

Graduate Diploma in Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

To be completed by DHEP Detective students only

**Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 1
(DHEP) 6,500 words**

(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) **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 Graduate Diploma 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)
- Problem Solving
- Evidence Based Policing
- Maintaining Professional Standards
- Public Protection.

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.

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.

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

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

NOTE

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

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

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

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

Guidance:

- *Your workbook must contain the items specified in the table below (clearly identified and in the order given);*
- *You should use this document to 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 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.*

Contents

Workbook	Area of Professional Practice	Word count
Task 1	Wellbeing and Resilience	1000
Task 2	Communication Skills, Managing Conflict, Valuing Difference and Inclusion	2000
Task 3	Criminal Justice, Valuing difference and inclusion	1750
Task 4	Decision making and discretion, Conducting Investigations and Criminal Justice (managing offenders)	1750
	Bibliography	
Task 5	Independent Patrol Status Confirmation	Equivalent 1500 words
	Confirmation of Confidentiality and Plagiarism <i>Confirmed by submission through `Turnitin</i>	

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Understanding the role of a constable.

Guidance:

Focussing on your initial 6 months of learning and since being attested as a Police Constable, **discuss and compare** 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:

This essay will focus on discussing and comparing a few of my coping strategies which I've adopted throughout my training period to develop resilience and minimise my stress levels. I'll be referring to Bortons "Model of Reflection" (Borton, 1970) which comprises of three stages. Firstly, is the "what?" stage which refers to the stress and resilience in question. Secondly, it asks "so what?", here I'll discuss what methods I have used to minimise my stress levels and develop my resilience. Lastly, it asks "now what?". Here I'll evaluate and compare these strategies deciding what worked for me and what I'll implement going forwards.

It was no shock that starting in policing was going to be demanding, mentally and physically, however I did not realise just how quickly the stress levels were going to rise. They say that "resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences" (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2015) and for me, joining the police force was definitely the most challenging experience of my life so far. Not only was my work-life balance about to completely change, but I also had to prepare for two exams, whilst working full-time; stress was inevitable. Stress is defined as a state of worry caused by a difficult situation (World Health Organisation, 2023) and I knew that to cope with the difficulties that lay ahead I had to be proactive and find ways to minimise this potential stress.

Addressing the "so what?" part of this model, the first strategy I tried to eliminate this stress was during the first month of the job I decided to get an online coach. It is widely known that "exercise stimulates the release of endorphins, often referred to as "feel-good" hormones" (Das, 2023) and I thought it was paramount that I kept myself accountable in order to feel good physically and mentally, whilst embarking on this new career change. Since doing so, not only has my fitness improved, but I have also gained resilience in training. Rather than finding any excuse not to train, I now find every excuse to train. Training every morning before work has now become a learned behavioural pattern.

Although I have found working out in the gym to be a great outlet for stress, an alternative I sometimes used when I didn't have a lot of energy was going for walks in the evenings with the dog. It has been proven that "walking increases blood flow to the brain and has a positive influence on your hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) which is responsible for your stress response" (Brennan, 2021), and I have found that these daily walks have eliminated my

stress, especially after a long day in the office. The power of nature and the fresh air is incredible. I am now appreciating it a lot more especially after a session in a classroom-based training environment.

The policing world is psychologically demanding too. During the first six months of training, it was classroom-based learning including a lot of PowerPoints on theories and laws. I was mentally exhausted every day, a feeling I've never had before, not to mention worried about having to retain all the lawful information needed for my exams and further, for my career. A strategy I adopted in order to not get too overwhelmed with all this information was at the end of every shift I would sit down at home in a quiet place and write revision cards of what I'd learnt that day, I'd aim to do a few hours each day (NHS, 2020). Starting so early on hugely benefited me when it came to exam revision, I did not have the extra stress of having to get all the material ready, I just had to learn it.

The third tactic I applied to reduce stress and gain resilience, was attending weekly Zumba classes. I have always had a passion for dance. Growing up I was always part of a local dancing group, and it was only when I went to university that I stopped. Dancing is a "psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration" (Field, 2021), a perfect outlet for built up stress so, I thought that it was the perfect time to re-join. This gave me a new lease of life, not only was it getting my endorphins flowing which in turn was reducing my stress levels, but it also made me more sociable. Your social life is something that comes to a halt when you join this type of profession, but it is important to spend time with friends and family for your mental health.

Even though we're now ten months into this new career, I still underestimate how much resilience is needed in order to maintain friendships. Friends help us through the difficult times (Puff, 2021), something I'll be experiencing quite frequent in this line of work therefore, it is important to have a strong network around me. I know that if I don't put aside time to catch up with friends this will negatively impact my mental health, which will lead to increased stress levels not only in my personal life, but in my professional life too. A strategy I have implemented recently in order to ensure I find time for friends is using a group calendar with them. Everyone inputs their shifts, and it is a lot easier to find free days where we can catch up.

Reflecting on the "now what?" part of Bortons model (Borton, 1970), in terms of minimising my stress levels, going to the gym and being out in nature seem to benefit me the most and these are activities I will continue to do. They get my endorphins flowing which in turn reduce my stress levels. Developing resilience in terms of stress has been a hard battle, I have neglected friendships which has had a negative effect on my mental health. However, this is something that I have noticed, and I am making extra efforts going forward to make sure I have time for those I love. My health is my wealth and I need to remind myself of this.

Word count: 1024

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.

Critically assess the incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Consider the use of effective communication skills that you used within the incident.

Reflecting upon your incident, critically evaluate any theories or models underpinning the causes of conflict within policing interventions. (Examples would include, Betaris Box, The Drama Triangle).

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

ANSWER:

Conflict plays a huge role in the policing world, not only do we deal with physical conflict from detainees, but we also deal with verbal conflict from our communities, whether that's out on the streets or over the phone. Even though the police have legislation and protocols in place to help alleviate this conflict, when you're dealing with it head on it can be intense, therefore behavioural flexibility from officers is fundamentally key.

This essay will focus on an occurrence that I dealt with within the first weeks of my position as PC Williams. I'll then critically assess it against any social and legislative contexts that I deem appropriate and finally I'll reflect upon it using Gibbs' model of reflection (Gibbs, 1988) and Betari's Box, including the communication styles I used and how these affected the attitudes and behaviours of the detainee that I dealt with (College of Policing, 2023).

This occurrence was the first one I dealt with whilst being on Team 1 in Cardiff Bay. I was allocated a detainee who was in for domestic violence against their partner. As this was my first interaction with a domestic violence perpetrator, I felt that I needed to do some background research on domestic assaults so that when I went into interview, I'd have an inclination of how they were going to behave and whether they would give a "no comment" interview or give an admission to the offence.

Even though (Cowling & Forsyth, 2021) found that common assaults that are flagged as instances of domestic abuse increased by 71% from 2016 to 2021 unfortunately, there are still too many victims withdrawing their support for a charge against their loved one. This makes it more vital for officers to obtain admissions in interview as without these we would not be able to progress with victimless investigations. The victim in this case was

unsupportive of police action so I knew I had to do my best to get the detainee to talk in interview.

Describing this case (Gibbs, 1988), the detainee had hit their partner to the face multiple times and pulled their hair, however no injuries were sustained. After doing background checks on the detainee, it became apparent that they had previously been arrested for other domestic incidences against this same partner however, all of them had been no further action due to insufficient evidence as well as the victim not being on board. I wanted this time to be different, not only because it was my duty but also because as a woman myself, I wanted to help this victim get justice against her abusive partner.

After I became the officer in case, I began rapport building with the detainee. Betari's box suggests that my attitude and behaviour will affect the detainee's' (Mulder, 2018) and that if I communicate in a calm tone the likelihood of the detainee matching that would be probable. So, I knew that to start building rapport I had to be friendly but professional. I introduced myself and explained to the detainee that I'd get them into interview as soon as I could. They disclosed that they suffered with depression, and that they had an undiagnosed learning difficulty. During this conversation they became irate, and their behaviour escalated from compliant to verbally resistant. They started shouting in their cell that they did not want to be interviewed and that I was a "PIG". Unfortunately, it is inevitable in policing to be called offensive terms like these, and although this term offended me personally (Gibbs, 1988) it was still my duty to build rapport with the detainee and remain professional. Realising I needed to deescalate their behaviour, I demonstrated empathy explaining that I understood their frustration and that I would do my best to speed up the interview process. I offered them food and drink, and this slowly brought their behaviour back down to compliant.

On analysing the detainee's behaviour (Gibbs, 1988), I concluded that it was not appropriate that they did this interview by themselves. So, after the detainee had calmed down, I suggested that I thought it would be beneficial for them to have a solicitor as well as an appropriate adult in interview to ease the process and to help with any comprehension issues due to their previous disclosure of having learning difficulties. I informed them that we could also take breaks whenever they needed and that we would only go into interview when they felt ready. Their behaviour entirely deescalated after this, and the detainee even thanked me for letting them know about the additional provisions we could implement to facilitate this process for them. I felt that this initial contact with the detainee put me in good stead for their interview.

As the detainee previously disclosed they had learning difficulties, in interview I ensured I adapted my language and only asked short and precise questions so that they could understand and answer them without any complications. Admittedly, it is very easy in this job to accidentally use police terms forgetting that those not in the profession would not understand, so during this interview I had to make even more of a conscious effort to avoid this jargon (Mencap, 2020) as I did not want to confuse the detainee.

I was only a few questions in when the detainee started clenching their fists and banging the table, they then stood up. Initially I stood up too as I thought they were about to become aggressive but after analysing their behaviour (Gibbs, 1988) I decided to soften my tone and tell them we'd pause the interview and continue it when they were calmer. I reminded them

that their welfare came first. The detainee's behaviour immediately came down a scale. If it wasn't for me building rapport with them whilst they were in custody earlier that day, I believe that their behaviour in interview could have escalated even further.

When the interview reconvened, the detainee gave a full admission, they started crying and said how ashamed and embarrassed they were. It turns out that this admission was completely against their solicitor's advice, and I truly believe that it was because of my rapport with the detainee that they decided to be honest. So, this time was different as by obtaining a full admission we could charge, even victimless.

The social context of this incident was not clear at first, however after doing background checks on the detainee and their partner it became evident. Our systems showed that the detainee was alcohol dependant and during initial attendance from officers the victim disclosed that most of their domestic violence incidents occurred after the detainee had consumed alcohol. McKinney *et al.* (2010, cited in Drinkaware, 2023) state that "30% of those who report intimate partner violence said alcohol is involved" and unfortunately, this incident mirrored this research. As alcohol amongst adults is becoming a major issue nowadays with the average consumption per adult being about 18 units a week (NHS, 2023), I took it upon myself to refer the detainee to an alcohol awareness course, in the hope to give them a chance to turn their life around.

Not only did alcohol play a social context here but the detainee and their wife lived in community housing in Ely, which is one of the most deprived areas in Cardiff (Deacon, 2021). (London Authority, 2019) findings also show that the highest levels of violent offending are in the top 10 most deprived areas, which also suggests that domestic violence is heightened in these areas, Ely being one. The detainee's I have dealt with so far at Cardiff Bay have come from these deprived areas, again supporting that there is a link between deprivation and crime.

Another contributing social factor was the detainee's depression. In a research article published on Senedd Wales it reports that 20% of adults in the most deprived areas are being treated for a mental health condition (Watkins, 2022). Poverty in childhood is a contributing factor to poor mental health as an adult. Unlike today, there were fewer protective measures in place for an adult who experienced poverty in their childhood, whereas now schools focus on a good education with wellbeing support. Obviously, I did not know the childhood upbringing of the detainee however I knew they suffered with depression. So, whilst they were in custody, I decided to give them leaflets of services they could contact to get further support if they wished.

Even though the detainee informed me they suffered with their mental health it's impossible to know what their trigger points were, as everyone's situation is different. I could have easily fallen into the trap of irritating them during the interview without knowing. When a detainee struggles with depression, and is being interviewed for a domestic incident, this can potentially stress them. To avoid this, I spoke calmly and slowly throughout the interview, and you could see the immediate effect I was having on their mental health as any escalated behaviour declined. Keeping their stress levels to a minimum was important to me. Again, I believe it was because of my previous rapport building with the detainee that led to a smooth interview process. Without this previous communication connection, the interview could have quickly deteriorated.

A recent study in 2020 found that cumulative exposure to deprived neighbourhoods within the first 18 years of a woman's life is a contributing social factor of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) whether it be physical or psychological by a partner, current or former, in early adulthood. This case correlates with these findings in the bigger picture, but little do we know what was experienced in both of their childhoods. Perhaps the detainee witnessed similar interactions with their own parents and believes that their behaviours are acceptable today, not knowing any different (Yakubovich et al., 2019). I wanted the detainee to understand how their actions would have affected their wife therefore, I made it mandatory that they attended a victim awareness course. This course would increase their victim empathy and possibly deter them from committing future assaults against their wife.

The legislative contexts here are evident. One of the main points to prove for domestic abuse is that the behaviour is violent or threatening, and the other element to prove is that the individuals involved were personally connected at the time (GOV UK, 2021). The personally connected aspect was clear in this context as they were husband and wife. However, as there were no injuries sustained it was harder to prove the violent behaviour element of the offence. But to my amazement the detainee gave a full admission which ended up covering this.

Critically reflecting on this incident using Gibb's reflection model (Gibbs, 1988), the communication skills I used during my interactions with the detainee had to be varied due to their disclosure of learning difficulties. Firstly, when their behaviour went from compliant to verbally resistant in the custody cell, although I was offended by their language, I analysed their behaviour and subsequently softened the tone of my voice and used concise language to explain the interview process to the detainee. Once they understood this their behaviour came back down the scale. Again, whilst in interview not only did I use short, clear questions to aid communication, but I also actively listened to the detainee. This ensured that there was a clear verbal understanding between us both. Even though the detainee's behaviour heightened mid interview, I was able to use my communication skills to again deescalate it.

Analysing this occurrence (Gibbs, 1988), I am very pleased with how this incident was handled and I do not think I could have done more. I felt I went above and beyond to make sure that the detainee's needs were met whilst in our care as well as offering them help to pursue once they'd left custody too.

Referencing the final stage of the Gibb's model, if a similar situation were to happen in the future (Gibbs, 1988), I would never assume that the detainee would always remain compliant. From this incident, I have also learned it is important to always stay situationally aware (College of Policing, 2023). I have established that staying calm and collected really does give you a better outcome.

Concluding on Betari's box, it was evident that my behaviour in this instance affected the behaviour of the detainee (Mulder, 2018), when I remained calm, so did the detainee. My conflict management skills were vital throughout this incident and without my quick adaption of communication skills the detainee's behaviour could have accelerated on more than one occasion.

Ultimately, being a police officer not only attracts physical conflict but verbal conflict too, as demonstrated in this occurrence. The communication skills I used throughout were lawful, suitable and flexible, skills that are vital in our toolkit. It is important that I adopt my training in my everyday role as without the application of Betari's box in this incident, behaviours could have risen beyond my control.

Word count: 2166

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

Critically explore a policing incident that you have investigated and examine how you dealt with competing issues such as legalisation, social issues, culture and language.

Consider the victims code of practice and how it was used to support your victim/witness through the criminal justice system during the investigative process.

Your reflection must illustrate your understanding and application of core principles of ethics, equality, diversity and human rights.

1750 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

Policing over the last few years has been under huge scrutiny and public confidence is at an all-time low. The Victims Commissioner found that only 43% of victims would report a crime again based on their previous experience of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) (Victims Commissioner, 2021), which is an alarmingly low percentage. Due to these low figures the College of Policing introduced the *Victims' Code* in 2021 (College of Policing, 2021). This code now ensures that victims are at the heart of every investigation. It is vital that every officer goes above and beyond when dealing with victims because unfortunately when they reach out for our help, they could potentially be experiencing one of the worst times of their lives.

Throughout this essay I will be describing an occurrence where I played a significant role with a victim. I'll reflect upon my actions during the investigation using the ERA cycle (Jasper, 2013). The ERA cycle starts with an experience, in this case it refers to the incident the victim went through. The second part of the cycle is reflecting on what has happened, and the third part of this model is to examine it and decide on the next steps. I'll also discuss what I'll be bearing in mind going forwards as my victim progresses through the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

Summarising my occurrence using the first step of the ERA cycle (Jasper, 2013), the detainee I was dealing with had committed *sexual assault by touching*, contrary to Section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Sexual Offences Act, 2003), against a female member of staff at the local bar. On initial attendance officers sat with the victim and took a first account, however her English was limited therefore her account was ambiguous. The victim was onboard to provide this first account however she expressed she did not want to give an evidential statement as she did not want to go to court, and she did not want to submit a

Victim Personal Statement (VPS). A VPS gives the victim a voice and a chance to document how the offence has impacted their life. It can either be given at the time of reporting, or it can be taken closer to the court date. The VPS is read out after conviction but before sentencing and it can have a great impact on the jury. Not only does it give the “victim an enhanced sense of involvement in proceedings against the perpetrator of the crime” (Windsor & Roberts, 2020) but it also gives the victim the power to make the offender listen to how their actions have affected them. In this case, without a statement or a VPS and with a refusal to attend court, it became apparent that getting this offence evidentially through court was going to be tough.

CCTV was later obtained from the premises which clearly showed this assault. As well as this video evidence, a witness, one of the security guards, also came forwards and provided a statement. Both are evidentially admissible in court so, I thought I'd try my luck and ring the victim to let her know about this overwhelming evidence, because maybe I could get her onboard to provide a statement of her own.

Even though I knew there would be a potential language barrier, I spoke to the victim on the phone. She again repeated that she did not want to speak to officers about the incident and she did not want to go to court. She made it clear that she did not feel comfortable speaking in English as it was not her first language. Referencing the second part of the ERA cycle (Jasper, 2013), reflecting on the fact that the previous officers had not taken her language preferences into account I wanted to ensure that she had the option to speak in her language of choice.

The third stage of the cycle is to decide on the next steps (Jasper, 2013). In this case my next step was to eliminate this language barrier so, I asked if I could meet her face to face with an interpreter so she could talk in her own language about what had happened. She agreed and said she would be willing to give a statement if it was in her language. It was vital that I did everything I could to facilitate this. I liaised with the Wales Interpretation and Translation Services (WITS) not only because it was force policy and one of the victims' rights but also because for me personally, it was imperative that this victim's incident was documented. Using an interpreter “ensures accuracy and impartiality” (GOV UK, 2017) and without an interpreter here not only would the victim have stayed unsupportive of police action but there could have been potential language mistranslations in her account, leading to evidential flaws should this matter have gone to court victimless.

Building rapport with victims right from the beginning is crucial. Whenever dealing with victims I like to think *what if it was my family members?* It is important that all officers safeguard victims, whether this means contacting third party services to assist, like in this case with WITS, or simply supporting them through the CJS yourself. Maintaining these relationships with our victims allows us to fulfil our duty of being positive, professional and proud (South Wales Police, 2023) whilst also ensuring that the victim is at the heart of the investigation. Ultimately, if our victims go to court further down the line, it can be a daunting place therefore it's key that they have our support from the get-go.

South Wales Police as a force police by consent (Brown, 2021), this means that the public freely choose to rely on us and cooperate with us to keep them safe. It is vital that we maintain these professional standards in order to keep these relationships because without the public's perception of us being impartial, we as a force would face serious repercussions.

To meet the language needs of my victim in this case, we arranged to meet at the police station as she did not want to recall this incident in her “safe space” at home. This 19-year-old was distraught and at first, she stated that she was going to quit her job as she was afraid of it happening again. We spoke for a few hours via an interpreter, and she opened up about why she didn’t want to give an initial statement and attend court. It turns out that the attending officers had not explained that under the Victims’ Code she would qualify for special measures in court. The Youth and Criminal Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCEA, 1999) introduced a variety of measures that can be put in place in court for vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses. In this case, as it’s a sexual assault she would automatically fall into the intimidated category; special measures were available to her. These measures included but were not limited to the use of a screen in the court room which would allow her to give her evidence without seeing the perpetrator. Another measure which would have been appropriate was for her to give her evidence via a live link. This meant that she could give her evidence without being in the courtroom itself, an option a lot of eligible victims choose. These measures are in place to stop the victim’s quality of evidence being diminished (YJCEA, 1999). After I explained these options to her, she was more than happy to attend court if she was not in the same room as the perpetrator on the day.

This example highlights how officers are letting victims down. If these special measures were explained to her at the start, then I’m adamant she would have been onboard. Not only this, but if the initial attending officers used the service *language line*, the victim would not have been hesitant to provide a statement as it would have been in her language of choice. Right 1 of the Victims’ Code states that all victims should understand and be understood (College of Policing, 2021) therefore this should have been a consideration right from the beginning by officers. Due to this error, it was even more important that I went above and beyond to ensure that this victim felt supported and represented by South Wales Police.

The victim of this case, being one of sexual assault also had access to a Sexual Offences Liaison Officer (SOLO). These are specialist workers for victims of sexual assault, and they provide services which are directly tailored towards them, putting the victim at the heart of the investigation (McMillan, 2015). Before I finished taking the victim’s statement, I ensured that I provided her with a direct contact for her SOLO so that this support could start immediately.

Whilst taking the statement from the victim I again went over the VPS that she could provide either now or later. Although she originally refused to make one, I explained how a VPS could potentially add weight to her case. To my amazement she agreed to give one closer to the court date. When I finished taking her statement, I couldn’t help but feel a sense of achievement. Not only did she provide an evidential statement and agree to attend court, but she was also onboard to give a VPS. This now made the case evidentially sound. I explained to the victim that the CPS would now be taking over this case, meaning that they’ll be the ones contacting her with future updates, rather than myself. However, I gave her my work number and told her to call if she had any questions at all. This is something I did not need to do, but I did not want this victim to be let down again.

As part of the Victims’ Code we, as officers, have a responsibility to keep our victims updated with the investigation every 5 days, or every 24 hours if they are eligible for enhanced services, like my victim in this case (College of Policing, 2021). We must ensure that we maintain this regular contact not only to keep our rapport with them but also to ensure they

are supported through the CJS. Although the Victims' Code suggests these timely updates, it is ultimately the victim's decision on how often they are contacted, therefore in this case I took it upon myself to ask the victim their preferences.

Reflecting on this incident, in line with the Victims' Code, my victim's language preferences were considered as soon as I became officer in case. It was important to me that the victim felt comfortable and assisted throughout this investigation. She legally has a right to give her narrative in her first language and I wanted to ensure I could do everything in my power to assist this. My efforts proved useful as we now had a complete CPS file.

Policing is a very fast paced profession and unfortunately it is quite easy to neglect victims. If a victim goes under the radar the effect on them can be catastrophic. I am proud of my actions and how I dealt with this victim whilst they were in my care. From the get-go I ensured that she was supported and although this case has been handed over to the CJS, I will do my utmost to carry on my support until this case has an outcome.

Word count: 1,909

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** which you played a significant role with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Critically assess your role during a police investigation where you played a significant part with an offender/victim and reflect upon what happened.

Reflect upon your use of the National Decision-Making Model and the Code of Ethics and review how this impacted upon your decision making and use of discretion within the investigation.

Critically review your responsibilities regarding the provision of CPIA when conducting this investigation.

1750 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

During the application process to join South Wales Police, one of the qualities highlighted in the eligibility criteria in order to progress through the stages is to have strong decision-making skills. This skill is key when it comes to being an officer, regardless of what department you are working in. Our everyday roles revolve around us making quick, ethical and justifiable decisions. In order to help our decisions be streamlined across the board the College of Policing introduced the National Decision Model (NDM), a primary tool that officers can now adopt when making decisions themselves. In this essay I will critically assess and reflect on an occurrence I dealt with using the NDM as well as the Code of Ethics. I'll also refer to my use of discretion throughout this investigation and finally, I'll analytically examine my responsibilities as an officer regarding the requirements from the 'Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act' (CPIA).

After 4 weeks in my role, I was deemed competent enough to become officer in case taking on my own workload. This meant that the cases allocated to me were now more complex. The occurrence that I'll be discussing throughout this essay was the first Hate Crime that I dealt with. To summarise this case, the suspect in question and some of their friends were at a Cardiff City football game and were intoxicated. They were shouting homophobic slurs to the away team on the pitch when they were confronted by a female spectator sat behind them in the stands. After this challenge the suspect turned to the female and said, "OH YOU ARE GAY TOO ARE YOU, F*** THE LGBTQ" and started squaring up to her. Stadium stewards detained the suspect until the police arrived who arrested them for an aggravated public order offence, contrary to S.4A of the Public Order Act (Public Order Act, 1986). This incident left the victim feeling distressed and scared to return to watch her home team play.

During this investigation the NDM was used throughout. The NDM was introduced in 2014 (College of Policing, 2014) to standardise police making decisions. This 5-step risk assessment was designed to provide officers with an evidence-based approach to making policing decisions, and if it was adopted, you'd never go far wrong. The five stages are gathering information and intelligence, assessing the threats and risks and developing a working strategy, to consider your powers and policies, to identify the options and contingencies and to take action and review your choices (College of Policing, 2023). Although there are 5 steps to the NDM, the Code of Ethics is at the core of this model and should always be the underpinning principle that officers act in accordance with.

The first phase of the NDM is gathering information and intelligence. For this occurrence, this stage started as soon as I became officer in case. I started by requesting Police National Computer (PNC) checks on the suspect so that I could see if they had any criminal history. Knowing whether they have previous convictions allows the investigator to have an inclination of where the investigation is going to go. For example, if a suspect had no previous convictions and it was a low-level offence and they admit to it in interview, they'd be eligible for a conditional caution. Having a full picture of the suspect before going into interview is useful not only for the investigation itself but it also comes in handy during solicitor's disclosure in terms of what the next steps could be with their client. As well as these checks, I also read through all of the evidential statements in order to visualise what happened, and I did a background check in order to see if the suspect had any warning markers. Again, knowing if the suspect had warning markers is useful prior to interview because for example, if they have aggressor markers on police officers, you will not want to go into interview by yourself with them. To complete my initial information gathering phase, I also watched all the Body Worn Video (BWV) that the officers uploaded. Knowing this information before you go into interview is key in order to remain impartial (Home Office Guidance, 2020) and ultimately, in this role knowledge is power.

Regarding the next step, assess the threat and develop a working strategy I went down to custody and introduced myself to the detainee. By having a simple conversation with them through the custody cell hatch, I was able to get a gist of whether the detainee was still intoxicated or whether they were fit to be interviewed. From this encounter I gathered that there was no immediate threat as the detainee was calm, compliant and was not slurring their words, therefore they were fit to be interviewed. The strategy I then developed was to prepare for interview and contact their solicitor.

In order to adhere to the Code of Ethics, throughout this investigation I considered all vulnerabilities of everyone involved. Not only was the detainee originally vulnerable due to their intoxicated state but the victim in this case was the most vulnerable as she was distressed and upset by the suspects words and actions. I called the victim and explained to her that I would be the officer in case, and that I'll keep her updated regarding the interview outcome. We spoke for a while, and she stated that she felt she could not return to the stadium in the future to watch another football game as she was too alarmed and distressed from this incident. On disclosing this, I immediately jumped to the next stage of the NDM, powers and policies. I decided that I was going to place a Football banning order, contrary to Section 23 of the Football Spectators Act 1989 (GOV UK, 1989) on this suspect so that they would not be allowed to return to the stadium. I ran this decision around the NDM model and determined it was ethical and justifiable in these circumstances as we as a police force are taking a robust stance towards tackling football-related disorders (CPS, 2022).

Regarding my options and contingencies, in this case it completely depended on what the suspect said in interview. If they admitted to their actions and were remorseful then the detainee would be eligible for a conditional caution, a possible Out of Court Disposal (OCCD) as they had no previous convictions, however if they denied the offence or gave a no comment interview then this investigation would have to be sent to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for a charging decision due to the homophobic Hate Crime element (CPS, 2022). Racially or homophobically aggravated related offences are something that the police cannot charge themselves, especially if the suspect denies the offence in interview.

This occurrence definitely involved discretion from myself. By definition, discretion is the right or ability to decide something (Cambridge, 2023), which is vital in our line of work. The importance of discretion within policing was not highlighted until 'The Scarman Report' released in 1982 (Scarman, 1982). Scarman acknowledged that officers would have to make their own decisions when the suggested course of conduct was not in the public interest. This report was significant as it came just after the Brixton riots in London, an outcome guided by terrible decision making and racism from the Metropolitan police officers. It is crucial to note that using discretion does not mean that officers can act ethically and morally wrong, officers must continue to always be in line with the Code of Ethics. In this case I used my discretion to take action by placing a football ban on the suspect, as homophobic public order offences was and will always be in the public interest.

Police requirements concerning the provision of The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA, 1996) when conducting investigations is to ensure that information is being managed and disclosed correctly. Information in this case is anything that is collected by officers during an investigation of a summary, indictable and either way offence. The CPIA has split *information* into three separate categories in order to make it easier for officers to comply with these obligations: evidence, unused material and non-relevant material. When starting this job, it almost seems impossible to get your head around this but if you break it down, evidence means anything you use as factual evidence for the courts, for example any exhibits or statements from witnesses. Unused material includes all information you have gathered throughout the investigation which relates to the case but is not being used as evidence, this includes occurrence entry logs and custody records. Finally, you have non-relevant material, this is information gathered that does not bear weight on the investigation, for example other suspects in the case who have been no further actioned. The more you deal with case files for the CPS the easier it gets to decipher these responsibilities. The CPIA determines that all of this information must go through a disclosure procedure. The CPS then shares this information with the defence of the detainee. If this disclosure criteria is not met it can cause a case to collapse in court however, if done correctly it allows a fair and impartial trial.

As I am still a student and this was one of my first case files to go to the CPS, I initially did not understand the disclosure process however, I reached out to our disclosure officer in Cardiff Bay Police Station, and we sat down and went through it in detail together. So, the next time I have a case file, I'll be more proficient to decide what evidence and material needs to be disclosed to the CPS and what does not.

Reviewing on my use of the NDM I am happy with how I dealt with this occurrence. I remained professional throughout and ensured that I always complied with the Code of Ethics. In terms of my CPIA responsibilities, all information available to me was managed

and disclosed correctly thanks to the help of the disclosure officer. Throughout the investigation, the NDM was constantly being spun in my head especially at each interaction with the detainee as well as the victim. This tool will allow me to make tough decisions in my career. Even though they'll be difficult, I'll have the satisfaction of knowing that they are all done lawfully and with integrity.

Word count: 1731

Task 5

Independent Patrol Status confirmation – equivalent to 1,500

This compilation of this task shall be confirmed by the employer once independent patrol status is achieved.

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