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LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

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

(SOUTH WALES POLICE, GWENT POLICE AND
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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.

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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.

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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 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:

This essay will evaluate the strategic role of the College of Policing (CoP) in professionalising the police. Additionally, it will reflect on how the police response to mental health incidents has changed during my final year of probation, and evidence how I am working to execute professionalism in such encounters. Holdaway (2017) references the “longstanding sociological approach” to professions that “separate them from occupations” as the existence of a professional body and code of ethics, evidence-based practice, and accredited employment. He notes that Neyroud accepted these as synonymous with classic professions such as medicine and law. Martin (2022) explains that professionalism can be *occupational*, driven by trust and autonomy, or *organisational*, which standardises practice and limits the control of the workforce, with traditional professions aligning with the former.

The Neyroud Review (Neyroud, 2011) highlighted the ambiguity of which body was accountable for setting police standards was an immediate obstacle for professionalisation. ACPO was deemed non-transparent, and so a new professional body would provide a single, transparent, source of police direction (Holdaway, 2017). From this, the CoP was established. The College's five-year strategy explains the purpose of the CoP is identifying and promoting good practice based on evidence, supporting professional development through accreditation of police learning, and working collaboratively with partner organisations (College of Policing, 2014). The College's corporate strategy 2022-2026 reiterates their strategic role of setting standards, through the Code of Ethics (CoE) and standards of professional behaviour, sharing knowledge and good practice, and supporting

professional development (College of Policing, 2023a). Both of these documents allude to the CoP adopting the traits of traditional professions; however, they do not account for how these traits are implemented in practice.

Autonomy arises in much of the literature surrounding professionalism (Holdaway, 2017; Hough and Stanko, 2020; Evetts, 2011). Often, *organisational* professionalism is implemented “from above”, initially attractive as it presents as a means for staff to become a “professional worker”, with clear standards to improve the occupations status. Consequently, it is further used as a disciplinary mechanism, stripping autonomy and discretion from decision-making for staff, and invoking a culture of “follow the rules or receive punishment” (Evetts, 2011). As such, if the CoP is to enforce the adoption of traditional professional traits “from above”, this may point away from autonomy, which is an equally important element of professionalism.

However, Evetts (2011) explains that *organisational* professionalism may also be implemented “from within”, to construct an occupational identity within its workers, and promote its image to its service users, terming this concept “new professionalism”. Part of the strategic role of the CoP is setting standards and a code for ethical behaviour, with Holdaway (2017) stating that establishing the CoE was vastly important for professionalism within the police, as several highly publicised incidents scrutinised police integrity. Whilst the IPCC dealt with complaints after an incident, the CoP introduction of the CoE sought to proactively prevent misconduct. An argument could be made that encouraging police members to adopt these as their own, as opposed to coercing them into compliance, would mitigate loss of autonomy whilst still achieving the desired outcome. Regarding this, Holdaway (2017) summarises that the CoP creates an ideology for officers to regard themselves, and act as, professionals. It should be noted though, that this is notwithstanding that disciplinary action may be required in certain circumstances.

Noordegraaf (2015) builds on Evetts’ (2011) work, introducing the term “hybrid professionalism”, explaining that this is a balance between *occupational* and *organisational* professionalism. Professionalism is pushed down from above to drive staff to take ownership of their own professionalism, whilst promoting autonomy and discretion. This presents as an ideal option for the CoP to professionalise the police, however success in implementing this approach rests on its ability to both educate and inspire members with regards to ethics and decision-making.

Pepper *et al.* (2024) state that collaboration with higher education institutions is key for police professionalisation, citing this as reflective of other professional practices. The CoP hails this as “the hallmark of any profession” (College of Policing, 2023a). This also reflects Holdaway’s observation of accredited employment being an important trait of professions. Pepper *et al.* (2024) proceed to highlight that the benefit of higher education collaboration is that the gap between transferring theory into practice is filled, developing an employee’s ability to exercise discretion and autonomy, and apply a course of action that best resolves a situation.

This is echoed by Hough and Stanko (2020), who write that to achieve *occupational* professionalism, with increased autonomy and discretion, the PEQF must inform new officers of what to do, but also why this is the best course of action. There must be a clear balance between knowledge and practice. They note, however, that research indicated many courses did not provide clarity on “what a good police officers looks like”. This may indicate a shortfall in the college’s strategic role at present. Moreover, Martin (2022) writes that the potential of the PEQF is still unknown, and there are some early assessments that the CoP approach may be too standardised, returning the police to a state where process is more embedded than practice. This alludes to the “from above” approach to professionalisation, which as discussed, does not present as the most beneficial option.

Nevertheless, promoting evidence-based practice is another key element of professionalism (Holdaway, 2017), and forms part of the CoP strategic role (College of Policing, 2014; College of Policing, 2023a). Martin (2022) explains that the CoP seeks to grow professionalism through evidence-based practices, which is embedded within the PEQF, although explains that this is still met with resistance. There remains a culture within policing that unless practices can be valued with rational and quantitative results, they are dismissed. Martin concludes that the CoP moving towards *occupational* professionalism is the right direction, however voices concerns that merely using “trait-based strategies”, (such as adopting the traits denoted by Holdaway) may be insufficient to regain traditional professional values such as trust and discretion. She suggests that the focus should remain on reasserting police discretion, and inter-organisational working, to improve trust and autonomy, in the face of external factors such as changes in governance, as well as changes in policing itself.

Using Borton’s Reflective Model (Ingham-Broomfield, 2021) I can reflect on how my final year of probation has seen my role as a constable change. Charman (2017) writes that within the police there are often conflicting roles between law enforcement and welfare, nonetheless, “public safety and welfare” now represents the largest proportion of incidents that the police respond to, with mental illness being the greatest contributor. The introduction of the “Right Care, Right Person” (RCRP) initiative (College of Policing, 2023b) altered the way in which the police respond to mental health incidents.

Charman (2017) notes that many new officers are recognising that responding to vulnerability is an operational focus, which is a concept that I feel personally affiliated to. Nevertheless, I have found that whilst I have a desire to intervene and to help when responding to these incidents, I cannot ignore that there have been occasions where I felt required to perform a service that fell outside of my role, generating a fear that I would make a mistake. This fear is rationalised by Charman, who states that research indicates this is shared by a vast number of officers. For me, the most important issue was ensuring that the person in crisis was provided appropriate care, and so at the time that RCRP was introduced, I welcomed this change.

HM Government (2023) outlined that the RCRP initiative was developed as it was recognised that the police were not always the appropriate agency to respond to mental health incidents, and that this could result in a poor experience and further distress for service users. As such, RCRP set out the strategic approach for when police should become involved. Reiner (2000, cited in Charman, 2017) notes the distinction between the police *preserving* and *producing* social order, arguing that the latter better falls within the responsibilities of other agencies. Aligned with this, Charman (2017) states police mental health training is limited, as officers are not medical professionals. Nevertheless, HM Government (2023) concluded that there will always be a time that police are required in relation to mental health crisis, denoted by designated powers within *Mental Health Act 1983* (MHA), in addition to legal obligations to act under *The Mental Capacity Act 2005* (MCA).

At first, I knew that this would be the case, however I felt that reduced demand from mental health incidents would allow me to direct more attention to other areas of my role. Subsequently, I questioned where the resources would arise to replace police intervention, and what effect this would have on service users. The CoP (College of Policing, 2023b) explain that the introduction of RCRP could save 1 million officer hours a year, and developed a toolkit for officers to follow, upholding the view that the police should work with partner agencies to identify the most appropriate response. However, Lane (2019) argues that underfunding and fragmentation of mental health services are what has led to the police becoming first responders to mental health. Moreover, Dodd (2024) writes that RCRP is putting lives at risk, as health and social care services “do not have the resources to plug the gap”. He also quotes in his article “failing to properly fund NHS mental health crisis services while instructing police forces to step back from mental health calls is an unsafe and frankly irresponsible decision”.

Having analysed and experienced RCRP in practice, I now realise that it is inevitable I will continue to encounter Mental Health. Nevertheless, I have a duty to act as a professional in response to such incidents, as The CoP Policing Vision 2025 stipulates how professional police officers must act, and change, as the demands of policing also change (College of Policing, 2016). It provides that policing has core priorities of reducing crime and protecting the vulnerable, and implementing professional practice based on what works. The police must increase partnerships with other service providers, whilst also understanding that it is not always immediately obvious which service is required, and so expresses that an improved understanding of vulnerability is paramount.

I have continued to develop myself professionally, in line with the CoP Corporate Strategy 2022-2026, by ensuring that I study the legislation relevant to responding to mental health incidents, most notably MHA and MCA. I have sought to understand the circumstances where these pieces of legislation are appropriate, and more importantly, where they are not, to better my understanding of vulnerability in line with the Policing Vision. An example of this, is an incident where I was told by a partner agency to exercise my powers under MHA, to detain an individual. I have exhibited professionalism, as whilst I have recognised that the individual was suffering from poor mental health, the use of such an invasive police power was not justified. I have communicated with partners that under RCRP, their response was more appropriate. This aligns with the work of Martin (2022), allowing me to exhibit *occupational* professionalism, by retaining autonomy and discretion over my decision making.

A further example is an incident whereby I was at a hospital, and a patient who had been deemed by doctors to lack capacity was attempting to leave. I have engaged with a partner agency, on this occasion being NHS staff, to discuss what the most appropriate approach should be, aligned with the CoP Policing Vision and five-year strategy. I have correctly implemented RCRP policy, advising that all persons have a duty to act under MCA, and as the patient was under the care of the hospital, NHS staff should lead with returning the patient inside, however agreeing to remain on scene to assist if necessary. As a result of this, the patient was returned without the need for police involvement, which as HM Government (2023) acknowledges, may have caused more distress to the patient.

In conclusion, the implementation of the CoE and Standards of Professional Behaviour, with instructions on how to behave, and consequences for deviating, present elements of *organisational* professionalism in the CoP approach to professionalising the police. Conversely, the use of evidence-based practice, and accredited learning through the PEQF, evidence elements of *occupational* professionalism, instilling the ability and freedom to make appropriate decisions. There is still resistance to the adoption of evidence-based practice, therefore if the CoP is to succeed in its strategic role, this needs to be quashed. However, as new officers progress through the PEQF and flood the workforce, this necessary change may become apparent. To this end, providing that the CoP can maintain the balance, as highlighted by Hough and Stanko (2020), I would conclude that they are succeeding in their strategic role of police professionalisation, through the implementation of Noordegraaf's "hybrid professionalism". Through reflecting on the change in responding to mental health incidents, I now know that whilst there are clear arguments in favour of RCRP, this is notwithstanding that this change will take time to flourish. Presently, risks remain that prevent a mass withdrawal of police response, nevertheless, I have been able to evidence my professionalism as a modern police officer, through my response to such incidents.

[Word Count: 2197]

Task 2

**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:

This essay will evaluate my experience of the benefits and risks of using social media within policing and conclude by measuring them against key initiatives of police social media use. Walsh and O'Connor (2019) state that police use of social media pertains to risk communication, impression management, and acquiring help from the community. This aligns with the work of Lee and McGovern (2014, cited in Colbran, 2018), who posit that there are three areas of focus for police social media use: promoting the police image, managing risk to the public, building trust and legitimacy. Social media refers to the array of online media that individuals may use to interact. Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020) reference Facebook and Twitter as forms of social media that are utilised by the police, whilst Walsh and O'Connor (2019) highlight the police use many forms of social media to communicate with the public. Facebook is a social networking site allowing users to connect freely with persons and organisations, Instagram and Youtube are image and video sharing mediums, and Twitter is a blogging site.

Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020) write that to benefit from social media usage, a policy must be generated to guide usage, allowing for uniformity in keeping with the goals of the organisation. My force social media policy (Gwent Police, 2022) sets out the responsibility of users to ensure that all online communication meets the same standards of any face-to-face interactions. The policy advocates that social media usage can provide immediate contact with a large audience, improve the visibility of policing activity, and make the force more approachable. Furthermore, it outlines three purposes for social media activity: achieving a tactical or operational objective, change or influence the behaviour of communities for the better, and to build capacity and trust with communities. These are aligned with NPCC guidance, however parallels can also be drawn to the work of Walsh and O'Connor (2019), and Lee and McGovern (2014), suggesting that the policy itself is aligned to academic research in this area.

Within my role as a response police officer, I have found that my usage of social media for professional purposes has related mainly to requesting help from the public. When investigating, I have utilised the corporate Facebook page to seek assistance in identifying a suspect, sharing an image with the aim of the public recognising them. Colbran (2018) makes specific reference to this type of use of social media by the police, stating that it allows the police to engage directly with the public. Moreover, Walsh and O'Connor (2019) explain that the nature of social media allows messages to be transmitted immediately, and through the mechanisms of sharing and reposting, the message is circulated widely and rapidly.

I have experienced this within my work, with information provided by the public received quickly, allowing me to expeditiously bring suspects to justice. Crump (2011) provides a well-publicised example of this, explaining that following the riots in 2011, social media allowed police to circulate images of rioters and subsequently take positive action. I have also found that this use of social media has been particularly beneficial when dealing with missing persons, with the public keen to assist. This observation is shared by Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) who note that the public are more likely to share a post regarding a missing person, as they feel that they are helping another person.

Colbran (2018) refers to another example of the police working collaboratively with the public, using social media, as the implementation of "Project Eyewatch" in Australia. She explains that this was a virtual neighbourhood watch scheme, and created the perception that the police are doing their job, however also empowered the public with the belief that they can help and contribute to policing. This finding offers explanation of the success I found with requesting assistance from the public, whilst additionally highlighting the benefit of social media where building trust and legitimacy are concerned. Myhill and Bradford (2012) write that improving confidence in the police is directly linked to police interactions with the public. Confidence can be built by showing interest in what the public have to say, portraying that the police care about these views. In relation to this, Colbran (2018) explains that historically, direct communication was limited to "the beat". Social media allows for this engagement to take place more widely, and immediately, adding that social media shows that the police are a 24-hour service and always available.

Conversely, Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) highlight that the public are assimilated to social media being available for 24-hour communication, however most police social media channels are not monitored 24 hours a day, leaving a gap between expectation and service. Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020) note that a benefit of police using social media is that citizens can use it to report incidents. However, this observation presents an example of where the anomaly between expectation and service could be encountered. Trust and confidence in the police may be reduced if a reported incident goes unanswered. This is supported by the findings of Crump (2011), who identified that exchanges between the police and the public on Twitter are infrequent, and that one-way broadcasting messages were dominant, suggesting that social media has been more successful as an extra channel to deliver messages, as opposed to opening a dialogue. However, it should be noted that these observations were made 13 years ago, and so could be considered outdated.

Nevertheless, Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) share this deduction, although note that non-corporate accounts have better scope for engagement as they tend to be more interactive with the public. Crump (2011) cites an example where one-way communication has been a success, however. Greater Manchester Police trialled an initiative whereby they used twitter to post a short summary of every incident that was reported to them within 24 hours, providing a platform to outline the vast diversity, complexity, and volume of calls reported to them. The number of followers for the account increased by almost six times.

However, Beshears, Beshears and Bond (2019) state that police social media usage would benefit from being more two-way. They found that the public felt much of the police's use of social media was preoccupied with generating self-image, with engagement being lost. The communication lacks a personal feel or human connection, and would benefit from being more humanistic and featuring a more personal tone. This is also noted by Cockroft (2019), who writes that engaging with the public has become increasingly impersonal through electronic means. Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) explain that social media messages from the police should be clear, highlighting that humour that is sensitive can increase engagement, however complex messages with police jargon are difficult to understand.

Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020), conceptualise that obstacles to police social media use can be categorised as structural or cultural, and relate to both the police and the public. Police-structural barriers are limited resources and a lack of training. Police-cultural barriers are an inability to create content matching the requirements of social media users, and the perceived risk to police reputation and raised levels of scrutiny, due to the heightened visibility provided by social media. These obstacles highlight how some of the risks of police use of social media can come to fruition, for example, limited resources prevent social media accounts from being monitored permanently.

Moreover, Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020) argue that there is potential role conflict for officers. There is an implication for social media to be humorous and easy to understand, which many officers view as incompatible with a professional work environment, fearing using humour that is misinterpreted as a lack of professionalism. Concerning this, Walsh and O'Connor (2019) add that increased social media visibility allows for the public to implement "counter-surveillance", whereby they can observe published police work and create their own narrative, often critically. This is a concern that I have personally experienced within my role. I find that anything I publish must be carefully written, subsequently airing on the side of caution, and opting for a more formal approach to avoid such scrutiny, despite the findings of Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) suggesting that this may lower engagement.

Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer (2020) continue to explain that public-structural obstacles relate to digital inequalities of the public. Many members of the public, in particular older generations, lower educated citizens, and rural communities, are less digitally able. This leads to a lack of understanding if complex language is used, but also exposes some members of society feeling isolated, particularly if they perceive a report is being ignored, having misunderstood the structural workings of a given platform, for example, the difference between a "comment" and a "message". Walsh and O'Connor (2019) note that differing forms of social media have equally differing communication styles. Similarly, Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) highlight that police communications span a wide range of topics, that require different forms of communication to be effective. Conversely, Colbran (2018) discusses the benefit of the police using social media to engage with groups that may previously have been isolated by the police. She provides an example of a successful campaign by the Met Police for a knife amnesty, where the target audience was young people who were unlikely to have been reached through conventional media such as newspapers.

Fernandez, Dickinson and Alani (2017) argue that networking to improve engagement is most successful when accounts follow each other, however police accounts following individuals may be misinterpreted as surveillance. This forms part of Dekker, van den Brink and Meijer's (2020) concept of public-cultural obstacles, who add that this distrust will limit the amount of engagement from the public. Additionally, frequent posts about crime may enhance fear, as it may create the perception that crime is rising. Contrary to this, Walsh and O'Connor (2019) argue that there is a vast amount of misinformation in online environments, and social media can instead allow the police to share facts as a credible source. Furthermore, Colbran (2018) adds that social media allows the police to convey

messages of reassurance and safety directly to the public. This is something I have seen my force implement regularly in instances such as road closures, road safety campaigns, security guidance, and episodes of antisocial or violent behaviour.

Whilst Beshears, Beshears and Bond (2019) outlined public perception that police social media is dominated by generating self-image, Colbran (2018) argues that this remains an important benefit, as most police attention in conventional media is highly critical. The rise of social media in the face of the declining conventional media provides the police platforms to carefully control what is published and promote positive stories. She exemplifies this with a story of Met police officers saving a citizen from a burning building having a single mention in conventional media, compared to a mass positive response on social media. Walsh and O'Connor (2019) concur that social media can outline good work and accomplishments, and develop ties to the community. I have experienced this when participating in attachments to specialist teams who have designated social media accounts, using them to publish seizures of antisocial or uninsured vehicles, notifying the public about community engagement events, and documenting patrols to reassure the public that they are operating in the areas that they need it most.

Nevertheless, using social media to promote the police's image presents more risk than eclipsing engagement. Jackson and Welles (2015) recount a campaign by NYPD using the tag '#myNYPD', with the aim of citizens sharing positive encounters. Instead, social media became flooded with images of police brutality and abuse of power, hijacking the campaign and damaging the reputation of the department. This example is extreme, and notably involves American policing which presents a very different landscape to British policing, however it highlights the risk of "counter-surveillance", which UK police forces are not immune to.

In conclusion, through observing my force's social media policy, and drawing parallels to Lee and McGovern's objectives, I can identify that my experiences have incorporated each of them. Using social media to manage risk and build confidence has credibility, given the ease that messages can be disseminated and shared exponentially. However, there remains risk that some communities may be isolated. Currently, social media cannot be completely relied upon, though with an increasingly digital society there is scope that it could become the new "beat". Nonetheless, for this to prosper, social media use by the police needs to become more two-way, perhaps through introducing more non-corporate accounts to open channels for reciprocal dialogue. Moreover, involving the public in investigations offers the scope for the public to feel heard, and publishing outcomes and accomplishments can build trust that the police are achieving their mission. Insofar as promoting the police's image, the benefits speak for themselves, however caution must be taken to ensure that this does not become overbearing, subsequently smothering other policy initiatives such as engagement. Finally, the risk that social media use by the police is turned against them by citizens, to create their own narrative, may never be avoidable, but may be effectively managed by continuing to develop trust.

[Word Count: 2198]

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:

This essay will seek to evaluate and evidence my flexibility in leadership styles by considering the benefits of such styles against my ability, or inability, to employ them in relevant operational situations. Further, this essay will then analyse the strategy of *communication* that I have developed to lead, considering how it may address the shortfalls of such styles, and as such, allow me to become a more successful leader. Leadership scholars have developed and adapted models for decades, with theories moving from trait-based, towards incorporating the complex and dynamic social elements of leadership (Davis and Silvestri, 2020). Leadership, now, does not only concern the people at the top, and can occur anywhere, in any person (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Gandolfi and Stone (2016, p.264) define a leadership style as “an intentional means by which a leader influences a group of people in an organisation to a widely understood future state that is different from the present one”. As such, leadership strategy can be considered what a leader will do to succeed in leading, and a leadership style is how this will be enacted.

Cote (2017) writes that to be effective, leadership may require using more than one style to motivate followers, with Bwalya (2023) adding that differing situations require equally differing styles, and that there is “no one-size-fits-all approach”. Kaiser and Overfield (2010) describe flexible leadership as “the mastery of opposites”. Davis and Silvestri (2020) state that situational leadership has benefited police as it allows for flexibility in leadership style, as it is responsive to the differing demands of equally differing operational situations. They argue that despite falling into the shadow of other leadership models, the increasing complexity of police work increases the likelihood that it will resurge. This model proposes that the leadership style utilised by an individual should reflect the requirements of the follower. It stipulates that this is dependent on “follower readiness”, this being the knowledge, skills, experience and confidence of the follower. The model incorporates “task behaviour” and “relationship behaviour”. The former of these is the extent to which the leader must instruct a follower

on what to do, whilst the latter pertains to a more encouraging, supporting and communicative approach (Davis and Silvestri, 2020). Within my role, I have strived to utilise this model to successfully lead.

I attended an incident where a male was to be arrested for a serious assault. Current information was that he was travelling home in his vehicle, he had warning markers for violence and keeping weapons in his vehicle, and he had already displayed violence within the commission of the offence. For me, the important aspect of this dynamic scenario was time, as the offender would need to be quickly detained before any further injury could occur to myself or colleagues. Chukwusa (2018) highlights that the greatest benefits of the autocratic leadership style are that it allows decisions to be made quickly and lead to higher productivity in the short-term, as team members can focus on the task, and less about the decision. Therefore, I have instructed my colleague that I would engage in communication with the male as a distraction, whilst he gained control over him with handcuffs. This was successful, and immediate risk of harm was averted.

Whilst implementation of this style was beneficial, I recognised that the circumstances of the situation had changed, and so as Bwalya (2023) explained, my leadership style may need to change. Therefore, I have opened a dialogue with my colleagues about how best to proceed. There was a requirement to search the subject's vehicle, so we have agreed between us that one should supervise the offender, whilst two conducted the search. I have assisted in the search and located a large quantity of cash and a "burner" phone. These implicated involvement in drug supply, and I have recognised that my colleague that was currently supervising the subject was particularly experienced in these investigations. I have sought advice from him, and he has suggested contacting the inspector for authority to search the subject's house, as well as providing direction on how to separate and document the items located. The democratic leadership style can be time consuming (Goleman, 2000; Al Rahbi, Khalid and Khan, 2017). Nevertheless, Goleman (2000) explains it is beneficial as decision-making is shared and so all team members understand what is to be achieved. Further, this style is prosperous in situations where the leader may not have a certain direction on how to proceed, and so allows for alternatives to be brought forward. Moreover, Chukwusa (2018) notes how the autocratic style diminishes commitment and motivation in the long run as it prevents the use of creativity in problem-solving, suggesting that its use is sparing. This is evident through my flexibility to change leadership styles in this scenario, allowing all of us to share in the desired outcome.

Davis and Silvestri (2020) posit that within situational leadership, newer employees require a more telling approach, due to their inexperience, gradually moving to a more relationship-centred approach as this experience is increased. It could be argued that transformational leadership provides the means for this change to manifest. Bush (2018) explains that transformational leadership is the powerful influence of leaders to bring about beneficial change in followers by persuading them to adopt certain behaviours. There are four components to transformational leadership, explains Reza (2019). These are idealised influence (acting as a role model), inspirational motivation (inspiring followers), intellectual stimulation (encouraging followers to think and develop their own solutions) and individualised consideration (paying attention to individual needs).

I attended a domestic incident with a student-constable, where we tended to the victim whilst colleagues supervised the offender. Bass and Riggio (2006) note that even within the transformational leadership style, there are occasions where the leader must take charge and be authoritative. This is reinforced by Bedford and Gehlert (2013) who state that there is greater support for autocratic leadership when there are high levels of uncertainty, with Bloom (2014) explaining that this uncertainty is affiliated to risk, with an individual unable to calculate the likelihood of events taking place. Nevertheless, I realised that this was an opportunity for the tutor-constable to develop themselves, and I encouraged them to take the time to recall their training and deduce their own

actions, as opposed to taking an autocratic approach. I offered support by asking questions to prompt their thinking, being careful not to dictate actions to them. This resulted in them making the correct decision. Reza (2019) notes that this approach can enhance motivation and commitment, stimulating a sense of competence and job satisfaction in followers. This is a style that I have utilised many times, particularly in office-based scenarios where less experienced officers have sought guidance from me.

Whilst these have been examples of situational leadership allowing me to successfully flex between leadership styles, there have been occasions where I have erred in this flexibility. I attended an incident of burglary with a newer colleague and agreed that whilst they obtained a statement from the victim, I would proceed with other enquiries. Initially, my colleague was positive about this arrangement. When I returned, I found that their mood had changed, and they presented as tense and withdrawn. After leaving the address I observed their statement and found that it was lacking in details, and when I spoke to them about this, they disclosed that they had not dealt with a burglary before. Tabrizi and Rideout (2019) note that one of the criticisms of situational theory is that the development levels of followers is not easily measured, and the theory does not offer any foundation for assessing this. Graeff (1997) also cites inconsistencies and ambiguity. Bedford and Gehlert (2013) explain that there is a risk of misjudging readiness, and this can induce anxiety and frustration within the follower. I observed this within this scenario, and as a result I also shared this anxiousness and frustration, as I felt that I had let my colleague down by leaving them in a situation they were not comfortable with. Having experienced this, I now realise that a democratic style would have been more appropriate, as this may have highlighted this issue, and possibly allowed me to utilise a transformational style, to guide them through it.

To improve my flexibility and ability to lead in different operational situations, I have developed a leadership strategy of *communication*. Sharma (2020) explains that effective communication strengthens connections with others and improves decision-making and problem solving. It involves both verbal and non-verbal skills, as well as active listening, and understanding one's own, and others, emotions. Schafer (2010) posits that the efficacy of leadership rests highly on effective communication, with ineffective leaders found to be poor communicators. Furthermore, Adair (2022) proclaims that "communication is the sister of leadership", and within this, listening is of co-equal importance. He further writes that communication can be used to emphasise and convey the importance of a team approach. I recognised that as different leadership styles are appropriate for different scenarios, effective communication will differ within each of these. I sought to develop a means to adapt how I communicated, to reflect the leadership style that I felt was best in a given operational situation.

Where there was time and opportunity for developing a colleague, I realised that direct and brief communication was unlikely to aid in encouraging them to think more deeply about a scenario. Instead, a calm and open approach to communication would be more beneficial, taking the time to build a relationship and understand their concerns. Bass and Riggio (2006) refer to the individualised conception element within transformational leadership, explaining that two-way communication, personal interactions, and effective listening, are paramount for achieving this. Adair (2022) furthers the notion that communication is embedded within transformational leadership, stating that individual needs can be met by listening to followers. This is directly related to the individualised consideration element.

Further to this, Goleman (2000) notes that by spending time to listen to followers and taking on board their views, trust, respect and commitment can be built. Bedford and Gehlert (2013) state that one of the shortcomings of situational leadership is that it relies on honesty from the follower about their competency level, for the leader to accurately assess which style of leadership is appropriate. They deduce that the model cannot overlook the fact that a good relationship needs to be in existence, to allow for an open and honest discussion regarding this. This highlights the importance of effective

communication for situational leadership to be successfully utilised to afford flexibility in leadership style, whilst also further adding to the importance of communication for individualised consideration, within transformational leadership.

There were occasions, particularly in dynamic operational situations where there were greater elements of risk, that I adapted my communication style to be direct and firm. These scenarios required information to be given quickly and clearly. However, it was important that when communicating in this way I did not become rude or offensive. Where autocratic leadership is concerned, Adair (2022) cites that assertiveness is often required, and followers will “accept it or even welcome it, if the situation calls for it”. This implies that direct and one-way communication has its place within leadership, however, as Chukwusa (2018) notes, should be used sparingly, and abusive or threatening language or behaviour has “no place in a leader’s repertoire”.

In conclusion, I believe that I have been successful in my flexibility of leadership style, when dealing with a vast range of operational situations. My use of communication as a means of leading has allowed me to adapt in changing scenarios, enabling this flexibility. There have been occasions where I feel that I could have implemented a different approach, however this has provided learning opportunities for me to develop as a leader. Having evaluated my flexibility, I understand that there is not one approach to leadership that can facilitate success in every operational situation. With this in mind, I am drawn to Adair’s (2022) action-centred leadership model, which separates leadership into three areas: achieving the task, building the team, and developing the individual. Autocratic leadership may be beneficial solely for achieving the task, however it neglects the other components. Likewise, democratic leadership may focus on building the team, and transformational leadership, developing the individual. However, in order to be a complete leader, all of these elements need to be addressed. To this end, I agree with the comments of Davis and Silvestri (2020), that situational leadership may be the best fit for policing. It enables flexibility, as it encompasses many individual leadership styles. I will endeavour to continue leading using this model.

[Word Count: 2102]

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:

This essay will use Borton's Model (Ingham-Broomfield, 2021) to critically reflect on my experience of coaching and mentoring and highlight how through these processes I have been able to achieve personal, professional and organisational goals. The essay will describe my experiences and proceed to analyse why these might have been successful. The conclusion will look to the future, and what I have learned from these experiences. Bozer and Jones (2018) explain that coaching is a learning and development approach that places the learner at the centre of the learning experience. Connor and Pokora (2012) write that coaching is generally short-term, focussing on a specific area of development within work performance, and features structured regular meetings. Contrasting this, mentoring is an ongoing and long-term relationship, is less formal, and focusses on career and personal development.

Within my three-year probationary period there have been times where I have experienced stress. My team had a change in leadership with a new Sergeant, who took the time to ask me what I wanted to achieve, and what I felt I was struggling with, which for me was an important element of feeling listened to. This enabled me to set the personal goal of managing my work-related stress, and the organisational goal of conducting quality investigations. Furthermore, this encouraged me to think about what obstacles I would need to overcome to achieve these goals, which I concluded were better management of my workload, and improved knowledge of case files. My Sergeant then asked me to consider how these may be mitigated, encouraging me to think not necessarily from a policing point of view. I deduced that to resolve a knowledge gap, more training would be beneficial. In my personal life, if I have a number of tasks to complete, I would typically make a list with these in order of importance. Subsequently, we agreed that they would source additional training in relation to case files, and that they would help me in creating a spreadsheet to manage my work.

Deiorio *et al.*, (2022) explain that coaching is the process of facilitating positive change, through identifying areas for learning and development, and supporting the individual. They reference the GROW model, which consists of four phases (establishing a *Goal*, understanding the *Reality* of the current situation, exploring various *Options*, and committing to a *Way* forward), as a means to achieve

this. The model offers explanation for the process that my Sergeant followed, to facilitate positive change. Batson and Yoder (2012) explain that coaching requires availability and effort from the coach, with facilitating attributes being the provision of feedback and learning. Kruger and Terblanche (2024) cite that a lack of support diminishes the positive effects of coaching. Meaningful elements of this process were that my Sergeant made time to meet with me and delivered on their agreement to obtain training. This developed a feeling of trust and that we were moving forward together.

A significant aspect of my initial interaction with my new Sergeant was that they engaged with me in a casual conversation. At first, I felt nervous meeting them, as I did not know anything about them, or what they expected from me as an officer. Kruger and Terblanche (2024) write that poor initial contracting between a coach and coachee can immediately hinder the coaching relationship, with a lack of introduction being an often-overlooked component of this. Conversely to this, what I experienced from my Sergeant was calming and welcoming, instilling a feeling that they were approachable. I often use humour when I communicate, and being met with severity can be a barrier to communication for me. An important part of this first encounter for me was that my Sergeant reciprocated humour back to me.

Batson and Yoder (2012) explain that another facilitating attribute of successful coaching is developing an interpersonal relationship, harbouring mutual trust and respect. Coaches must see the coachee as an individual and identify what is important to them. Kruger and Terblanche (2024) write that a gap in communication style leads to frustrations and so as such, coaches must be flexible in their approach. Moreover, they add that the strength of the connection between a coach and coachee is pivotal for the success of coaching, and for this to develop, there must be chemistry and rapport building. This might explain the bond that I appeared to form with my Sergeant, with Deiorio *et al.* (2022) likening this bond to an alliance. Previously, I felt apprehensive about speaking to my sergeant about how I was honestly feeling, perhaps because I did not want them to perceive me to be incompetent, or unsuitable for the role. Weinberg and Scandura (2024) state that coaches must ensure that there is a safe environment for the coachee to express themselves without fear of judgement. Kruger and Terblanche (2024) note that mistrust between the coach and coachee about the confidentiality of what is discussed, further leads to breakdown in the coaching relationship. Having established this trust, I felt that I could be open with my Sergeant about my concerns regarding my workload and completing case files.

Setting clear goals is an important element of coaching (Batson and Yoder, 2012). A lack of involvement from the coachee in setting these goals is an obstacle to coaching (Kruger and Terblanche, 2024). For me, the most important experience was being able to take ownership of my own resolutions. Bozer and Jones (2018) write that coaching enables the learner to resolve an issue for themselves by providing the time and guidance required for them to be able to make sense of available information. Moreover, they explain that improving self-efficacy is a vital part of coaching; if the learner has an enhanced belief that they can achieve results this will correlate to improved prospects of success. I felt empowered to reach my goals, as they presented to me as less daunting and more achievable. This can perhaps be explained by the findings of Connor and Pokora (2012), that goals that are neither too easy, nor too difficult to achieve, powerfully motivate an individual, particularly when this goal is self-determined. Furthermore, when they are documented formally with a trusted person, they are more likely to be achieved.

Bodilenyane and Mooketsane (2019) highlight that mentoring is the process of developing a whole person, encompassing both personal and professional development. I had set myself the personal goal of becoming more confident in dealing with conflict scenarios, and the professional goal of becoming a taser-qualified officer. To be accepted onto a taser training course, there was a requirement for me to exemplify my ability to deal with conflict. I was apprehensive about dealing with conflict when first

leaving my accompanied tutorship-phase, and I was fearful of becoming hurt whilst conducting my duties. Through establishing a mentoring relationship with a senior colleague, I have been able to succeed in achieving these goals.

At the time, I noticed that one of my colleagues was particularly competent at dealing with conflict, and I found myself drawn to them, asking them questions about various operational scenarios. This initial experience could perhaps be explained by Kram's (1985) model of mentoring. Chao (1997) explains that the model consists of four phases, the first of which is initiation, where a mentee begins to respect the competence and knowledge of the mentor, and the mentor recognises the capability and potential of the mentee. Moreover, Deiorio *et al.* (2022) state that mentoring typically involves a more experienced mentor advising and guiding the mentee, acting as a role model. Role-modelling involves leading by example, of how to interact for the better (Turban *et al.*, 2017; Eller, Lev and Feurer, 2014). These observations could explain this initial gravitation that I felt towards my colleague, as their competence and relative experience were attractive to me. I viewed them as an ideal version of a police officer, and I wanted to develop myself professionally to conduct the role at their same high standard.

Initially, I thought that my questioning might be a nuisance, however they continued to welcome and respectfully answer them. A significant aspect of this for me was that I never felt judged by them for my perceived lack of knowledge, however when there was a learning point, or if I had made a mistake, this was communicated to me. They would respond with humour, an important element of communication for me, and furthermore they would explain times that they had made similar errors and point out the learning that they took from these experiences. As such, I recall feeling relaxed when receiving feedback, and confident that I could overcome setbacks to achieve my goals. St-John and Mathieu (2015) explain that improved mentee confidence is a bi-product of a successful mentoring relationship.

Hudson (2013) writes that for a mentoring relationship to be successful, communication should be open and honest, and support must be non-judgemental. Open communication involves a willingness to receive questions (Eller, Lev and Feurer, 2014), and possessing personal attributes such as active listening, humour and empathy also contribute to a positive mentoring relationship (Hudson, 2013). Role-modelling involves the sharing of experiences and learning (Eller, Lev and Feurer, 2014) and this process builds a relationship between the mentor and the mentee, subsequently creating trust and improving the productivity of the relationship (Hudson, 2013). I believe that this trust was present within our relationship, likely due to my mentor's exhibition of these key components.

My mentor made efforts to understand me as a person, accepting that whilst we were conducting the same occupational role, differing personal factors meant that we could achieve the same outcomes using different means. This was an important experience for me, as I did not feel that they were trying to change who I was as an individual. Equally, I recall them being energetic about attending incidents, and as my mentor was a taser qualified officer, we encountered numerous conflict scenarios. After dealing with such incidents, my mentor would debrief with me, to discuss their actions and decisions, which enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of dealing with conflict. Eller, Lev and Feurer (2014) explain that expressing a personal interest in the mentee develops a caring relationship, and that having a mutual respect, where learning is facilitated but the mentor does not try to create a duplicate of themselves, further enhances this. Additionally, the exchange of knowledge is a key component of mentoring, as is passion for the role.

My mentor's enthusiasm may refer to Kram's (1985) initiation phase, however the respect, communication and learning that I experienced could be explained by the second phase: cultivation. Chao (1997) states that this is where the mentor and mentee learn about each other and the benefits

of entering a mentoring relationship, and functions are maximised in this phase as the most development takes place. Whilst the benefits of the relationship for me were obvious, as an opportunity to develop myself, the benefits for my mentor may be explained by Ghosh and Reio (2013), who note that effective mentoring improved job satisfaction and commitment of the mentor, as well as their own increased performance and success. Chun, Sosik and Yun (2012) also explain that the affective well-being of the mentor can be improved, as they feel proud about helping someone.

This is notwithstanding that a good mentor must help for the sake of helping, and that mentoring can be harmful if the mentor demands loyalty or for the mentee to act as their puppet (Bodilenyane and Mooketsane, 2019). Ivey and Dupre (2022) term this as the dark side of mentoring, as it is an abuse of power. This may be prominent within the third phase of Kram's (1985) model, separation. Chao (1997) explains that this is where the mentee gains more independence, and negative emotions may emerge as it is perceived as a breakup. It could be argued that the mentor may observe this as disloyalty. However, within my experience I did not feel that I owed anything to my mentor, and I noticed that they were pleased with my achievements, and our relationship moved towards a friendship. This alludes to the final phase of Kram's (1985) model, redefinition, which Chao (1997) explains is the transition into a relationship of mutual support and respect.

In conclusion, I now know that I have significantly improved my performance in work by better managing my workload, and I now realise that coaching facilitated this. Initially, I did not realise the importance of contracting, however I now know that this formed the basis of trust between my coach and I, enabling us to understand and communicate with each other, which are key elements of coaching. I have learned that setting reasonable goals is vital, which is important for me as a learner as I can continue to utilise this in future. Similarly, I now understand how mentoring is a protracted relationship. Through time and mutual respect, I was able to obtain knowledge of dealing with conflict, developing personally and professionally, eventually achieving my goal of being a taser-qualified officer. Most importantly, I now know the skills that are required to be a successful mentor and can use these to fulfil the role of a mentor myself, in future.

[Word Count: 2197]

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The bibliography should only include sources referenced within the workbook using the Harvard referencing system. Information about referencing in written assignments and how to avoid plagiarism can be found on Moodle. It is important that you are aware of the importance of ensuring that the work submitted is your original work.

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