoring and coaching?

How has it helped you to meet personal, professional and organisational goals?

How has it aided you to learn, develop and perform in the workplace?

Consider relevant coaching and mentoring definitions along with current coaching and mentoring theories used in policing.

How do you provide and receive feedback?

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Reflecting upon my probation within South Wales Police, I have learnt new skills, whilst becoming more academically astute with my studies. Incorporating work-integrated learning, along with evolving education is a challenge within police forces in the UK (Leek, 2020). I feel that learning the role of a police officer has been particularly challenging, however I have been able to understand the expectations in greater detail due to the degree that I have been completing alongside my role.

Having a balance between work and home life is important. Work life balance can be defined as a person's ability to meet their expectations in work, family commitments and other non-work responsibilities (Parkes & Langford, 2008). This

is particularly relevant in policing due to the very nature of the role. I have found balancing learning the role as a full-time police officer, alongside completing a degree and being present at home hard. Having coping strategies as a police officer is important. Acknowledging different emotions, writing down and talking about feelings can be useful coping mechanisms (Mind, 2022). I keep a diary of my experiences in work and feel like this helps me as a coping mechanism. I also feel that once I close my diary for the day this helps me psychologically shut off work for that period and I can focus on my home life.

I will reflect upon my three-year probationary period and review how I have benefited from mentoring and coaching. I will provide numerous examples of how I have learnt from coaching I have had and given. I will use the Gibbs Reflective Cycle for reflection (The University of Edinburgh, 2020).

Due to the complex nature of the role and the exposure to stressful and violent situations, on-going training is important. Police receive up to 22 weeks classroom-based training, first aid, personal training, driving training and are provided a tutor for three months (Join the Police, 2025). On-going training is crucial to my learning. Since joining the role I have become skilled in emergency response driving, am an authorised taser carrier and am a trained police support unit officer (PSU) to aid with public order. These skills help me feel more equipped in dealing with potential hostile situations. I have also been exposed to regular refresher training which helps keep me upskilled to support the public when they need me the most.

Being coached and mentored within the police can be key to personal development. Coaching can be described as a personal human development process that can achieve desirable and sustainable outcomes personally and for the organisation worked for. Further to this coaching can improve satisfaction in a role, well-being and achieved goals (Mühlberger, et al, 2023). From a policing perspective coaching helps when managing challenging scenarios as they arise. Coaching can help develop careers, improve leadership, work effectively with team members, understand strengths and areas for improvement, solve problems, deal with challenging situations, and improve self-confidence (College of Policing, 2025). I feel that coaching has been imperative to my personal development. An example

where coaching has benefited me was when I was coached during the arrest of a male suspected of rape. Due to the suspect being within an evidential window period, time was against me. When arresting the male, I confirmed he was under arrest and that I would explain the reason to him when he was on his own. I made this decision as he was with a current partner within the house and announcing that he was under arrest on suspicion of rape, may create a hostile environment. This was something coached to me from my tutor and is something I have done ever since, to mitigate the risk to those around me during the most serious of allegations. As per the scenario above I feel that this subtle way of being coached on dealing with challenging incidents has increased my self-confidence and assisted me in dealing with problematic situations.

During my time within the police I have collaborated with various team members, some of these who have much more operational experience than me. When working together, observing what other people do and providing feedback are linked to effective coaching (Connor, 2017). I feel that I have learnt a lot from team members experiences and knowledge that they have shared with me. Absorbing knowledge to share with others is extremely valuable. Absorbing knowledge can be described as being a sponge and soaking in knowledge from colleagues, whilst maintaining a professional curiosity (McFee, 2024). From my very first day I had professional curiosity and on my first ever shift, I was coached through a stop search of an individual.

Absorbing knowledge and being mentored from colleagues who have more experience can be beneficial to personal development. Mentoring can be described as a relationship between two individuals who share expertise, improve knowledge, and support each other (Jacobs, 2022). Within policing mentoring includes more experienced colleagues supporting and guiding colleagues with less experience.

Mentoring within police can be described as a more knowledgeable and experienced officer providing support, guidance, and advice to aid the development and progress of a less experienced colleague. This includes identifying when support and guidance is required, sharing useful networks with colleagues, and

empowering colleagues (College of Policing, 2025). I have been mentored whilst in tutorship and since I have achieved independent patrol status.

An example of this was during a call I attended whereby I requested assistance due to a male trying to make off. On trying to detain the male he attempted to flee and when I stopped him, he grabbed hold of me. I was outnumbered and initially unable to reach any of my appliances due to myself and the male grabbing hold of each other. Being a police officer involves showing courage during dangerous situations to safeguard those around you. The mission of the police involves pro-actively preventing crime whilst detecting it. Reassuring the communities served and providing a first-class service for victims of crime is essential (South Wales Police, 2025). I was faced with an individual who clearly wanted to get away from police and was outnumbered 5 to 2 with my colleague. I was astutely aware that there was a member of the public in a car close by and that I needed to prevent anyone getting hurt. I feel that through various coaching and understanding of South Wales Police missions, visions and values that I needed to show courage in this moment to protect myself, my colleague, and the public.

My colleague came to my aid to get the individual off me. I drew my taser as my colleague and I were outnumbered, and the situation was escalating fast. The male was eventually arrested and after the incident I asked my previous tutor to review my body worn video footage with me for learning, as they had not been present and I valued their opinion. Reflecting after an incident is key to learning and growing as an individual. Reflective activity can be seen as a skill that helps assist in personal learning and future professional development (Copley, 2011).

I received valuable feedback from my previous tutor and the discussion centred around what went well and why, what could be improved on and what lessons were learnt for next time. Reviewing what went well, the male was arrested without anyone being hurt, and controlled substances were seized. The use of drawing taser enabled me to control the situation quicker and keep my colleague and I safe. The main lessons learnt were to always specify where you are when requesting immediate assistance. Due to me actively wrestling with the male subject when I asked for assistance from other officers I did not specify where I was, causing a

delay in officers reaching me. If dealing with the situation again I would immediately request assistance from officers providing my exact location, based on the number of individuals I faced.

Coaching requires different skills that can be used to coach each other. Four key skills include active listening, being creative, utilising spaces, places and managing pace and using props (Turner, 2023). Active listening is key to the role of a police officer, not only in the role itself but to communicate effectively with each other as colleagues. Active listening is key a skill in communication that includes rapport building (College of Policing, 2021). Active listening is always something I do when supporting colleagues and I have noticed this improves communication. An example of active listening was during a call I attended with a colleague who was in younger service than me. The incident involved a male in charge of a vehicle, who was suspected of being under the influence of drink. The male was required to provide a specimen of breath as per Section 6, Road Traffic Act, 1988. My colleague I was with had never operationally used a roadside breath test before and after listening to this I coached him through the process.

Due to the very nature of the role coaching cannot always be planned. An example of where managing spaces and places within the police is during emergency driving training. Receiving structured coaching whilst learning to respond to emergency situations can be a useful learning approach that offers value (Passmore & Townsend, 2012). I feel that having taken part in police driver coaching, coaching aided me personally and I left the course feeling like an overall more competent driver. Considering I have been driving for 14+ years it was refreshing to learn separate ways to read the road and perceive danger. I feel that the course utilised spaces and places well and was structured as such that although the environment was live and unpredictable, the journeys taken were planned to maximise learning experiences. This included lane driving to learn limit points and rural driving to enhance learning.

Using props can be a beneficial way to enhance learning. I feel this is crucial and have experienced firsthand the benefits of utilising props and kit. As a trained Police Support Unit (PSU) officer I have undertaken extensive training involving the use of

props. These include wooden blocks and the use of petrol bombs to provide realism to the training environment. This along with the sheer level of kit worn provided key learning and helped reinforce how important having and wearing the correct kit was.

When responding to policing incidents the situations faced change all the time. Due to this working together to solve problems is important. Sharing knowledge enhances existing knowledge and improves the capacity to produce creative solutions (Carmeli, Gelbard & Reiter-Palmon, 2013). An example of working together to creatively solve a problem was during an incident where a mother had accidentally left her keys in her car and the car had locked. Within the car was her baby and she was unable to get into the car. The colleague I was with considered whether immediate access was needed but the baby could be seen sleeping and did not seem uncomfortable. After working together, we found an emergency locksmith online that was able to attend on an emergency and gain access to car. This was deemed the less intrusive method and with clear sight on the baby who was sleeping, prevented any damage to the car, and scaring the child inside. The mother was extremely grateful and thanked myself and my colleague for our help.

Whilst coaching can have an immediate impact individually everyone has a duty to coach each other, with the aim of evolving the organisation. Developing standards nationally and providing guidance to follow, increases the capability of the workforce (College of Policing, 2025). There is clear guidance and structure to help align individual coaching with the organisation's goals for the future.

Evaluating and analysing my experience, I feel I have gained a lot of experience that has enabled me to grow through coaching from my peers. I have been able to be upskilled to give me further tools to do my job and have also learnt from experiences I could have done better with.

In conclusion I have benefited from coaching and mentoring which in turn has helped me support team members with less service. Through my three-year probation I have evolved from a police officer that required a tutor, to a police officer with independent patrol status. Various training and coaching have enabled me to be a taser carrier, emergency response driver and respond to public order. Coaching and

mentoring is ever evolving and is crucial to the maintenance of an efficient individual and team, with a shared goal of being truly equipped to support the community they serve.

As part of my action plan, I will continue to grow from coaching with the aim of being a better police officer and will always critically review my work, with the assistance of others.

Word Count - 2138

Bibliography

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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