

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 4 - 40 Credits

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

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

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 1 (PCDA)

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

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

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

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

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

How should the workbook be presented?

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

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

https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/agh-chapters/chapters---en/Chapter_07_Assessment-Taught_Programmes_Pages_72-79-UPDATED-05-11-2019.pdf

Reflective practice is a core aspect for your workbooks and although there is a variety of useful resources on Moodle, there is one particular book, that is specifically based on reflective practice in policing, here is a link to one chapter from Selina Copley's Reflective Practice for Policing Students:

https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/298870/mod_resource/content/1/Reflective%20Practice%20for%20Policing%20Students%20-%20Selina%20Copley%20Chapter5.pdf

How is the workbook assessed?

Advice and support about the completion of this workbook will be provided by university staff as part of your initial training day. Your tutor constable and in-force

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

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

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

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

NOTE

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

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

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

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

Guidance:

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

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

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Wellbeing and Resilience

Guidance:

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

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

ANSWER:

Building resilience and minimising stress are important skills to have in a policing role. For this task I am going to analyse what resilience and stress are and I will outline two coping strategies I applied to develop resilience and minimise stress during my first six months at training school. Any research undertaken will be referenced. As part of my reflection of my experience I will be using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (*The University of Edinburgh, 2020*).

The first six months at training school consisted largely of classroom lessons, mainly delivered using PowerPoint, practical assessments and two exams. I have no prior experience of policing and had not been in education for a long time, so it was crucial I was resilient and reduced stress as much as possible to avoid becoming overwhelmed.

What is resilience? "Resilience is the ability to adapt and grow following adversity" (*NHS, n.d.*). Stress is "any type of change that causes physical, emotional or psychological strain" (*World Health Organization, 2021*). It is vitally important to develop resilience and minimise stress as a police officer because due to the nature of the job, adversity and trauma is something I will experience regularly. I will need to be able to bounce back from this to effectively do my role and to look after my wellbeing.

To build on my resilience during the new and challenging environment of training school, and to keep my stress at a minimum during this time, I applied two coping strategies:

The first strategy was regular exercise, mainly at the gym or walking outside. Exercise brings a whole host of benefits both to our physical self and mental health. "Research shows that physical activity can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress..." (*NHS, 2021*). At the beginning of training, I consulted a Personal Trainer at my gym who tailored me a weight training programme. This consisted of four sessions split between lower and upper body exercises. Having a programme to follow simplified my workouts and in addition to giving me focus, also reduced any anxiety I had about what to do when I actually arrived at the gym. Following this plan four days a week was a brilliant stress reliever after a day in the classroom learning legislation, powers and policies, and gave me

time to reflect on the day and put any negativity into perspective, while also building strength and maintaining fitness. Half-way through training I invested in a smart watch. I enjoyed using this to count my steps and track my route on days where I chose to walk outside for my exercise. Not only did this improve my fitness, but being outside in nature helped me to be mindful and lift my mood after a heavy day in the classroom. During the summer when the weather was warm and evenings long, I particularly enjoyed trying to hit a step count goal, such as walking at least 10,000 steps per day.

As well as regular exercise, I made a conscious effort to improve my sleep routine and therefore quality of sleep, because feeling stressed can release hormones which keep you awake. "On the other hand, a good night's sleep can have an 'anti-stress' effect and relax the systems in your body that are responsible for this stress response" (Gallagher, 2021). It is easy to see how a lack of quantity or quality of sleep can affect how you feel when you wake up, which in turn can shift your mood so you are less able to handle stress effectively and therefore be less resilient to any difficulties faced during the day. It is very important not to fall into this cycle and to place sleep at the forefront of any coping strategy. As the Sleep Foundation recommends, I tried to make sure I was consistent with the following things in order to help maintain good sleep:

1. Using a black-out eye mask. Light is a trigger for your internal clock so reducing this at the right time helps to settle your body into sleep.
2. Reading a book before bed instead of scrolling on my phone. This is a good way to wind down before going to sleep and also to reduce exposure to blue light which can contribute to alertness.
3. Going to bed at the same time each night to help my body stay in a routine.
4. Keeping my room and bed cool. I have breathable cotton sheets which help to regulate my body temperature.

Overall, I enjoyed training school and when times became stressful, particularly around the exam or when learning about potentially distressing topics, I am glad I had these coping strategies in place as they did help to develop my resilience and minimise stress. However, there were times when I did struggle to stick to them religiously as occasions or events would happen which would make my targets unrealistic, but I tried to get back on track and into my routines as quickly as possible.

It is clear to see why, from the reading and research I have done, that when I applied my coping strategies, they worked. I noticed my mood and perspective shift and stress minimise as exercise and sleep are two well-known ways to improve health and wellbeing. I have learned that regular exercise that you enjoy, and good quality sleep, are vital. As I move now from training school to being a response officer, I will have to continue using these coping strategies, but adapt them from a weekday 8am to 4pm work pattern to a changing shift pattern, so that I am able to take on and deal with the challenges I will face in the job and maintain a healthy life outside of work.

Word Count: 963

Task 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

Managing conflict and effective communication are two essential skills a police constable must have as part of their role. During this essay I will reflect on an incident I recently attended where I dealt with a person acting drunk and disorderly. My reflection will be completed using Borton's model of reflection (*Study Prism, n.d.*). I will review the communication used and discuss the thought process behind using force in this conflict situation, referring to Betari's Box and ethics principles in my writing.

The incident I attended began with a call where someone reported a man who looked like he was forcing a female to drive in a small dark car; unfortunately, more detailed descriptions were limited. My tutor and I went on proactive patrol to try and locate the vehicle and people, which we did shortly afterwards. At the scene, there was a stationary car, a male stood on the pavement and a female in the road who was presenting extremely intoxicated.

I tried to speak to the female, asking her what had happened, who she was with, what she had taken, and attempted to diffuse the situation. The female became verbally aggressive and then physically aggressive, lunging towards my colleague. At this point, I decided an arrest was necessary and justified as offences were now being

committed and verbal communication had failed. Despite continued attempts to speak to the female to try and find out what was upsetting her so much, and even with brief moments of calm from her, her aggression escalated rendering restraint necessary. The female fell to the floor when I tried to put handcuffs on, which I eventually managed to do (with the assistance of my tutor) when she was on the ground. We promptly sat the female up and walked her to a police van, where she continued to scream and shout on her journey to custody and ultimately a cell to sober up.

Section 91 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967 makes it an offence to behave in a disorderly manner in a public place whilst being drunk (www.pnld.co.uk, n.d.). Someone who is drunk is “unable to speak or act in the usual way because of having had too much alcohol” (*Cambridge Dictionary*, 2023). There is no specific definition of ‘disorderly’ in legislation, however, it can be described as “threatening the safety of people or the peace of a neighbourhood” (*Cambridge Dictionary*, 2023). It was therefore imperative to effect an arrest on the female to restore order in the street, for her own safety and to avoid further offences being committed, such as driving her vehicle away whilst under the influence.

From a social perspective, it was important for us to take action as “drunkenness can trigger violent behaviour... by lowering inhibitions and impairing judgement alcohol can increase both aggression and the willingness to take risks” (*Alcohol Change UK*, n.d.). The loud noise being made by the female, and disturbance from the whole scene including voices and lights from police presence also meant consideration had to be made for surrounding neighbours to keep the disorder to a minimum.

At first, I tried to calm the female and persuade her to quieten down as she was shouting. I did this by first asking her open questions such as ‘can you tell me what has happened?’ and ‘what have you been up to tonight?’ before moving to more specific questions like ‘what alcohol have you been drinking?’ Open questions allow us to get a big picture of the build-up to the incident and the incident itself, whilst more closed questions can tell us important details to help establish if an offence has been committed and what action to take next. I was conscious to keep my tone of voice neutral but firm and tried to encourage her to move out of the road with a hand on her arm. Unfortunately, due to her intoxicated and upset state, these techniques were not successful in diffusing the situation and she continued to behave irrationally.

As previously stated, there were brief moments of calm from the female. I tried to take advantage of this to talk to her and probe more into what was causing her extreme response, actively listening to any information she was willing to give. I made an effort to give a reasoned appeal, reassure her we were there to help, were not going to cause her harm and things would be smoother if she cooperated, however, this too was unsuccessful, and the female became physically resistant and aggressive.

It was at this point I considered using force to effect a lawful arrest, as non-violent means for resolving the incident were not working. There are two main pieces of legislation which govern the use of force by police officers: the Criminal Law Act 1967 and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. These laws require that “any use of force should be reasonable in the circumstances. Reasonable means absolutely necessary for a purpose permitted by law...” (*College of Policing*, 2013).

There are also certain rights under the European Convention of Human Rights which apply to the use of force, such as Article 2: Right to Life and Article 8: Prohibition of Torture. The use of force must be “absolutely necessary”, and the “amount of force must also be reasonable and proportionate, and the degree of force used must be the minimum required in the circumstances” (*College of Policing, n.d.*).

Taking everything into account, I decided to use handcuffs to restrain the female, whose behaviour was worsening. This is the minimum amount of force I could use in order to effect the arrest for drunk and disorderly behaviour and to protect my colleagues and surrounding property from harm by the female. This is a duty a police officer has and is one of the ten key principles governing use of force by police (*College of Policing, n.d.*).

The female was now in my care and custody and I was careful to ensure the process moved as efficiently as possible so that the female was kept in handcuffs for no longer than necessary. I explained to the female why she was being restrained (for our safety and to preserve order) and that this would only change when her behaviour did for the better. My tutor and I helped the female to her feet as she was restrained on the floor and only when she was escorted to her cell were we able to safely remove the handcuffs.

As part of my reflection I think it is relevant to mention Betari's Box here. “Betari's box describes how people can get locked into a vicious or virtuous circle of communication, based on how their attitudes and behaviour respond to each other” (*College of Policing, 2020*). The female's attitude was aggressive from the start as she was shouting and unwilling to engage in conversation or listen to reason. This filtered through to her behaviour which mirrored her attitude, becoming physically aggressive and resistant to officer instructions. As a result, this affected my attitude towards her. I began being neutral and open, attempting to diffuse the disorder with tactical communication. This did not work so my behaviour had to change so that the conflict could be managed appropriately. Hence, the female was arrested. The circle continued and the female's attitude was affected by this information and worsened, which in turn increased her aggression and physical fight. This caused me to respond by using restraint until she could safely be contained and dealt with once the effects of her alcohol intake had gone. This perfectly demonstrates how a circle of communication breaks down when at least one participant has a negative frame of mind as a result of being intoxicated, for example. “When we're feeling negative...we can be impatient, we can get angry, we might even yell or argue...” (*Mind Tools Content Team, n.d.*).

I received an update from the custody Sergeant the following day who advised the female was charged with the offence of being drunk and disorderly and when sober, she apologised for everything the previous day.

In conclusion, I am pleased with how I handled this incident, and I don't think there is anything I could or would have changed about how it was dealt with. I had an open mind from the outset as the initial call circumstances were unusual and vague. I adapted to a changing scenario in front of me and worked through due processes to try to manage the conflict without unnecessary escalation. Each action was

considered, justified, necessary and proportionate, and the safety of everyone involved was protected. Should an incident like this happen again, I will be sure to keep all relevant codes of practice and powers available to me in mind so that the desired outcome is always achieved.

Word count: 1467

Task 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

It is important for us as police officers, often the first point of contact of the criminal justice system, to be understanding, impartial, and gather evidence so a case reaches the right outcome. In this essay I will reflect on an incident I attended where I arrested a male on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and conducted golden hour enquiries to ensure a solid foundation for a case to be built on. My reflection will be completed using Borton's model of reflection (*Study Prism, n.d.*). I will refer to the relevant Codes of Practice and policing values during my review.

I attended a call where a female reported that her partner had injured her during a prolonged attack, and she had finally managed to escape. My colleagues dealing with the female confirmed the injuries caused were extensive and they were going to take her to hospital as, unfortunately, no ambulances were available. My tutor, several colleagues and I were dispatched to arrest the male who was believed to still be at the address. On arrival at the address, the male eventually made himself known and I placed him in handcuffs and arrested him for assault, the necessity being to protect others from harm and to aid the prompt and effective investigation of the offence as evidence would have to be seized and interviews conducted. When the injuries to the female were detailed, the assault was graded as grievous bodily harm with intent. On arrest, the male was covered in blood.

Grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent is defined in section 18, Offences Against the Person Act 1861:

Whosoever shall unlawfully or maliciously by any means whatsoever wound or cause any grievous bodily harm to any person with intent to do some grievous bodily harm to any person, or with intent to resist or prevent the lawful apprehension or detainer of any person... (*legislation.gov.uk, 2011*)

This offence is extremely serious and carries a mandatory life sentence if found guilty. In order to prove this offence, an element of intent to cause the injuries, such as a sustained attack, must be shown. Due to the severity of the offence the male was under arrest for, it was imperative and in the public interest that we safeguarded the victim and conducted our initial investigation as effectively as possible.

Violence, particularly domestic violence against women as in this case, can have many effects on mental and physical health, both short and long term. Physical effects range from bruises, cuts and broken bones to more long-lasting issues such as problems sleeping or chronic pain. The impact on mental wellbeing is also huge and can lead to suffering from depression and anxiety (*Office on Womens' Health, 2019*). This in turn can affect children and immediate families. All of this together meant it was so important to give the victim proper support and protection from the outset, and to make sure the offender was dealt with appropriately and fairly so as not to undermine the case. Referring to and abiding by policies and procedures in place is the best way to do this.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE 1984) is a piece of legislation which outlines police powers and provides accompanying codes of practice detailing how to best carry out these powers.

The first relevant code of practice in this case was Code G which relates to the power of arrest. "The power of arrest must be used fairly, responsibly, with respect for people suspected of committing offences and without unlawful discrimination" (*Gov.uk, 2012*). The female had specifically named and described the male who carried out this attack and gave the address for where it happened. The first way of supporting the female was to believe her account and immediately look to protect both her and the public from further harm by locating and arresting the male. On arrival at the address, the male did not present himself when we made ourselves known, so I tried to communicate with him through a door to come and speak to us. I spoke firmly so that my tone indicated authority and that this situation was serious, explaining why it was best he come to the door to avoid forcing entry. Shortly afterwards, the male opened the door. He matched the description and the most recent photo on PNC and, as previously stated, was covered in blood, thereby giving sufficient grounds to necessitate his lawful arrest.

At the core of policing is the Code of Ethics and one of the standards of professional behaviour is around use of force. The Code states force must only be used "to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all circumstances" (*College of Policing, 2014*). At the scene, the male was placed in handcuffs to ensure the safety of officers as the male was accused of a violent offence and was unpredictable.

Handcuffs were justified for this reason and was the minimum amount of force needed in this situation.

While my tutor and I conveyed the male to custody, to avoid any cross-contamination of evidence, different colleagues stayed with the female. They took a first account from her, took photos of her injuries at hospital and later completed a Public Protection Notice (PPN) so that she received appropriate support from any relevant partner agencies, such as Women's Aid, following the incident. A PPN is a report completed by officers after speaking with a vulnerable victim which includes positives and negatives about the situation, together with a description of what has happened and the officer's thoughts about the incident.

On arrival at custody, in line with Code C, the arrested male was brought before a custody officer and a new record for him was created where I gave the details of the incident and arrest and the male was provided with his rights. As the male spoke English, there were no special arrangements to be made to assist him. No matter what offence someone has been arrested and taken to custody for, it is vital to treat each person with the same level of respect and impartiality.

As both the offender and my tutor are male, my tutor seized the male's clothing by placing each item in separate brown bags. I then labelled these exhibits before booking them into property should they need to be forensically examined further down the line. With the male's consent, I photographed his hands as there were obvious signs of injury. The photographs were taken in line with PACE and Code D which allows a detainee at a police station to be searched or examined or both, to establish "whether they have any marks, features or injuries that would tend to identify them as a person involved in the commission of an offence and to photograph any identifying marks..." (*Home Office, 2017*).

The next step in the investigation of the offence was to write my arrest statement and exhibit all relevant items, including the seized property and photographs. This evidence was then put together with other officer and witness statements and information gathered from the victim to help compile an interview plan. Code A says "an interview is the questioning of a person regarding their involvement or suspected involvement in a criminal offence..." (*Home Office, 2019*). Code E allows interviews to be audio recorded and details how this should be carried out. Due to the seriousness and nature of the offence, the case was ultimately handed over to another department to complete the interview with the male and liaise with the Crown Prosecution Service for a charge.

Working on this case gave me a really good insight into how to manage a serious incident from start to finish, ensuring both parties are treated appropriately so that justice can be done. Having guidance from the Codes of Practice on how to deal with certain aspects of the incident properly, and using this in line with the Code of Ethics, was really apparent in how each officer acted and dealt with the case as individuals and as a team. The resulting charge for the male reinforced just how important it is to adhere to the procedures in place and the responsibility we have as police officers to do everything we can to look after and protect the most vulnerable people in our society.

In this case I think I took instruction from my tutor on what to do upon arrival at the address well, although looking back I think I could have been even firmer when communicating with the male when he was not presenting himself at the door. Once he did come out and it was clear he was not a threat to us, I lowered my communication tone to keep things calm and I was happy I managed to do this instinctively. I had contamination in mind so was conscious to gather golden hour evidence as quickly and as best as I could. Ultimately, my actions and those of my tutor and colleagues who dealt with the female, were shown to be on point because of the resulting charge.

If I was to have this case again, perhaps by dealing with the female instead, I would have acted differently with her, taking into account her injuries and vulnerabilities, for example, my communication style would be softer and slower. Nonetheless, I was pleased with how fairly and promptly I dealt with the male. Despite being an offender in a serious assault case, this did not change the fact he deserved and received impartiality and respect from the police.

Word count: 1596

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

Decision making is constant as a police officer: how best to handle the initial incident, whether to arrest or not, and how to investigate the case. During this essay I will look at how the National Decision Model assists with making decisions to achieve the best outcome possible and how during an investigation I used policing values and considered management of police information. My reflection will be completed using Borton's model of reflection (*Study Prism, n.d.*).

I am going to reflect on a case of harassment which was reported to us by a woman against her ex-partner. The two had been together for years previously and had two children together. Unfortunately, things had turned sour and the relationship ended. Despite this, there remained conflict over child contact and the woman said she no longer wanted any communication from her ex-partner. Unwilling to accept this, the man continued to call. Over a period of a few weeks, the calls became more regular; often tens of times a day, always unanswered. Unsure how to put an end to this, the woman called the police to help.

S1(1) Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as "a person must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another, and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other" (*Legislation.gov.uk, 2012*).

A course of conduct is defined as “being on at least two occasions. Harassment is not defined but includes conduct causing alarm or distress” (*Crown Prosecution Service, 2018*).

The impact of harassment on a victim can range from irritation at the situation to depression, distress and fear. Because the behaviour can make a victim feel like they have no control and are vulnerable, it is important to investigate and to put a stop to the harassment. However, it is worth reinforcing that harassment can be a serious offence and the term is often thrown around by people without reflection on their own communication. Harassment must be one-way, unwanted and continuous contact.

To establish whether the accusations made by the woman amounted to harassment, a thorough investigation must be done. To assist with the investigation and resolving the incident, I looked to the National Decision Model (NDM). The NDM is a decision making framework where decisions can be examined and challenged (*College of Policing, 2014*). The NDM has six key elements:

- 1.Code of Ethics.
- 2.Gather information and intelligence.
- 3.Assess threat and risk and develop a working strategy.
- 4.Consider powers and policy.
- 5.Identify options and contingencies.
- 6.Take action and review what happened. (*College Of Policing, 2014*).

I began my enquiries by gathering information and intelligence from both parties. It was important to start by getting a thorough account from the woman by way of a statement. This gives a starting point for further investigation and also a personal account of how the man’s behaviour has impacted her. Following the statement, I asked the woman to provide further evidence to substantiate her claim of harassment; she included screenshots of her call history showing a list of calls from the man’s number. I then requested an examination of her phone records to show calls received from the phone number she believed to be the man’s. I intended to then match these up with her statement of times, dates, and length of calls received from him. As this process is not immediate, I made sure to keep the victim updated on progress so that she was reassured action was being taken.

When the records were returned, it showed a large volume of calls from the same number, and this number matched that provided for the man. I subsequently requested records and subscriber information for this phone number; this confirmed the phone number belonged to him. As such, we had gathered enough evidence to interview the man.

I made a thorough plan for the interview, thinking of all relevant questions which would help to prove or disprove the offence and determine if more enquiries needed to be followed. Despite my preparation, I did feel nervous going into the interview as I had not done one of this nature before – there were a lot of topics, questions and multiple exhibits, and the subject of harassment had potential to provoke strong emotions and in the man being interviewed. Nonetheless, I was dynamic with my questioning as sticking rigidly to the plan would not have made sense at all times, and I made sure not to rush. Overall, I was pleased with how it went and the information I gathered.

The next step was to assess the threat and risk and figure out what to do next. The ex-partners no longer lived together or in the same area, the woman had now blocked the man on all forms of communication, the man had been suitably warned and his behaviour had not escalated beyond phone calls, the threat of further harm and risk to the victim was low. I evaluated all the evidence I had gathered and whether further enquiries were warranted.

Next I considered options available to me. “Decision makers should consider the immediacy of any threat, the limits of information to hand and the amount of time available...” (*College Of Policing, 2014*). Taking the above into account and so that the risk remained low, the man was released on bail but with conditions not to contact the woman. During this time period, our investigation could continue as we awaited some results from the phone checks and followed up lines of enquiry raised by the defendant in his interview.

The final step is to take action. Once all of the evidence has been compiled and analysed, a decision can be made about whether an offence has been committed and if so, the charging decision. It is important to record what work was completed and then reflect on the outcome, considering any improvements for the future.

In addition to the NDM, discretion also plays a part in decision making. “In the context of policing, discretion means that officers are given some leeway on which they can rely as they make choices that impact the people they are policing” (*Treebold, 2018*). In a harassment case such as this where there is no immediate risk of harm, depending on what the victim wanted to happen and what evidence was available, an option available to officers would have been to have words of advice with the man and give a warning about his behaviour, rather than conduct a full investigation. However, in this particular instance, due to the frequency of the calls, the victim’s views and previous history between the pair, I decided it was in the public interest to pursue this matter.

When conducting this investigation, including managing and recording information, I had responsibilities under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA). This “is a piece of statutory legislation in the United Kingdom that regulates the procedures of investigating and prosecution of criminal offences” (*Wikipedia, 2020*). There are numerous investigative principles used in the police, including “use of legal powers should be proportionate, investigations should be carried out as transparently as possible without compromising confidentiality...” (*College of Policing, 2013*). I made sure to adhere to these as any phone records obtained were only for specific numbers within a strict timeframe and not a download of the whole phone history – this would not be justified or necessary. I kept both parties up to date with progression and disclosures made. With the relevant information obtained, I recorded it in a “durable and retrievable form” (on our case management system) and ensured this was done as soon as practicable after it was obtained, in line with the CPIA Codes of Practice (*Ministry of Justice, 2015*).

Lastly, when investigating crimes and making decisions, it is essential to be aware of any potential bias which may impact the choices made. Biases are prejudices we may have and are accumulated through different experiences and how we thought and felt about them.

Positive bias occurs when we feel something matches our own thoughts and ideas, or is familiar to us and we are naturally drawn to it. Whereas negative bias occurs when something is different from what we are familiar with or what we think is best or normal.

(NSHCS, n.d.)

For example, in this case I may have had an unconscious bias against the male if I had dealt with a similar incident before and determined all men to be the same, sympathised more with the vulnerable woman and made decisions based on these thoughts. To negate any biases I may have had, I relied on the NDM framework, with the Code of Ethics at its core, to achieve the best outcome. These two tools are essential in helping to stick to the facts and evidence and to stay impartial which is at the core of policing.

On reflection, overall I think I handled the case well – although it can be challenging not to let any bias get in the way of decision making, it is good that I am aware of its presence and question why I might be thinking or feeling a certain way. I was pleased with my attention to detail when it came to my interview plan and analysis of the phone records, as these were at the core of this case. I think the right decision was made to release the man on bail and to keep both parties updated so they both felt reassured and secure in the investigation.

This case was a solid lesson in not assuming the outcome before any investigation was conducted. It reinforced why we have policies and legislation, such as the NDM and CPIA, in place and I found them a useful tool to have. Going forward I will continue to use this framework to deal with cases in the best way for all involved.

Word count: 1643

Task 5

Personal Development Plan (PDP) / Learning Plan.

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

Identified area for development	How it will be achieved	Who can provide support?	Timeline
Adapting and improving communication level and tone for different situations.	Through experience and observation of other officers. The more incidents I attend the more I will learn to adapt my tone and language to the situation and behaviours/emotions of people I encounter. I will learn this by doing and by picking up on what other officers do and say. The best way is through continued practise. Reflection will also help me improve this skill – writing down what I did, what went well and how I could have communicated differently.	My tutor for the short term, other officers as I become more experienced, my Sergeant for specific advice, resources such as books on how to communicate effectively.	I would like to see an improvement in 6 months.
Continue to challenge any unconscious biases	Always refer to the NDM in my decision making to ensure what I am doing is impartial and for the right reasons, not because of my feelings.	College of policing as they have guidance laid out for following the NDM, my case management system as this always points to it in update templates, my	Ongoing, but 3 months the NDM should become a natural, instinctive process.

		colleagues should I need advice on my decisions and why I am making them, my Sergeant as they may ask me to explain my decision making.	
Sleep routine as I am now working different shifts and need to perform my best despite working changing hours.	Speak to colleagues about what routine they follow to get the best sleep possible and so they feel the most alert during shifts. Also having an idea of their struggles so I know it's not just me and we're all part of a team sharing similar experiences. Continue to use my eye mask and dark room, or daylight and hydration when I need to feel awake. Communicate with friends and family when I'm working so they know when not to disturb me.	Colleagues, sleep aids such as an eye mask or daylight lamp, books such as 'Why We Sleep' to educate myself and to also relax before bed.	1 year, I think this will take a lot of trial and error to get my sleep pattern suitable for my shift pattern and finding what works best for me.
Plan and lead an interview independently.	Continue to take any handovers and be thorough with case research, question planning and organisation of any exhibits so that I am confident entering the interview. The best way to improve interviewing skills is to keep doing them.	Colleagues and my Sergeant for any similar question templates they have and advice for how they may structure their interview.	Within 1 month of being signed off independently.

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

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

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

Signed: ELIZABETH MARSH (Learner - Electronic signature or type name)

Date: 19/03/2023