

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 4 - 40 Credits

**Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 1
(PCDA)**

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

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 1 (PCDA)

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

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

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

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

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

How should the workbook be presented?

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

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

(https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/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 will be provided by university staff as part of your initial training day. Your tutor constable and in-force

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

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

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

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

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

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

The content of this workbook should be your own work. Do not allow anyone else to see your work or use your work for their own submissions.

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

NOTE

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

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

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

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

Guidance:

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

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

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Wellbeing and Resilience

Guidance:

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

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

ANSWER:

During the initial six months of training to become a Police Constable, it is critical to minimise stress and develop resilience. As with beginning any new career, the pressure of adjusting to change can lead to consequential impacts on a person's mental well-being and ability to perform if not well controlled. Several strategies can be combined to reduce the strain and pressure that a career with much responsibility can have on a person. Implementing coping strategies to reduce stressors can significantly enhance the fulfilment of a job role and combat health and well-being problems. In this essay, I will discuss how I used various techniques to combat and minimise the stress of a new career and the strategies which helped me adjust to the role of a Police Constable. I will use Gibbs' Reflective Cycle method, as depicted by Mind Tools (2016), to discuss how these methods aided me during this period and reference my research throughout.

Resilience is a powerful mechanism we can enforce in all aspects of our lives to help us prepare for unforeseen changes and the inevitable hurdles we all face. Courtney E (2023) supports this theory by stating that when you understand that bad stuff happens to everyone, you are less likely to feel discriminated against when misfortune does occur. This is particularly influential when commencing a career in policing, as officers frequently encounter negative situations and challenging circumstances that can emotionally impact their well-being. The ability to withstand traumatic incidents and to switch off from a personal perspective becomes paramount in delivering the best quality service to the public. The role of a Police Constable is one of the most demanding due to the length of working hours and its responsibility. When beginning a career in policing, these demands rapidly become apparent, along with the challenge of balancing a professional and personal life. This is reinforced by Tuttle et al (2019), who states that at the end of a shift, police officers are required to return to their everyday lives and play the role of parent, friend and neighbour. The strain that this can have on a person's mental and physical well-being is something that those working outside of policing may struggle to understand, which is why finding a balance between the two is essential.

The stressors associated with being a police constable can be combatted by incorporating various strategies into our daily routines. One valuable technique is focusing on time management, maximising our free and professional time usage. I decided to focus on self-regulation methods such as the Pomodoro Technique.

Mozafaripour (2019) states that author Francesco Cirillo created the Pomodoro Technique, which focuses on preparing you to identify and stick to specific tasks to manage your daily schedule better. The technique involves breaking down tasks into smaller intervals and committing a fixed period of time to complete that task. An example of how I implemented this method would be when I was revising for my initial training examinations. I would set a thirty-minute timer and dedicate that period to revision. Once the timer sounded, I would allow myself to take a short ten-minute break in between and repeat the process until I was satisfied that I had covered a topic. By committing myself to shorter revision intervals, I could better focus on the task at hand. In conclusion, this technique reduced the amount of time I wasted staring aimlessly into a book, and I felt satisfied with the work that I had completed.

A further practice I integrated into my routine was attending a dance class once a week with a friend. Dancing is an excellent alternative to traditional exercise or attending the gym for those who struggle to focus on mundane routines. The expression and freedom that dancing provides not only benefits fitness levels but facilitates mental well-being by relieving stress. Sharma (2023) discusses how dancing causes the body to release endorphins that combat stress and enhance our mood, resulting in a feeling of relaxation and calm. Sharma compares dance as an alternative to a gym workout or meditation for those who seek a more immersive experience; however, both activities can achieve the same result. The dance classes increased my fitness levels and brought me a sense of satisfaction by attending them with a friend, allowing me to switch off from my working day.

The final strategy for managing stress and promoting well-being that I will discuss relates to developing a solid support network. Touronis (2022) proposes that stress can be mitigated by surrounding yourself with a system of people whom you can turn to in times of need. Touronis states that the study of social support during stressful periods of a person's life can cause the brain to release hormones such as oxytocin that result in a feeling of relaxation and the reduction of anxiety. Having a community of people around you whom you can offload on and seek advice can ultimately allow us to make informed decisions and improve mental focus.

This was a strategy I focused heavily on during my initial six months of training, particularly when forming relationships with new people. I quickly became aware of the importance of social support for Police Officers, especially from colleagues and those who experience the same challenging work environments. In order to form a reliable support network, I would dedicate time outside of work to socialise with colleagues, friends and family. In doing this, I was able to communicate with my friends and seek advice from my peers whenever I started to feel overwhelmed or anxious regarding work. I felt assured that I was supported throughout my training period, and this aided me in building close relationships with others.

To conclude, there are many ways to reduce the stressors that our occupational and personal lives carry. Reducing stress and managing personal well-being plays a critical part in the role of being a Police Constable to ensure that we can perform and deliver the highest standard of policing to the public. By implementing the techniques mentioned in this essay, I have become more aware of the potential consequences of failing to manage stress. I aim to continue implementing these strategies throughout my policing career to alleviate stress and promote my overall well-being.

Word count - 1040

Task 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

Conflict is a naturally occurring element of human interaction that can materialise in various ways. Police officers are far more likely to encounter conflict than in any other profession, and whilst situations involving conflict can feel uncomfortable, this can be controlled using practical communication skills. This essay will discuss the importance of effective communication and valuing differences in conflict management. I will refer to a policing incident in which I played a significant role in successfully managing conflict. I will reflect on the incident to evaluate how my actions contributed to the success of resolving the situation and consider alternative solutions that may benefit future occurrences.

Robinson et al (2023) describe conflict as the result of a situation where one or both parties perceive a threat to be occurring, which can trigger strong emotional reactions from those involved. The threat may not exist; however, conflict may arise when an individual believes their opinions, actions, or beliefs are being obstructed. Whilst conflict naturally occurs as part of day-to-day life, it can materialise to different extents and effective management of conflict early on can de-escalate a situation. The College of Policing, guidance for conflict management (2020) examines evidence of how showing understanding and empathy towards a person whilst utilising interpersonal

communication skills can successfully resolve conflict situations. Interpersonal communication skills involve actively listening, staying open-minded, having patience and remaining self-aware of our body language. These skills contribute to the perception that their views are valued and that the officer is listening and considering their point of view. Doing so can significantly reduce the hostility of a situation, influencing how that person reacts to authority and developing a level of rapport.

The nature of the Policing incident whereby I utilised effective communication to resolve conflict relates to concerns for the welfare of a male, acting erratically and sending a series of alarming messages to a family member regarding having potential weapons in his possession. Before my arrival, other officers at the scene made me aware of the subject's behaviour. The officers stated that the male was refusing to cooperate with the Police and was displaying aggressive behaviour towards the officers. My colleagues also informed us that the male was in possession of weapons such as three air rifles, baseball bats and multiple knives. I was informed that the subject would only converse with officers through the first-floor window of his property, obstructing negotiations. Considering the circumstances, it became apparent that there were multiple barriers to utilising effective communication skills, such as the subject's positioning and opinions of the Police.

Barriers to utilising interpersonal communication can drastically affect the successful resolution to conflict. Meier (2018) explains that various factors contribute to barriers to communication, such as language, cultural, and personality differences. Meier goes on to discuss that if these barriers fail to be identified or addressed, communication is likely to break down early on without establishing a sense of understanding between both parties. In this scenario, the subject displayed views of a strong disliking towards the Police and immediately dismissed the officer's efforts to help him. Police officers are encouraged to use the National Decision Model operationally before taking any action to determine the best course of action and to evaluate the risks associated with that decision.

The National Decision Model is a powerful framework designed for all aspects of policing decisions and can be employed in any circumstance. It is intended to make the decision-making process easier and more efficient for officers who are required to use their discretion to determine a course of action. Using the National Decision Model not only allows the decision maker to consider alternative possibilities but it illustrates the thought process behind that decision to others and justifies why that decision was necessary at that time. The framework comprises five stages: gathering information and intelligence, assessing the threats and risks involved, considering which powers and policies are applicable, identifying possible options and contingencies and finally, taking action and reviewing that action. The Open University (2023) explains that the model is intended to supply a common framework for all policing decisions, allowing colleagues to analyse the decisions and understand the fact.

Applying the National Decision Model to this scenario, I began by considering the information and intelligence gathered on the suspect prior to and upon my arrival. The information included warning markers for violence, mental health, and a previous history of assault on police officers. Contemplating this information, I moved on to the next stage of the model, assessing the associated threats and risks. The threat and risk can be assessed by considering impact factors and offender behaviour. The

subject displayed erratic behaviour, which was aggressive in nature. The impact factors surrounded knowledge of potential weapons present on the premise, which subsequently deemed the level of risk towards both the subject and officers' safety as high.

I moved on to the next phase of the model, which was considering which Policing powers and policies were applicable in this instance. I needed to understand the subject's intentions and the circumstances surrounding the necessity for police assistance before considering which powers to utilise. The Police were contacted by the subject's family member, who had received a series of messages from the subject stating that he wanted to commit suicide. Upon speaking with witnesses at the scene, it emerged that the subject had been seen to be outside of his address the previous evening in possession of what appeared to be a firearm. Evaluating the information I had gathered and the fact that the male was refusing to communicate with officers, I began to consider the appropriate Police powers. I determined that the most appropriate power would be the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a framework designed to implement decision-making on behalf of a person deemed to lack capacity and the ability to make an informed decision. Tidy (2022) discusses the five principles which underpin the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Tidy writes that these principles involve assuming that the subject first has capacity. Every person has the fundamental right to make their own decisions; therefore, we must assume that they can do so unless proven otherwise. The second principle the act states is that the individual must be supported within their right to make their own decision. Tidy explains how this means the individual must be offered any help before we assume they lack the capacity to make their own choice. The act also states that we cannot assume a decision to be seen as eccentric or unwise and that the individual has the right to maintain that decision if they, in fact, have the capacity. Tidy goes on to explain the final two principles underpinning the Mental Capacity Act 2005: any action taken must be determined to be within the best interests of the individual and the least intrusive course of action, protecting their human rights.

In basic terms, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 can be utilised by Police Officers if that officer believes the individual lacks the capacity to make informed decisions that threaten their well-being or best interests. In this scenario, I believed that the subject could not make an informed decision, and I will now explain why. As I approached the address, I began engaging with the subject, still positioned in his upstairs bedroom window. I maintained a calm, friendly manner in an attempt to build rapport. Upon doing so, the subject began engaging in a general conversation with me about his lifestyle. He began to explain how his mental health had deteriorated in recent weeks due to the fact that there were people outside of his address taunting him. The male then started pointing towards the road behind me, claiming that there was a man there at that moment who was shouting at him. At this point, I realised the male was having some sort of medical episode and appeared to be hallucinating, as no one was standing behind me. This raised my belief that the subject lacked capacity due to a medical episode and required immediate medical attention.

Working through the final phases of the National Decision Model, I began to consider the options and contingencies associated with taking the decided action to utilise the Mental Capacity Act 2005. I considered implementing the five-step appeal method, a

conflict management skill intended to influence the subject to comply with Police action, starting from the least invasive onwards. The College of Policing guidance for conflict management (2020) describes the five-step appeal as a tool to prepare officers for managing resistance and giving the subject every opportunity to cooperate. I appealed to the subject by talking calmly, listening to his views and explaining how his family had raised concerns because they cared about him. The appeal resulted in a positive response from the subject, who engaged and agreed to attend the hospital to receive medical attention.

Later in the day, I attended the hospital. Meanwhile, the male consulted with the crisis team. Following his consultation, he opened the door, and I smiled at him and asked him how he was feeling. His response was, "Better now that I have seen you", which made me feel that he trusted me and confirmed that I had built a rapport with him. This proves the importance of effective communication when managing conflict and resistant situations. Failure to communicate effectively and utilise the appropriate methods of conflict management could have resulted in a hostile, aggravated situation.

Word Count : 1578

Task 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

Diversity is at the core of every community, and it is the fundamental principle which encourages our societies to learn from each other and grow. However, with diversity comes a conflict between societal differences in various forms. Therefore, when it comes to Policing our communities, valuing the public's differences and promoting inclusion is paramount. In this essay, I will be referring to a policing incident which required me to value difference and inclusion when dealing with victims of a violent Hate Crime. I will reflect on my approach to the situation using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle as depicted by MindTools (2016).

CIPD (2022) explains diversity as visible and non-visible differences between individuals' personal characteristics. These differences can include a multitude of factors such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural and religious beliefs, disabilities and economic backgrounds. Inclusion is the practice of recognising these characteristics and encouraging differences between people, protecting each person's fundamental right to individuality and freedom of expression. The policing incident which I will be referring to involves the victim, an Asian male who is the owner of a local convenience store. On the day of the incident, whilst working at the store, an unknown white male approached the victim and began verbally abusing him by aggressively shouting racial slurs. The white male was extremely irate and continued to attempt to initiate a physical fight with the store owner.

The Crown Prosecution Service (2023) explains that a hate crime can be distinguished if any of the five relevant factors have been identified. These include demonstrating hostility towards a person based on their race, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identification, or religious groups. More than one relevant factor can apply to any incident; however, prejudice of at least one personal characteristic must be targeted to distinguish whether a hate crime or incident has occurred. The legislation that outlines these crimes is The Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

In any hate crime or incident, it does not have to be the victim who feels the circumstances were motivated by prejudice or hostility towards a personal characteristic. A third party can also identify this. In this instance, the victim acknowledged the racial slurs, identifying the hostility towards his perceived or actual race or religious background. However, if the victim did not identify this behaviour, but a witness or an officer perceived this as the case, a hate crime or incident would nevertheless be identified.

I was assigned the responsibility of gathering as much information from the witnesses and victims as possible by obtaining statements. Upon my arrival, I visited the victim's home address, which was next to the store he owns, recognising that my approach to the situation would need to be very sensitive due to the hostile nature of this incident, and gathering evidence would be critical to a successful prosecution. The victim and his family were of Asian ethnicity, and it soon became apparent that only one family member spoke fluent English. The victim's son spoke the best level of English and therefore agreed to assist with communication between myself and his father. During this interaction, I reflected on the victim's code to remember the key elements to cover when managing and supporting victims and witnesses of a crime.

The Ministry of Justice (2020) Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales is a set of minimum criteria that any victim or witness to a crime is entitled to from the Police and prosecution services. One right that the victim's code highlights is the right to be able to understand and to be understood. This means that by any means necessary, the victim has the right to be heard and to express their views and wishes, including the right to produce a statement or any other account in their first language. Upon reflection, allowing the victim's son to aid with a translation may not have been the most suitable form of communication as an interpreter could have provided an accurate, unbiased and impartial service. However, at the time, I recognised the importance of the Golden Hour principles and obtaining a first account of the victim's experience to assist with the prompt and effective investigation of the offence. The Golden Hour is a term used to describe the initial period following an incident, whereby evidential material is most available, maximising the security of such information which otherwise may be lost. Obtaining an accurate first account of the incident from the victim is critical to understanding and identifying any offence. Fearing that the victim's memory recall could be affected following a traumatic event such as this, I used my discretion to allow the victim's son to aid in communication.

Whilst taking the victim's statement, I remained compassionate and empathetic during our conversation. I could see that he was visibly distressed following the incident and was fearful for his family's safety. I reassured him that measures would be put in place to protect everyone involved in this situation, and I encouraged him to take his time with recalling the events as I knew he was very shaken up. The victim stated that during the altercation, the perpetrator had somehow realised that the victim resided in

the house adjacent to the store he owned. This resulted in the subject attacking the property by banging on the front doors and windows in an attempt to target the victim's family. This resulted in alarm and distress to those inside the house, including small children. As part of my initial investigation, I began to explain the victim support services to the family as I felt they would benefit from additional support and care during this time. During this interaction, I referred to the victim's code to remind myself of the key elements to cover when managing and supporting victims and witnesses of a crime.

Another entitlement of the victim's code is that the victim has the right to be referred or directed to additional support services throughout the duration of an investigation. The victim has a fundamental right to be offered direct support tailored to their individual requirements depending on the circumstances of the crime. The Victim's Code states that the victim has the right to make what is called a Victim's Personal Statement. This type of statement notifies the court and prosecution of the lasting effects this event has had on the victim and the impact it has had on their day-to-day lives.

I decided to explain the process of the Victim's Personal Statement to the victim on this occasion, as during our interaction, he expressed how much this incident was already affecting him. Although I considered that in some instances, the victim would need time to identify whether a crime has impacted their lives, in this case, it was already apparent that the victim was afraid to go to work and to leave his family alone following the attack. Additionally, I feel that I could have offered the victim further support on re-evaluation of the incident by submitting a Victim Focus Referral. A Victim Focus Referral is similar to a victim's personal statement; however, instead of being presented to a court, it is shared with the relevant partner agencies to propose additional support where required. Victim Support is an independent organisation that delivers help to anyone who has been affected by a crime. The charity supports those in need during and following their experience with the criminal justice system.

Upon reflection, my communication skills were vital throughout the duration of this incident. I was aware that hate crimes are one of the most serious crimes in nature and lead to the victims becoming high risk following the incident. The impact these crimes have on a victim can affect their day-to-day lives, and the risk of a further incident occurring is increased. With my understanding of the seriousness of this incident, I feel I was more prepared to ensure that the victim received the support they required and deserved. I wanted the victim to feel understood by the police and to reassure them that there were services available to support them, both throughout and following the investigation process.

If I were to do anything differently, I would consider that for many people, this may be the first time they have dealt with police, and therefore they are overwhelmed with emotions and may still be in shock. In hindsight, I could have explained matters such as the court process in more simplified terms and dedicated time to explaining the following stages of the criminal justice procedure. I found that during this interaction, at times, the victim would seem confused by the explanation I was giving them, and I should have considered the language barrier as an impact factor. This resulted in me having to repeat specific points in a more simplified manner for the victim and their family to better understand what to expect throughout the investigation. I will consider

that in the future when dealing with high-risk victims and crimes of a serious nature, I will be aware of the emotional consequence on the victim and dedicate more time to explain things thoroughly with patience and care.

Word Count : 1523

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

There are times whereby Police Officers are required to use their discretion when making decisions. Discretion is the process where an officer uses their professional judgement to consider alternative means of resolution and to determine the best course of action. Whilst officers are encouraged to use their discretion when making decisions, it is a privilege which should not be abused, particularly whilst conducting criminal investigations. Liddell (2022) explains how there are circumstances whereby officers are required to make quick and in-the-moment decisions without delay. Liddell goes on to discuss how an officer's discretion can be utilised when specific laws and legislations cannot be consulted or reviewed in time to take action. In this essay, I will be referring to a policing incident in which I played a significant role in conducting an investigation and the management of offenders. I will reflect on my decision-making during the investigation, using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (MindTools, 2016), illustrating the considerations I made which contributed to a restorative justice outcome.

The incident I will discuss involved a shoplifting offence from a local supermarket. I was allocated to investigate the offence, identify potential suspects and execute the most appropriate course of action. I had been provided with CCTV footage of the incident from the store manager, which pictured a group of three males entering the store. One male picked up a shopping basket and proceeded to take multiple items of mixed value. The other two males selected one item each and placed it into their pockets before all three males left the store. None of the subjects attempted to pay for

the goods, and therefore an offence of Theft under Section 1 of the Theft Act 1968 was complete. The store stated in their initial report that they had been persistently targeted by shoplifters, with incidents becoming more frequent in recent months and, as a result, had suffered a significant loss. It emerged throughout the investigation that the suspect with the basket was a seventeen-year-old with a history of committing similar offences, believed to be influenced by financial struggles within his personal life.

Considering the information within the initial report, I decided to visit the store and speak to the witness, who was the manager. I chose to do this in order to understand how the store would like the incident to be dealt with. My objective was to understand the store manager's wishes and to determine the offence's severity with the value of the stolen items. It became apparent that there was a significant difference in the level of theft committed by all three males. The male with the basket had taken five items, totalling £60, whereas the accompanying males each took one item with a value of £2. The manager expressed how the store's main concern was that they had experienced a significant increase in shoplifting incidents. The manager explained that the store preferred that police tell the males that they were banned rather than opting for a criminal prosecution.

During my interaction with the store manager, I felt empathy towards the loss his business was suffering. However, I recognised that I needed to remain impartial to determine the facts of the matter. I also considered the information and intelligence that I was provided with surrounding the age of one of the suspects, and I began to try and think of alternative methods to the criminalisation of young offenders. I felt that it was necessary to explain that one potential suspect was believed to be seventeen years old and went on to explain the restorative justice approach.

Restorative Justice Council (2023) describes the restorative justice method as an opportunity to connect both the victim and those responsible, enabling an option for those involved to contribute to the resolution and the repairing of harm. This process can allow individuals to acquire a mutual understanding and come to a conclusion where everyone is satisfied. Restorative justice can increase the level of confidence that the public has in the police and prosecution service whilst allowing them the opportunity to have their say on the outcome of an offence. Many victims value the opportunity to engage with the offender either directly through mediation or via a third party in an effort to understand why this has happened to them.

Whilst doing this, I maintained a compassionate attitude towards the witness. I did not want him to feel like the police were not taking the offence seriously, and I reassured him that if he wanted to support a criminal prosecution, I would be willing to progress the investigation. The manager stated that he was acting on behalf of the store and would be keen to engage in the restorative justice process, but only for the male with the shopping basket who took the highest value of items. The manager expressed that he did not feel it necessary to progress the investigation with the other two males and would prefer that they were given suitable words of advice along with being banned from the store.

I communicated effectively with the manager and informed him that I would contact him with an update as soon as possible. During the next stage of my investigation, I

decided to contact the Youth Offending Team for some advice. The Youth Offending Team work with young offenders who are involved in criminal behaviour in an attempt to prevent long-term criminalisation through positive action. GOV.UK (2023) states that the Youth Offending Team will review and evaluate the background and behaviour of an offender and create a plan to prevent them from committing further offences. The Youth Offending Team work alongside other agencies such as schools, council, communities, and probation services.

After identifying the suspect, I contacted the Youth Offending Team to determine whether the subject would be eligible for this service. An officer from the team informed me that they were aware of the subject and were currently working with him regarding two previous offences. He explained that they would be willing to incorporate this matter into the suspect's ongoing action plan and could discuss this with the suspect at his next meeting, which was to be in a few weeks. Brighter Futures for Children (2023) describes how The Youth Offending team can work with the subject in various ways, including offender behaviour work, drug and alcohol support, communication support and education or employment support. They go on to explain how a specialist team of professionals consisting of social workers, psychologists, probation, and education officers work together to engage with the suspect in an attempt to help them understand the consequences of their behaviour and to encourage them to prevent committing further offences in the future.

Following my discussion with the Youth Offending Team, I reflected on the Victim's Code of Practice which stated it was necessary to update the witness of the decision to proceed with a restorative justice approach. I decided to attend the store in person as I felt that I would be able to clarify whether the witness was satisfied with this outcome. If I had made contact with the witness via telephone, I might not be able to gauge their feelings, and the risk is that they could have been left feeling as though the police were not taking the offence seriously. I wanted to reassure the witness that many alternative police actions were considered and that this outcome was determined as the most appropriate. The witness expressed that they were satisfied with the decision and were supportive of the alternative to the criminalisation of the subject. I assured the store manager that the youths would be banned from entering the store in the future and urged him that if any further issues persisted, then he should contact the police.

Upon reflection, I feel that my decisions throughout the investigation were carefully thought out. I referred back to the National Decision Model to make a structured, informed decision and used my discretion to consider alternative means of action. With the information and intelligence that was gathered relating to the subject's previous history, it became apparent that suitable words of advice may not be the correct action to take. Considering all other options and contingencies, along with policing powers and policies such as the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996, to identify my responsibilities and provisions involved with the regulation of conducting an investigation. I also considered alternative methods of disposal, such as issuing a fixed penalty notice to the suspect. However, I determined that in this instance, a restorative justice approach could provide the witness with an opportunity to contribute to the outcome of the matter.

I feel that when explaining the options to the witness, I promoted a sense of involvement from them and ensured that they felt as though their wishes were being considered. In the future, there will be occasions when I may struggle to find the time to visit each witness in person, and I will lean on the option to contact them via alternative methods. However, I have recognised that visiting a witness or a victim in person builds a rapport with them and develops a sense of understanding from their perspective. I will attempt to do this as much as possible whenever I can during my policing career.

Word Count: 1543

Task 5

Personal Development Plan (PDP) / Learning Plan.

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

Identified area for development	How it will be achieved	Who can provide support?	Timeline
Dealing with vulnerable victims and incidents of a sensitive nature.	By responding to incidents such as sexual offences and more complex domestic incidents. Utilising my SOFR training and refreshing my knowledge of the Victims Code of Practice. Volunteering myself to respond to calls of that nature when they arise. Developing my communication skills when conversing with vulnerable people.	My colleagues can support me through sharing their knowledge and previous experiences of handling calls of that nature. Specialised departments such as Public Protection, CID and the Rape Investigation Teams. Partner agencies such as OASIS and Women's Aid.	Within the next 12 months.
Issuing a Notice of Intended Prosecution	Being more proactive with identifying traffic related incidents. Conducting more stop searches. Conducting more vehicle checks whilst patrolling. Considering alternative means	My supervisor and colleagues can support me with my decision making in order to determine whether a Notice of Intended Prosecution is applicable in the circumstances.	Within the next 6 months.

	of disposal and options when deciding on the course of action for an incident.	Traffic officers can advise me on the appropriate course of action to take.	
Completing a Not Guilty Anticipated Plea (NGAP) Case File	Completing my Hub Attachment, where I will have the opportunity to complete files of this type. Offering assistance to my colleagues when they are completing files of this type.	My colleagues can provide support by sharing their knowledge of what's required when completing NGAP files. Seeking advice from colleagues at the Hub who regularly complete case files of this nature. The Evidence Review Team could provide me with insights and advice when completing NGAP files.	Within the next 12 months.

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

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

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

Signed: Jessica Jones (Learner - Electronic signature or type name)

Date: 23/04/2023