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BSc (Hons) Professional Policing Practice

**Do Women Police Differently? An Examination of  
Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public  
Perception.**

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**Dedication:**

To my daughter, Tilly –

May the working world you grow into be kinder, fairer, and more empowering than the one I entered. May you find the strength in your voice, pride in your work and the freedom to thrive without limitation.

And to my parents, Stewart and Michelle –

Thank you for raising me in the rhythm of radios and duty, for showing me that purpose wears a uniform, and that passion can echo through generations.  
Your legacy is woven into every word of this work

**Declaration:**

Declaration - This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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Statement 1 - This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BSc.

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Statement 2 - This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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## **Abstract:**

This dissertation examines how gender shapes policing practices, communication, and organisational experiences within contemporary UK police forces, focusing on Heddlu Gwent Police. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study combines surveys of 112 respondents, semi-structured interviews with 10 officers across a variety of ranks, and freedom of information (FOI) data on use of force and complaints to explore whether women police differently. The research is guided by three objectives: comparing female and male approaches to policing, identifying gendered patterns in communication and de-escalation, and examining the influence of unconscious bias on policing practice and public perception.

Findings indicate female officers consistently prioritise communication, empathy, and relational strategies, particularly in high-pressure or vulnerable situations, while male officers more often adopt immediate, force-orientated approaches. FOI data corroborates these differences, showing female officers are involved in fewer use of force incidents yet achieve comparable outcomes in discretionary tasks. Evidence of unconscious bias emerged in task allocation, perceptions of competence and career progression.

The study concludes that gendered approaches contribute positively to operational effectiveness and highlights the need for organisational recognition of communication and de-escalation skills. Recommendations include bias awareness training, equitable access to specialist roles, and promotion process that value diverse policing competencies. This research contributes to understanding gender dynamics, informing policy, and fostering inclusive, effective policing.

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# Glossary of Terms

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agentic Traits</b>                | Characteristics which are traditionally associated with leadership and authority. For example, assertiveness, dominance, and control.                                     |
| <b>Communal Traits</b>               | Traits associated with empathy, co-operation, care, and interpersonal sensitivity.                                                                                        |
| <b>Community-Orientated Policing</b> | A policing approach that emphasises engagement, communication, and rapport-building in partnership with communities to prevent crime and resolve conflict.                |
| <b>Cross-Sectional Design</b>        | A research design that captures data from participants at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of attitudes, behaviours, or experiences.                          |
| <b>De-escalation</b>                 | Techniques used by police officers to reduce the intensity of a situation through communication, empathy, and negotiation to avoid or minimise the use of physical force. |
| <b>Double Bind</b>                   | A situation in which individuals face conflicting expectations, where meeting one expectation leads to negative judgement for violating another.                          |
| <b>Emotional Labour</b>              | The management and regulation of emotions as part of professional work.                                                                                                   |
| <b>Ethics of Care</b>                | A moral framework that prioritises empathy, relationships, context and responsiveness to individual needs.                                                                |
| <b>Ethics of Justice</b>             | A moral framework focused on impartiality, rules, rights, and legal enforcement.                                                                                          |
| <b>Feminist Criminology</b>          | A theoretical perspective that examines how crime, policing and justice are shaped by gendered power relations, inequality, and social structures                         |
| <b>Gendered Policing</b>             | Refers to the way in which policing practices, roles, behaviours, and expectations are influenced by gender norms and assumptions.                                        |

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Glass Ceiling</b>                        | An invisible but persistent barrier that prevents women from advancing into senior or leadership positions despite formal equality policies.                                                                              |
| <b>Hegemonic Masculinity</b>                | A dominant form of masculinity that legitimises male authority and reinforces gender hierarchies, often associated with aggression, physical strength, and emotional restraint in policing culture.                       |
| <b>Legitimacy (Policing)</b>                | The extent to which police authority is perceived as appropriate, fair, and deserving of public trust and compliance.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Masculine Occupational Culture</b>       | A workplace culture shaped by norms traditionally associated with masculinity, such as toughness, control, risk-taking, and emotional suppression.                                                                        |
| <b>Maximum Variation Sampling</b>           | A purposive sampling strategy used in qualitative research to capture a wide range of perspectives and experiences across participants.                                                                                   |
| <b>Mixed-Methods Approach</b>               | A research design that combines quantitative and qualitative methods to provide both breadth and depth of understanding.                                                                                                  |
| <b>Operational Policing</b>                 | Frontline policework involving direct interaction with the public.                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Organisational Culture</b>               | The shared values, norms, beliefs, and practices that shape behaviour and decision-making within an organisation, including police forces.                                                                                |
| <b>Pelargonic Acid Vanillylamide (PAVA)</b> | A police issued incapacitant spray used in the United Kingdom as a less-lethal use of force option. Causes temporary irritation to the eyes.                                                                              |
| <b>Pragmatism (Research Philosophy)</b>     | A research philosophy that prioritises practical outcomes and allows the use of multiple methods to address complex social issues.                                                                                        |
| <b>Role Congruity Theory</b>                | A theory proposed by Eagly and Karau (2002) which suggests that prejudice occurs when there is a perceived mismatch between gender stereotypes and the expectations of a particular role, such as policing or leadership. |
| <b>Strategic Conformity</b>                 | The process by which individuals adapt their behaviour to fit dominant organisational norms in order to gain acceptance or legitimacy.                                                                                    |
| <b>Thematic Analysis</b>                    | A qualitative method used to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns or themes within data.                                                                                                                             |

|                         |                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Triangulation</b>    | The use of multiple data sources or methods to enhance the credibility and validity of research findings.              |
| <b>Unarmed Skills</b>   | Physical control or restraint techniques used by police officers that do not involve weapons or specialist equipment.  |
| <b>Unconscious Bias</b> | Implicit attitudes or stereotypes that influence perceptions, decisions, and behaviour without conscious awareness.    |
| <b>Use of Force</b>     | Any physical intervention or tactical action used by police officers to gain compliance or control during an incident. |

# Chapter 1 - Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

Policing in the United Kingdom continues to evolve in response to shifting social expectations, organisational reforms, and increasing scrutiny regarding how officers engage with the public. Among these developments, the role of gender has emerged as a crucial area of inquiry, particularly concerning how female officers navigate an occupation long shaped by masculine norms. While the representation of women in policing has improved over recent decades, questions remain regarding whether female officers' approach operational duties differently, how their communication styles compare to those of male colleagues, and whether unconscious biases continue to influence their experiences and public-facing decision-making.

This dissertation investigates these issues by examining perspectives and experiences of officers within the Police. Through qualitative data and thematic analysis, the study explores gendered differences in operational approach, patterns of communication and de-escalation, and the presence of unconscious bias in everyday policing. Understanding these dynamics is essential not only for improving internal culture but also for supporting professional standards, ethical practice, and public confidence. Thereby, this research contributes to broader discussions about inclusivity, occupational culture, and how policing can adopt approaches that are both fair and effective in meeting public safety demands.

## 1.2 Background and Rationale

The policing profession has historically been associated with traits such as physicality, assertiveness, decisiveness, and the capacity to exercise control, attributes traditionally aligned with masculine occupational identities. Research has repeatedly highlighted how police cultures can reproduce and reinforce these norms, creating environments where alternative approaches, such as communication or emotional intelligence, are undervalued despite their proven effectiveness in resolving conflict and building community trust. As a result, female officers often find themselves negotiating organisational expectations that conflict with their professional strengths or preferred operational styles.

Despite increased efforts to diversify police workforces, evidence suggests gendered assumptions continue to shape role allocation, promotional opportunities, and the perception of competency. Studies have shown female officers are often steered towards community-based roles, safeguarding, or administrative responsibilities, whereas male officers are more likely to dominate specialist units associated with physicality or prestige. This not only influences career progression but also perpetuates the belief certain areas of policing require inherently “male” attributes. Such assumptions can minimise the value of communication-based skills, despite their centrality to modern policing strategies focused on problem-solving, public engagement, and de-escalation.

The rationale for this dissertation therefore lies in addressing a continued gap between contemporary policing needs and the cultural paradigms that underpin the profession. While national debates often foreground the need for professionalism, accountability, and public legitimacy, less attention is given to how gendered behaviours and biases shape these outcomes.

By exploring how female officers experience and navigate these dynamics, and how their approaches compare to those of male colleagues, this study seeks to provide insight into why gender continues to matter in policing practice today.

Furthermore, examining unconscious bias is essential to understanding why inequalities persist even in forces with strong inclusion policies. Bias may influence decision-making in subtle ways, such as perceptions of strength, authority, and threat level, which can contribute to disproportionate use of force or gendered expectations regarding “appropriate” roles. Investigating these issues in a focused organisational context, such as within Heddlu Gwent Police, offers the opportunity to contribute locally meaningful and practically relevant recommendations while also informing wider policing discourse.

### 1.3 Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of this dissertation is to explore how gender shapes policing approaches, communication patterns, and organisational experiences within a contemporary UK police force. This aim is pursued through three analytically connected objectives that guide the structure and focus of this research.

The first objective is to *explore how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts*. This includes examining operational preferences, decision-making styles, organisational expectations, and how officers perceive their own and others’ approaches.

The second objective is to *identify whether there are any noticeable patterns in communication*

*styles, or de-escalation.* This draws on participant experiences to assess whether gendered patterns emerge in how officers interact with the public, manage conflict, and navigate tense or complex situations.

The third objective is to *examine how unconscious biases influence gendered policing and its impact on policing practice and public perception.* This incorporates officers' own perceptions of fairness, legitimacy, occupational culture, and how gender shapes both internal dynamics and perceived external expectations.

Together, these objectives provide a coherent framework through which the study integrates the intersection of gender, culture, and professional practices within policing.

## 1.4 Research Structure

This dissertation is organised into five chapters, each of which contributes to a systematic examination of how gender shapes policing practice, communication, and organisational experiences.

Chapter 1, *the introduction*, establishes the background, rationale, aims, and structure of the study. It outlines why gendered policing remains a key area of academic and professional interest, particularly within the context of contemporary policing demands.

Chapter 2, *literature review*, critically examines existing research on gendered policing, communication styles, empathy, de-escalation, unconscious bias, and organisational culture.

This chapter provides the theoretical and empirical foundation against which the study's findings are later compared.

Chapter 3, *methodology*, outlines and justifies the mixed-method research design. The study draws on three complementary data sources. They detail participant selection, data collection, thematic analysis based on theoretical frameworks, and ethical considerations necessary in policing research. It also reflects on issues of bias, reflexivity and methodological limitations.

Chapter 4, *analysis and findings*, presents thematic findings generated from participant data and discusses them in relation to the literature provided in Chapter 2. This chapter examines differences in policing style, communication patterns, de-escalation approaches, and the presence of unconscious bias within organisational practice.

Chapter 5, *conclusion and recommendations*, summaries how the research objectives were met, reflects on the implications of the findings, and provides practical recommendations aimed at improving inclusivity, professional development, communication training, and cultural expectations within policing.

## 1.5 Conclusion

In bringing this introduction chapter to a close, it is clear, examining gender within policing remains vital for understanding both organisational culture and frontline practice. The background and rationale have demonstrated how cultural expectations, operational behaviours, and unconscious biases intersect to shape officers' experiences, opportunities, and

interactions with the public. The aims and objectives outlined offer a focused direction for exploring these issues within the context of the Police, while the research structure provides a clear roadmap for how the dissertation will address them systematically.

The next chapter builds upon this foundation by examining existing academic literature relevant to gendered policing, communication styles, de-escalation, use of force, and occupational culture. This review will situate the current study within the broader scholarly context and highlight theoretical and empirical gaps the present research seeks to address.

## Chapter 2 - Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This literature review explores the question: *Do women police differently? An examination of gendered approaches to policing and public perception.* The increase of women employed within police forces globally has prompted an interest in understanding how gender influences not only policing styles but also institutional culture and public perception. While internal policies may aim to improve equality and diversity, research suggests the lived experiences, behavioural expectations, and career trajectories of female officers remain shaped by deep rooted masculine cultures.

This review begins by examining feminist and criminological perspectives to uncover how gendered expectations influence both practice and perception of female officers. Feminist scholars highlight how women are often seen as more suited to community-orientated or emotionally intelligent policing, while being marginalised from specialist departments or face resistance within masculine subcultures (Shoub et al. 2021). Such insights indicate the presence of broader issues with power, identity and legitimacy within policing institutions.

The review then turns to international field studies, which further highlights how gendered dynamics in policing manifest across social and cultural contexts. These studies reveal both the universal nature of gender-based challenges and where local institutional cultures are shaping how women integrate into policing. They also highlight how performance, legitimacy, and career progression are affected differently by gender.

A key area of focus is the use of force, where data consistently shows gender-based differences. Female officers tend to use more communicative tactics and face fewer complaints of serious misconduct. However, they also experience unique pressures, such as the need to prove their physical competence when dealing with suspects or navigating a fine balance between assertiveness and approachability.

The review also considers the role of policing cultures and leadership, examining how masculine norms shape expectations, behaviours, and career progression of female officers. Even when women adopt effective leadership styles, they are often undervalued in comparison to more traditional models of command and control. Despite the presence of inclusion policies, structural biases persist within policing, particularly in senior leadership pathways.

Finally, this review examines Role Congruity Theory which proposes prejudice occurs when there is a perceived inconsistency between the attributes of a social group and the qualities deemed necessary for a specific role, leading to biased evaluations and reduced opportunities for members of that group (Eagly & Karau, 2002). It reveals a conceptual framework for understanding social pressures women face when their behaviour crosses gendered expectations. Whether using force or demonstrating empathy, female officers often encounter conflicting demands, undermining their perceived competence or legitimacy.

## 2.2 Feminist and Criminology Perspectives

A reoccurring theme observed throughout the literature for this research, is the hypothesis female officers adopt a community-orientated and more empathetic approach to policing compared to their male counterparts. Their approach often characterised by utilising

communication and conflict resolution strategies, as opposed to physical force. These theories reflect broader gendered narratives within both policing and the public's perception of female officers.

Paolio (2021) highlights that female officers are frequently perceived as overly emotional and less physically capable than their male colleagues. In response to these stereotypes, many women adopt strategies such as leveraging emotional intelligence, and cautious decision-making practices to build professional credibility and mediate conflict effectively. These strategies not only challenge masculine ideals within policing but also reveals how women adapt and navigate a gendered occupational space.

However, responses to strategies adopted by women vary. While some females internalise traditional gender expectations, viewing themselves better suited to “women's work” in policing, others actively resist masculine ideals by asserting their capabilities in physically demanding or investigative roles (Holdaway & Parker, 1998).

Cunningham (2022) provides a comprehensive feminist critique of policing, arguing both theoretical and empirical evidence point to a deeply entrenched gender dynamic within policing. Cunningham's research highlights that female officers who defy traditional norms, particularly those surrounding how officers should look, act, or communicate, often face sexualised “banter” or derogatory labels from male colleagues. Significantly, Cunningham contends that it is not physical strength, but rather communication skills and emotional acuity, that underpin effective policing. Nevertheless, female officers continue to face exclusion from specialist units and promotional opportunities due to persistent, sex-based assumptions about their suitability for certain roles.

Similarly, Brown (2016) introduces the concept of “transformational scenes” to describe instances in which policewomen establish legitimacy by unequivocally adhering to procedure. However, this approach often sets them apart in a policing culture that values informal rule-breaking to achieve results. Brown’s work underscores how gendered expectations, ranging from doubts surrounding women’s physical competence to aspirations that they will ‘clean-up’ the service, are socially constructed and historically situated.

These findings suggest female officers do not simply ‘police differently’ in terms of style or method; but rather their presence and practices expose the underlying power dynamics, contradictions, and assumptions which are inherent in policing cultures. The gendered nature of these experiences is not confined to a single country. As Brown and Lewis (2003) observe, while female officers globally contend with many of the same structural and cultural barriers, the specific form and intensity of these challenges are shaped by local traditions, policing systems, and institutional cultures.

## 2.3 International comparative and field studies

International field studies further illustrate the gendered dynamics of policing, offering an insight into how officers of different genders interact with the public and navigate institutional cultures across a variety of policing systems. While gendered differences in behaviour are often assumed, studies present a more nuanced and complex picture.

Rabe-Hemp (2008(a)) found that gendered patterns in officer behaviour became more pronounced during encounters where members of the public were disrespectful. Female officers appeared less reactive than their male counterparts. Contrary to stereotypical

assumptions, women in policing did not consistently behave in a more ‘feminine’ or nurturing manner during public interactions. However, consistent with broader trends, female officers were shown to use less physical force than men, though they were equally likely to engage in indirect forms of aggression (Rabe-Hemp,2008(a)).

In a separate study, Rabe-Hemp (2008(b)) identifies the persistence of a ‘glass ceiling’ within policing institutions, where women face systemic barriers to promotion. Female officers often obtained legitimacy only after demonstrating behaviours aligned with traditionally masculine values, such as aggression, physical strength, and solidarity. This masculine cultural framework not only shapes what is rewarded within policing but also restricts the professional identities available to female police officers. As such, the occupational culture tends to favour traits associated with “hemogenic masculinity”, reinforcing gender hierarchies and marginalising alternative policing styles.

This rigid value system poses significant challenges for female officers, who must navigate the tension between stereotypical expectations of femininity and the hyper-masculine demands of the police environment. Pabichuk et al. (2024) reports that this dissonance contributes to elevated mental health risks among female officers, who are found to be 1.66 times more likely than their male colleagues to experience psychological distress. The emotional toll of managing conflicting role expectations is often an overlooked, yet critical, consequence of institutional gender dynamics.

Internationally, structural and cultural barriers manifest in a variety of forms. In India, the establishment of all-women police stations, intended to create more inclusive and supportive environment, did not lead to an overall increase in crime reporting. Instead, male officers often

redirected gender-based crimes to these specialised units, effectively reducing their own caseloads. While this policy may have initially appeared progressive, it inadvertently reinforced the perception female officers are only suited to gender-specific cases, limiting their operational exposure and hindering their career advancement (Nirvikar, 2020). Indicating that initiatives aimed at ‘feminising’ policing spaces, can sometimes entrench, rather than challenge, occupational gender roles.

A contrasting cultural context is provided by Wagner et al. (2017) in their study of Ugandan policing. The researchers found male officers demonstrated greater stringency in judging misconduct and recommended harsher disciplinary actions than female officers. Furthermore, male respondents showed greater leniency when the officer in question was male. These findings suggest gender biases may influence not only policing behaviours but also disciplinary practices within law enforcement.

Together, these comparative studies illustrate gendered approaches to policing are shaped not only by individual behaviours, but by broader institutional frameworks, cultural norms, and operational policies. While there are shared challenges faced by women within policing across international contexts, the extent and manifestations of these issues are deeply shaped by local policing traditions and societal expectations.

## 2.4 Male versus Female use of force in policing

Use of force data in England and Wales shows for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, female officers accounted for 18% of all use of force incidents. While there was no specific breakdown

by gender in the overall rate of 13 incidents per 1000 people, this figure suggests a disproportionately lower involvement of women in such cases.

Further analysis of tactic-specific data reveals female officers are less likely to be involved in incidents involving multiple or high-lethality tactics, with male officers more frequently associated with firearms or other high-risk interventions (Home Office, 2024). This disparity may, in part, reflect underlying structural imbalances in specialist roles. For example, as of March 2025, firearms officers comprised of approximately 3.9% of all serving officers. Although gender-disaggregated figures are not available, data from the Metropolitan Police shows women accounted for only 7.1% of firearms officers as of March 2023 (Metropolitan Police Service, 2023).

Rabe-Hemp (2005) found female officers are more likely to have force used against them, though findings are tempered by contextual variables such as assignment type and offender characteristics. Her research suggests women are more likely to use communicative and de-escalatory approaches, favouring conflict resolution and rapport-building over physical confrontation. However, female officers also face persistent scepticism regarding their physical competence, which, coupled with masculine workplace cultures, can lead to pressure either to conform or adopt alternative strategies to demonstrate professional credibility.

Studies have consistently found male officers are significantly more likely to be involved in serious misconduct. In contrast, female officers, though subject to fewer complaints receive remedial action rather than formal disciplinary measures. Cubitt et al. (2022) further notes male misconduct is concentrated in the early stages of an officer's career, whereas female misconduct is more evenly distributed over time. These findings suggest female officers adopt

different approaches to policing compared to their male counterparts, potentially reflecting variations in conduct and conflict management styles. Understanding these differences is critical to addressing unconscious biases that influence perceptions of officer behaviour and discipline, aligning with the research objectives of exploring gendered policing practices and their implications.

Gender differences are also evident in discretionary practices. Research into traffic stops shows female officers are less likely to initiate searches than their male counterparts. Yet, when searches are conducted, women are more likely to recover contraband, indicating a higher success rate and more targeted decision-making (Shoub et al. 2021). This supports broader findings female officers are more community-orientated and possess stronger communication skills, both of which may influence their approach to public interactions and help reduce the likelihood of escalation.

## 2.5 Gendered Policing culture and leadership

Organisational culture in policing is deeply gendered, shaping perceptions, behaviours, and power hierarchies. Female officers report experiencing derogatory labels such as being “dykes” or “bitchy”, and ongoing sexual harassment. Their physical capabilities and willingness to use force are often scrutinised by male peers. Franklin (2005) describes policing as an “inherently masculine” institution, where subcultural norms valorise aggression, weapons, danger, and emotional restraint.

Women within such cultures face pressure to conform, risking hostility if they do not. Those who over-conform are still at risk of being labelled “weak”, reinforcing narrow conception of

masculinity (Franklin, 2005). Historically, women were relegated to handling juveniles, morality, and female-related cases. These biases persist, with female officers still deemed as “unsuitable” for firearms teams, excluded due to sexist beliefs of being “not strong enough” or affected by “pre-menstrual tension”.

The psychological burden of needing to outperform male peers just to be seen as equal is significant. Silvestri (2004) notes women often engage in strategic conformity, demonstrating assertiveness, avoiding emotional displays, and downplaying gender or caregiving roles, to fit within masculinised professional norms. However, such adaptation comes at a cost as female leadership styles, centred on mentoring, relationship and morale building, are frequently perceived as lacking authority in traditional policing culture.

Despite diversity initiatives and leadership development programmes, Silvestri argues these reforms remain largely symbolic. Structural biases endure, and leadership pathways still reward conformity to masculine norms (Silvestri, 2004). Kingshott (2009) also identifies a hyper-masculine and often misogynistic culture, fostering homophobia, racism, and gender bias, conditions that can produce adverse experiences for female officers.

Kingshott proposes a feminist leadership ethic, which values empathy, care and adaptability, over contrasting leadership models focused on traits such as decisiveness and physical dominance. Female leaders may favour relational or situational approaches over rigid, hierarchal structures. Nevertheless, barriers to leadership remain significant, ranging from tokenism and discriminatory training practices to male-dominated networks and poor retention. In 2009, women represented less than 5% of senior leadership, and as of 2013, only 16.3% of

officers at Chief Inspector rank and above in England and Wales were women (Silvestri et al. 2013).

More recently, however, data indicates women now hold approximately 40% of Chief Constable roles, reflecting a significant increase in female representation at the highest level of policing, arguably influenced by recent initiatives aimed at addressing misogyny and promoting gender equality within the force (Hymas, 2023). This trend contrasts sharply with earlier statistics and highlights ongoing but incomplete progress towards equality in senior police leadership.

Moore (1999) draws on Gilligan (1982) and Walker (1991) to compare the ethics of justice, centred on rules, rights and impartiality, with ethics of care, which emphasises empathy, context and responsiveness. Applied to policing, officers orientated toward justice may focus on strict legal enforcement, while those leaning toward care prioritise de-escalation and relationship-building. Moore notes women tend to score higher on care, and men on justice, suggesting differing leadership and policing styles shaped by gendered moral orientations.

## 2.6 Theory and broader legitimacy frameworks

Role Congruity Theory (Eagly and Karau, 2002) states individuals face bias when their social roles conflict with gendered stereotypes. In male-dominated professions such as policing, where traits like physical dominance, assertiveness, and aggression are often valorised, women are perceived as incongruent with the role. Consequently, female officers, particularly in leadership positions, may be judged as less credible or ineffective simply due to their gender.

When women adopt behaviours aligned with conventional policing norms, such as using force, they risk violating gender expectations, leading to a backlash where they are perceived as competent but “cold” or “unlikable”. Conversely, when employing communicative strategies traditionally associated with femininity, such as empathy and active listening, female officers are often evaluated more favourably, but those tactics may simultaneously undermine perceptions of their authority or strength.

This theoretical framework highlights a double bind. Women are often penalised regardless of the behavioural strategy they adopt. If they prioritise agentic traits (e.g. assertiveness), they may be seen as effective but less likeable. However, if they emphasise communal traits (e.g. approachability), they risk being perceived as weak or lacking in leadership potential. Eagly and Karau (2002) argues this tension limits how women can authentically perform their roles without professional persecution.

In policing, this dilemma carries particular significance. It can influence both how female officers engage with the public and how they are perceived both internally and externally. Even when empathetic approaches are more effective and positively received, the stigma surrounding femininity in policing may discourage their use, thereby effecting both officer behaviour and broader perceptions of legitimacy.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This literature review has shown while female officers are increasingly present within modern police forces, the gendered nature of policing remains a powerful force shaping both practice

and public perception. Across each thematic area, whether operational styles, organisational culture, leadership or theoretical framing, evidence suggests that women do in many ways '*police differently*'. However, this difference is not merely a matter of choice or capability, it is heavily influenced by institutional expectations, stereotypes and structural inequalities.

Feminist and criminological literature reveals women are often associated with more communicative and community-based policing approaches. These styles are generally viewed positively by the public and are sometimes more effective at de-escalating conflict. Yet, paradoxically, such approaches are undervalued within policing, where masculine norms continue to shape ideas of competence, credibility, and leadership.

International and comparative research confirms these gendered dynamics are not isolated to the United Kingdom (UK). Female officers across different policing systems face similar challenges, being confined to 'gendered' roles, excluded from specialist units, or overlooked for promotional opportunities. Even where well-intended policies are introduced (e.g. all-women stations in India), they often fail to address deeper structural and cultural biases.

Literature on use of force provides a particularly striking illustration of gendered practice. Female officers tend to use force less frequently, achieve higher success rates in discretionary actions (e.g. traffic stops), and receive fewer misconduct complaints. This suggests alternative policing styles can be both effective and less harmful. However, outcomes are often overshadowed by institutional scepticism about female competence, leading many women to adopt either overcompensation strategies or face professional segregation.

In leadership and culture, women remain significantly underrepresented, particularly in senior ranks. Despite the introduction of diversity and inclusion initiatives, leadership development continues to favour those who align with dominant, masculine ideals. Even when women adopt strategic conformity, their leadership styles are often devalued.

Role Congruity Theory helps explain the double bind female officers face; demonstrating agentic behaviours may increase perceptions of competence but reduce likability, while communal behaviours may gain social approval but undermine authority. This tension lies at the heart of gendered policing and affects both practice and public perception.

Overall, the literature shows women do police differently, but this difference is shaped as much by institutional constraints as by individual choice.

## Chapter 3 - Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology Introduction

This study aims to investigate the central research question: *Do Women Police Differently? An Examination of Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public Perception*. The research is informed by Saunders et al.'s (2023) Research Onion, which provides a framework for considering philosophical stance, research strategy, methodological choice, and data collection techniques. The research objectives to guide this study are as follows:

1. To explore how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts.
2. To identify whether there are noticeable patterns in communication styles, empathy, or de-escalation.
3. To examine how unconscious biases influence gendered policing and its impact on policing practice and public perception.

Given these aims, this methodology is required to capture both pattern breadth (patterns across a wider population) and depth (individual experiences and perspectives). Therefore, a mixed-methods approach incorporating surveys, semi-structured interviews and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests will be used. This combination allows for triangulation of findings and ensures the research objectives are addressed.

### 3.2 Research Strategy

As outlined in Saunders et al.'s (2023) Research Onion, the methodological process begins with the identification of research philosophy, which serves as a foundation for subsequent strategic and procedural decisions. The below diagram shows the Research Onion, whereby the highlighted fields indicate the researchers' chosen approaches.

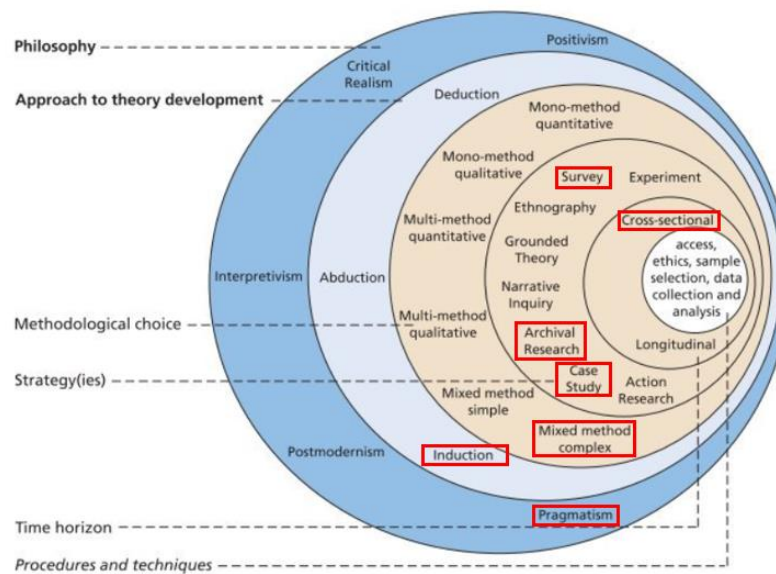


*Figure 1.1: The Research Onion (Saunders et al. (2023)). Showing the researchers chosen approaches.*

Guided by Saunders et al.'s (2023) Research Onion, this study adopts a pragmatic philosophy, recognising that complex social issues such as gendered policing cannot be fully understood through a single philosophical lens. Pragmatism, which emphasises practical application over methodological rigidity, permits the integration of quantitative data (numerical measures that enable comparison) and qualitative data (narrative accounts that capture meaning and experience), making it well suited to addressing research objectives that require both

measurable comparisons between male and female officers and examination of subtler dynamics such as empathy, communication, and unconscious bias. In line with this stance, a mixed-method complex design was selected, as the study integrates and triangulates survey and interview findings rather than treating them as parallel, independent strands. This provides both breadth and depth, enhancing the credibility of results.

The study uses an anonymous survey and 10 semi-structured interviews. The survey will target 50-100 officers, allowing for sufficient comparison. Interviews will involve 5 female and 5 male officers across ranks to capture diverse perspectives. Participants are drawn from Police Forces, across a variety of departments (Response, CID, etc) and years of service. Recruitment for both the interviews and survey will be via internal police websites and on a voluntary basis to maximise access to a varied sample, though exact distributions cannot be guaranteed.

Semi-structured interviews will provide robust accounts of lived experiences ranging from the mid-1980's through to modern day policing and will be valuable for exploring how unconscious biases shape practice and public perception. A cross-sectional time horizon was selected, reflecting the dissertations timeframe and aiming to capture a snapshot of current perspectives. Finally, the techniques and procedures include survey analysis through statistics and thematic analysis of interview transcripts. Triangulation across these methods ensures findings are robust and that all three research objectives, exploring gendered approaches, identifying patterns in communication, and examining unconscious bias, are addressed comprehensively.

### 3.3 Data Collection

#### Interviews (Qualitative Component)

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 5 female and 5 male officers, across a range of ranks and backgrounds will be utilised within this research. This purposeful sampling, consistent with maximum variation sampling, captures diverse perspectives (Patton, 2015). Interviews will explore officers' experiences and their perceptions of the public responses, and internal dynamics within the force.

Interviews will be conducted in person, recorded (with consent), then transcribed verbatim for analysis. Semi-structured formats enable flexibility, allowing participants to spotlight issues most salient to their experience, whilst ensuring coverage of key themes like public interactions, use of discretion, emotional labour, and perceived gender expectations.

This interview sample size is appropriate for achieving depth and thematic saturation in a qualitative phase embedded within a mixed-methods design (Guest et al., 2006).

#### Surveys (Quantitative Component)

An anonymous online survey will target between 50-100 respondents who are either currently serving or retired police officers and policing staff from a range of ranks and policing contexts. Closed questions will collect demographic information (e.g. gender, rank, years of service) and Likert-scale questions will assist in gauging attitudes, perceived public responses, and self-reported behaviours, as opposed to open questions which will invite brief reflections.

Anonymity encourages candid responses on potentially sensitive topics such as gender bias or perceived public responses. Online distribution through police associations ensures a wide reach while preserving privacy. Targeting 50-100 survey respondents' balances feasibility with the need for variability and statistical breadth, a method in line with recommendations for exploratory mixed-methods studies (Saunders et al., 2023).

### Freedom of Information Requests (FOI)

FOI requests will be submitted to Heddlu Gwent Police to obtain secondary data, such as:

- Use of Force forms submitted in the year 2024-2025 and the level of force used, with the data segregated by gender.
- Complaints received in the same year in relation to Use of Force, using the same criteria.

FOI data offers a valuable institutional perspective, helping to contextualise individual accounts. For example, survey and interview findings on bias can be triangulated with organisational statistics on Use of Force. This strengthens the validity of findings by integrating personal experiences with documentary evidence (Bowen, 2009).

## 3.4 Data Analysis

### Qualitative Data

Interview transcripts will be analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process will involve familiarisation, coding, theme development, review, and definition. Themes will be mapped to the objectives listed above.

## Survey Data

Closed responses will be analysed using statistics to identify trends, and where possible, open non-parametric tests will be applied to compare male and female responses, which will then be thematically coded to capture additional insights.

## Interview Data

Interview transcripts will undergo thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involves developing themes, and comparing differences in approach, empathy, and perception of bias. Reflective memo-writing will be used to reduce researcher bias.

## FOI Data

FOI responses will be treated as documentary evidence. Where data is numerical, statistical analysis will be applied and where responses contain contextual or qualitative information, content analysis will be used.

## Integration

Findings from all three sources will be triangulated, for example, survey results showing higher self-reported empathy among women can be explored through interviews and then compared with FOI data. This integration enhances validity and provides a richer understanding of gendered policing.

### 3.5 Limitations & Ethical Considerations

#### Sample Size and Representativeness

The small number of interviews limits the transposing of responses into qualitative findings. By limiting the exposure of the initial question set, the survey results collected via non-probability sampling, may not represent the wider population, meaning the findings cannot be generalised beyond the sample.

#### FOI Data Quality

Responses may vary in completeness and format, and some forces may decline requests or withhold certain information.

#### Time Constraints

The cross-sectional design captures perceptions and experiences at a single point in time and cannot reflect changes across decades, this limitation is mitigated by triangulating survey and interview data to provide breadth and depth of insight. Findings are also situational within existing literature to contextualise developments in policing, though future research would be required to examine change over time.

#### Sensitivity of Topic

Discussions about bias, gender, and policing may cause discomfort. This will be mitigated through careful question framing, the right to skip questions, and signposting to support resources.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are central to this study, particularly given the sensitive nature of policing and gender. Participants will be provided information prior to their involvement ensuring informed and voluntary participation, and they will be reminded of their right to withdraw at any time.

Survey responses will be fully anonymous, and interview data will have all personal details removed. Data will be securely stored and only accessible to the researcher. Given the potential for sensitive issues such as discrimination or bias to arise, interviews will be conducted with care, allowing participants to skip questions or pause. FOI requests, as a form of secondary data collection, involve a minimal ethical risk since the information is publicly available, however, responses will still be handled responsibly and stored securely. This approach has been reviewed and authorised by the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David's Ethics Committee.

## 3.6 Conclusion

This methodology, structured using Saunders' Research Onion, combines a quantitative officer survey with qualitative interviews, and FOI data to provide a comprehensive exploration of gendered approaches to policing. A complex mixed-methods design was chosen, combining surveys, semi-structured interviews, and FOI requests to address the three objectives: exploring gendered approaches, identifying patterns in communication and empathy, and examining unconscious bias.

Surveys provide breadth and comparability across male and female officers, interviews provide depth and nuance, and FOI requests supply official institutional data that contextualise and validate primary findings. Data analysis will combine statistics, thematic analysis, and documentary analysis, using triangulation to ensure robustness. While limitations around sample size, representativeness, and FOI responses are acknowledged, strong ethical safeguards underpin the study.

Together, this methodology provides a balanced and rigorous approach, ensuring the research objectives are comprehensively addressed and contribute valuable insights into whether, and how, women police differently.

## Chapter 4 - Analysis of Results

### 4.1 Analysis of Results Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the study, integrating data from the officer survey, semi-structured interviews, and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to address the central research question: *Do Women Police Differently? An Examination of Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public Perception*. The results draw on three data sources: survey responses from serving and retired police officers, semi-structured interviews with male and female officers across a variety of ranks, and Freedom of Information (FOI) data detailing use of force and misconduct complaints. Together, these sources allow the study to explore measurable trends alongside the lived experiences of officers operating within a gendered organisational culture.

The analysis is structured around the three research objectives that underpin this study:

1. To explore how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts.
2. To identify whether there are noticeable patterns in communication styles, empathy, or de-escalation.
3. To examine how unconscious biases influence gendered policing and its impact on policing practice and public perception.

Each section presents the findings thematically, combining quantitative and qualitative insights to build a comprehensive understanding of gendered policing practices. Survey data provides an overview of general patterns and perceptions, while interviews capture the nuances of

officer's experiences. FOI data is used to triangulate and validate key findings, particularly in relation to use of force and professional conduct.

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) principles of thematic analysis, patterns were identified and refined to reveal recurring issues across data. This integrated approach enables a deeper exploration of whether women police differently, and how gender continues to shape operational practice, institutional culture, and public perception within contemporary policing.

## 4.2 Survey Analysis

Survey data from 112 respondents was exported into Microsoft Excel for analysis. Each response categorised according to sex (male or female) to enable comparative analysis between the two groups. Raw data was collated, and total number of responses for each category of the Likert scale (*Strongly Agree*, *Slightly Agree*, *Neutral*, *Slightly Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*) was calculated for each question.

To determine proportionate trends, the number of responses in each category was divided by the total number of respondents for that sex group, producing percentage values for ease of comparison. These percentages allowed identification of patterns in agreement, neutrality, and disagreement across all seven survey questions. Resulting figures were then tabulated to illustrate differences between male and female responses in relation to the study's three objectives. This descriptive analysis provides a clear representation of response trends and facilitated the interpretation of gender-based differences in attitudes and perceptions within the policing context.

### 4.3 Survey Results

The survey data revealed clear gendered differences in perceptions of policing practice, directly addressing Objective 1 referenced above.

| Question                                                  | Female Officers<br>Strongly/Slightly<br>Agree (%) | Male Officers<br>Strongly/Slightly Agree (%) | Key Difference |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Different Approaches to Policing                          | 88                                                | 52                                           | <b>+36</b>     |
| Gender Affects Public Interaction                         | 78                                                | 67                                           | <b>+11</b>     |
| Females Use More Communication/ De-escalation Techniques  | 86                                                | 51                                           | <b>+35</b>     |
| Policing is Influenced by Masculine Values                | 49                                                | 19                                           | <b>+30</b>     |
| Officers are Encouraged to Adopt the Same Policing Styles | 66                                                | 55                                           | <b>+11</b>     |
| Officers Changed Policing Style to Fit in With Their Team | 26                                                | 17                                           | <b>+9</b>      |
| Gender Impacts Perceptions of Competence/ Leadership      | 62                                                | 25                                           | <b>+37</b>     |

*Table 1: Summary of Survey Responses by Gender Across Seven Questions.*

A significant majority of female respondents (88%) agreed male and female officers often take different approaches to policing, compared to just over half of male respondents (52%). Similarly, 78% of female officers believed gender affects how officers interact with the public, whereas 67% of males shared this view. These findings indicate women are more conscious of gendered distinctions in policing, possibly reflecting on their experiences within a male-dominated occupational culture. Overall, women appear to recognise and articulate gendered approaches to policing more readily than their male counterparts.

In relation to Objective 2, 86% of female respondents agreed women are more likely to use communication and de-escalation rather than physical force, compared with 51% of males. Additionally, 66% of females felt officers are encouraged to adopt a uniform policing style

irrespective of personal strengths, compared with 55% of males. Findings suggest that while women may place greater value on communicative and empathetic approaches, organisational expectations may still favour more traditional or assertive policing styles, potentially constraining alternative methods of engagement.

Finally, the survey findings also contribute to Objective 3. Nearly half of female respondents (49%) agreed policing styles are influenced by traditional masculine values, compared to only 19% of males. Furthermore, 62% of female officers believed gender impacts how colleagues view competence and leadership potential, whereas 25% of males disagreed. This disparity indicates female officers are more likely to recognise and experience the effects of gender bias, while male officers may be less aware of its presence. Such perceptions suggest unconscious bias continues to influence organisational culture, shaping both internal professional dynamics and external perceptions of policing.

#### 4.4 Interview Analysis

Interview data was analysed using a thematic analysis approach, which involved systematically identifying and categorising patterns across participants' responses. Initially, each interview was transcribed and reviewed in detail, with responses highlighted and colour-coded according to the three stated objectives. Individual thematic tables were created for each respondent, capturing key themes, interpretations, and illustrative quotes. Following this, a cross-case comparison was undertaken to identify recurring patterns, contrasts, and unique experiences across respondents.

## 4.5 Interview Results

Analysis of the interviews highlighted clear gendered differences in policing approaches, communication styles, and perceived public perception. In comparing female and male officers, female respondents consistently described relying heavily on communication, empathy, and negotiation to manage situations, while male respondents generally emphasised physical intervention and assertive strategies. For example, Respondent 1 reflected, *“I learned very quickly to use this (pointing to her mouth) rather than fighting...I was more empathetic and caring than the men on my shift”*, whereas male respondents described approaching incidents with a more hands-on, control focused approach. Respondent 6 stated, *“I am very direct...if they’re becoming a threat, I act quickly and get it under control”*, and Respondent 3 similarly noted that male officers were *“far more likely to go in and get it dealt with...if that meant getting hands on then that meant we were getting hands on”*. Female officers, however, sometimes adapted to male-dominated team cultures. Respondent 7, despite preferring communication, described a pressure to justify her softer approach to colleagues stating, *“I spent years trying to prove myself...being told I was too caring”*. Likewise, Respondent 3 acknowledged adapting to force-based expectations from male colleagues stating, *“I adapted to fit in the team more...I just used whatever techniques they were using...it was effective”*. These accounts illustrate female officers tend to emphasise assessment and relational strategies, but their approaches can be influenced by team expectations and operational norms.

Patterns in communication, empathy, and de-escalation further distinguished female and male officers. Female respondents consistently described using patience and rapport building as central tools, particularly in managing vulnerable individuals or high-tension incidents. Respondent 2 recounted de-escalating a mental health crisis where male officers were

unsuccessful: *“she wouldn’t speak to the male officers, but she would speak with me... having female officers is only a benefit to the force”*. Respondent 8 similarly explained, *“People have naturally responded better to me than the officer who I am with who is male...I’m coming from a caring point of view”*. Respondent 1 also described how her personal circumstances shaped a more empathetic approach: *“my decision making changed like a flick of a switch following the birth of my child... that’s why I used communication to de-escalate situations... I had something, someone to go home to”*. Male respondents recognised the strategic value of these approaches, with Respondent 4 observing, *“we tried to use it to our mutual benefit...she could sweet talk anyone down from anywhere”*. Male officers, in contrast, often relied on rapid, force-orientated resolution, with less emphasis on verbal negotiation. Respondent 6, for example, emphasised being *“direct, clean, firm”* and willing to assert physical control when required. The comparison suggested that while female officers bring enhanced relational skills, effective policing relies on a combination of approaches, and the integration of female communications strategies can complement male assertive tactics.

Finally, unconscious biases were evident in both operational and public spheres, shaping how female officers were perceived and deployed. Female officers reported being underestimated, excluded from high-risk incidents, or subjected to sexist commentary, whereas male officers were assumed to be authoritative or aggressive. Respondent 7 described being dismissed by colleagues and the public, *“people automatically approach the male officer...it’s like I’m invisible”*. Respondent 8 noted continued disparities in opportunities, *“females won’t get the arrest attempts, but the males will...it’s the boys club”*. Respondent 2 observed similar task allocation reflecting on gendered expectations: *“it’s automatically assumed that the female officer will deal with the injured party and the males will deal with the offenders”*. Public

interactions reflected similar biases, female officers reported dismissive or derogatory comments such as Respondent 2 being told to “*go back to school little girl*”. Male officers, however, were often labelled as aggressive or domineering, with Respondent 3 noting, “*the public thinks male officers are bullies...assuming you’ve used too much force*”. Supervisory respondents echoed these observations, with Respondent 10 acknowledging that some individuals “*test boundaries more*” with female officers.

Language also reflected biases; male officers frequently referred to female officers as “girls”, whereas female respondents consistently used neutral terms like “male officers”. This dynamic was mirrored in public interactions, with female officers being subjected to demeaning remarks such as “*little girl*”, while male officers were labelled bullies. These linguistic patterns, alongside operational and public biases, illustrated how entrenched gender norms continue to shape policing practices and public perceptions.

#### 4.6 Freedom of Information (FOI) Data Analysis

FOI data on Use of Force (UOF) submissions were analysed to examine potential gender differences in operational behaviour. The dataset included counts of UOF submissions and complaints for both male and female officers across multiple intervention types. Ratios of male to female submissions were calculated by dividing the number of male submissions by the number of female submissions for each intervention type, providing a standardised measure. These ratios allow for direct comparison between genders across categories, independent of absolute numbers, and serve as a basis for identifying patterns in the frequency and type of UOF interventions used by male and female officers. This analytical approach highlights

whether certain types of interventions are disproportionately associated with one gender, offering insights into operational behaviours and potential differences in policing styles.

#### 4.7 Freedom of Information (FOI) Data Results

Analysis of the FOI data revealed notable differences in UOF submissions between male and female officers across a range of intervention types. Across all categories, male officers submitted more UOF reports than their female counterparts, with an overall ratio of approximately 4.06 male submissions for every female submission. The distribution of submissions highlights both the relative frequency of interventions and potential gendered patterns in policing behaviour.

| <b>Use of Force (UOF) Type &amp; Complaints Received</b> | <b>Male Officers</b> | <b>Female Officers</b> | <b>Male submissions per 1 Female submission</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Total UOF Submissions                                    | 6633                 | 1632                   | 4.06 : 1                                        |
| Compliant Handcuffing                                    | 2331                 | 594                    | 3.92 : 1                                        |
| Non-Compliant Handcuffing                                | 1117                 | 281                    | 3.98 : 1                                        |
| Limb/ Body Restraints                                    | 399                  | 176                    | 2.27 : 1                                        |
| Unarmed Skills                                           | 1306                 | 214                    | 6.10 : 1                                        |
| Spit Guard                                               | 78                   | 29                     | 2.69 : 1                                        |
| Ground Restraint                                         | 435                  | 125                    | 3.48 : 1                                        |
| PAVA Drawn                                               | 39                   | 8                      | 4.88 : 1                                        |
| PAVA Used                                                | 96                   | 26                     | 3.69 : 1                                        |
| Complaints Received                                      | 30                   | 14                     | 2.14 : 1                                        |

*Table 2: Summary of FOI data on UOF submissions and complaints received by Gwent Police between August 2024 and August 2025.*

When examining specific UOF types, data suggests the largest disparities are observed in unarmed skills, with males submitting 1,306 reports compared to 214 by female officers, representing a ratio of 6.10:1. This may reflect differences in deployment, role assignment, or the physical nature of certain interventions. Compliant handcuffing, non-compliant handcuffing, and ground restraint all shows ratios ranging from 3.48:1 to 3.98:1, indicating while male officers are more frequently involved, female officers are still substantially participating in these common interventions. Limb/body restraints and spit guard submissions show smaller disparities (2.27:1 and 2.69:1, respectively), suggesting female officers are relatively more engaged in interventions that require controlled physical management rather than aggressive or combative techniques.

Use of PAVA, both drawn and used, shows intermediate ratios of 4.88:1 and 3.69:1, which may reflect operational decisions based on officer strength, training, or situational assignment. Complaints received show the smallest gender disparity 2.14:1, indicating public complaints are somewhat more evenly distributed between male and female officers, despite overall differences in submission frequency. However, it could be argued male officers are twice as likely to receive a complaint, comparatively to that of their female counterpart.

Overall, the data highlights male officers are more frequently involved in UOF interventions across most categories, but female officers maintain substantial engagement, particularly in interventions requiring controlled physical management and compliance techniques. These patterns align with qualitative findings from interview data, where female officers emphasised communication, assessment, and de-escalation strategies, whereas male officers utilised more immediate, force-orientated approaches. The FOI data provides a quantitative context for these

differences, offering insight into how operational behaviours may be influenced by gender, role assignment, and situational context.

## 4.8 Conclusion

This study demonstrates gender significantly influences policing approaches, operational behaviour, and public perception. In line with the first objective, female officers were observed to approach policing differently from their male counterparts, prioritising communication, empathy, and de-escalation, while male officers more frequently adopted immediate force-orientated strategies. Regarding the second objective, patterns in communication and relational skills were consistently evident, with female officers using rapport-building and patience to manage complex or vulnerable situations, skills that complemented male officers' assertive approaches. Finally, in addressing the third objective, unconscious biases were shown to shape task allocation, career progression, and public perception, with female officers frequently excluded from high-risk incidents, subjected to derogative language, or expected to adopt more supportive roles. Despite these challenges, combined findings from interviews, surveys and FOI data indicates gender diversity contributes positively to operational effectiveness, highlighting women police differently in meaningful and measurable ways. Recognising and addressing these differences is essential for fostering equitable, inclusive and effective policing practices.

## Chapter 5 - Conclusion

### 5.1 Conclusion Introduction

This dissertation set out to explore the question: *Do Women Police Differently?* Through a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and statistical evidence obtained from FOI requests, the study critically analysed gender dynamics in policing practice. The research evaluated behavioural differences, communication styles, and the influence of unconscious bias within police contexts. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to synthesise key findings, reflect on their implications, and offer recommendations for future policy, practice, and research.

### 5.2 Main Findings

Objective One - To explore how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts:

A key finding of this research is women police differently, a conclusion echoed throughout research literature yet complicated by institutional pressures. Survey results showed 88% of female respondents agreed gender plays a role in policing approaches. This aligns with older studies by Rabe-Hemp (2008(a)), who argued gender patterns became more pronounced during encounters where members of the public were disrespectful, whereby women used less physical force than men.

Interviews revealed female officers prefer communication and negotiation consistent with conclusions made by Cunningham in 2022, defying traditional masculine norms

within policing. This was further substantiated by FOI data showing disproportionately higher UOF submissions made by male officers, over 4 times that of their female counterpart. Such findings corroborate conclusions from Paolio (2021) who found women's restraint in using force was often perceived as overly emotional and less physically capable than their male colleagues.

This study also highlighted that women in policing sometimes feel compelled to adopt masculine ideals to gain credibility. A point raised in earlier literature by Eagly and Karau (2002), who identified female officers adopt a more masculine approach to conform with organisational cultures in policing. Despite this strategic behaviour, participants in the current study described struggling against perceptions of legitimacy when attempting to operate decisively, especially in high-risk environments.

Objective 2 – To identify whether there are noticeable patterns in communication styles, empathy, or de-escalation:

Findings show female officers consistently emphasise communication, empathy, and emotional labour, a pattern well recognised in research literature. Paolio (2021) posits that women often utilised community-orientated values and a more empathetic approach to policing. Survey findings support this, with 86% of women prioritising communication over using force (compared with 51% of men), and interview testimonies illustrated how such skills lend themselves effectively to diffuse tensions.

However, this study also revealed this emotional labour is undervalued and frequently goes unnoticed within the police. Several officers in this study reported burnout

resulting from this invisible labour, a phenomenon also recognised by Silvestri (2003), whose work highlights the psychological burden females experience and the perception they need to outperform their male peers, just to be seen as equal.

Objective 3 – To examine how unconscious biases influence gendered policing and its impact on policing practice and public perception:

Another central finding of this research is the presence of gendered organisational biases, which shape how women are recruited, deployed, and evaluated within police forces. Women were found to be subtly guided toward community and safeguarding roles, echoing Role Congruity Theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002). It highlights women face inherent penalties when acting against societal expectations of femininity, a finding confirmed here as several interview participants described being judged harshly when using discretion or taking assertive action.

Interestingly, despite being less likely to use force and less likely to receive complaints (as observed in the FOI data), women reported being perceived as less competent by both colleagues and the public in assertive scenarios. This contradiction mirrors research by Eagly and Karau (2002) who argues that women's actions are more severely scrutinised due to gendered double standards.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations emerge to support more equitable and effective policing practices, aligned with the three research aims.

1. To address differences in policing approaches between female and male officers, training programmes should emphasise communication, empathy, and de-escalation techniques, recognising that female officers in this study frequently employed these strategies successfully, while male officers tended to rely on force, even at a lower perceived threat level. Training programmes should directly challenge the glorification of use of force and the “big boys club” ideology. Organisational culture should actively reward relational and community-orientated policing in performance evaluations, promotional criteria and operational commendations. This could include formal recognition for officers who have successfully utilised de-escalation techniques, conflict resolution, and community engagement as measures of policing effectiveness, thereby reframing what counts as competence.
2. Specific changes should be made to improve accessibility to operational training modules, such as Method of Entry (MOE) courses. Current emphasis on using battering rams disadvantages many female officers due to physical strength expectations. Introducing a basic MOE course, with the use of lock-snapping kits and alternative entry methods would create a more inclusive, skill-based approach broadening operational capabilities and reducing gender bias inherent in current practices. Such adaptations not only elevate practical effectiveness but also symbolically challenges the “big boys club” ideology pervasive in tactical training environments.
3. Anonymised applications for promotional opportunities and structured mentorship programmes should be implemented, alongside the setting of measurable targets for female representation in senior leadership and specialist roles. This increases visibility

of women in influential positions and actively challenges unconscious biases in recruitment and career progression, reflecting concerns identified by Eagly and Karau (2002).

4. To address unconscious biases that shape organisational behaviour and public perception, organisations should incorporate ongoing bias awareness training, transparent promotion processes, and reflective practice to ensure gendered assumptions do not influence task allocation, leadership evaluation, or operational decision-making, consistent with lived experiences of officers documented in this study.

### 5.3 Future Research

Future research should explore gendered policing across multiple UK forces, focusing on high-risk incidents, decision-making, and use of force. Comparative studies could examine communication, de-escalation, and access to specialist roles, while investigating intersections with race, ethnicity, and organisational culture. Such research would provide broader insights into structural biases and inform policies promoting equitable and effective policing practices.

### 5.4 Final Thoughts

This dissertation set out to explore how female officers experience and contribute to policing, and findings demonstrate that each objective has been meaningfully addressed.

Objective one, examining how female officers approach policing compared to their male counterpart, revealed clear differences in communication, decision-making, and the

prioritisation of de-escalation, challenging long-standing assumptions about what effective policing looks like.

Objective two, identifying patterns in empathy and communication styles, showed that these skills are not only more commonly utilised by female officers, but also central to resolving conflict safely and building community trust.

Objective three, to examine how unconscious biases influence gendered policing and shape organisational practice and public perception, illustrated how deeply embedded assumptions continue to affect role allocation, legitimacy, and professional recognition.

Taken together, findings demonstrated more effective aspects of policing extend beyond physical capability and are underpinned by emotional intelligence, communication, and adaptable decision-making. They also show gendered assumptions remain influential, limiting opportunities and undervaluing vital policing competencies. Yet the contributions of the officers in this study offer a clear indication of what policing could become, a profession that recognises and rewards a broader range of skills, challenges outdated cultural norms and reflects the communities it serves. If policing organisations continue to evolve and embrace the strengths highlighted in this research, they have the potential to foster a more inclusive, balanced, and forward-looking future, one where every officer, regardless of gender, can contribute fully and confidently to the service and public it protects.

Word Count: 8,795

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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Application for Ethical Approval

### APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

#### RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within **SIX** months for full-time students and **TWELVE** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

Once complete, submit this form via the ***MyTSD Doctoral College Portal*** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

#### RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to [pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk](mailto:pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk) , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

**STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES** should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

**In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.**

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

**Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.**

**This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.** Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

#### SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

|   |            |                 |
|---|------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Full Name: | Harriet Poulton |
|---|------------|-----------------|

|   |                            |                                     |                             |                           |                               |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2 | Tick all boxes that apply: | Member of staff:                    | <input type="checkbox"/>    | Honorary research fellow: | <input type="checkbox"/>      |
|   | Undergraduate Student      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Taught Postgraduate Student | <input type="checkbox"/>  | Postgraduate Research Student |

|                      |                                       |                                                     |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 3                    | Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre: | IMH                                                 |
| 4                    | Campus:                               | Swansea Campus                                      |
| 5                    | E-mail address:                       | 2222444@student.uwtsd.ac.uk                         |
| 6                    | Contact Telephone Number:             | N/a                                                 |
| <b>For students:</b> |                                       |                                                     |
| 7                    | Student Number:                       | 2222444                                             |
| 8                    | Programme of Study:                   | Bachelor of Science: Professional Policing Practice |
| 9                    | Director of Studies/Supervisor:       | Jane Davies                                         |

## SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |                          |    |                                     |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| 1                            | Has the research activity received approval in principle?<br>(please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual) | YES                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |                          |    | <b>Date</b>                         |
| 2                            | If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known):<br><b>Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval</b>                               | Research Degrees Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                                     |
| Institute Research Committee |                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |    |                                     |
| Other (write in)             |                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |    |                                     |

## SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                     |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|   | Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed. |                                     |
| 1 | <b>UWTSD Research Ethics &amp; Integrity Code of Practice</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | <b>UWTSD Research Data Management Policy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | [List any other relevant documents here]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

## SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

|   |                                                                                                             |                                                                         |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Institution                                                                                                 | N/a                                                                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 2 | Contact person name                                                                                         | N/a                                                                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 3 | Contact person e-mail address                                                                               | N/a                                                                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 4 | Is your research externally funded?                                                                         | YES                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 5 | Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?                                                                   | YES                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 6 | Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?            | Voluntary                                                               | YES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 |                                                                                                             | Employed                                                                | YES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)? | If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered. | YES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?                     | (If YES attach copy)<br>If NO the application cannot continue           | YES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

|                                                                                                                                                 |                                                             |     |                          |    |                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 10                                                                                                                                              | Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system? | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate). |                                                             |     |                          |    |                          |

#### SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                      |                                                                                                              |                    |            |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|--|
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Indicative title:    | <b>Do Women Police Differently? An Examination of Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public Protection.</b> |                    |            |  |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Proposed start date: | 28/03/2025                                                                                                   | Proposed end date: | 29/12/2025 |  |
| <p><b>Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section)</b></p> <p><b>Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below:</b></p> <p><i>Purpose of Research Activity</i><br/> <i>Proposed Research Question</i><br/> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i><br/> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i></p> <p>Demonstrate, briefly, how <b><u>Existing Research</u></b> has informed the proposed activity and explain</p> <p><i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i><br/> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i></p> |                      |                                                                                                              |                    |            |  |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | <p><b>Purpose of Research Activity</b></p> <p>This dissertation will explore the question “do women police differently?” This topic is highly relevant due to ongoing debates around gender equality and policing cultures. This research will examine how female officers adopt a variety of policing styles and how these differences are perceived by fellow officers, and whether policing cultures supports or hinders these approaches to frontline policing.</p> <p>This research is extremely relevant in today’s climate, particularly following recent publications surrounding Police misconduct, negative policing cultures, diversity and gender equality. For example, the Baroness Casey review in 2023, an independent review into misconduct hearings for The Metropolitan Police (Casey, 2023) showed the struggle with internal dynamics and policing cultures, and how policing styles are perceived by officers.</p> <p>Despite an increase in the employment of female officers (an increase of 2.2% from 2023.), policing remains disproportionate with only 35.4% of officers being female across all 43 police forces (Home Office, 2024).</p> <p>This shows that the profession continues to be heavily shaped by traditional masculine values, such as the perpetuation of occupational roles being designated a gender and considered ‘male’ or ‘female’ (Westmarland, L, 2001).</p> <p>To date the focus on similar research has been on the retention, recruitment and public trust in female officers. There is an identified gap in research around the perception of policing styles adopted by female officers comparatively to their male counterpart.</p> <p>By focusing on the internal experiences and peer perceptions of female police officers, this research will aim to explore an area that has real implications for development and cultural reform.</p> <p>This research will adopt a feminist lens, utilising qualitative data through the dissemination of surveys, to examine the genuine beliefs of officers working in frontline policing. The hope for the findings within this research is to effect change and challenge negative policing cultures and recognise the varied approaches adopted by police officers, regardless of their gender.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p> |
| 4 | <p><b>Research Question</b></p> <p>Do Women Police Differently? An examination of Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public Perception.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 5 | <p><b>Aims of Research Activity</b></p> <p>This dissertation will utilise an anonymous survey to examine the opinions of police officers around a gendered approach to policing. This, alongside the use of freedom of information (FIO) requests for use of force data within Gwent Police, will allow for an analysis of whether females police differently to males, especially in relation to communication, empathy and de-escalation tactics utilised.</p> <p>The use of a survey will provide an in-depth understanding of the belief held by serving officers, regardless of rank, length of service or operational role. The aim is to obtain a wide range of responses to identify patterns, assess any differences in approaches to policing and explore the organisational culture within the Police. The FOI requests will act as secondary data to support or negate the information collected by the survey, allowing for a practical examination in the use of force by officers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | (this box should expand as you type)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 6 | <p><b>Objectives of Research Activity</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Explore</b> how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts.</li> <li>2. <b>Identify</b> if there are any noticeable patterns in communication styles, empathy or de-escalation tactics.</li> <li>3. <b>Examine</b> how unconscious biases play a part in gendered policing and its impact.</li> </ol> <p>With the use of freedom of information requests, information from Gwent Police around the Use of Force forms will be obtained. From there, an analysis of tactics used by officers and their conflict resolution will be able to take place. Included in this form is the officer's gender. Exploring the correlation between female/male officers and the tactics most commonly utilised by their gender will provide information on how females police comparatively to that of their male counterpart.</p> <p>To answer these research aims, an anonymous survey will also be utilised to obtain an understanding of officer perceptions on communication styles and de-escalation tactics. Using a Likert-scale survey, an examination of whether there is a disparity between males and females when communicating, de-escalating situations or empathising.</p> <p>As interviews are time-consuming, the survey will include numerous situational examples of where use of force might be required, enabling the identification of what stage of use of force the officer begins with (level 1 – officer presence to level 5 – Firearms).</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p> |
|   | <p><b>Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)</b></p> <p>Provide a brief summary of all the methods that <b>may</b> be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7 | <p>This study will utilise a quantitative survey method, supported by qualitative responses through open-ended questions. The survey will be generated through the use of Microsoft forms, on a secure platform.</p> <p>The survey will include Likert-scale question answers, alongside free-text fields and multiple-choice questions to ensure that officers assess their perception of the policing style they adopt. Also included in the survey will be scenario-based questions to interpret different styles of policing.</p> <p>This survey method is best suited to my research as it allows for the collection and analysis of data from a diverse sample of officers, enabling the examination of responses across gender, rank, service and personal experience. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, anonymous surveys will allow for an honest response from the participant without fear of professional consequence. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative questions allows for the identification of trends within responses, whilst supporting inclusivity and efficient distribution, making it ethically appropriate for this research topic and practical for the research aims.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | <p>Secondly, this dissertation will utilise freedom of information requests to examine the use of force within Gwent Police. As this form also includes details on the officer's gender and the force used, it will provide key data for a cross-examination on whether females police differently to males.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|   | <p><b>Location of research activity</b><br/>Identify all locations where research activity will take place.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 8 | <p>Research will be carried out throughout Gwent Police force area.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|   | <p><b>Research activity outside of the UK</b><br/>If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research, then please state this.</p> |
| 9 | <p>N/a</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |     |                                     |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 10 | Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <b>NOT</b> publicly available?                                                                                                                                                                                                             | NO  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | YES | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 11 | <p>If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p> |     |                                     |

|    | Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015? | YES                                 | NO                                  |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 12 | A prosperous Wales                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | A resilient Wales                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | A healthier Wales                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 | A more equal Wales                                                                                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 16 | A Wales of cohesive communities                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 17 | A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 18 | A globally responsible Wales                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 19 | If YES to any of the above, please give details:                                                                     |                                     |                                     |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>A more equal Wales:</b> This research directly contributes to a more equal Wales as it will be exploring the gender dynamics and possible inequality within policing. This research aims to support efforts towards a fairer and more equal working environment, and representation within policing.</p> <p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities:</b> Should it be identified that female officers are shown to be more empathetic and utilise more community orientated policing methods, and if these approaches were more valued and understood within policing, this can improve training and, subsequently, improve community engagement.</p> <p>By addressing any internal biases and promoting a more inclusive police force (especially one that can respond sensitively to the needs of their communities through the use of community-orientated policing), then this will strengthen trust and support from communities in under-represented or marginalised areas. The values held by those in law-enforcement can translate into better external practices being used, supporting cohesive communities within Wales.</p> <p>(this box should expand as you type)</p> |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

|    | Will the research activity include:                                                                                                             | YES                                 | NO                                  |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?                                                                                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 2  | Use of interviews?                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3  | Use of focus groups?                                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4  | Use of participant diaries?                                                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5  | Use of video or audio recording?                                                                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6  | Use of computer-generated log files?                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7  | Participant observation with their knowledge?                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8  | Participant observation without their knowledge?                                                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9  | Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive? | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Use of procedures that involve deception?                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 | Working with live vertebrate animals?                                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 | Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 | Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.                                             | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|    | Details of any other primary data collection method:                                                                                            |                                     |                                     |

|  |                                      |  |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
|  | (this box should expand as you type) |  |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

## SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

|   | Who are the intended participants:                                                                                 | YES                                 | NO                                  |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Students or staff at the University?                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 2 | Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?                                                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 3 | Vulnerable adults?                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Prisoners?                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Young offenders?                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper? | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | People engaged in illegal activities?                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.      | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|   | Details of any other participant groups:<br><br>(this box should expand as you type)                               |                                     |                                     |

|    | Participant numbers and source<br>Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited? |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | How many participants are expected?                                                                                                                              | The response aim is approximately 50-60 persons.<br><br>(this box should expand as you type)                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 11 | Who will the participants be?                                                                                                                                    | The target sample for this research will be serving police officers across UK police forces.<br><br>(this box should expand as you type)                                                                                                                                                            |
| 12 | How will you identify the participants?                                                                                                                          | I will utilise posters around the station to obtain a variety of responses. Only utilising colleagues I directly work with, I believe that I will be restricting the responses to officers who are young in service. By placing posters with a QR code across the station, I will be able to obtain |

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | responses from other shifts, other organisational departments and officers with a considerable service length.<br><br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i> |
|--|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|    | Information for participants:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | YES                                 | NO                                  | N/A                                 |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 13 | Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 15 | Will you obtain written consent for participation?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 16 | Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 | If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 18 | Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 19 | With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 20 | Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 21 | Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 22 | If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                     |                                     |                                     |
|    | <p>Q15 – the questionnaire will show implied consent and is only completed on a voluntary basis. Should participants not be willing to consent, they will not be asked to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, all survey participants will be over the age of 18 at the time of completing.</p> <p><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i></p> |                                     |                                     |                                     |

|    | Information for participants:                                                                                                                      | YES                      | NO                                  | N/A                      |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 24 | Will participants be paid?                                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25 | Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26 | Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27 | Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28 | If YES to any question, please provide full details                                                                                                |                          |                                     |                          |
|    | <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                        |                          |                                     |                          |

## SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|   | Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                        |                                     |
| 1 | Full risk assessment completed and appended?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Yes                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | <b>Risks to participants</b><br>For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | Risk to participants:<br><br>No risk identified<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | How you will mitigate the risk to participants:<br><br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>     |                                     |
| 3 | If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | No risk identified<br><br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                        |                                     |
| 4 | <b>Risks to the investigator</b><br>For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | Risk to the investigator:<br><br>No risk identified<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:<br><br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i> |                                     |
| 5 | <b>University/institutional risks</b><br>For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | Risk to the University:<br><br>No risk identified<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | How you will mitigate the risk to the University:<br><br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>   |                                     |
| 6 | <b>Environmental risks</b><br>For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                        |                                     |
|   | Risk to the environment:<br><br>No risk identified                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | How you will mitigate the risk to environment:                                                         |                                     |

|  |                                      |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|  | (this box should expand as you type) | (this box should expand as you type) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

|   | <b>Disclosure and Barring Service</b>                                                                                                                                                                             |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|   | If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.                                   | <b>YES</b>               | <b>NO</b>                | <b>N/A</b>                          |
| 7 | Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?                                                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number. |                          |                          |                                     |

## SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Feedback</b><br>What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|   | As the survey will be completed anonymously, there will be no ability to provide feedback to the survey participants.<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2 | <b>Informed consent</b><br>Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|   | Before beginning the survey, there will be information at the top which will explain what the research is about, what taking part in the survey means and how the data will be used. No personal data will be collected throughout the survey and participation is voluntary, this will be explained in the information sheet prior to completing the survey. It will be made clear that participants can stop filling it out at any time.<br><br>Respondents will be asked to tick a box to confirm they understand the above and agree to take part. All data collated will be stored in line with UK GDPR and University regulations.<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i> |
| 3 | <b>Confidentiality / Anonymity</b><br>Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|   | The survey will not ask for the respondents' personal information (name, date of birth, contact information) to ensure it remains strictly confidential and anonymous for participants.<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |                                     |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|   | Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | YES                      | NO                                  |
| 1 | <b>“Personal data”</b> means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|   | If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                          |                                     |
| 2 | <div>(this box should expand as you type)</div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |                                     |
|   | Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | YES                      | NO                                  |
| 3 | <b>“Special category data”</b> means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ –<br>(a) racial or ethnic origin,<br>(b) political opinions,<br>(c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,<br>(d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992),<br>(e) physical or mental health or condition,<br>(f) sexual life,<br>(g) genetics,<br>(h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|   | If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                          |                                     |
| 4 | <div>(this box should expand as you type)</div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |                                     |

|    |                                                                                                                                                          |                                     |                                     |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?</b> | YES                                 | NO                                  |
| 5  | Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?                                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6  | University computers?                                                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7  | Private company computers?                                                                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8  | Home or other personal computers?                                                                                                                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 9  | Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | “Cloud” storage or websites?                                                                                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Other – specify:                                                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 | For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation: |
|    | <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |                                     |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Data Protection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                          |                                     |
|    | Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>YES</b>               | <b>NO</b>                           |
| 13 | Electronic transfer of data in any form?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 | Sharing of data with other organisations?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 | Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 | Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 18 | Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 19 | Use of data management system?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 20 | Data archiving?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 21 | If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                          |                                     |
|    | N/a<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                          |                                     |
| 22 | List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                          |                                     |
|    | N/a<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                          |                                     |
| 23 | List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                          |                                     |
|    | Myself<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                          |                                     |
| 24 | Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                          |                                     |
|    | <p>All data collected will be stored on a secure laptop device, utilising a secure platform such as Microsoft forms to collate primary data. Responses will be downloaded and password protected in excel to ensure it is only accessible to myself, the researcher.</p> <p>No identifiable information will be collected in the survey, ensuring the anonymity of the respondents and files will be stored securely throughout the research process.</p> |                          |                                     |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |     |                                     |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
|    | As the information collected will be anonymous and only used for this dissertation, it will not be archived long-term, as there is no requirement for the retention of the data once the project is completed, marked and assessed by the University.<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i> |     |                                     |
| 25 | Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see <a href="https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/">https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/</a> ). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>                                                           |     |                                     |
|    | N/a<br><i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |     |                                     |
| 26 | Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see <a href="https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/">https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/</a> )                                                                                            | YES | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 27 | Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding                                                                                                                                                                         | YES | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

## SECTION K: Declaration

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |           |                                |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
|   | <p>The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.</p> <p>In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: <a href="https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/">https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/</a></p> |           |                                |
| 1 | <b>Signature of applicant:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | H.Poulton | <b>Date:</b><br><br>01/05/2025 |

### For STUDENT Submissions:

|   |                                 |  |              |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| 2 | Director of Studies/Supervisor: |  | <b>Date:</b> |
| 3 | Signature:                      |  |              |

### For STAFF Submissions:

|   |                                    |  |              |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| 4 | Academic Director/ Assistant Dean: |  | <b>Date:</b> |
| 5 | Signature:                         |  |              |

**Checklist:** Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

|                                     |                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I have completed <b>ALL RELEVANT</b> sections of the form in full.      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle |

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation ( <b>where appropriate</b> )                                                                                                                                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) <i>ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT</i>                                                                                                                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.                                                                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director. |

#### RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

#### RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to [pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk](mailto:pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk) , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

**STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES** should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

## Appendix B – Research Proposal Form



### UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

Please complete the following research proposal and submit it to Turnitin.

Which project option are you taking? Please tick:

8,000 word project

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>NAME:</b> Harriet Poulton                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>STUDENT ID No.:</b> 2222444 |
| <b>DRAFT RESEARCH TITLE QUESTION:</b><br><br><b>Do Women Police Differently? An Examination of Gendered Approaches to Policing and Public Protection.</b><br><br><b>Narrowed down: Do female police officers engage in policing differently from their male counterparts, particularly when dealing with community engagement, conflict resolution, and victim support – and how is this perceived by the public and colleagues?</b><br><br><b>INTRODUCTION:</b><br><br>This dissertation will explore the question do women police differently? This topic is highly relevant due to debates around gender equality and policing cultures. This research will examine how female officers adopt a variety of policing styles and how these differences are perceived by fellow officers, and whether policing cultures supports or hinders these approaches to frontline policing.<br><br>This research is extremely relevant in today's climate, particularly following recent publications surrounding Police misconduct, negative policing cultures, diversity and gender equality. For example, the Baroness Casey review in 2023, an independent review into misconduct hearings for The Metropolitan Police (Casey, 2023) showed the struggle with internal dynamics and policing cultures, and how policing styles are perceived by officers.<br><br>Despite an increase in the employment of female officers (an increase of 2.2% from 2023.), policing remains disproportionate with only 35.4% of officers being female across all 43 police forces (Home Office, 2024). |                                |

This shows that the profession continues to be heavily shaped by masculine values, such as the perpetuation of occupational roles being designated a gender and considered 'male' or 'female' (Westmarland, L, 2001).

To date, the focus on similar research has been on the retention, recruitment and public trust in female officers. This creates an identified gap in research around the perception of policing styles adopted by female officers comparatively to their male counterpart.

By focusing on the internal experiences and peer perceptions of female police officers, this research will aim to explore an area that has real implications for development and cultural reform.

This research will adopt a feminist lens, utilising qualitative data through the dissemination of surveys, to examine the genuine beliefs of officers working in frontline policing. The hope for the findings within this research is to effect change and challenge negative policing cultures and recognise the varied approaches adopted by police officers, regardless of their gender.

#### **SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:**

1. **Explore** how female officers approach policing comparatively to their male counterparts.
2. **Identify** if there are any noticeable patterns in communication styles, empathy or de-escalation tactics.
3. **Examine** how unconscious biases play a part in gendered policing and its impact.

With the use of freedom of information requests, information from Gwent Police around the Use of Force forms will be obtained. From there, an analysis of tactics used by officers and their conflict resolution will be able to take place. Included in this form is the officer's gender. Exploring the correlation between female/male officers and the tactics most commonly utilised by their gender will provide information on how females police comparatively to that of their male counterpart.

To answer these research aims, an anonymous survey will also be utilised to obtain an understanding of officer perceptions on communication styles and de-escalation tactics. Using a Likert-scale survey, an examination of whether there is a disparity between males and females when communicating, de-escalating situations or empathising.

As interviews are time-consuming, the survey will include numerous situational examples of where use of force might be required, enabling the identification of what stage of use of force the officer begins with (level 1 – officer presence to level 5 – Firearms).

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Research in gender and policing has shown differences in how males and females approach policing. Rabe-Hemp 2007 found that female officers utilised communication and relationship building to combat crime, particularly in community policing. 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' roles, as detailed within Westmarland's 2001 book on Gender and Policing,

indicates that these dedicated roles create a challenging culture for women in policing, from pressure to comply with more dominant policing styles to barriers in progression.

The Baroness Casey Review in 2023, has drawn attention to the misogynistic culture within UK policing, highlighting an urgent need for reform. However, despite this review, there is still a notable gap in research exploring how policing styles are perceived within the organisation. Most studies focusing only on public perception, trust and recruitment – rather than the views of fellow officers or internal dynamics. This dissertation aims to address that gap and explore how gendered approaches to policing is viewed, experienced and understood by peers, contributing to both academic understanding and cultural reform within Policing.

#### **SUMMARY OF RESEARCH –SURVEY METHOD:**

This study will utilise a quantitative survey method, supported by qualitative responses through open-ended questions. The survey will be generated through the use of Microsoft forms, a secure platform.

The survey will include Likert-scale question answers, alongside free-text fields and multiple-choice questions to ensure that officers assess their perception of the policing style they adopt. Also included in the survey will be scenario-based questions to interpret different styles of policing.

This survey method is best suited to my research as it allows for the collection and analysis of data from a diverse sample of officers, enabling the examination of responses across gender, rank, service and personal experience. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, anonymous surveys will allow for an honest response from the participant without fear of professional consequence. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative questions allows for the identification of trends within responses, whilst supporting inclusivity and efficient distribution, making it ethically appropriate for this research topic and practical for the research aims.

#### **SUMMARY OF SAMPLING FRAMEWORK:**

The target sample for this research will be serving police officers across UK police forces. The focus will be on gathering a balanced representation on gender, years of service and rank. The aim will be to include both male and female officers, from a variety of officers in different roles (neighbourhood, response, CID), to explore the differences in policing styles.

There will be an aim to reach between 40-60 respondents through the use of an online survey, whereby participation will be voluntary and anonymous, allowing the respondents to speak openly about their own perceptions on policing styles.

#### **ETHICAL ISSUES:**

This research will be conducted in line with UWTSD ethics codes of practice and focus on the protection of the participants anonymity, rights and wellbeing. All participation will be on a voluntary basis and anonymous, with informed consent obtained at the start of the survey.

As there is a sensitive focus on workplace biases and gender, gender identity options will be inclusive of non-binary and self-identified gender, with respectful language used throughout the survey. Any data collected as a result of the survey, will be analysed sensitively to avoid misrepresentation and ensure inclusivity.

#### **TIME SCALE:**

The timescale for this dissertation is as follows:

19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 – Ethics and proposal form submitted

28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Literature review submission

8<sup>th</sup> September 2025 – Research methodology and planning

27<sup>th</sup> October 2025 – Submission of results analysis

1<sup>st</sup> December 2025 – Findings and conclusion submission

29<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – Final project submission

#### **REFERENCE LIST:**

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## Appendix C - Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. As you are aware, I am currently undertaking my dissertation as part of my degree in professional policing. The purpose of my research is to explore the role of gender within policing, specifically examining whether male and female officers approach policing differently, and how these differences may be perceived by the public.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. The interview will be recorded (with your permission) for the transcription purposes only. All data collected will be kept confidential, and any identifying details will be anonymised in the final dissertation. Your name, specific working location and any other personal details will not be disclosed or linked to any of your responses.

If you are happy with all of that, I will now begin the interview.

1. What initially motivated you to join the police?
2. Can you tell me about your career path in policing so far?
3. How would you describe your approach to policing and interacting with the public?
4. Do you think your gender influences your style of policing? In what ways?
5. Have you noticed any consistent differences between male and female officers in how they handle conflict?
6. How do you typically handle conflict or de-escalation situations?
7. Do you believe there are gender-based strengths or challenges in de-escalation or negotiation?

8. Have members of the public ever commented on your gender when dealing with incidents?
9. Do you feel your gender has influenced how you are perceived or treated within the police force?
10. Have you ever observed any differences in expectations placed on male versus female officers, either by colleagues or superiors?
11. How do you think the public perceives male officers compared to female officers?
12. Have you had experiences where you felt public reactions to your actions were shaped by your gender?
13. Do you think gender diversity improves the overall effectiveness of policing? Why or why not?
14. What changes (if any) would you like to see in terms of gender dynamics in policing?
15. Is there anything else you would like to share about gender and policing that you would like to discuss?

## Appendix D - Interview Transcripts

### **Q1: What initially motivated you to join the police?**

**R1:** I wanted to make a difference. I started policing in 1994 and was in a team that was predominately male. I was told “YOU DO NOT MAKE COMPLAINTS” and more often than not, these were genuine threats, not just perceived. Many of the men I worked with came from pre-PACE time, and often those pre-PACE behaviours were displayed even after I joined.

**R2:** One of my mums’ best mates’ mums is a police officer so I feel like growing up, she’s a DC now, but she was a big part of my life. She influenced me to join, and I think from a young age inspired me.

**R3:** um, it was an aspiration I had from a young age, wanting to join the police. An influencing factor was that my cousin joined, and I wanted to help people. I saw how proud it made my grandparents that my cousin was there, and it made me think aw I want my grandparents to think like that about me.

**R4:** Dad was in RAF; career path was RAF but when I found out I was colour blind I looked at ground trades and nothing took my fancy. I liked the idea of being on a police motorcycle. Both parents and grandparents were in RAF, etc. there’s a tradition of service in the family. None of us really career minded individuals, going into a service seemed natural to me. I wanted to make a difference to someone’s life positively, didn’t know how I did that but imagined I could, or I would be being in the police force.

**R5:** Felt I wanted a career change. Wanted a change in jobs and something with variety, due to being in retail for many years prior.

**R6:** I didn't actually want to be a police officer when I was growing up, funnily enough I wanted to do something completely different. I was in my early 20's when I was at an office job and I just thought this can't be the rest of my life, I needed a job where I wasn't stuck behind a desk all day. A friend of mine had joined the police and I chatted to him about it for a bit. He talked about his shift all the time and how the team were just a great laugh and really had each other's backs and all. He seemed like he had a sense of purpose, that really...I don't know. Appealed to me I suppose. I liked the idea of doing something more active, something I could really get stuck into.

**R7:** honestly, I joined because I wanted to do something that felt meaningful, I wanted to make a difference. I grew up in a neighbourhood where we didn't always trust the police and I wanted to be part of changing the narrative. I also liked the idea of a job where every day is different, I like a challenge, and I like helping people in need.

**R8:** Um so I was a CSO and finishing Uni and I always had an interest in helping other people, wanting to do a good job. So, when I finished Uni, I looked for a job, saw that CSO was open and applied for the job. From there I then progressed to PC because I wanted to help people

**R9:** I was working in the private sector before joining the police. my job didn't really have much of an impact. I joined around 16 years ago now, wanted a change. Wanted to make decisions that would help the community. The police offered a structure, a purpose, and just clarity for me.

**R10:** I grew up around a community that had some minor issues, but those issues were affecting us all. I felt like no one was stepping in to take action and I thought I might not be able to do much, but I can certainly be part of the system to change the way we approach these issues. I didn't want to sit on the sidelines and just observe anymore, joining the police felt like a way to be involved in fixing problems instead of just talking about them. I worked in the NHS before joining the job and thought I can handle the abuse from patients, at least as a PC I have the power to do something about it.

**Q2: Can you tell me about your career path in policing so far?**

**R1:** I started on response like most officers. I got placed in (Force Location) because there were no females on that shift. I spent many years there before moving into L&D for the last 5 years of my career.

**R2:** Been on response. Sometimes its horrendous and then some days are less horrendous.

**R3:** I spent some time on response before moving over into neighbourhood. There was a huge difference in attitudes towards officers between the two departments. I hated response. MOP thought very little of us, whereas when I was on neighbourhood, we were able to spend time getting to know our community which meant we were more well received.

**R4:** Started in Aug 1990 initial training period finished Jul 1991, I started solo patrol as a probationary constable, finished that in Aug 1992. Served group force south (Force Location). Stayed there until 1997, within the group team I did every role available, went and did my standard course and then went straight into van, and once you got that ticket you went straight

onto your Friday Saturday night 'battle bus'. Created something called a service desk at (Force Location) police station, sat there for 4 months before I was then posted to FCR in late 1997. Worked A and C division and looked after the motorway as a motorway controller, went out on some significant deployments on those vehicles.

But then when the millennium came up, they wanted every uniform bobby back out on the streets, so any able-bodied bobbies was then put back out on a uniformed role. So, I was posted in 1999 to (Force Location) and saw out the millennium there.

In May 2000 I bumped into my former sarge, he said he was on the radio, I jokingly said if you want a bag carrier, I'm available, for the next 5 years I worked on that based out of HQ. I got my place on traffic for a year after that, in (Force Location). Sept 2005, a place came up for an ANPR motorcyclist interceptor and I volunteered for it, went on my motorcycle course, I suddenly became top dog for motorcycle course so came to Gwent and did my motorcycle course of the Nov/Dec. spent 4 years on ANPR, in Apr 2009 I got promoted to Sergeant, moved over to group 1 (Force Location) response. So, I did 4/5 months there, July 2009 I transferred to Gwent, did a year on traffic, a year in custody. Went onto the Niche project coming from a force that had been using niche, and coming from custody, I stayed on the niche project for 5 years, a lot longer than I intended but that took me up to 2017, and then I said I didn't want to pay for my own travel to HQ anymore, so they put back to force. I was then put on the ESN project and the retired out from that. Was the ab loads officer for Gwent, project manager for ANPR into Gwent, made me chairperson for resilience forum.

Each van has 4 officers and a Sergeant in it, each van with a cage in the back, two on south and two on north. We basically provided mutual aid to any call that required a large number of

bodies, fights domestics, etc. anything that needed flooded with bodies. Anything from 2 bobbies to within a couple of minutes 32 bobbies standing there. My gang is bigger than your gang. The ratio was at the time was 2/3<sup>rd</sup> male in (Force Location) police station anyway, 4 women on a team of 16. Made up of officers who were not response car drivers.

**R5:** Joined in Jan 2023. Started being tutored in July 2023. Since the start of my policing career, I have held the role of a police response officer, based out of (Force Location) Police Station.

**R6:** I obviously began on response, stayed there then because of how busy it always is. I think I just love the chaos of it all, the madness of the radio all the time. I want to go over to traffic though, I think they have a good team over there and it will be nice to change things up a bit.

**R7:** I started as a response officer, on shift doing shift work and answering like emergency calls and bouncing from job to job, it was fun. I moved into NPT then a few years ago for a quieter life. I realised I enjoy the more long-term aspect of NPT, the idea that I can build proper relationships with the community and focus more on problem solving rather than being tethered to the radio.

**R8:** I've always been on response.

**R9:** I started as a response officer before moving over in the L&D and became a SGT, I then moved back to response to temp up as an inspector. I now oversee response policing again.

**R10:** I started on response and stayed there for longer than I expected but I found I really enjoyed frontline policing. I learnt a lot, grew a lot as an individual and then went for my sergeants a few years ago, just been working on the additional qualifications ever since.

**Q3: How would you describe your approach to policing and interacting with the public?**

**R1:** I have been thrown into many situations on my own as a female officer, there were a few times where I would be told there's 5 males fighting in a nearby pub and I would be expected to defuse the situation on my own. I learned very quickly to use this \*pointing to mouth\* rather than fighting. I think things changed when I had my children, I quickly learnt that I had something, someone to go home to that was more important. My decision-making changed like a flick of a switch because I needed to go home at the end of my shift. That's why I have always used communication to de-escalate situations. I was more empathetic and caring than the men on my shift, but I think that's needed in policing.

**R2:** I want to make a difference in people's lives. I feel like I quite like trying to build a rapport. To try and get more information, not that it always works but I try. When it doesn't work, I feel like I keep going until I get through to them.

I think a lot of people see just the uniform and don't see me as a person. I think that when I try to build rapport, like talking to them normally it throws them off guard. I think that when they are up there \*indicating towards head\* they expect me to come at the same level and give them the response they want. But when you come in down here \*indicating lower\* you're going to bring them down. They can't keep it up for forever so I will eventually bring it down.

**R3:** Very talkative, tended to use communication. Approachable, mmmm I'd say some situations I'd go in with an open mind but most I would be tunnel focused which I'd say is probably a downfall for my policing style. I assume that someone is going to be arrested in most situations, that it was going to lead to an arrest. I think the way I was tutored meant the majority of calls did lead to arrests and the team I was in, not many things was knocked on the head, most of the time someone was bring brought into custody. I think that was my team's culture, we were very arrest orientated. I think my SGT was pushing for more arrests. 9/10 I was expecting to go into a situation and there was going to be an arrest. I wasn't overly exposed to using the other options, very rarely handed out tickets, I think it was the nature of the beast in my locality. I think it was expected there comparatively to a rural setting. With the types of people we were dealing with, we couldn't use diversionary measures. Domestic, assaults, serious crimes, people who has been sexually assaulted, raped, we'd always attend to some sort of argument or altercation. 9/10 it was already past the point of de-escalation. It was a deprived area so the people we were dealing with were already really well known to us. I had a lot of old sweats as SGTs as well. I would typically be the one to go and talk to them and talk people down, get their side of the story. I would find an amicable way of dealing with the situation, I hated arresting people. If I had the choice not to, I wouldn't do it. I made loads of arrests, half the time they were ones I didn't want to make, but under the guidance of senior figures on shift and SMT, I was encouraged to do so. I felt a little bit of pressure to arrest because they were statics focused, we were getting updates on arrest numbers, NBWs, open cases, what was due to be closed basically, how many TORs in a month or sets and they would be giving figures on who was being productive and who needed to do more. I think this was a main driver for the amount of arrests in the team. I think looking at the statistics takes away the human element of

policing, you become a stats driven robot. You'd use the situation to improve your stats or your team's stats and make SMT happier.

**R4:** Out of my 30 years' service, 15 were public facing and the rest was office based or non-public facing. Whilst I was public facing, I approached the ethics of it, I challenged myself to deliver a service to those individuals based on how I would want to be treated myself in the same circumstances. Always really mindful of gender, sexual orientation, race, etc because that was shoved down in the late 1990's following the Lawrence enquiry. I very rarely drew my baton, was PAVA trained, but I never used it out and about, but I used it in custody. He was going to spit at another officer, so he got a face full of PAVA, it was an instinctive reaction, my free hand was my PAVA hand so he just, and unfortunately the officers stood next to him, had a face full of PAVA.

I've been PAVA'd, I was being strangled, and another officer was about this far away (indicated around 30cm) from me just released a whole can of PAVA.

I would always deal with anyone who lied or was dishonest, more fo...forcefully is the wrong word. I would be firmer with them, one thing I couldn't stand was folk lying to me. That said the Thurs, Fri, sat nights certainly in (Force Location) were very much about rapid getting into the thick of the situation and dominating it. Take control, suppress any public disorder and then deal with the questions. Shortly after I left (Force Location), the number of vans put out was 2 instead of 4, the time I left wilts they were putting it out on intel basis. The style of policing changed between me leaving Swindon and me leaving wilts purely down to numbers. Cameron came in and put a halt to recruitment. In Gwent we went from 1450, 1200, losing 250 officers.

**R5:** I always aim to provide members of the public with a great customer service and look to build a rapport by building public confidence and engaging respectfully.

**R6:** I think I'm very direct, I don't do messing around, very straight forward. I try to be clear, firm when I need to be, but still respectful. Most people just want to know what's happening, why, so I don't sugarcoat but will still talk to them. I find that being direct keeps situations from getting more complicated

**R7:** I'd say I'm approachable, I like a good chat so using communication was definitely the way to go for me, it's my go to approach for sure. I make an effort to explain what I'm doing and why so people understand the processes. There's this misconception that the police can do anything and it's going to be done quickly, but really we don't have the numbers to spend loads of time with each call, at least by communicating the process and setting out the truth about timescales and stuff is like easier and helps people understand why it might take you know days, weeks, months whatever to get a statement or progress to the CPS. I've found that when people feel heard, things normally go a lot smoother

**R8:** Oh, um I think I'm confident by polite, I'm very much you should speak to someone how you want to be spoken to. Be kind and reassuring and then go from there. I always go in calm and use my tac coms before anything else

**R9:** I take a very measured approach. I don't like to rush into decisions so will explain my reasoning clearly. Especially when delivering difficult messages. Transparency, honesty, and consistency is key to reducing tension

**R10:** I try to be approachable but decisive. People can tell when you're uncertain, and it affects how they respond to you. So, I make a point of being clear about what I'm doing and why, I make sure that my team feels they can come to me, speak to me if there's ever any issues.

**Q4: Do you think your gender influences your style of policing? In what ways?**

**R1:** Yes, I always knew I wasn't the strongest, so I relied heavily on communication comparatively to the men on my shift when I first started. Over my 30 years, I have seen a change in the way men and women police, but I think there are still underlying problems.

**R2:** Yes absolutely, if there is a fight ongoing and you attend with all male officers, they will sort of push you aside as a female. They don't give women a chance to get involved. In some ways its nice, it's as if they want to protect you, but sometimes it feels as though they just want to get in the fight first. They (referring to male officers) don't give us (referring to female officers) a chance.

**R3:** I don't know is my honest answer. Um, yes and no. so yes in the fact that me and some of the other boys on the team got sent to the griever calls, like the nasty DVs where the offender is well known for violence against police. very rarely they'd partner male and females to go to those types of calls, usually it would be 2 sets of male officers attending. This was always the decision of my SGT, this wasn't out of choice of the team, or officers. It was always that the SGT would re-allocate officers based on who was best to deal with those situations. No, because I've also worked with female officers that were very hands on, and arrest orientated. I think I worked with some females that were keener to arrest. I went into most situations thinking I, expecting it was going to be punched or kicked. I felt numb to the idea that I was

possibly going into a situation that could result in someone using violence against me. A lot of the DVs we went to, a lot of the people we were dealing with had assault markers, that wasn't just the antagonise that was the victim. I went in thinking oh this was going to get tasty; it made me escalate situations quicker, so it didn't get to the point that I was getting assaulted. It did make me more confrontational.

**R4:** Yea, it probably has. I'm fortunate in that I'm regarded as tall. I was 6ft 1, I never suffered from 'little man syndrome' where you're the smaller of the blokes but you need to make up for it by being confrontation. I was never physically muscular, I've always been proportionate for my height, and I've always been able to use my height more than my gender I suppose to have a presence. But when I was working the public order patrols, 6 coppers get out of the van of gents 6ft plus. You could see the calculation in people's faces, people wised up quickly. In terms of did my gender have anything to do with the way I policed, I was more inclined to lay hands on quicker. I realised fairly early on, that we were taught to grapple and encouraged to grapple with people. we were then in the fighting arc, some of my biggest struggles were because I was trying to hang onto an arm or a leg or whatever, if I wasn't a bloke.

Later in my service, driving past the school I was in the van, hand the window down and went past a bunch of school kids, the stupid idiot that did it had very red hair.

**R5:** No

**R6:** Um maybe a little, but I think personality plays a bigger role. That said, I do think as a man I'm sometimes expected to take more of the lead on like the riskier jobs or be more assertive, so I've learned to kind of step into that when I need to

**R7:** Oh yes definitely. I think I tend to lean on communication more than force. Part of that might be more my personality and like style of policing but I also think being a woman means people sometimes see me as less threatening, so conversations tend to start from a calmer place. I know I don't have the height or weight or strength and that behind me so I'm almost already coming in on the back foot

**R8:** Yea probably, I'm a female at 5ft2 so I'm not going to go into a situation irate. Its more beneficial for me to go in with a de-escalation tactic. I feel sometimes people respond to that better coming from a female with a short stature especially. So, yea, does influence the way I police. I'm definitely considering impact factors, size, gender, under the influence

**R9:** I think it influences how people initially respond to me rather than how I am actually presenting/behaving. As an inspector, people assume we need to be authoritative, and don't get me wrong when I was in training I was, I needed student officers to understand that this is a disciplined organisation. I can be a bit more lax now on response which is nice, my expectations remain the same, but I know my cops in a way that I never got to know the student officers because they were only there for like 6 months

**R10:** I think it influences how situations unfold rather than how I behave or deal with an incident. Some people open up a bit quicker because I'm a woman, because I have a listening ear, especially victims. Others test boundaries more. I've learned to anticipate both reactions and adapt how I approach any given situation

**Q5: Have you noticed any consistent differences between male and female officers in how they handle conflict?**

**R1:** When I first started, there was a lot of ‘old sweats’ on my shift that had started before PACE had been brought in, some of the stories they would tell me about how they would handle conflict before PACE was horrific. I would see, particularly male officers, still perform their duties in the same way regardless of PACE. When I started, I was the only female on shift, so I could only compare their conduct to mine.

**R2:** Yes, I think male officers will give people one or two chances and then they use force, whereas women will take a lot more time trying to calm them down rather than using force. When male officers go in, I think other people see it as a sort of challenge, then they are just reacting to the male officers. But if they took a step back it might be different.

**R3:** Mmm yes, male officers were far more likely to go in and get it dealt with, did whatever means necessary. If that meant getting hands on, then that meant getting hands on. Some of the girls were more, they were less keen to get hands on and would take through it if you get me. Even when I moved from area to area, that was the norm. there were only a few female officers that were more hands on, but I think that was because they were on a team of majority men so that’s all they ever knew. I could go in and get hands on with someone and that would be seen as proactive. We didn’t care how it was done. Men were using more force because we are more willing to get hands on than women. I think men are easily led to gets hands on. We were going in and just getting hands on, whereas women were using other methods to de-escalate. I was on a team where a lot of officers got assaulted, it had a reputation for officers being assaulted, probably because they were more hands on, it was a more male team. There was only 1..2..3 females working there when I was there, out of a team of 10. When I started, I used other techniques, but I adapted to fit into the team more, it was effective, and it worked so I just used whatever techniques they were using.

**R4:** Yea, we tried to use it to our mutual benefit. she could sweet talk anyone down from anywhere, she displayed far more patience than most would tolerate. Subconsciously we allowed those behaviours to exist, it's not that we thought of them as being inappropriate or wrong because it was accepted that the ladies had a different way of controlling things. My old Insp was very sexist, he would delight in telling stories about putting two co-defendants in two separate rooms, beating one up. Women were singled out by virtue of their sex because they don't call them WPCs anymore. It was part of the title, as a bloke I didn't give it a second thought. It was a reflection of a bygone age.

It's one of those changes that I thought was taking the piss but upon reflection, it had to change.

**R5:** I haven't noticed consistent differences between male and female officers in how they handle conflict. I think initially, in my experience, there is always the initial, "verbal" interaction with an individual, however, I feel that there has been occasions where if there is a suspect that becomes irate, I think male officers are more likely to get "hands on" if that is what is required.

**R6:** I think girls will take on more of the talking part when dealing with things. I think it's much quicker just to get hands on when needs be, I've worked with women who have been assertive and will get hands on, don't get me wrong, but I think women are better suited for that negotiation, the talking side of things and keeping it all nice and calm.

**R7:** Um generally yes, not always but often. A lot of female officers I've worked with either on response or NPT tend to use verbal skills and de-escalation tactics to start off with. It does take a bit more time to get to the bottom of things but it helps; we do our bit. Some of the males

on my shift, especially ones that are maybe younger in service, less life experience you know, can be quicker to take control of someone physically. But that does very much depend on the individual because I've known male officers use communication too, they just sometimes have.... like a shorter fuse sort of.

**R8:** Yea I think not always, but I think sometimes there is a difference when you're at a call. Sometimes the offender won't respond well to a male officer, but they will a female. Sometimes the impact factor isn't the same, male officers aren't seeing the risk the same.

**R9:** No, I wouldn't say there's any differences

**R10:** I've noticed female officers tend to reply more on communication or negotiation before moving to physical options to de-escalate situations. Male officers will sometimes assert themselves physically a bit earlier. There's no wrong way I don't think. It's not a rule – it's just an observation I see within my own team

**Q6: How do you typically handle conflict or de-escalation situations?**

**R1:** Already answered

**R2:** I always talk to them first. Some people, you can't bring them down until a later time, some people are just so angry you have no option but to use force.

**R3:** Already answered

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** I typically handle conflict by using “verbal communication” with individuals and always aim to use this tactic in the first instance. However, I would consider and adapt my approach, accordingly, based on the situation.

**R6:** I try to establish a rapport, in a calm way. If someone is angry, I will stand my ground don’t get me wrong, but I will try and calm them down, I give them a few chances like but then if they’re becoming a threat, I act quickly to get it under control. I’m a big believer in clear commands and maintaining a presence.

**R7:** When we get to calls, normally everything is up in the air. Its best to try and just slow things up a bit so I can actually ask questions and get straight answers and not the usual screaming, shouting, all that lot. I give people space to vent don’t get me wrong, but I will keep my tone calm, so it doesn’t like escalate or anything. If there’s a safe way to avoid getting hands on, then I’ll take that option. I’ll try that first. But if force is needed, I’ll use it. Just not before using my voice and communicating and going down that sort of route

**R8:** Always try and talk to people first and keep them calm. If I have had to use force, I will again try to calm them down. It doesn’t always work but depends on the person and how they respond to you, but you need to try and keep the situation calm before during and after any force is used.

**R9:** I am really Calm when approaching situations, I’m calm but direct. People need to know where the line is and what directions I am giving.

**R10:** I anchor myself. By that, I mean I try to be the calmest one there. If I'm around my team, I need to lead by example, I am responsible for their safety, so I use clear communication to let the individual know how this is going to be handled. I won't be a pushover don't get me wrong; I will stand my ground, but I do that verbally rather than physically, only getting hands-on when needs be. People usually match your tone, for better or worse, so going in shouting and screaming is just not the way to go

**Q7: Do you believe there are gender-based strengths or challenges in de-escalation or negotiation?**

**R1:** Yes, I think women are more patient and can see and understand the bigger picture when dealing with incidents. I think they use this when de-escalating situations rather than simply using force. I think women use communication more often.

**R2:** I know I am not the best in a physical fight, but I can calm someone down with communication and just talking to them. Whereas males, are obviously bigger than I am, and they don't care about getting into that physically because they are, most of the time, stronger so they are able to use that to their advantage. I feel like men are less patient.

I was assaulted by a female who claimed to be pregnant, she scammed me and pulled parts of my hair out. I was with another male officer, who was more focused on his future and worried about what would happen to the baby that he didn't do anything. He stood there and watched me get assaulted. So, I think he was just thinking more of his future than right there and then helping me.

I think that when I am considering use of force, I am conscious of what the public might think. There are so many cameras thrown in our face the whole time. If it's a busy day, and there's lots of people around, they don't see the persons warning markers or know what they've done. So, I feel like you have to be very careful about what you do in front of members of the public because anything you perceive and one bad complaint from someone could be career ending.

I use communication more because of the impact factors (weight, height, size, sex) because I am more at risk of causing harm to myself.

**R3:** No, I think males and females are pretty equal in terms of strengths. There's only some minor differences. I mean, men obviously have sex, weight, height but women are more caring I suppose.

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** Gender based challenges – Statistically and genetically, statistics suggest that on average, males are stronger than females. If this is accurate, males would have an advantage in de-escalation of an individual who needs to be dealt with by getting “hands on” with.

**R6:** Possibly, I've noticed that some people respond differently depending on whether the officer is male or female. What I mean is that some men won't back down for a male officer but then you put a female there and he will calm down. And vice versa. It's almost like an ego thing for some men, but then some men might see female officers as more of a challenge. So, gender can change the dynamic but it's the officers' skills that make the real difference.

**R7:** I think our (female officers) biggest strength I've noticed is that people will almost let their guard down more with women. But at the same time, you could go into a like heated situation, where there's aggressive individuals and that, where the person I am dealing with underestimates me, tests my boundaries just simply because I'm a woman. It's like a bit of a balance

**R8:** Yes, there probably is. I've witnessed firsthand people have naturally responded better to me than the officer I'm with who is male. Whether they have noticed it or not, I don't know, but to me there has been noticeable differences where they will not engage with a male officer, but they will have a conversation with me to calm it down. I think it's a subconscious decision, I'm not sure if they look at my size and just think she's not a threat. I think it's because I'm coming from a caring point of view.

**R9:** I suppose so, in the sense that the public often respond differently depending on the gender of the officer. Some people back down more quickly with a man, while others feel challenged by them. Women sometimes get more cooperation from certain groups. It really depends on the individuals involved and their personal approach, I think.

**R10:** Yes, being a woman can lower the temperature of a situation quite quickly because people sometimes don't expect confrontational behaviour from us. But that can also be a challenge, some individuals assume they can push limits more, you just have to know when to shut that down.

**Q8:** Have members of the public ever commented on your gender when dealing with incidents?

**R1:** Yes, when I first started it was all the time, and not just members of the public, police officers shared the same views. When I started, I had a misogynistic sergeant who almost made me want to quit. I remember working the racecourse one shift when we had reports of a gentleman who was flashing people. My sergeant, knowing that this male was right near the finish line and there were thousands of people watching, sent me to arrest him. He and I both knew that the onlookers would shout horrendous things if they saw a female officer arresting a male for flashing MOP. Luckily, a sympathetic colleague of mine stepped in and said he would deal with it to spare me the embarrassment, it wouldn't have stopped me, but I knew my sergeant did it intentionally.

I have had males ask if I am a stripper, I have had men saying, "oh if you were a man I would...." followed by a long list of actions (normally fighting expletives) they would've done if I was only male.

**R2:** Yea, I've been at a call where I've been called a little girl and told I need to back to school. When you have groups of old men saying these things, it dehumanises you. It makes you feel small

**R3:** Already answered

**R4:** I've had one women officer 'services' to try to get out of a ticket, but I, even in custody, where gender is quite sensitive, but I didn't have any issues with my gender.

**R5:** No

**R6:** Sometimes, I get comments asking why I'm not handling something, it could be a female officer speaking with an aggressive male, I can see she is handling it, and I don't want to step in and make it worse, but then the public just assumes I'm stood there doing nothing.

**R7:** Some times I get positive comments, especially when dealing with female victims and that. But generally, I get dismissive comments like get me a real police officer or like oh you're gonna need more officers to take me down, that sort of thing. It's very rare I'm threatened directly, like I know it's the uniform they're being aggressive with and not me itself if you get me.

**R8:** Um yes, not always but I have had people make comments like you're just a WPC, you're too young to do this job. It's not always malicious but I've had people say I won't hit you because you're a woman.

**R9:** Not in recent years no, but I haven't been as forward facing as I was on response as a cop obviously. I can't really recall anything from my time as a PC in terms of comments from members of the public when dealing with incidents

**R10:** I can't say I've really overheard anything, don't get me wrong I've heard stories about the things being said to officers', but I wouldn't say I've had anyone single me out because of my gender.

**Q9: Do you feel your gender has influenced how you are perceived or treated within the police force?**

**R1:** Yes, it's the big boys club. I have seen men get away with things that a woman would never dream of getting away with. Excessive use of force, inappropriate and disorderly conduct and they all cover for each other. I was excluded from social gatherings when I started because I was female and I didn't "fit the mould", I wish I had stood up against it more when I was young in service, but after being told that I should never make complaints, it felt like a veiled threat, so I didn't. Throughout my 30 years, I had to prove myself more than the men on my shift, I had to work harder, do more, be more. As I got more experienced, I learnt that I needed to speak up and challenge more, so I often spoke out about injustices and unprofessional conduct especially from my male counterparts. But I always felt it fell on deaf ears. The men in my departments were often supervised by male sergeants who were supervised by male inspectors, they looked out for each other. They protected each other, I never had the same level of protection as a female.

**R2:** Yea, I feel like naturally if any sort of calls come in that are more men kicking off, its automatically a male officer going. Rather than sending females to deescalate them, they'll send male, bigger cops to deal with them. Males will deal with the more aggressive style of policing, females will more often deal with the victims, missing persons. Its automatically assumed that the female officer will deal with the injured party and the males will deal with the offenders.

**R3:** No, apart from the situations I mentioned before where we were sent to more griefier stuff, I'd say I was treated fairly. But that was the only difference I could visibly see was that the women were dealing with mispers (laughs), um misper checks, um they (women) would be sent out to stuff but I'm not sure if that's because of the disparity in numbers between men and

women in the team. There was more male to male partners than male to female partners on shift.

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** No

**R6:** Yea in a sense, I'm sometimes expected to be the one who deals with more aggressive clients shall we say, or the physically demanding jobs. I don't mind helping out, but it can create assumptions about what roles I should be taking on as a man

**R7:** I think I've had to prove myself more than the gents on my shift, especially when I first started. Id didn't feel like I fitted in to begin, I like didn't gel well with the shift because I felt like I was being judged at every step, every call I went to. Some of my colleagues assumed because I was spending more time talking to the people, we were dealing with that I was too caring, or too soft. I had more comments from males on my own shift asking me why I'm talking to offenders decently like. I have been told I'm being too caring towards offenders more than I can count, but like I think that everyone has gone through their fair share of issues and that, maybe that offender has too. Maybe if we just spent 5 minutes talking to them and understanding them better, not only are they going to be nicer the next time we see them, but we might be able to get more support in place to prevent re-offending and all that. It's much better now on shift, but I spent years just trying to justify every action to my colleagues because I felt this need to prove myself to them, prove that I was a good cop and that I can do just as much as them.

**R8:** Yes, um I think that although they try not to be, I think male officers are favoured over female PC. I don't think it's always intentional, females won't get the arrest attempts, but the males will. It doesn't always seem to matter who the offender is, it's never two females crewed together to complete the arrest attempts. We get put in logs where more compassion is needed which I think is wrong because not all females feel comfortable being compassionate. I think it's been that way for so long it just keeps happening

**R9:** No

**R10:** I'd say maybe earlier in my career, yes. I don't know, I think I needed to make sure I could handle the physicality of the job to be taken seriously. I sometimes feel like male colleagues expect me to show that dominance as a sergeant, show I am just as strong mentally and physically as my male counterpart

**Q10: Have you ever observed any differences in expectations placed on male versus female officers, either by colleagues or superiors?**

**R1:** Yes, the men didn't have to do as much. The men were able to do anything they wanted, conduct themselves in any way they wanted, and they would get away with it. "Boys will be boys", "big boys club", were used all the time and what's worse, the men didn't even see it, they still don't see it. They don't see the struggle women face within policing, and if they do see it, they simply don't care to change it. The system works in their favour, why would they want to change that?

**R2:** I think there are different expectations because it's known that the boys love traffic and doing what they want to do. And it's expected that girls will look to go to CID and stuff like that. There's digs on shift that the girls don't go to anything and that the boys take all the calls when they're actually going off doing what they want to do. If girls did that, we would be dragged over coals for not answering calls, but the boys it's expected that they will do what they want to.

I feel like there is a perception that females don't want to do traffic or firearms, because the boys have in their heads that they think it's good at sort of pulling cars, getting stop searches that that's what you need for those types of roles. Then they see girls sat in the office, they think we wouldn't be good at traffic, etc.

I think that when you think of a proactive officer, you think traffic stops and stop searches. I think the perception is that male officers are more proactive than female officers even though you don't see what is going on with investigations in the background. I think the girls are expected to do more investigatory work like phone work, statements and stuff like that.

I feel excluded from wanting to go for traffic and firearms, I think the boys degrade girls who want to go for traffic. Cause they would be like, well you don't go out, you don't leave the station.

**R3:** No. not that I can think of off the top of my head. I never felt the need to prove myself, I initially felt I needed to fit in but after a couple of weeks I didn't think about it.

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** No

**R6:** No. I don't think so

**R7:** Oh my god, so yea. Females constantly get sent to deal with the victims, the sensitive stuff. If there's a rape or sexual assault, well you know who that's coming to. Even if a male officer might be better suited, females will be sent. I think what's worse is it's like a subconscious thing, I don't even think that people know what they're doing, they're adding to the problem by automatically assuming a female will deal with it.

**R8:** I'm struggling to think of any examples but when you asked the question my immediate answer was yes. I think I sometimes feel that way, but it depends on who your supervisor is. I feel like it happens less if your line manager is also female, because perhaps they come from a place of understanding because it comes from experience when they were on shift. The big boys club is hugely still, it is the running theme that it's the boys club. I go back to the arrest enquiries, the exciting jobs predominately is still allocated to male officers. Not always but often females will get the mispers, the caring, I don't mind it, but I don't want to shy away from the exciting calls. You look at other departments as well, they are male heavy. When I joined, we had a cohort of 38 there was only 16 females. To be fair to training they asked us why we thought that was, they were aware of it and did look at it. I feel like I have to prove myself more than males on shift, I think in conflict certainly I think not in a bad way, male officers take over a bit. They naturally some of them are stronger than me, which is fair enough, but you don't want to be seen as the officer that stands there and does nothing, but you have to remember it is the minimum force necessary. I think it's expected that the female will take a step back.

**R9:** No, I'd like to think we challenge those unconscious biases.

**R10:** Um I guess so, quite a few. Male officers are still expected to handle the more aggressive calls, they get to go out and have the fun whilst I sit here and do the administrative tasks. That can be really frustrating, I sometimes miss the going out and about bit. There needs to be at least one sergeant in the office for tasks. I don't think I handle my male and female staff any differently, I try to keep it as fair as possible.

**Q11: How do you think the public perceives male officers compared to female officers?**

**R1:** Already answered

**R2:** Males will go out and get stuck in and just sort of deal with people straight away rather than taking to them and bringing them down. I think the ability to communicate to de-escalate is an underestimated and undervalued skill.

**R3:** Bullies, public thinks male officers are bullies. The amount of times I was called a bully, but I would never notice it with my female counterparts. Women would normally approach women and men would usually approach me.

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** I feel that the public may perceive male and female officers with no differences.

**R6:** Already answered

**R7:** I think they see the men as more authoritative just by default. What annoys me, if I'm with a man like regardless of service, they could be far less experienced than me, the public will automatically approach them and direct all questions and answers at them. It's like I'm invisible, just because I'm female and deemed lesser than my male colleagues. I mean sometimes that works in my favour, being female.

**R8:** Um I think it depends on who you speak to. I think a lot of people would say the male officers are big and strong and you want them there if it's kicking off, but men don't see the other side of it. A mixture is good, we should be looking at even splits on shift because we all have different strengths and abilities.

**R9:** I think that the public often comes with preconceived ideas about officers. What I've noticed is that assumptions influence how people speak to us right from the start of any interaction, even before any action is taken. It takes a bit of work to get past these initial impressions and show people who you actually are as an officer. I can't think of any exact examples from my time on response as a PC.

**R10:** Already answered

**Q12: Do you think gender diversity improves the overall effectiveness of policing? Why or why not?**

**R1:** Already answered

**R2:** I went to a call not long ago for a female who was in a mental health crisis, id dealt with her before but the two males who went hadn't. the boys were trying to just put the door through but when I got there and spoke to her through the door, she opened it willingly and was compliant. She wouldn't speak to the male officers, but she would speak with me. I managed to do that because I took the time to build that rapport that the male officers didn't have with her.

I think being a female officer can be a strength, having female officers is only a benefit to the force. If you're a female victim, and you have experienced violence from a man, you would look to the female for more support and reassurance rather than go to a male because you automatically have your guard up when speaking with men.

**R3:** Yea when probably dealing with homeless people, people would say you lot are just bullies, you're they're grabbing him and ragging him into the back of the van and that. They were just assuming that when you used force, you've been too forceful with your actions. We'd just ignore it and carry on with our job.

**R4:** Already answered

**R5:** No

**R6:** I've had people try to challenge me because I'm a man, like they need to prove something getting one up on an officer. I've also had situations where people expected me to take charge, go I think gender shapes public reactions for sure.

**R7:** Oh, yea for sure. I've had people comply with me quickly because they didn't feel threatened, or they've said I won't kick off because you're a female. I've also had people completely ignore me until a male arrived, I could say one thing and one of the males would say like the exact same thing and they'd then listen to him. It can be really frustrating, that constant feeling of being pushed aside but not only the public and that but by my colleagues too, I don't feel like they stand up for me or challenge that behaviour.

**R8:** Yes. There was an incident on the town where there was some conflict and me and another female were hands on, I felt like the public wanted to help us. But when male officers got there and got hands on people were like there is so many people for one person. Their attitude changed from let's help those female officers quick they don't deserve this. There was an incident where we were near the town and two men were fighting, two members of the public stopped and shouted that's a little female don't touch her again because we had to gets hands on.

**R9:** Not that I can remember no

**R10:** I've had some MOPs challenge me and any decisions made, thinking ill just roll over if that's what you mean. I've had instances whereby gender has also helped though. I can defuse a situation quickly, either my getting hands on when they least expect it, element of surprise on my side, or I can talk them down if the situation allows it.

**Q13: Do you think gender diversity improves the overall effectiveness of policing? Why or why not?**

**R1:** Not asked

Women now are more outspoken, but in the 30 years I was policing, there has been minimal change. I doubt it will change much more in the next 30 years unless women start talking more, speaking out against the big boys' club.

**R2:** I don't understand why only females can search females, but female officers will also be required to search men. Male officers will search males, but they won't search females. It's the same for 221's

**R3:** More female sergeants, I had a mix, and I found my female sergeants were far more on the ball than my male sergeants who were useless. More females within the force, I only had 2 female sergeants, and I never had a female inspector, I so no higher SMT which were females during my time in SWP. Even the DS's I dealt with were male.

**R3:** Yes, because everyone can bring something to the table it's important to create a cohesive team. I think if you put an all-male team and a mixed team in the other. You'd find one team is more proactive than the other.

**R4:** I think it does, you only really need to look at Swindon in the early 1990s to see how it worked to our advantage, on a team where only 4/5 of the members were female, we had other weapons in are arsenal which would've taken ¾ blokes to take him down and all we needed was one female.

On traffic, out of 40 odd bobbies I can only recall 3 ladies on the department, and they were dismissive of them driving high speed cars. I witnessed comments and behaviours that were dismissive of women in that role. At that time women were being actively recruited for firearms, and I remember comments being made “they only got the job because they are female”.

**R5:** Yes. It is important to have gender diversity in the police force, as this can only help with engagement and help build rapport with individuals from different communities from all walks of life.

**R6:** Yes, having different officers does bring new perspectives, I’ve worked with female officers that have been brilliant with calming people down, and male officers that have been great at building rapport. A mix of genders does make the team better.

**R7:** 110% absolutely yes. We have our benefits, different perspectives on things help us deal with stuff. Policing isn’t a one strategy fits all, it just won’t work like that. Having a mix of genders makes for force more adaptable and better at dealing with communities.

**R8:** We all have different skill sets because some people respond better to females some people respond better to males so it’s important to have a good mix. Have that mix but don’t generalise on gender.

**R9:** Without question. You need a range of experiences, range of backgrounds and communication styles. Each one adds perspective to incidents, when those perspectives work cohesively it add value. Males and females will naturally experience and see the world

differently because of these experiences, so it can only be seen as a plus to have gender diversity.

**R10:** Policing involved so many different types of calls, you really don't know what you're going to be dealing with. You could be dealing with a sudden death with a distraught family, where compassion and care is needed, one minute to a drunk guy on town who has started scrapping with someone where force and more assertiveness is needed. It's like you're wearing loads of masks, and you need to select the right one for the situation, get it wrong and it can escalate, but get it right and you can play to each other's strengths. I think having gender diversity in the force can provide different perspectives and communication styles, it definitely brings out a sort of balance on the team.

**Q14: What changes (if any) would you like to see in terms of gender dynamics in policing?**

**R1:** More needs to be done, I'd like to think there would be more women in senior positions by now, but it's not enough. Not enough change is happening. I think it will be the next generation of officers that we start to see changes, the issues surrounding police are becoming more talked about. But until the old sweats retire or leave the force, they will maintain control and power and use that power to protect the other men in force.

Women now are more outspoken, but in the 30 years I was policing, there has been minimal change. I doubt it will change much more in the next 30 years unless women start talking more, speaking out against the big boys' club.

**R2:** I think there are a lot of benefits to being a female officer. But the male dominated cultures need to change. The boys going out on arrest attempts and stuff like that, isolates female officers and creates a barrier. I think that training like Taser, MOE (method of entry) and courses like that are so male dominated, they need to adapt the courses to be more inclusive. Like having an MOE light with just the drill kit so that females who struggle carrying heavy weights don't need to use the red key.

I think there is a glass ceiling for women when it comes to the likes of traffic and firearms. I think those promotional opportunities aren't there simply because of my gender. As a female officer, if I said I wanted to go onto traffic, I'd have to prove myself far more than my male counterpart. My knowledge would be tested more by male officers, I'd be expected to issue more TORs (traffic offence reports), it would completely put me off going for those positions.

**R3:** More female sergeants, I had a mix, and I found my female sergeants were far more on the ball than my male sergeants who were useless. More females within the force, I only had 2 female sergeants, and I never had a female inspector, I so no higher SMT which were females during my time in SWP. Even the DS's I dealt with were male.

**R4:** The police service generally need to embrace the fact that women have different needs to men, the service is still very leaning towards catering for a male officer. For female officers, the uniform is not fit for purpose for a women officer. Catering for things like, menstrual cycle, some struggle with it more than others, not sure how they could cater for that but if they had a more approachable nature, they might address female wellbeing more on a level than what they do at the moment.

Women are still having to balance many competing demands, the women will look after the children, do the housewife thing whilst being a police officer. That's not changed in the last 30 years. Women are still having to cater for male expectations, there still an attitude that men go out and wins the day and women looks after the child.

Progress is not going to be particularly fast whilst there are so many counters suggesting women are below men. Great strides have been made, there are so many more women in positions of authority now to when I first started. I am no longer surprised to see a female chief super or chief constable, but when I was first in service having a female chief was unheard of.

**R5:** No

**R6:** None

**R7:** I think it would be good to see less assumptions on what women or men are naturally good for, less sending men to grieve calls because it's the boys club and they can all go on their little jolly, and less assuming women will sit on the 221s and dealing with the victims all the time. I want to see more women in SMT, I think it's so disproportionate. It wasn't so bad when we had a female Chief, female DCC and female ACC, that was kinda cool to see. It gave female officers someone to look up to, to become, if they wanted to. When you see women in these roles, it sends a message that it's actually obtainable for the rest of us, that we are seen, recognised, we have value.

**R8:** I think to balance the scales, there should be female only courses. I am happy to go on mixed sex courses don't get me wrong, but to balance the scales on certain courses it would be

only a good thing. I want to see more female in male dominated departments like NPT, firearms, the female to male ratios is really bad. I think it would be nice because it will encourage you as a female to apply for the role.

**R9:** We all know about the bystander affect; we have training on it. I think it would be good to see more people challenge questionable behaviours, having the confidence to either challenge directly or escalate it to a supervisor.

**R10:** No, I don't think there is anything I would change in terms of gender dynamics, don't get me wrong there's a lot I would change about response but not about individuals just processes to make it easier for the officers

**Q15: Is there anything else you would like to share about gender and policing that you would like to discuss?**

**R1:** No

**R2:** No

**R3:** No

**R4:** No

**R5:** No

**R6:** No

**R7:** I think that just that gender shouldn't define what kind of officer you are, it shouldn't be the first thing someone thinks when they see you. That you're a female officer so you are lesser than the males on your shift. Skills, attitude, and training matters, we have all had the same training so why am I any different as a female? But at the same time, I suppose we can't pretend that gender doesn't influence experiences and that. I think the key will be to acknowledge that there's differences but to encourage people to accept those differences, not limit people because of just their gender, it's not like they chose to be a woman.

**R8:** No

**R9:** Just that acknowledging gender dynamics isn't about criticising the job, it's about improving the service. The more honest we are about gender dynamics and how gender effects interactions either internally or externally, the better we can support officers, improve the way we work and create a more cohesive environment for officers to thrive, regardless of gender.

**R10:** No

## Appendix E - Interview Analysis Matrix

| Main Topic – Respondent 1 (F) | Theme                           | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                     | Supporting Quotes                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Motivation to make a difference | Joined the Police out of a desire to help others and make a positive impact, despite entering a heavily male-dominated environment.                                | “I wanted to make a difference. I started policing in 1994 and was in a team that was predominately male” |
|                               | Early career and isolation      | Experienced isolation as the only woman on her shift and faced implicit threats against reporting misconduct, shaping her early policing experience                | “I was told “you do not make complaints” and more often than not, these were genuine threats.             |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>  | Reliance on Communication       | Developed a communication-based approach due to being outnumbered and less physically strong than male colleagues. Used verbal skills (“this”) to defuse conflict. | “I learned very quickly to use this (pointing to mouth) rather than fighting”                             |
|                               | Risk awareness and empathy      | After becoming a mother, her policing style changed – prioritising safety,                                                                                         | “My decision-making changed like a flick of a switch because I needed to go home at the end of my shift”  |

|                                 |                                      |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 |                                      | empathy, and de-escalation over physical confrontation                                                                                            |                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Gender-based comments and harassment | Faced sexist remarks and inappropriate comments from both the public and male colleagues, which reinforced gender barriers                        | “I have had males ask if I am a stripper” and “If you were a man I would....”                                      |
|                                 | Target of misogynistic treatment     | Supervisors deliberately placed her in humiliating or unsafe positions because of her gender                                                      | “My sergeant...sent me to arrest him (a flasher) knowing the onlookers would shout horrendous things”              |
| <b>Male V Female Approaches</b> | Communication physicality vs         | Contrasted her communication-based style with male colleagues’ reliance on physical control, reflecting gendered differences in handling conflict | “I always knew I wasn’t the strongest, so I relied heavily on communication comparatively to the men on my shift”  |
|                                 | Inequality and “boys club” culture   | Described entrenched gender inequality, with male officers protected and excused misconduct hearings, while women faced double standards.         | “it’s the big boys club. I have seen men get away with things that a woman would never dream of getting away with” |

|                             |                                        |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | Gendered expectations                  | Women have to prove themselves more, while men faced fewer expectations and accountability.                                    | “The men didn’t have to do as much....’boys will be boys”.                                     |
| <b>What Needs to Change</b> | Representation and leadership          | Called for greater female representation in senior roles and more active efforts to challenge male-dominated power structures. | “I’d like to think there would be more women in senior positions by now, but it is not enough” |
|                             | Cultural shift and generational change | Believes meaningful change will only come with generational turnover as older, entrenched male officers retire                 | “Until the old sweats retire or leave the force, they will maintain control and power”.        |

| Main Topic – Respondent 2 (F) | Theme                                         | Interpretation                                                                                                                            | Supporting Quotes                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Motivation to make a difference               | Influenced by a female family friend who worked as a detective; joined policing from a young age with an aspiration to make a difference. | “One of my mum’s best mates is a police officer...she influenced me to join”                                                |
|                               | Career on response policing                   | Described frontline response as emotionally draining and unpredictable, showing awareness of occupational stress.                         | “Been on response. Sometimes it’s horrendous and then some days are less horrendous”                                        |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>  | Rapport communication as de-escalation tools. | Places high value on building rapport, reading emotional cues, and using calm communication to reduce tension.                            | “When they are up there, they expect me to come in at the same level...but when you come in down here, you bring them down” |
|                               | Conscious of public scrutiny and risk         | Expressed awareness of being record by the public; this shapes her restraint and reinforces reliance on communication rather than force.  | “There are so many cameras thrown in our face....one bad complaint from someone could be career ending”                     |

|                                 |                                                             |                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | Gendered physical limitations and adaptation                | Recognises physical disadvantage compared to male colleagues, using empathy and patience to compensate.                                   | "I know I am not the best in a physical fight, but I can calm someone down with communication"        |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Gendered harassment and dehumanisation                      | Experiences sexist remarks that undermine her professionalism, particularly from older male members of the public                         | "I've been called a little girl and told I need to go back to school....it dehumanises you"           |
|                                 | Female officers as trusted by vulnerable people             | Described incidents where female victims or individuals in crisis preferred to engage with her rather than male officers.                 | "She wouldn't speak to the male officers, but she would speak with me"                                |
| <b>Male V Female Approaches</b> | Protective but exclusionary behaviours from male colleagues | Male officers often "take-over" in conflict, sidelining female officers under the guise of protection, reinforcing inequality.            | "If there is a fight ongoing.... they will sort of push you aside as a female"                        |
|                                 | Patience and communication vs force and control             | Female officers described as more patient and communicative; male officers escalate more quickly, sometimes provoking further aggression. | "Male officers will give people one to two chances and then use force.... women take a lot more time" |

|                             |                                                       |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | Gendered task allocation and stereotypes              | Men handle confrontations and enforcement roles; women are directed toward victim support and paperwork.                                      | “it’s automatically assumed that the female officer will deal with the victims, and the males will deal with the offenders” |
|                             | Barriers to specialist roles (firearms, traffic, etc) | Perceived exclusion from specialist or proactive units due to stereotypes and male-dominated cultures; higher burden of proof for competence. | “If I said I wanted to go onto traffic, I’d have to prove myself far more than my male counterpart”                         |
| <b>What Needs to Change</b> | Inclusion in training and specialist opportunities    | Advocates adapting training (E.g. Method of entry, taser) to be more inclusive, removing physical barriers that exclude women                 | “Courses like that are so male dominated... they need to adapt the courses to be more inclusive”.                           |
|                             | Challenging cultural barriers and glass ceilings      | Calls for dismantling the “boys’ culture” and ensuring equal promotion and progression opportunities.                                         | “I think there is a glass ceiling for women when it comes to traffic and firearms”                                          |

| Main Topic – Respondent 3 (M) | Theme                                             | Interpretation                                                                                                                                           | Supporting Quotes                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Family Influenced and Pride Motivation            | Motivation rooted in family pride and admiration for a cousin already in the force; reflects how familial approval and drive career choices in policing. | “My cousin joined, and I wanted to help people... I wanted my grandparents to think like that about me”                                                |
|                               | Arrest focused Policing culture                   | Early exposure to performance-driven environment emphasising arrests and productivity over problem-solving; shaped his policing mindset                  | “I think my Sergeant was pushing for more arrests... we were getting updates on arrest numbers, on who was being productive”                           |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>  | Statistics-driven policing and pressure to arrest | Describes pressure from supervisors and team culture to prioritise arrests for performance metrics rather than necessity; loss of human element          | “Looking at the statistics takes away the human element of policing... you become a stats-driven robot”                                                |
|                               | Confrontational style and pre-emptive escalation  | Adopts a proactive, sometimes confrontational stance due to anticipation of violence; shaped by exposure to high-risk calls                              | “I went in thinking this was going to get tasty... it made me escalate situations quicker, so it didn’t get to the point that I was getting assaulted” |

|                                 |                                             |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | Adaptive influence of team culture          | Initially more communicative but adapted to a more force-based approach to fit in with male-dominated team culture                               | “When I started, I used other techniques, but I adapted to fit into the team more... it was effective, and it worked”.         |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Male officers being viewed as bullies       | Perceives public bias against male officers, often labelled as heavy-handed regardless of intent.                                                | “Public thinks male officers are bullies... the number of times I was called a bully”                                          |
|                                 | Misinterpretation of use of force by public | Notes that physical interventions by male officers are often misperceived as excessive by onlookers unaware of context                           | “People would just say you lot are just bullies... they were just assuming that when you used force, you’ve been too forceful” |
| <b>Male V Female Approaches</b> | Gender-based allocation task                | Observed pattern where male officers are assigned more violent or high-risk calls, while female officers handle welfare and missing person cases | “We got sent to the griefier calls... women were dealing with mispers (missing persons)”.                                      |
|                                 | Force vs communication dynamics             | Acknowledgements that men are quicker to use force, while female officers tend to communicate more; sees this as a consistent gender difference  | “Male officers were far more likely to go in and get it dealt with... women were using other methods to de-escalate”.          |

|                             |                                         |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | Influence of male-dominated culture     | Suggests team norms pressure both male and female officers to conform to force-based approaches; fewer female officers reinforce this behaviour | “There were only 1...2...3 females working there when I was there, out of a team of 10”                  |
| <b>What Needs to Change</b> | Representation and leadership diversity | Advocates for more female sergeants and senior leaders, citing better management and competence among the few he worked under                   | “My female Sergeants were far more on the ball than my male sergeants... I never had a female inspector” |
|                             | Value of gender diversity               | Supports a mixed- gender teams for balanced policing styles; believes diversity enhances team effectiveness                                     | “If you put an all-male team and a mixed team... you’d find one team is more proactive than the other”.  |

| Main Topic – Respondent 4 (M) | Theme                            | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                    | Supporting Quotes                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Family tradition and aspiration  | Motivated by family history of service in RAF and personal desire to make a positive impact; policing seen as a natural career path                               | “Both parents and grandparents were in the RAF... I wanted to make a difference to someone’s life positively”  |
|                               | Extensive and varied career path | Served in multiple roles over 30+ years, including traffic, ANPR, custody, public order and project work; experienced both public-facing and administrative roles | “Out of my 30-year service, 15 were public facing and the rest was office based or non-public facing”          |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>  | Ethics driven, mindful policing  | Approached public interactions with respect, fairness, and awareness of diversity; used force sparingly and only when necessary                                   | “I challenged myself to deliver a service to those individuals based on how I would want to be treated myself” |
|                               | Height and presence influence    | Perceived gender less significant than physical presence; height and proportion influenced approach and ability to control situations.                            | “I’m regarded as tall... I was more inclined to lay hands on quicker...height more than gender”                |

|                                 |                                                   |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | Assertive approach in high-risk situations        | In public order or high-risk calls, quicker to use physical intervention when needed; reflects adaptive approach based on environment           | “Thursday, Friday, Saturday nights...about getting into the thick of the situation and dominating it”                   |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Public respect and stereotypes                    | Some public deference to male authority but also recognition of female officers’ utility in mixed teams; awareness of public reactions.         | “On a team where only 4/5 members were female... we had other weapons in our arsenal (referring to the women on shift). |
|                                 | Historical dismissal of women in specialist roles | Observed dismissive attitudes toward women in traffic or high-speed roles, reflecting gender bias in public perception.                         | “They only got the job because they were female”                                                                        |
| <b>Male V Female Approaches</b> | Complementary gender strengths                    | Women were valued for patience, communication, and de-escalation; men often more force-orientated; teams adapt to use strengths collaboratively | “She could sweet talk anyone down from anywhere... accepted that the ladies had a different way of controlling things”  |
|                                 | Historical gender bias and sexism                 | Early career experienced overtly sexist attitudes from supervisors and                                                                          | “My old inspector was very sexist... it was a reflection of a bygone age... upon reflection, it had to change”          |

|                             |                                             |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             |                                             | culture; noted changes over time in policy and recognition                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>What Needs to Change</b> | Service adaptation for female needs         | Advocates practical adjustments for female officers (uniforms, wellbeing support, menstrual cycle considerations)                 | “The service is still very leaning towards catering for a male officer... they might address female wellbeing more on a level than what they do at the moment” |
|                             | Work-life balance and societal expectations | Highlights ongoing pressures on women to manage family and domestic responsibilities alongside policing; systematic change needed | “Women are still having to balance many competing demands... they still have to cater to male expectations”                                                    |
|                             | Progress in leadership representation.      | Recognises gains in women achieving senior positions, though historical barriers were significant.                                | “I am no longer surprised to see a female chief superintendent, or chief constable... when I first started having a female chief was unheard of”               |

| Main Topic – Respondent 5 (M)   | Theme                                     | Interpretation                                                                                                                                              | Supporting Quote                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>                 | Wanted a change                           | Joined policing for a career change and variety after years in retail. Their career is still very early-stage, working exclusively in response              | “Felt I wanted a career change. Wanted a change in jobs and something with variety, due to being in retail for many years prior”                                                                                         |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>    | Favours communication                     | Strongly favours communication as the primary tool for de-escalation. They only escalate to force if required, emphasising adaptation to the situation      | <p>“I typically handle conflict by using ‘verbal communication’...always aim to use this tactic in the first instance”.</p> <p>“However, I would consider and adapt my approach accordingly based on the situation”.</p> |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Doesn’t note any significant differences  | The respondent perceives no significant gender-based differences in how the public views male versus female officers                                        | “I feel that the public may perceive male and female officers with no differences”                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Male V Female Approaches</b> | Male officers may be quicker to use force | They haven’t seen major differences, but notes that the male officers may be quicker to use physical force when a suspect becomes irate. The distinction is | “I haven’t noticed consistent differences, however, if there is a suspect that becomes irate, I think male officers are more likely to get ‘hands on’.”                                                                  |

|                             |                             |                                                                                                                                    |     |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|                             |                             | not absolute but observed situationally.                                                                                           |     |
| <b>What Needs to Change</b> | Doesn't suggest any changes | Respondent does not highlight any specific desired changes regarding gender dynamics. They express no concerns or recommendations. | N/a |

| Main Topic – Respondent 6 (M) | Theme                             | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Supporting Quote                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Friend talking about team culture | They entered policing seeking a more active and purposeful career. They were influenced by a friend who spoke positively about team culture. They enjoy the fast pace of response work and plan to move into traffic | “I was in my early 20’s...I needed a job where I wasn’t stuck behind a desk...a friend of mine had joined the police...he seemed like he had a sense of purpose”           |
| <b>Use of Force</b>           | An authoritative figure           | Describes themselves as direct, firm, and willing to take control physically when necessary. They favour clear demands, strong presence, and decisive action once dialogue fails.                                    | <p>“I’m very direct...clear, firm when I need to be”</p> <p>“I give them a few chances...but then if they’re becoming a threat, I act quickly to get it under control”</p> |
| <b>Public Perception</b>      | Hesitance to intervene            | States that members of the public sometimes expect male officers to take lead in confrontational situation. This can cause misunderstandings about why he may not intervene immediately                              | “I get comments asking why I’m not handling something...the public just assumes I’m stood there doing nothing”                                                             |

|                                  |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Male Vs Female Approaches</b> | Female officers use communication | Respondent perceives that female officers tend to lead more with communication, while male officers more often move to force quickly. However, they emphasise individual differences rather than strict gender divisions. | <p>“Girls will take on more of the talking...much quicker just to get hands on when needs be”</p> <p>“I’ve worked with women who have been assertive...but I think women are better suited for negotiation”</p> |
| <b>What needs to change</b>      | No changes proposed               | The respondent does not feel any significant changes are needed regarding gender dynamics. They report no issues or expectations they want altered                                                                        | N/a                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Main Topic – Respondent 7 (F) | Theme                                                  | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Supporting Quote                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Wanted to make a difference                            | Joined policing to make a meaningful difference and change negative perceptions of the police in their community. They enjoy community-orientated policing and prefer NPT where longer-term relationships can be built. | <p>“I joined because I wanted to do something that felt meaningful...I wanted to be part of changing the narrative”</p> <p>“I realised I enjoy the more long-term aspect of NPT...build proper relationships with the community”</p> |
| <b>Use of Force</b>           | Prioritises communication                              | Strongly prioritises communication, rapport building and calming strategies. They try to slow situations down and avoid physical intervention unless absolutely necessary                                               | <p>“Using communication was definitely the way to go for me...my go to approach for sure”</p> <p>“If there is a safe way to avoid getting hands on then I’ll take that option”.</p>                                                  |
| <b>Public Perception</b>      | Males are more authoritative, and females feel ignored | Feels the public often defaults to viewing men as more authoritative, which means female officers are often spoken                                                                                                      | “The public will automatically approach (The male officer) and direct all questions...it’s like I’m invisible”                                                                                                                       |

|                                  |                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  |                                                                               | over, ignored, or treated as secondary.                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Male Vs Female Approaches</b> | Notices consistent differences between male and females                       | Perceives consistent trends: female officers are more communication-driven and patient. While male officers, especially the younger ones, tend to escalate to physical control quicker. | “Female officers...tend to use verbal skills and de-escalation tactics to start off with”. “Some of the males on my shift...can be quicker to take control of someone physically”                                                                                    |
| <b>What Needs to change</b>      | Issues around role allocation to be challenged and more representation in SMT | Wants fewer gender-based assumptions about role allocation. They advocate for more women in senior positions to signal opportunity and representation.                                  | <p>“Less assumptions on what women or men are naturally good for”</p> <p>“Females consistently get sent to deal with the victims...men get to go on their little jolly”</p> <p>“I want to see more women in SMT...it gave female officers someone to look up to”</p> |

| Main Topic – Respondent 8 (F) | Theme                             | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                                         | Supporting Quotes                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>               | Motivated to help people          | Responded progressed from CSO to PC, motivated by a desire to help people and do good. They have always worked in response and value reassurance to the public                         | “I was a CSO...I always had an interest in helping other people”                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Use of Force</b>           | De-escalation before force        | Emphasis calmness, kindness, and tac-coms. They always try verbal de-escalation before resorting to force. Even when force is necessary, they try to establish calm.                   | <p>“I think I’m confident but polite...be kind and reassuring”</p> <p>“I always go in calm and use my tac coms before anything else”</p> <p>“If I have used force, I will again try to calm them down”</p> |
| <b>Public Perception</b>      | View that females need protecting | Observes that the public sometimes responds protectively toward female officers and may view male officer as overly forceful. Gender influences how the public reacts during incidents | <p>“Sometimes the offender won’t respond well to a male officer, but they will a female”</p> <p>“The public wanted to help us...but when male officers got there their attitude changed”</p>               |

|                                  |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Male vs Female Approaches</b> | Females engage whilst males escalate | Believes that male and female officers can elicit different reactions from offenders. Female officers can sometimes engage more easily due to being perceived as less threatening, whereas males may escalate situations unintentionally. | <p>“People have naturally responded better to me than the officer I’m with who is male”</p> <p>“Sometimes the impact factor isn’t the same, male officers aren’t seeing the risk the same”</p>                                                                                                      |
| <b>What needs to change</b>      | Female only training groups          | Wants greater gender balance in specialised departments and better access for women to training and advancement. They also suggest female-only courses to level the playing field and reduce longstanding male dominance.                 | <p>“There should be female only courses...to balance the scales”</p> <p>“More females in the male dominated departments like NPT, firearms...the ratios are really bad”</p> <p>“Females won’t get the arrest attempts, but the males will...we get put in logs where more compassion is needed”</p> |

| Main Topic – Respondent 9 (M)   | Theme                                      | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                               | Supporting Quotes                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>                 | Wanted structure and purpose               | Respondent joined policing after working in the private sector, seeking purpose, structure and impact.                                                                       | “I was working in the private sector...wanted a change. Wanted to make decisions that would help the community”                                                                        |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>    | Possess an almost clinical way of thinking | Takes calm, measures, transparent approach to conflict. They stress clarity of reasoning, reducing tension through honesty                                                   | <p>“I take a very measured approach...I don't like to rush into decisions”.</p> <p>“Transparency, honesty, and consistency is key to reducing tensions”</p>                            |
| <b>Public Perception</b>        | Preconceived ideas about officers          | Acknowledges that the public brings preconceived ideas about officer gender and authority, which affects early transactions before any policing action is taken.             | “The public often comes with preconceived ideas...assumptions influence how people speak to us right from the start...it takes a bit of work to get past these initial impressions”    |
| <b>Males Vs Female approach</b> | It's about the individual, not the gender  | Reports no major consistent differences in conflict-handling between men and women. Instead, they point to individual skill and approach. They do, however, note that public | <p>“No, I wouldn't say there's any differences”</p> <p>“Some people back down more quickly with a man, while others feel challenged by them. Women sometimes get more cooperation”</p> |

|                             |                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             |                                                                      | reactions differ by officer gender.                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>What needs to change</b> | Bystanders affect and active challenging of inappropriate behaviours | Emphasises the need for more active challenging of inappropriate behaviour (bystander affect) and creating a culture where officers feel confident escalating concerns. | <p>“It would be good to see more people challenge questionable behaviours”</p> <p>“Having the confidence to either challenge directly or escalate to a supervisor”</p> |

| Main Topic – Respondent 10 (F) | Theme                            | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Supporting Quotes                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal</b>                | Changing their community         | Joined policing to create change within their community and play an active role in solving problems rather than observing them.                                                                                      | “I thought...I can certainly be a part of the system to change the way we approach these issues”                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Use of Force Approach</b>   | Authoritative aggression without | Presents themselves as calm, grounded, and authoritative without aggression. They rely heavily on clear, controlled communication and only use force when necessary. They emphasise setting the tone for their team. | <p>“I anchor myself...I try to be the calmest one there”</p> <p>“I won’t be a pushover...but I do that verbally rather than physically”</p> <p>“People usually match your tone...going in shouting is not the way to go”</p> |
| <b>Public Perceptions</b>      | Mixed reactions from the public  | Experienced mixed reactions from the public. Some challenge them because they are a woman, whereas other times their gender helps diffuse situations                                                                 | <p>“I’ve had some MOPs challenge me...thinking I would just roll over”</p> <p>“Gender has also helped though. I can defuse a situation quickly”</p>                                                                          |

|                                  |                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Male Vs Female Approaches</b> | Observes patterns, not rules. | Female officers often communicate more before escalating, while male officers may assert themselves physically earlier. They emphasise adaptation rather than superiority of one particular approach. | <p>“Female officers tend to rely more on communication or negotiation before moving to physical options”</p> <p>“Male officers will assert themselves physically a bit earlier”</p> |
| <b>What needs to change</b>      | No changes proposed           | Does not believe major gender-based changes are needed. Their concerns focus more on response policing processes than gender dynamics.                                                                | <p>“No. I don’t think there is anything I would change in terms of gender dynamics”</p> <p>“Theres a lot I would change about response but not about individuals”</p>               |

## Appendix F - Survey Questions

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your current rank/ role?
3. How many years have you been policing?
4. I believe male and female officers often take different approaches to policing.
5. I believe gender affects the way officers interact with members of the public.
6. Female officers are more likely to use communication and de-escalation strategies than physical force.
7. Policing styles in my organisation are influenced by traditional (masculine) values.
8. I feel that officers are encouraged to adopt a particular style of policing regardless of their personal strengths.
9. I have changed the way I police to fit in with my team.
10. Gender has an impact on how colleagues view an officer's competence or leadership potential.
11. Have you ever felt misjudged or misunderstood in your role based on your gender?
12. Have you ever witnessed or experienced differences on how male and female officers are treated by colleagues?
13. Have you ever received any training focused on gender awareness, diversity or inclusive leadership?
14. If yes, what training have you received?
15. In your view, do men and women police differently? If yes, how?
16. Would you say there is a culture within policing? If yes, how would you describe it?
17. Do you have any experiences or observations about how gender has influenced your work or that of your colleagues?

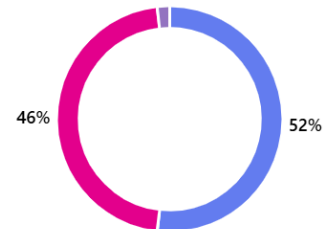
18. I feel that female officers are expected to take on more emotional or pastoral roles (E.g. being tasked with supporting victims or vulnerable individuals)?
19. Situation: A young male who appeared to be heavily intoxicated has been reported to be fighting with another male in the town centre late at night. Upon officer arrival, the male is acting aggressively and attempting to strike others nearby. What use of force would you initially use with this male?
20. Situation: A female has been reported to be causing damage to parked vehicles along a residential street. Upon officer arrival, the female is located actively smashing a car window with a metal pole. What use of force tactic do you initially use?
21. Situation: Officers receive a call for a male in a doctor's surgery who is refusing to leave. Upon their arrival it is identified that the male has concealed a blade which he refused to drop. What use of force tactic do you use?

## Appendix G – Survey Data

1. What is your gender?

[More details](#)

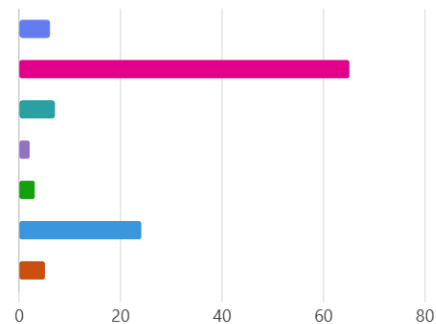
|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Woman             | 58 |
| Man               | 52 |
| Non-binary        | 0  |
| Prefer not to say | 2  |



2. What is your current rank/ role?

[More details](#)

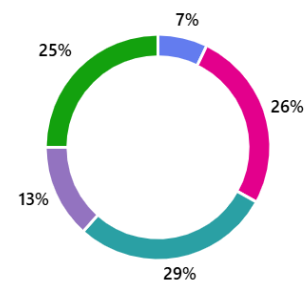
|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Student Constable    | 6  |
| Constable            | 65 |
| Sergeant             | 7  |
| Inspector            | 2  |
| Senior Officer       | 3  |
| Staff/ Civilian role | 24 |
| Other                | 5  |



3. How many years have you been in Policing?

[More details](#)

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| 0-2 Years   | 8  |
| 2-4 Years   | 29 |
| 5-10 Years  | 32 |
| 11-20 Years | 15 |
| 21 + years  | 28 |



4. I believe male and female officers often take different approaches to policing.

[More details](#)



5. I believe gender affects the way officers interact with members of the public

[More details](#)



6. Female officers are more likely to use communication and de-escalation strategies than physical force

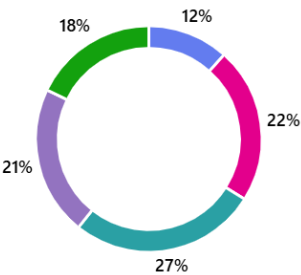
[More details](#)



7. Policing styles in my organisation are influenced by traditional (masculine) values.

[More details](#)

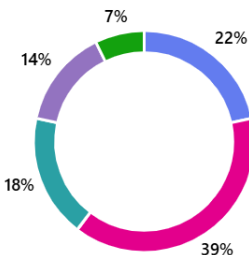
|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly agree    | 13 |
| Slightly agree    | 25 |
| Neutral           | 30 |
| Slightly disagree | 24 |
| Strongly disagree | 20 |



8. I feel that officers are encouraged to adopt a particular styles of policing regardless of their personal strengths

[More details](#)

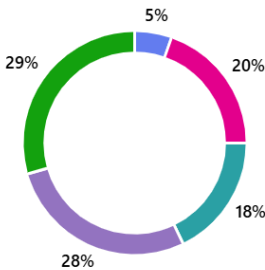
|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly agree    | 24 |
| Slightly agree    | 43 |
| Neutral           | 20 |
| Slightly disagree | 16 |
| Strongly disagree | 8  |



9. I have changed the way I police to fit in with my team

[More details](#)

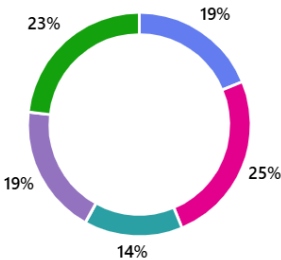
|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly agree    | 6  |
| Slightly agree    | 22 |
| Neutral           | 20 |
| Slightly disagree | 31 |
| Strongly disagree | 33 |



10. Gender has an impact on how colleagues view an officers competence or leadership potential

[More details](#)

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly agree    | 21 |
| Slightly agree    | 28 |
| Neutral           | 16 |
| Slightly disagree | 21 |
| Strongly disagree | 26 |



11. Have you ever felt judged or misunderstood in your role based on your gender?

[More details](#)

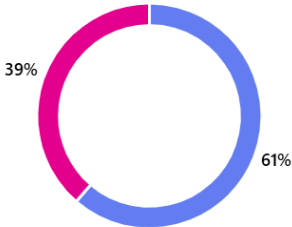
- Yes 52
- No 59



12. Have you ever witnessed or experienced differences on how male and female officers are treated by colleagues

[More details](#)

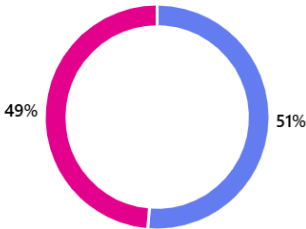
- Yes 68
- No 43



13. Have you ever received any training focused on gender awareness, diversity or inclusive leadership?

[More details](#)

- Yes 57
- No 54



14. If yes, what training have you recieved?

[More details](#)

43  
Responses

Latest Responses  
"initial training"  
...



15. In your view, do men and women police differently? If yes, how?

[More details](#)

98  
Responses

Latest Responses  
"Not sure if I would say they police differently, but one may be more appropr..."  
"Yes - I think the attitude towards both victims and offenders differs between..."  
"yes"  
...



16. Would you say there is a culture within policing? If yes, how would you describe it? (Culture: the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time) [More details](#)

87

Responses

Latest Responses

"I don't believe so, other than following the core principles and values of our ... "

"Yes - I think that women police officers are expected to deal with victims/ pa... "

"There is a culture within any workforce. In policing, I feel it is generally inclus... "

...

35 respondents (40%) answered culture for this question.



17. Do you have any experiences or observations about how gender has influenced your work or that of your colleagues? [More details](#)

80

Responses

Latest Responses

"I find that when I am at jobs with male officers, they will usually take the lea... "

"No"

...

13 respondents (16%) answered deal for this question.



18. I feel that female officers are expected to take on more emotional or pastoral roles (e.g being tasked with supporting victims or vulnerable individuals) [More details](#)



19. A young male who appeared to be heavily intoxicated has been reported to be fighting with another male in the town centre late at night. Upon officer arrival, the male is acting aggressively and attempting to strike others nearby. What use of force would you initially use with this male? [More details](#)

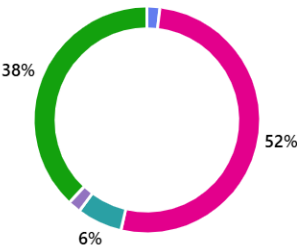


20. A female has been reported to be causing damage to parked vehicles along a residential street. Upon officer arrival, the female is located actively smashing a car window with a metal pole. What use of force tactic do you initially use? [More details](#)



21. Officers receive a call for a male in a doctors surgery who is refusing to leave. Upon their arrival it is identified that the male has concealed a blade which he refused to drop. What use of force tactic do you use? [More details](#)

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| ● Officer presence         | 2  |
| ● Tactical communication   | 56 |
| ● Physical control         | 7  |
| ● Strikes and takedowns    | 2  |
| ● Firearms (PAVA) or taser | 41 |



## Appendix H - Freedom of Information Request Raw Data



### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

#### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 2025/28740

Dear requester,

Thank you for your recent request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Section 1** of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at, **Section 1(1) (a)**, is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at, **Section 1 (1) (b)**, is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

The information that you are seeking is in relation to the following:

#### REQUEST

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act if possible? I am currently conducting academic research as part of my professional policing degree dissertation, which examines gendered approaches to policing, specifically focusing on the use of force and public perceptions.

I am looking for the following information for the most recent 12 month period:

The total number of use of force forms to be submitted by officers

A breakdown of these forms by the gender of the officer involved (i.e. number submitted by male officers and number submitted by female officers)

If available, a breakdown of the types of force used by gender (e.g. handcuffing, tac comms, baton use, Pava, etc)

#### RESPONSE

The following data has been pulled using all use of force forms recorded from August 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 to July 1<sup>st</sup> 2025. This data is accurate as of the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025. Please note that while the below tables are broken down by officer gender, this is based on form submitted so an officer can submit multiple forms so may be counted multiple times.

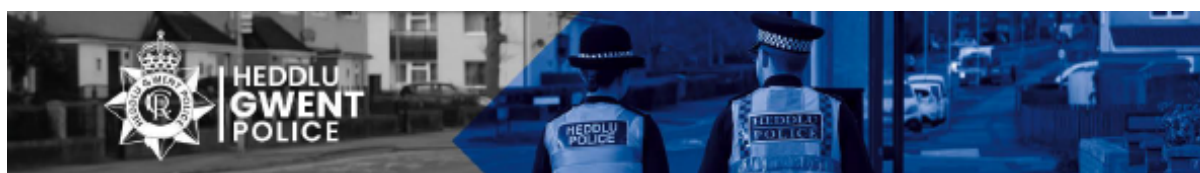


| Total |
|-------|
| 5744  |

| Gender             | Total       |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Female             | 1204        |
| Male               | 4526        |
| Not recorded       | 6           |
| Other              | 8           |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>5744</b> |

Please note that the below table shows all tactics that are recorded on a use of force form broken down by gender of officer. An officer can record multiple tactics on one form so one form may be counted multiple times.

| Tactic used                 | Officer gender |             |              |           |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
|                             | F              | M           | Not recorded | Other     |
| AEP Drawn                   | 2              | 13          | 0            | 0         |
| AEP Used                    | 0              | 2           | 0            | 0         |
| Baton Drawn                 | 1              | 5           | 0            | 0         |
| Baton Used                  | 0              | 1           | 0            | 0         |
| C.E.D (Taser)               | 52             | 346         | 0            | 1         |
| Compliant Handcuffing       | 594            | 2331        | 3            | 4         |
| Dog Bite                    | 0              | 2           | 0            | 0         |
| Dog Deployed                | 1              | 17          | 0            | 0         |
| Firearms Aimed              | 2              | 29          | 0            | 0         |
| Firearms Fired              | 0              | 0           | 0            | 0         |
| Ground Restraint            | 125            | 435         | 1            | 1         |
| Irritant Spray - CS Drawn   | 0              | 10          | 0            | 0         |
| Irritant Spray - CS Used    | 4              | 11          | 0            | 0         |
| Irritant Spray - PAVA Drawn | 8              | 39          | 0            | 0         |
| Irritant Spray - PAVA Used  | 26             | 96          | 0            | 1         |
| Limb / Body Restraints      | 176            | 399         | 1            | 1         |
| Non-Compliant Handcuffing   | 281            | 1117        | 2            | 0         |
| Other / Improvised          | 113            | 388         | 0            | 0         |
| Shield                      | 0              | 2           | 0            | 0         |
| Spit Guard                  | 29             | 78          | 0            | 0         |
| Unarmed Skills              | 214            | 1306        | 0            | 4         |
| No Tactic Recorded          | 4              | 6           | 0            | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>1632</b>    | <b>6633</b> | <b>7</b>     | <b>12</b> |



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 2025/28836

Dear requester,

Thank you for your recent request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at, **Section 1(1) (a)**, is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at, **Section 1 (1) (b)**, is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

The information that you are seeking is in relation to the following:

#### REQUEST

I am looking for the following information for the most recent 12 month period (August 2024 – July 2025):

1. The total number of complaints received by Gwent Police in relation to use of force
2. A breakdown of these complaints by the gender of the officer involved (i.e. number of complaints made towards male officers versus female officers)

Please let me know if the above is not accessible. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance.

#### RESPONSE

1. The total number of complaints received by Gwent Police in relation to use of force

There are a total of 28 finalised complaints recorded against 44 police officers

2. A breakdown of these complaints by the gender of the officer involved (i.e. number of complaints made towards male officers versus female officers)

Please see below table

| Gender | No of police officers |
|--------|-----------------------|
|--------|-----------------------|



|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| Female      | 14 |
| Male        | 30 |
| Grand Total | 44 |

---

Please note, every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete.

Freedom of Information Act is a public disclosure regime, not a private regime. Any information disclosed under the Act is thereafter deemed to be in the public domain, and therefore freely available to the public and will be published on the Gwent Police website.

If, upon receiving a response to a freedom of information request, you are unhappy with the outcome, you may request an internal review. **This should be made within 40 working days of the initial response.**

Please direct any internal review requests to [FOI@gwent.police.uk](mailto:FOI@gwent.police.uk)

You have the right to request an appeal from the Information Commissioners Office about your Freedom of Information request, if you are dissatisfied with your internal review response.

ICO Contact Details:

The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Web: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Thank you for your interest in Gwent Police.