

Graduate Diploma Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

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

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Policing in the Workplace 3 (DHEP) - BMPP6001D

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Vulnerability and Risk, Evidence-based policing

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a significant role with a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour 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.

Critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches (by professionals and the police) in supporting or managing vulnerable people or people at risk of harm.

Explore what works in relation to tackling repeat victimisation and repeat offending. Consider the use of evidence-based policing.

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

ANSWER:

The incident I have played a significant role is a report of online harassment, using the social media platform Tik Tok. The victim had been harassed by an unknown person using Tik Tok over a 3-year period. He was a repeat victim with several reports made to the police over the 3 years. The individual was personally attacking the victim using homophobic slurs and insults as well as posting personal information online, trying to recruit others to partake in the harassment and making threats towards the victim's family and property. The offender was not living locally and was not known to the victim which made the incident particularly difficult to investigate. Due to the harassment being online collecting data from Tik Tok was the primary focus to try and establish further lines of enquiry and identify the offender to do this data collection forms (Charter) were submitted. The victim was vulnerable with a young family, these online videos and messages were causing him a lot of distress and was affecting his mental health. A PPN (Public Protection Notice) was submitted to help support the victim with

the information being shared to multi agencies to access his needs and to provide the support he needs.

The College of Policing definition of a vulnerable person is A person is vulnerable if, because of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation (College of Policing, 2021).

According to Swain (2003), the term vulnerability has no inherent meaning and that being at risk is a relative state. When using the terms vulnerability or at risk, it generally refers to potential harm of a serious nature and includes, but is not limited to, specific groups such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities, people with mental illness, and many others who may be vulnerable in certain conditions (Scourfield et al., 2006).

Professions have different approaches when working with vulnerable people as they have different aims and objectives. In doing this, they may come into conflict with one another. Kennedy et al. (2008) suggested that the police were concerned with risk management and public protection, whereas social services tended to be concerned with the welfare of the person and mental health professionals were concerned with safeguarding. Whilst these approaches may come into conflict, they are not exclusive to one another and, in many cases professionals will share common objectives of protection and support, and in others, their differing objectives may complement one another. Kennedy et al. (2008) provide examples of where the interests of mental health professionals and the police coincide, i.e. in the protection of an individual who may be vulnerable and a risk to themselves, others, and property. Although there may be conflicting interests, the fact that they may all use similar methods in managing risk

should contribute to improved communication and shared understanding between differing professions. This should create a situation where risk management and the protection of vulnerable people becomes a common agenda across a range of agencies and a step towards a shared multi-agency approach aimed at public protection.

In cases of vulnerability and risk, a professional should respond using an assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. This will ensure that the best possible method is employed in their situation. There are many assessment and intervention strategies, and which one is used depends entirely on the nature and severity of the situation. To effectively respond to a situation of risk or vulnerability, structured professional judgment (SPJ) provides a thorough and informed process.

Joint teams can help to avoid duplication by enabling the agencies to share information about what they are doing with the victim. Whenever two or more agencies are working together with the same victim, it is important to regularly review and, if necessary, change the level of their interventions. This is because working together does not always require high levels of coordination, and sometimes it can be more cost-effective for each agency to deliver its services simultaneously or one after the other. An example is when a child has been reported missing and has returned, police forces will then speak with the child and family, conduct a prevention interview, and then submitted the relevant forms that will be shared with multi agencies, so they have substantial support from social care services, their family, and the school services. To achieve the most effective multi-agency practice, two or more distinct agencies work

together to achieve a common goal. Multi-agency referrals may take place across the children's sector and the adult's sector, for example, a young person may be receiving help from a youth worker at the same time as social workers are helping the family. In the highest need cases, it may become necessary to establish a joint team involving employees from different agencies working together on an ongoing basis to share their specialist knowledge and skills. An example of this would be a high-risk victim of domestic abuse, because of the high-risk nature of the victim a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meeting will be called to discuss what help and support agencies can provide the victim.

A MARAC is a meeting involves information shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. They discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim (Safelives.org.uk, 2014)

When assessing risk, the issues of safeguarding and protection take on specific relevance to victim-oriented policing as its goal is to protect the victim as well and the public, its assertive nature, and "get tough" stance against suspects can at times create greater risk to victims. It is currently held that the best predictor of police action or inaction is the assessed level of risk to victims. South Wales Police have adopted the THRIVE approach when accessing the level of risk associated with the reported incident (College of Policing, 2021).

The policing of domestic violence incidents provides a good example of this, and it has been acknowledged that past failings in this area have been due to a lack of understanding of the complex nature of such cases, not enough training, and poor coordination between criminal justice and civil authorities. In response to this, there are now initiatives for specific training of officers, and the greater involvement of Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and related legal measures such as DVPN (Domestic Violence Protection Notice) and DVPO (Domestic Violence Protection Order) have increased the level of victim protection.

Primary and secondary prevention indirectly deal with the social and environmental factors which give rise to criminal or anti-social behaviour, thereby reducing the likelihood of it occurring. These are particularly relevant to vulnerable adults and children in need, whose subtle signs of depression, inability to cope, and failing health can so easily be overlooked in the investigation of specific offences against them. The police play only a part in such scenarios, and it may be other professionals (health workers, social workers, housing officials) who are to implement prevention strategies. The need for policing to redirect its attention away from short-term goals, such as arrests and more towards long-term safety and prevention by identifying methods that prevent repeated incidents of crime.

Repeat victimisation has been at the forefront of criminological research attention for over three decades, with the term and associated concept first introduced in the mid-1980s, resulting in a several studies seeking to identify an plenty of predictive and causal variables thought to be associated with the risk of experiencing further

victimisation following an initial crime incident (Laycock, 2001). Repeat offending among known offenders has long been regarded as a particular problem for criminal justice agencies. Coming from a policing perspective, the notion of police being able to prevent both those who have recently been victimised from further victimization and prevent known offenders from committing further offense is a challenge. Repeat victimisation and repeat offending are believed to hold a very strong link between each other in terms of prevention methods, though a clear and consistent pathway is yet to be formed.

Identification of repeat offending and repeat victimisation is a concern in the prevention of further victimisation and offending. By identifying specific patterns in an offender's criminal history, specific risk factors can be identified and managed to prevent further offending (Wilcox, 2005). An example is the link between substance abuse and domestic violence. By recognising this link, an intervention to treat the offender's substance addiction may reduce the likelihood of further domestic violence. Identification of high-risk offenders and victims allows for more specific targeting of resources to prevent further offending and victimisation in higher-risk cases. Target Hardening is one resource that can be used and aims to increase the effort and risk for offenders to commit a crime, reducing the likelihood of the crime occurring. Identifying specific repeat offenses and locations enables resources to be targeted at these specific crimes, for example, an increase in police patrols of a specific area and repeated burglary victims making their houses less vulnerable to burglary. An earlier study by Brown and Gordon (2019) has shown interview methods can be useful in identifying patterns and increase the reporting of crimes to police with the view of preventing repeat victimization by victims who would not normally report it. The study

showed that elderly victims often do not report crimes because they are reluctant to bother the police.

A study by Ward, Melser and Yates (2007) has shown that in New Zealand, forensic mental health services are not meeting the needs of an increasing number of people in this category and there are few specific interventions to reduce the risk of further harmful behaviour. This must be addressed to avoid future offending and reduce the risk of victims. It is known that more serious offenders have higher risk of re-offending. This is directly relevant to the abuse as there are often cases where individuals with cognitive impairments have behaved in a harmful way because of not understanding the situation or having been manipulated by another. An example might be an adult with mild learning difficulties accessing indecent images on the internet because he doesn't realize it is illegal. It is also recognised that those who have been victims of crime are more likely to offend themselves due to post-traumatic stress and feelings of anger, revenge, or a need to prove they are not weak or powerless (Orth et al., 2006).

Rehabilitation and reintegration is something that the support services look to introduce to help the offender. The idea behind rehabilitation and reintegration is to attempt to avoid further harmful actions by the offender by reintegrating them in a positive manner. "Reintegration is the process of changing the social conditions in an effort to avoid repeated harmful behaviour in the future of the offender" (Gendreau et al., 1999). For vulnerable people, harm reduction is also a goal. The importance of this approach for harm reduction and public safety is reflected in the finding that the more

intensive the intervention for the offender, the greater the reduction in recidivism (Gendreau, 1996).

A critical element of support involves establishing personal and social support networks for vulnerable individuals. Social support has been described as the resources that individuals gain through family and friends., and it means they can draw on resources to mitigate risk factors for victimisation and offending. Rokven (2017) states it is important to note that extensive evidence shows that there are numerous detrimental effects of social ties and support for certain offenders particularly sex offenders, and this needs to be taken into consideration to avoid increasing risk to the community.

It is widely known that the police are the primary form of criminal control, which means they are always able to exercise discretion. Discretion is not often well-informed, leading to potentially damaging consequences in terms of the quality of service delivered to the communities and the general effectiveness of criminal control (College of Policing, 2023). It has been said that evidence-based policing is actually very similar to community policing, with evidence-based policing helping to build police legitimacy and trust between the police and the community, the ability to engage in problem-solving partnerships becomes more attainable. Also, the police are more accountable for their actions, which are expected to be based on the best possible solution to existing problems. This is exactly what the community is expecting.

Evidence-based policing is an approach that uses scientific evidence and evaluation in decision-making to develop problem-solving strategies in the hope of improving effectiveness and efficiency. The objective of evidence-based policing is to provide the police with an opportunity to make more informed decisions on policy and practice in reducing crime and disorder. This then requires criminal justice practitioners to adhere to policies and practices that have been shown to be effective, which inevitably leads to a decrease in crime rates and an improvement in community safety (College of Policing, 2024)

Words - 2185

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Task 2 Option 1:

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Response Policing

A core part of the policing mission is to prevent crime and disorder. Domestic abuse causes both serious harm and constitutes a considerable proportion of overall crime

You should choose **a domestic abuse incident** that was of a complex nature, in which you played a significant role in providing a response.

Critically assess the challenges associated with a domestic abuse incident that you have attended, and the strategies developed for effective policing in such challenging situations.

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

ANSWER:

In my short career as a police officer I have had to attended several domestic incidents, that could be involving partners, ex-partner, mother/father and child, siblings and even grandparents. Each one is different, and each require a fresh pair of eyes and an open mind as you'll never know what you are going to turn up to. High risk victims are always a priority and as a police officer how will deal with these situations will always be under scrutiny. I was provided with all the information I need before attending the domestic incident, with warning markers of both the victim and offender and any markers placed on the address. I was aware that the victim is a high-risk victim and who the perpetrator was. Its not just how I deal with the incident at the scene its what support and safeguarding is provided after the incident.

Domestic abuse is defined in the domestic abuse act 2021 as behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if—

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following—

(a) physical or sexual abuse.

(b) violent or threatening behaviour.

(c) controlling or coercive behaviour.

(d) economic abuse

(e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

"Economic abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

(Gov.uk, 2021)

The definition is helpful as the behaviour has always been criminal but in many cases, it may not involve a criminal offense and will provide a clear focus for criminal justice interventions and a basis for identifying harmful behaviour. This development is so significant in terms of understanding the nature of domestic abuse and how it can damage the victim's freedom and well-being.

The term 'domestic abuse' is used to mean physical or sexual violence, actual or threatened, or other abusive behaviour which has a harmful effect on the safety, health, and well-being of the victim. It is generally agreed that it can be on a single or

repeated incidents. Typically, domestic abuse occurs between couples or in past/present close or family relationships. This description includes 'the new definition' of domestic violence and abuse recognising the harm that can be caused by patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour that do not involve violence.

Domestic abuse is a problem the police have been facing for several years. This has been an issue that has been threatening the well-being of the country because it is persistent. It does not only affect the victim but the family and the local community its effects are long-lasting. In many cases, it results in serious injury and in some cases death. Between 2020 and 2022, 186 women were murdered by their male partner or ex-partner in England and Wales. In comparison, 30 men were murdered by their female partner or ex-partner (Home Office, 2022). The Office of National Statistics reported in the year ending March 2022, the police recorded nearly 1.5 million domestic abuse related incidents and crimes in England and Wales (Elkin, 2022)

There are an increasing number of women who are seeking help from abusive relationships, with statistics showing men now reporting domestic incidents more than ever before. Many cases result in victims being reluctant to testify and withdraw cooperation, 21% of male victims (2022/23) fail to tell anyone they are a victim of partner abuse which is big improvement as previously it was 49% in 2017/18. The figures for female victims are 18.2% (2022/23) and 19% in 2017/2018 (Mankind, 2024). Kleaver et al. 2019 states there has been an increase in research efforts with little success in finding an effective intervention for the problem. A multi-agency approach for victims of domestic abuse is used to provide them with the support they need as well as having an early intervention to prevent them becoming a repeat victim.

Many police forces now have a specific domestic abuse team that support the victim and able them to work more closely with multi agencies.

The issue of domestic abuse has recently come under the spotlight. There has been much criticism concerning the way the police and other agencies have dealt with domestic abuse cases and a growing pressure problem. It has been argued that domestic abuse is the most challenging and problematic incident police attend. There are many challenges faced by the police, given the private and sensitive nature of domestic abuse and the low rate of victim reporting to the police, there are limitations on what the police can do to try and prevent domestic abuse from occurring. The police play a significant role is preventing domestic abuse and supporting the victim to prevent repeat victims this is where the multi-agency approach works well. Referrals made to specialist domestic abuse services, including independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA) and multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), were most made by the police in the year ending March 2018 (Elkin,2022). High-risk victims of domestic abuse require extra support and safeguarding due being at higher risk or being a repeat victim, a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meeting will be called to discuss what help and support agencies can provide the victim.

A MARAC is a meeting involves information shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. They discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim (Safelives.org.uk, 2014)

Effective policing can reduce domestic abuse through both specific and general deterrence or prevention. An effective response might also demonstrate to victims that the criminal justice system takes the matter seriously. This may increase victims reporting of abuse and increase the chances of successful convictions. If victims believe that the police take positive action against the abuse and that the justice system can offer protection, they might also report incidents of minor abuse in the hope of prevention before abuse escalates to more serious forms. Effective police interventions break the cycle of abuse in some relationships or prevent newly formed abusive relationships escalating to more serious forms of abuse.

Policing domestic abuse is a challenging and emotive area of police work. Research suggests that police attitudes towards domestic abuse are sometimes inappropriate (Myhill, 2018). Police response to domestic abuse is often seen as less effective than their response to other forms of violence (Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Given the frequency of such abuse, the harm it causes, and the attempts of victims to gain police assistance, policing effectively in this area is highly important.

Difficulty facing police is the one of "dual arrests" and dealing with situations in which it is difficult to ascertain an aggressor. However, it is problems relating to victims' and offenders' cooperation and behaviour which police identify as particularly troublesome (Hirschel, 2008).

When investigating and prosecuting domestic violence, police officers face several challenges although there are also specific operational and legislative difficulties. According to research evidence and the findings of various governmental and non-governmental inquiries, problems are replicated in many other parts of the world. A

study by Hagmann, 2019 into police, probation, and court responses to domestic violence in the state of Victoria, Australia, found that legal professionals consistently underestimated the scale of the problem.

The underreporting of domestic abuse is also a challenge. The second type of underreporting is an issue that was raised by many of the officers in a study in to domestic abuse and policing by Davies et al. (2021) in his study of domestic. These officers made reference to the fact that the victims frequently change their statements and become uncooperative or refuse to testify against the offender which led to a break down in the case and difficulties in taking it to court. The UK Crown Prosecution Service makes it clear that "the decision to prosecute a case is the responsibility of the CPS, not the victim or any other person involved in the case." (CPS, 2024) Therefore the victim's cooperation and testimony are important but not essential to the prosecution of the case.

An offender can also exercise very tight control over the victim, which can restrict their ability to talk to the police. Various measures such as isolating the victim or closely monitoring their behaviour can make it difficult for the victim to make any sort of contact without this being detected by the abuser. In extremely severe situations, the abuser may have total control over the victim's actions, this form of domestic abuse is referred to as coercive control, there is no physical violence but economic, psychological, or emotional abuse towards the victim. This is becoming more and more reported since it was made a criminal offence in 2015 (CPS, 2024)

One of the most important components in dealing with domestic abuse cases is the role of the victim. Without their cooperation, it is very difficult for any legal intervention to be effective. The conflict of interests between the victim and the police may result in the victim refusing to cooperate in fear that it will exacerbate the situation if the abuser is prosecuted. Alternatively, the victim may cover up what has happened to prevent the police from taking further action.

Domestic abuse cases are extremely difficult to prove and prosecute. This is due, in part, to the fact that domestic abuse incidents frequently involve conflicting stories, leaving the police trying to figure out what really happened. There are times the more serious incidents of abuse are not reported until some time has passed. This makes evidence collection very difficult, if not impossible. General evidence collection in domestic abuse cases is difficult because it is often difficult to corroborate information given by victims, offenders, and witnesses of abuse. A lack of witnesses to abuse is also a barrier to evidence collection. Physical evidence is frequently not documented through pictures or medical exams so are only left with the account of the victim.

Enhanced training for officers is essential for effective police responses to domestic abuse. Since officers encounter more domestic abuse calls than any other violent crime, it is essential that officers are properly trained in understanding abuse, its implications, and how to effectively respond to it. The primary goal of training is the safeguarding of the victim and the safety of the officer and the community and reduce the offenders use of abusive behaviour.

Police forces have made progress in dealing with domestic abuse and implementing effective strategies for dealing with domestic abuse over the past few years. Over the past three decades, awareness about domestic abuse has increased and departments that concentrate on domestic abuse have been developed. As a result of these departments, the understanding of domestic abuse and how it can be successfully reduced and prevented has undergone dramatic changes. With today's policing and the victim service providers there is a belief that police can stop the violence, prevent its recurrence, and keep victims safe even without a complete arrest and prosecution of the abuser.

South Wales Police have taken steps to help empower victims and improve information sharing with support services through the development of a new risk assessment framework (DASH) Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment to assist attending officers to assess the risk of further harm more accurately to a victim. This is completed at every domestic incident and then shared to relevant agencies through the domestic abuse unit who risk assess every DASH that's completed by officers (College of Policing, 2015). Developing a proactive relationship between police services and support services can help support services identify high-risk victims and then being involved in the process of managing that risk. This may involve regular contact and information sharing between police and support services and the victim if consent is given.

The domestic abuse units set up have been established in recognition of the unique problems associated with responding to domestic abuse that often require intervention

strategies that differ from those used for other types of crime. These specialised units represent a departure from traditional methods of policing domestic abuse, moving away from the 'confront and arrest' approach used for general crime. This is in recognition of the fact that domestic abuse situations are often highly complex, involving multiple incidents, and requiring ongoing monitoring and follow up. The primary goal underpinning specialized units is to increase victim safety.

Words - 2119

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