

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:

Within this essay, I will critically evaluate the strategic role of the College of Police in professionalising policing in the U.K. The College of Police (COP) was founded in 2012 to unify the training, standards and approach of police forces in England and Wales and ensure high levels of professionalism amongst police officers. (National Police Chiefs' Council, 2013). I will evidence how I am working towards fulfilling the role of a modern professional police officer, by reflecting on an incident of repeated suicide attempts as a form of anti-social behaviour, which is illustrative of the nature of the type of incident the modern police force responds to. I will address how the COP shaped my response. I will critically reflect upon my final year of probation and how my role as police officer has developed. I will use Borton's reflective tool to structure my reflection throughout. (Borton, 1970).

Professionalism is defined as the conduct and qualities required as essential for professional practice. This includes a combination of skills, knowledge, competence and behaviour, as well as core values such as integrity, honesty and ethics. It would include the ability to communicate and work with colleagues and designated groups including the public. (Oxford Reference, 2023). The COP is the professional body for the police forces in England and Wales, and it has a tripartite purpose. Firstly, the COP sets the standards that police need to meet. These include, but are not limited to, major investigations, firearms,

counter terrorism, public order, public protection, stop and search, undercover and policing elections. Secondly, the COP collates an evidence base of effective response and practise to reduce crime. This covers crimes such as drink driving, knife crime and domestic violence for example. Its third role is the professional development of police officers and staff to ensure their continuing improvement, with access to the best training, skills and expertise. (COP, 2023, A). The police force in England and Wales consists of 43 different forces in total. (Police Success, 2023). Consequently, the role of the COP is essential in ensuring consistency in practice across those forces. The COP ensures that consistency by taking responsibility for the training, development, qualifications and skills of police officers. In its *Five Year Strategy* the COP set out its vision and plan to quip a modern police force with the necessary skills and training. (COP, 2014). Central to this is peer support and self-evaluation using tools, such as Continuous Improvement Self-Assessment Matrix (CI SAM). (COP, 2022C). *Policing Vision 2025* explains how local policing will respond to society's diverse and complex needs, with specialist capability to react to new and evolving crime, with an effective partnership business model. (NPCC, 2016).

In 2016 the COP developed the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF). In 2020 the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) was introduced. This allows entry into the police force while gaining a degree in policing concurrently. For candidates already holding a degree, the Degree Entry Holder Programme (DEHP) is available. A further entry route is to those who hold a Professional Policing Degree (PPD). (COP, 2023, B). I personally entered Gwent Police under the PCDA route. This has both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages include a through grounding in the pertinent knowledge and standards required for the role; I will obtain a nationally recognised degree funded by my employer; I have the opportunity to learn and earn; gaining skills from daily practice; and benefitting from the advice of more experienced colleagues, as well as a dedicated mentor for 12 weeks during my initial deployment as an officer. A further advantage includes an increase in my knowledge of police matters from an academic perspective, and the opportunity to reflect on my practice, which enables me to become a better officer. I also had the opportunity to undertake attachments to other sections in the police force, which provided experiences which were transferred to my own daily working, as well as potentially offering further career avenues to pursue in the future. Disadvantages include the time pressure of completing academic work while undertaking a highly demanding and potentially stressful role. Finding time to complete research for academic assignments on rest days is challenging, when time is needed to rest after shift working and long hours.

The COP itself has recognised areas for further development in its self-evaluation in *Fundamental Review of the College of Policing*. Recognised areas of good practice include to “move evidence-based policing from an academic theory into an operational reality in many forces” (COP, 2022, p10). The establishment of the “What Works” centre; the work on Policing Futures; the setting of clear standards by the Authorised Professional Practice (APP); the standard setting, training and accreditation it has set in areas of high risk policing such as firearms; Oscar Kilo (National Police Wellbeing Service); access to College products; cooperative working between college staff and force staff; and the passionate dedication of College staff. (COP, 2022). Negative areas targeted for improvement include a better understanding of the role of the College. “It is too often silent on the big issues faced by policing, and does too little to use its role as an independent voice to explain policing and its

approach to the public.” (COP, 2022, p.13). It was also judged to lack the mechanisms to engage with front line staff and understand their perspective. It recognised that there was a perception by rank and file officers that the COP was of use to senior officers, and those seeking promotion only. Further areas for recognised improvement included better “coordination between the learning outcomes policing needs and the products available.” (COP, 2022, p. 14).

The role of a police officer has changed substantially in the late 20th century. Previously rooted in the Peelian principles of preventing crime and disorder, the role of the modern police officer has expanded, and is additionally now substantially concerned with the protection of the public, and has moved beyond policing by consent, to policing in partnership. (Home Office, 2010). As society has changed and developed the police have increasingly been engaged with both new types of crime, particularly involving technology, such as cybercrime, but also with a new perspective on other offences – such as domestic violence, or racially aggravated incidents. Increasingly, the police deal with social difficulties; for example, the police frequently deal with those in mental health crisis. (HMICFRS, 2018). This is reflected in my personal experience. The majority of my caseload consists of incidents of domestic violence, anti-social behaviour and criminal activity by teenagers and responding to mental health crisis calls. For example, a recurring incident that I encounter, involves a female teenager making repeated suicide attempts, at a motorway bridge, contacting police and stating she feels suicidal and intends to jump. She will have self-harmed and stated she has taken a painkiller overdose. The female teenager has no familial support and is in the care of the Local Authority. The female has a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) in place, which is designed to address the most serious and persistent anti-social individuals, where their behaviour has resulted in them receiving a conviction. (Sentencing Council, 2023). During this recurring incident my response is shaped by the National Decision Model (NDM) (COP, 2013). In Policing Vision 2025 guidance is given to deal with mental health crisis and with potential suicidal incidents. (NPCC, 2016). As the first part of the NDM, gathering information and intelligence, while on route to the incident, I enquired for any recent previous mental health calls, and the outcome of these, asked for the on duty mental health professional (AMP) to be made aware of the incident, and asked for any warning markers on the female. The Criminal Attempts Act 1981 defines attempted suicide as more than merely preparatory to the commission of the offence, including being “proximate” in time and place to the lethal method. (COP, 2023C) Consequently, despite the CBO order, I followed the established procedures. My first priority was her safety. As part of the NDM I assessed the threat and risk, and developed a working strategy. The risk to the female was either falling or jumping, and I coordinated colleagues to manage the risk. Colleagues in Roads Policing Specialist Operations Unit were alerted to stop traffic on the dual carriageway, and the Fire Service asked to attend to use their specialist equipment to reach the female. Motorway bridge attempted suicides are very personnel and multi-agency intensive. (COP, 2023D). I engaged with the female verbally. The communication strategies I employed included speaking in a calm reassuring voice, observing her body language and tone of voice, and being empathetic to her situation (COP,2021). I used Listen, Empathy, Ask, Paraphrase, Summarise – LEAPS strategies (COP, 2020). I used paraphrasing and summary particularly to probe and gain further understanding, using a variety of open and closed questions. While communicating with the female, as part of assessing the risk to herself, I also questioned her on her self-harm cuts, asking about the implement she used

(clean or dirty) and visually assessed the cut depth and level of bleeding, while coordinating with the Ambulance Service. Previous experience of the female, and her reluctance to engage with officers, indicated the need to use a change of face procedure and I requested a trained negotiator to attend. While colleagues continued to engage with the female I started assessing the powers and policies available to me during this incident. I contacted the AMP to gain specialist mental health advice. They advised the CBO comes with power of arrest, and that I needed to decide if the appropriate approach was detention under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act (if her suicide attempt is perceived as a genuine mental health crisis and that she needs an immediate Mental Health Assessment in order to Safeguard her) or to detain her under Section 5 of the Capacity Act (tacking into account her use of painkillers) or alternatively to arrest the female as in breach of her CBO as one of the conditions of the Order is not to be found on any bridge. A further option was to ascertain if the female was willing to engage with Mental Health professionals and receive their help voluntarily. Following her safe removal from harm, I had identified potential options for the next step. I managed to engage with the female verbally and persuade her to leave the bridge. I made the decision to arrest her, in conjunction with conversations with the AMP, the on duty sergeant and other colleagues on scene. The CBO was specifically put in place due to her prolific potential bridge jumping incidents, which the Mental Health Service had assessed as not intentional suicide attempts. I then took the female to the hospital to have her self-harm wounds treated and her medical fitness assessed. Following this the female was conveyed to the Custody Unit where her detention was authorised. Throughout this incident I employed collaborative working, within my own force and with partner agencies, as outlined in the Competency and Values Framework. (COP, 2016).

Unfortunately, while my response managed the immediate risk to the individual, as the suicide attempts are a form of anti-social behaviour, in the long-term my actions do not address the fundamental issues for this individual. It is probable the behaviour will be repeated. This is also reflective of modern policing, where the police aid in crisis those whose needs are not being met by other agencies. This incident is also reflective of the difference in my role now I have reached my third year of probation. Now I am the experienced officer on response, expected to take the lead and run investigations, as I did in this incident. Previously, a more experienced officer would have delegated a role to me in this incident, where now I am delegating more inexperienced officers, coordinating the response and directing officers and partner agencies, while decision making. In the current climate many officers do not stay on response long-term, therefore as a three-year probationer I have become one of the more experienced officers. This has developed me as an individual, allowing my decision and leadership skills to grow.

In conclusion, the COP has standardised and professionalised my role as a modern police officer, and my response to modern policing incidents. The PCDA has structured a professional level of knowledge, setting out the required skills and provided an avenue of advancement. The COP has recognised a need to continually develop alongside changes in society. With increasing and continually evolving demands upon the police force, it needs to consequently continually develop its own response strategies, in order to equip officers with the skills and training to respond effectively. As a modern police officer I need to have access to continuing professional development, in order to be able to continually adapt and

change to fluctuating demand. The COP enables this process and allows me to become a better police officer.

Word Count: 2145 words.

**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 this essay, I will critically evaluate the use of social media as a means of informing and engaging with the community and promoting policy initiatives. Social media can be defined as a method of digital interaction which allows the creation, sharing or exchanging of ideas or information in an online community. (Oxford, 2023, B). This contrasts with the traditional media platforms of radio, television or newspapers. I will critically evaluate the use of social media as a method of informing and engaging with the community through my own practice. Gwent Police force operate a specific team to promote policy initiatives through social media, therefore, I can only evaluate this from a non-personal perspective. I will critically address my own work use of social media in missing person appeals, to appeal for witnesses to a crime, and to notify the public of road closures following a road traffic collision. I will use Borton's reflective tool to structure my reflection throughout. (Borton, 1970).

Social media is commonly understood to refer to specific online platforms. Some platforms are more suitable than others for informing and engaging with the community or to promote policy initiatives. Gwent Police use Facebook, Instagram, X (formally Twitter), TikTok and YouTube. (Latham, 2020). Previously the dissemination of information was through traditional means such as posters, newspapers, television and radio. However, the rise in popularity of social media, coupled with its unique features, have made its use a necessity for police. Social media differs from traditional media specifically with the enablement of two-way communication, through likes, comments, reactions and reposts. Traditional media information exchange only supports one-way communication. While

traditional media has a wide audience, social media can target specific groups. Social media is also able to incorporate a range of formats – documents, text, video, audio, graphics etc. (Police Foundation 2014). The UK currently has 57.1 million active social media users which equates to 84.4% of the population. (Johnson, 2023). An online police presence is now perceived as a fundamental necessity, comparable to walking the beat. (Keane, N, cited in Police Foundation, 2014). “In a consent-based policing system engagement is crucial in building public trust and confidence” and social media facilitates engagement, enables relationship building, as well as intelligence and information gathering. Additionally, social media allows officers to respond in “real-time”, show greater transparency and accountability, and engage with hard to reach groups. (Police Foundation, 2014, p.2). In short, police use social media to provide information; for engagement; and for intelligence and investigation. (Police Foundation, 2014). The ability of social media to be responsive in real-time is especially useful in times of civil disorder, and as part of a disaster management response. (Police Foundation 2014). As part of information and intelligence gathering, police monitor targeted social media sites and groups, known for potential criminal or anti-social activity. (Police Foundation, 2014). Social media also allows the public to understand what is being done by the police, both as a daily activity and in response to specific incidents. This can make the police more visible in the community – for example posts on PSOs patrolling raise awareness for those who have not physically seen them. This contributes to building trust and relationships. Police can show organisational content on how the Force is being run, and promote their response. Social media can also act as crime prevention – raising public awareness of certain anti-criminal drives, may dissuade potential crime or anti-social behaviour.

However, social media is not without disadvantages. These include getting the balance of tone and information correct. For example, police dog videos gather a lot of positivity, and a high percentage of likes, increasing engagement. (Instagram, 2023). However, cute dog videos may leave the public with the impression the police are not working hard on “real” crime. Another risk of social media is that in being instant and responsive, any mistakes or misinformation are immediately broadcast, are difficult to control and widely exposed. Further problems include having the personnel to sift through a large amount of public responses for pertinent information, during critical incidents for example. There is a lack of consistency between forces, with each adopting its own social media policy. (Police Foundation 2014). Gwent Police have their own Social Media Policy, empowering officers to use social media “safely, effectively and appropriately” to ensure social media works “for” not “against us”, in a way that reflects the Code of Ethics, and Gwent Police values, and is compliant with the Human Rights Act and Welsh Language Standards. (Noyes, 2022). This policy responds to another general area of concern, in that any social media output reflects the professionalism of the police, and is fair, impartial and line with the Code of Ethics. Gwent Police’s force policy document, *Social Media Equality Impact Assessment* ensures it complies with impartiality and equality requirements. (Wesson, 2022). It must be further noted that the public can only receive this communication if they engage with the social media sites. Older persons, for example, are less likely to engage with sites like TikTok or X (formally Twitter) and unless users are following a Force they will not see posts, even if they

are engaging with those platforms. Police also need to continually adapt their approach as society and technology evolves. (Police Foundation 2014). Additionally, within Wales, Welsh Government legislation states that all communication by public bodies be bilingual, and consequently, police forces need the capacity to communicate in both languages. (Welsh Government, 2022).

I have utilised social media to assist in missing persons enquires. The first case was a high risk adult male. Police were called to an address following a report of a domestic violence incident, where the male had threatened his partner with a knife. In response to the incident, and in attempt to locate the male, who had left the premises, an area search was carried out by officers, a Firearms unit, a dog unit, and the National Police Air Service (NPAS) were deployed. The male had a history of extreme self-harm and suicide attempts. He also had markers for violence. Information gathered also stated he had doused himself in petrol, held a lighter to himself and threatened to kill himself. The self-harm markers and the suicide threat, coupled with the inability to locate him, resulted in the male being classed as a high risk missing person. A missing person is defined as high risk when "The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely." (Goodchild, 2020).

Consequently, it was decided that a public appeal for information was an appropriate course of action, as one of the lines of enquiries being progressed. First step initially, is to obtain permission for this from the next of kin. I was tasked with creating the detail to be approved by an Inspector and Corporate Communications. A social and media appeal was consequently created following the detail I provided. The information provided to the Inspector to decide if it was suitable for a media appeal to be created, included name, age, address, description, where last seen - time and date, frequented areas, and a photograph. This information is used to decide if an appeal is a suitable course of action, all this information may not be included in the appeal itself. The information was approved, and Corporate Communications created a media appeal to be placed on Gwent Police's Facebook account. The appeal proved successful, generated a high level of response, and the male was found and arrested a few days later, following responses by a member of the public responding to the Facebook appeal. Negatively, the appeal brought in such a large amount of public responses, it became difficult to validate them all, and respond to potential sightings with officer follow-up. This then generated further work in analysing and prioritising the public responses, and consequently use of officer time and personnel, following leads that may or may not have been productive.

Another occasion I used social media to assist in a missing person appeal was for a missing male child. The child had been missing from home for several days, and was at an increased risk due to his age – 15 years old. There was no catalyst incident prior to his disappearance, however, he had a history of prior short term disappearances, where he had resurfaced in the local area with friends. All missing persons under 18 years old would be categorised at least medium risk, due to their age. As there were no other indications to raise the risk beyond medium risk, this was the category of risk applied as most appropriate. A person is categorised at medium risk when "The risk of harm to the subject or public is assessed as likely but not serious." (Goodchild, 2020). As he has been absent for several days, the most

appropriate next line of enquiry was to conduct a media appeal. For a child media appeal, written permission from the person with parental responsibility has to be obtained prior to any media appeal. I gained written parental permission, obtained the information, which was approved by an Inspector and passed to Corporate Communications. Again, public information generated via Facebook assisted in locating the child. Unfortunately, Facebook also generated negative and unhelpful public responses. These included comments that the individual had frequently gone missing, therefore family must be to blame, which potentially could inflame tensions. Additionally, friends of the missing child began a running commentary, including posting threats to members of the public who genuinely tried to help, for “snitching”. Such commentary can also detract from the appeal itself, if allowed to gain momentum. All commentary posted by the public needs to be monitored, not only to glean information, but to shut down potentially harmful or inciting statements. This then takes up further police time and personnel.

Dependent upon the nature of the incident, the response procedure in regard to social media usage varies. I have also used social media as a communication tool to inform the public of a road closure. When using social media to provide information for incidents such as a road closure announcement, the procedure is to notify the control room of the closure, and allocated staff in the control room post the information on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter). Following a road traffic accident (RTA), where a car was driven down the wrong lane of a dual carriageway resulting in a head on collision, the road needed to be closed. Both vehicle occupants suffered life changing injuries, and partner agencies of Ambulance and Fire were in attendance. Consequently, the road was closed for a number of hours. The Road Traffic Collision Team needed to assess the scene, following the removal of the vehicle occupants to hospital. Social media provided an ideal platform to inform the public of the road closure, and reduce consequent traffic congestion and disruption, allowing drivers to be aware of delays and plan alternative routes. Unfortunately, it is not possible to ascertain to what degree the social media information raised awareness and reduced traffic congestion, only that it is probable it did so.

I have also used social media to appeal for witnesses to a crime to come forward. The crime was theft of power tools from a vehicle. All other avenues of enquiry had been exhausted; the offender was not known to the victim, there was no CCTV capturing the incident, no identified witnesses, and the stolen property had not resurfaced in outlets such as pawn or cash generator shops. I therefore posted a media appeal on Gwent Police Facebook account, going through Corporate Communications and the Press Office. Unfortunately, this did not generate any further lines of enquiry. Social media does not always produce positive results. It is also difficult to evaluate the preventative aspect of social media. Within Gwent Police certain officers are social media trained, enabling them to post independently to promote police initiatives. A colleague, for example, posted a picture of a seized vehicle, warning that vehicles driven without insurance or MOT would be confiscated. This post outlined the consequences of driving illegally, and promoted a force initiative of safe and legal driving. It generated a large amount of “likes” and positivity from the local community. Therefore, while its preventative nature cannot be measured its success in building

relationships and raising awareness of policy initiatives and police response can be measured.

In conclusion, while social media is an essential tool in the police arsenal, it cannot be the only one. A balance is needed between social media and other forms of communication. Police must be aware that only users who have decided to follow their accounts on social media platforms will access the information posted in those platforms. However, with societies increasing reliance on social media as a form of communication, it is essential the police utilise it to inform and engage with the community, and promote police initiatives. Social media uniquely fosters engagement and relationship building via two-way communication. As my personal experience demonstrates, the use of social media significantly progressed one case with a positive outcome. Social media is also not without its disadvantages, which must be carefully managed with force policies to ensure consistency, impartiality and equality, and ensure legitimate purpose.

Word count: 2200 words.

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:

Within this essay, I will critically evaluate and evidence my flexibility in leadership style. Leadership style can be defined as the way an individual uses their personality traits, experience and learned behaviours to maximise and produce effective team performance. (The Open University, 2023). All police officers are expected to be leaders as an intrinsic nature of the role. How that leadership is displayed varies according to rank, responsibility, circumstance, individuality and chosen leadership strategy and style. The ability to select an appropriate leadership style for any given scenario can result in improved communication and team cohesion. I will critically analyse my deployment of a variety of leadership strategies I have developed to manage a range of different operational situations. Strategies can be defined as the plan or method used to achieve an aim. (Oxford Reference, 2024). Leadership strategies are the plans or methods used to instruct, motivate or inspire followers to achieve an aim. I will use Borton's reflective tool to structure my reflection throughout. (Borton, 1970).

All police officers need to be leaders and display leadership qualities irrespective of rank. When dealing with members of the public police officers take on a leadership role, and the responsibility to manage a diverse range of challenging circumstances, in their remit of protecting the public. Every incident is unique, no incident is static but constantly evolving, and require the officer to lead by organising, managing resources, making critical judgements and evaluations, to have a positive attitude, be versatile and open minded, and

to learn from past experiences and be reflective. Leadership theoreticians have identified qualities such as emotional intelligence, systems thinking and the ability to learn as essential characteristics of leaders. A variety of models exist from the 3 strands of authenticity, empathy and adaptability to models with multiple qualities. Theoreticians have argued that leadership behaviours are more important than leadership characteristics. (Chow, Salleh, Ismail, 2019).

The police force is a hierarchical organisation with different levels of leadership dependent upon role. The police structure in the UK is set by the Police Act 1966. The police force recognises 5 levels of leaders. Level 1 leaders are service deliverers and include Police Constable, Special Constable, Police Community Support Officers and Specialist Practitioner. Level 2 Leaders are team or technical leaders, and include Sergeant, Team Leader, First Line Manager, Technical Lead. Level 3 leaders are manager or expert advisors, and include Chief Inspector, Inspector, Specialist Manager and Expert Advisor. Level 4 leaders are service function leaders, and include Chief Superintendent, Superintendent and Service/ Function Leader. Level 5 leaders are force leaders, and include Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable, Assistant Chief Constable and Executive Staff. (COP, 2023E). Within these hierarchical ranks of leadership are different leadership expectations, set out in stages.

Stage 1 sets out the leadership levels for constables and staff with equivalent levels of responsibility. Stage 2 leadership standards are for first-line leaders; Stage 3 for mid-level leaders; Stage 4 for senior leaders and Stage 5 for executive leaders. As a constable there are 15 leadership standards to adhere to, which were created in line with the Code of Ethics and the Competency and Values Framework. (COP 2023c). Much of the Foundation level leadership requirements are connected to leading by example, in performing the role in line with standards on professional behaviour, inclusive working, performing the role with fairness, respect, integrity and accountability etc. These leadership standards include demonstrating leadership as a constituent part of effective team working. Leadership at this level of policing involves leadership as part of rapid problem solving in response to a diverse range of incidents. A strategy of response needs to be decided upon, and each constituent member of the team lead the effective deployment of their actions. In order to develop leadership at different levels the National Centre for Police Leadership (NCPL) provides a development programme to deliver consistent standards. (COP, 2023D).

Leadership style is the way an individual combines their personality, experience and learned behaviours to maximise team production and performance. Leadership style is personal to an individual but can also be categorised into types. Autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire are primary styles of leadership recognised by Kurt Lewin. (The Open University, 2023). More modern models identify numerous categories of leadership style, including transformational, bureaucratic, transactional, and others, each with distinct advantages and disadvantages. (Nickerson, 2023). Consequently, an effective leader is one who can transition between styles dependent upon circumstance and need. Equally, leaders need to effectively motivate or inspire their followers. Path-goal theory examines how leaders motivate their followers in order to reach specific targets or goals. It identifies four leadership behaviours. The directive style is clear and specific, with targeted and tracked expectations; the supportive style fosters a positive working environment by prioritising followers' welfare and needs; the participative style involves followers in the decision

making process and is open to followers input; the achievement-orientated style sets achievable targets for followers to meet. (Nickerson, 2023)

I have evaluated the following incident to examine my leadership. A 999 call was received from a female in distress and screaming for assistance. Upon officers arriving at the scene the female was found to be distressed, intoxicated and difficult to engage with. She repeatedly asked for help but was unable to explain the circumstances around why she needed help, or what sort of help she needed. Throughout the incident I framed my decision making process using the National Decision Model (NDM). (College of Policing, 2013). On observation of the property while engaging with the female, signs of a disturbance were evident, with chunks of the female's hair visible on the floor. The female refused to engage with any of the male officers. Therefore, using a directive leadership style, I made the decision that the male officers should step back, to enable communication with the female. The female then engaged with me as the only female officer present. When gathering information from her, I used a series of open questions to determine her account of the incident, followed by closed questions to ascertain specific points. I ensured I actively listened to pick up key information and that my body language was con-frontational. (Oxburgh, Mykleburst, and Grant, 2010, p.48). I used LEAPS strategies - Listen, Empathise, Ask, Paraphrase, Summarise, to gain further understanding of the situation. (College of Policing, 2020, Conflict Management Skills).

The female disclosed that she had been physically attacked by her partner, including dragging her along the floor by her hair and pulling it out. The female's behaviour then escalated and she became verbally aggressive, screaming and shouting. I attempted to de-escalate the situation, applying calming strategies such as suggesting using breathing techniques. However, the female's distress escalated and she began to hyperventilate stating she couldn't breathe. Having assessed the situation, I made the decision an ambulance should be called. Using a directive leadership style I then delegated a colleague to call an ambulance while I continued to attempt to calm and reassure the female. While waiting for the ambulance to arrive the female displayed behaviour which indicated she was suffering from a mental health episode. I lead by example continuing to speak to her in a calm, reassuring voice, suggesting breathing techniques. I ascertained she had an inhaler for asthma and I directed a colleague to locate it. Officers and I were working in a collaborative and participative manner, as an effective team, although as the main communicator with the female, I was acting as the lead in the decision making process.

However, the female's anxiety increased. After screaming and swearing at officers to leave, she ran upstairs, stating she was going to harm herself and locked herself in the bedroom with three large XL Bully dogs. She stated that if officers tried to enter the bedroom she would instruct the dogs to attack and bite officers. I then utilised a participative style of leadership, with all officers contributing to a discussion regarding the best course of action for both officers' and the female's safety. I took leadership here by summarising key points, and confirming the group decision. Due to the threat, officers withdrew from the property and attempted to negotiate with the female through the open bedroom window. At this point the female then began to engage with one of the male officers.

This offered an opportunity to lead a discussion between officers as to the best approach to neutralise the dog threat and preserve officer safety. Options discussed included requesting firearm assistance to euthanise the dogs, or alternatively requesting Roads Policing Specialist Operations Unit (RPSO) neutralise the dogs with dog shields, with a dog handler attending to deploy expertise with aggressive dogs. I liaised with the Force Incident Manager (FIM). The police force is a hierarchical organisation, and referring incidents to senior management part of the working procedure. This participative management allows discussion between people in various forms of hierarchy, where persons of lower rank make decisions jointly with those in supervisory positions. (Steinheider and Wuestewald, 2008). The joint decision made was to proceed with RPSO and the dog handler. In addition to dealing with the female, arrangements needed to be made to locate the male she had made allegations against. Using a directive leadership style, I organised for a free unit to conduct arrest enquiries for the male.

The sound of breaking glass was heard inside the property and the female shouted from the bedroom that she had taken tablets and was going to cut her throat. Myself, and the male colleague she was willing to engage with, continued to attempt to negotiate with her. We alternated between us for maximum impact. However, continued attempts to negotiate with the female were unsuccessful. She stopped responding to officers. Due to the potential risk to her life the decision was made to enter the bedroom, with RPSO and the dog handler present to deploy dog shields to counteract the dog threat. Section 17 of Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984 (PACE) gives officers the power of entry in order to save life or limb. (Clark, 2006). At this point RPSO took the leadership role and entered the bedroom, secured the dogs, and removed the female into a safer location, where she was then assessed by the paramedics. Following assessment from paramedics, they recommended that she attend hospital for treatment, which she refused.

Due to concerns regarding her erratic behaviour, the level of her intoxication, and the fact she had stated she had taken tablets, it was decided, in conjunction with the ambulance service, that she did not have capacity. At this point participative leadership strategies were used, taking into account the opinions of all professionals present. I made the decision to make further attempts to engage with the female and persuade her to attend the hospital. When this strategy failed I employed directive leadership strategies, and informed the female she would be detained under Section 5 of the Mental Capacity Act, 2005. This allows officers to use force if necessary to ensure an individual receives medical treatment. The female resisted, which resulted in officers needing to carry the female into the ambulance in handcuffs, where she was transported to hospital for treatment. Given her levels of resistance, I made the decision that ambulance colleagues would need support at the hospital, and officers consequently accompanied her in the ambulance.

In conclusion, in this incident I needed to change my leadership style and employ different strategies to effectively manage rapidly changing circumstances. The original incident profile was for domestic violence, which evolved into a risk to life and mental health crisis. The safety of officers needed to be balanced with an effective protective response to the female, which involved close liaison with colleagues in health. Additionally, the location of the male involved in the incident was an accompanying concern. Throughout the incident, I consider I changed leadership styles effectively, moving mainly between participative and

directional styles with colleagues, and using a range of strategies with the female including leading by example (remaining calm, using a soft voice), persuasive and directional strategies. Upon reflection, given the female's level of anxiety, I should have given consideration to flight inside the house. Officers were located near the door exists from the house, but I hadn't considered flight upstairs, even though the female was sitting on the bottom of the stairs. Her flight, however, was not stimulated by a poor choice of leadership strategies. The leadership level for constables, stage 1, relates to leading by example, with fairness, respect, integrity and accountability, demonstrating leadership as a constituent part of effective team working, as part of rapid problem solving in response to diverse and evolving circumstance. I consider I demonstrated these characteristics in this incident.

Word Count: 2112 words.

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:

Within this essay, I will critically reflect upon my three-year probation as a police officer for Gwent Police. I will consider the mentoring and coaching I have received and examine how it has helped me to meet personal, professional and organisational goals. Coaching can be defined as having the objective of developing specifically targeted skills and knowledge to enhance performance, identifying individual's strengths and areas for development. Whereas, mentoring can be seen as a relationship, in which a more senior individual uses their specific expertise to support the development of a more inexperienced colleague. (Lynn, 2017). I will reflect upon how it has enabled me to learn, develop and perform as a police constable. I will use Borton's reflective tool to structure my reflection throughout. (Borton, 1970).

The Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) entry route offers the opportunity of a BSc Hons Degree in Professional Policing Practice, leading to a permanent position as a police officer, following successful completion of a three-year probationary period. It combines classroom based learning with on the job training and experience, giving the opportunity to work as a police constable while gaining the relevant skills and knowledge. (Gwent Police, 2024). This is the route into police work that I have undertaken. The advantage to myself was that all course and examination fees are included in the PCDA, and I am able to draw a salary while working as a police officer, gaining vital on the job skills and experience. The disadvantage is that I need to carefully plan and organise my time, as police work is highly demanding, physically and emotionally, and I need to find the time and energy to complete university work after a shift. I find it particularly challenging as I have dyslexia, and academic work consequently takes longer for me. However, the PCDA does

recognise these challenges, and I have dedicated days to spend upon university work, and I have the ability to apply for extra time if needed, due to my dyslexia.

The course is structured to offer a continual delivery of coaching, mentoring, and education throughout the three-year programme. The PCDA commenced with six months in training school, focusing on core aspects of law and policing, as essential knowledge for police constables. The training school focussed on key learning, including classroom based learning, concentrating on the law and how it applies to different offences. The practical sessions created scenarios where you were taught to identify offences and respond appropriately. I also had to successfully pass three exams. The classroom learning was essential to function as a police constable, and I put considerable effort into learning all the necessary information. I personally found this a lot to process in a compressed time frame, and I also did not find it the most interesting aspect of police work. However, I undoubtedly benefited considerably from all the knowledge I gained, and I would not have been able to function as a police officer without it. Core essentials included learning about the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) including codes of practice that govern police working including stop and search, arrest, detention, investigation, identification and interviewing detainees. (Home Office, 2013). Another core essential that frames my everyday working practice is the National Decision Model (NDM) with the Code of Ethics at the centre. The NDM is a cyclical and continuous process including gathering information and intelligence; assessing threat and risk and formulating a working strategy; considering powers and policy; identifying options and contingencies; and taking action and reviewing. (College of Policing, 2013). The Code of Ethics are set by the College of Policing in the UK and these describe the standards of behaviour and professionalism that every police officer needs to demonstrate. (COP, 2024). The NDM frames my decision making on a daily basis influencing how I respond to a wide range of scenarios. Having these structures and frameworks to guide police practice has enabled me to act in a clear and decisive manner and facilitated me in my professional development. I also benefitted from the practical scenario work, which gave me the time and opportunity to develop essential everyday skills such as handcuffing and restraining individuals. I found the exams extremely challenging, as it was a considerable amount of information to process in a very short time span, but I am very proud of myself in passing all the exams first time.

The next phase of the PCDA was the tutorship period, which lasted for twelve weeks. I began to work as a response officer for Gwent police, working a shift pattern and responding to calls. I was accompanied by a tutor throughout this period, and learnt through observation and instruction. This tutorship covered aspects of police work not covered by the training school, such as handover, paperwork, etc. The tutor selected which calls we would or would not attend, with the aim of providing a broad range of experience, and being able to meet competency criteria during this period. I was extremely fortunate to have an experienced and highly competent tutor who had been a response officer for over eighteen years. He recognised my willingness to learn by ensuring I received an extensive range of opportunities, allowing me to take the lead when ready and broaden my experience. It is a potential flaw in the programme that officers may or may not have a tutor that was as dedicated, motivated and experienced as my own. Often officers with as

little as two years' experience become tutors. Substantial literature exists as to the importance of tutors' experience, knowledge, levels of enthusiasm and relationships with the higher education institutions. Recent research has highlighted the roll out of the PDQF system in police recruitment, accompanied by a drive to increase recruitment by 20,000 officers, has put a strain on the recruitment and retention of tutors with a suitable skill set and level of experience. (Williams, Bowles, Cockroft, 2022). Sadly, my excellent tutor has resigned that role due to a number of factors, including being unpaid for the role, the pressures of bureaucracy and lack of management support. Another beneficial aspect for my own tutorship was the fact we worked one to one. I was the only probationer he was mentoring, therefore, I had undivided attention and input. I was also fortunate, in that I personally had a good relationship with my tutor, and it undoubtedly helped the process. People are individuals, and we may or may not have liked each other. Fortunately, we did. As my confidence and experience grew my tutor facilitated my increasing independence, to prepare me for the next stage, where I would respond to calls independently. Throughout this tutorship period I had the opportunity to question my tutor to deepen my experience, whilst he was able to observe me and provide feedback on areas of development.

Once I passed my tutorship period I gained independent patrol status. At this point I relied on my peers' experience to guide me in any areas of uncertainty. Peer support is an integral facet of police work, with advantages including inclusivity and diversity of thinking. (COP, 2024). Peer learning involves a collaborative approach to giving and receiving feedback, to enhance performance. (Coxhead, 2022). After my tutorship I moved shift, which was a planned move due to organisational demand. Fortunately, I did have a crossover with my new shift, so the personnel were not entirely unknown. However, the disadvantage was I needed to build new relationship structures, as I was not familiar enough with the shift to know who best to approach for advice and support in specific areas. I wanted to make a good impression with my new colleagues and appear competent and confident, however, due to my newness I still needed support and guidance. I had built excellent working relationships with my old shift and felt confident they understood my strengths and areas for development, and they were very welcoming and friendly. Moving shifts meant starting again and this was not particularly easy. I also found that different sergeants had different working methods and priorities, and I also needed to adjust to these. However, peer learning became an important part of my development at this point. By working with different colleagues it gave me the opportunity to observe different approaches and working practices, as individuals all have different areas of strength. Peer learning in this form very much centres around verbal feedback. Its advantages are it is responsive to need and instantaneous. Its disadvantages centre around its unstructured nature, as unlike a classroom curriculum where content can be planned for, the feedback is dependent upon circumstance. Equally, the quality of feedback cannot be guaranteed or measured, and factors such as the timing of feedback given, the frequency of feedback, the format the feedback is given in, the level of support offered in the learning process and following feedback, and crucially the relationship between the learner and mentor, will all affect the validity and effectiveness of the feedback, and consequently of the learning. (Dahl et al, 2023).

During the second year of my probationary period I had the opportunity to experience a more diverse range of police work. I undertook attachments with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Roads Policing Specialist Operations Department (RPSO). Each attachment was three days' duration. The main advantage during my attachment to CID was that it gave me an understanding of complex cases and the accompanying paperwork and procedures. For example, I got to understand how to use a Superintendent's Extension, which enables you to increase an individual's detention by twelve hours. This is not an aspect of policing commonly used on Response. I enjoyed Neighbourhood the most, as I participated in a drug warrant and I was able to see an incident through in its entirety. I helped search the property, assisted with interview planning and the case file, which resulted in charges from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). This differed to Response where we often only deal with one element of the process – interviewing, attending the scene, completing the case file, but rarely the whole process. I also had very positive feedback from the Sargent following the attachment to Neighbourhood. The RPSO attachment in contrast, was markedly different to Response, especially in regard to their specialist training and methods at their disposal, such as pursuit, Tactical Pursuit and Containment (TPAC) and stringers. All three attachments widened and deepened my understanding of police work and were valuable in my personal and professional development. The disadvantage of all three attachments was their duration; they gave an insight into the departments, as opposed to a true understanding of the breadth of the work and the diverse range of skills you could develop within the departments.

An important core aspect of the probationary period included widening my professional understanding of complex policing at an academic level. This was achieved through partnership with University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Gwent Police. This included exams, academic assignments, reflective workbooks and a dissertation. Debate exists as to the relevance of all police officers having degrees, as the academic skills needed to write to a degree quality are not the same skills as those needed to function as a good officer. (Surrey Police Federation, 2021). The Government introduced the degree requirement in 2020 as a response to the changing nature of modern crime and a drive to professionalise rank and file police with pay based on skills and qualifications as opposed to time served. (Dodd, 2016). The degree requirement has recently been removed by Suella Braverman. (Willimas, 2023). Personally, I consider the degree learning gave me an understanding of policing beyond my daily experience as a Response officer, and deepened my understanding of my daily role, linking theory and practice, and encouraging improvement through reflection. I had opportunities to refine my academic learning through feedback on my assignments. Additionally, I needed to pass my police competencies, to evidence my ability in the role. I met with a mentor within the Learning and Development Team where we examined my progression and discussed incidents I have dealt with and my response to them. This encouraged me to reflect upon how I could improve.

In conclusion, the structure of the PCDA has supported my evolvment as a police officer. I have transitioned to one of the more experienced officers on my shift, and it is now my role to offer support to less experienced officers. The learning has been considerable, and personally I have found completing academic work in addition to working in a highly demanding role, very challenging. However, it is highly probable that without the structure

of the PCDA, I would not have carried out independent academic research, and consequently I would have been less aware, skilled and knowledgeable in regard to many aspects of police work. I also consider the supportive structure of coaching and mentorship I received to have been invaluable.

Word Count: 2154 words.

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