



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 4 - 40 Credits

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

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

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 1 (PCDA)

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

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

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

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

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

How should the workbook be presented?

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

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

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

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

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

How is the workbook assessed?

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

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

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

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

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

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

NOTE

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

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

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

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

Guidance:

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

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Task 2	Communication Skills, Managing Conflict, Valuing Difference and Inclusion	1500
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Task 4	Decision making and discretion, Conducting Investigations and Criminal Justice (Managing offenders)	1500
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Task 5	Development Plan	500
	Total	6000
	Confirmation of Confidentiality and Plagiarism <i>This is confirmed by submitting through Turnitin</i>	

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Wellbeing and Resilience

Guidance:

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

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

ANSWER:

During my initial 6 months of training, I have utilised several coping strategies to deal with the stresses of entering an entirely new professional environment. I would like to focus on just a couple of the more prominent strategies I have found to be the most effective for myself. I will be focussing on physical exercise and online gaming and how the coping strategies I've used helped me build resilience and reduce stress levels.

Any stimulus that elicits a biological response is known as stress. These biological responses are known as stress responses. Depending on the type, timing and severity of the stimulus, stress can cause varying responses from the body, ranging from changes to the body's hormone balance to life changing effects including death (Yaribeygi, 2017).

Building resilience is the process of adapting to trauma, tragedy and significant sources of stress such as: work related trauma, serious conflict situations and work related stresses. Being resilient doesn't mean an individual won't be affected by trauma but they have developed behaviours, thoughts and actions that help minimise that impact. Usually, resilience is built by dealing with these traumatic and stressful situations (APA, 2012).

I am going to be using Borton's reflective model to help me reflect upon the coping strategies I have used (Borton, 1970)

What pressures and stressors are police officers facing today?

Police officers are exposed to more trauma than most in their career than a person might be exposed to in their entire life. Policing is one of, if not, the most mentally and physically draining job anyone could perform. Currently there are very few studies which look at officer's mental health issues and the causes behind them.

A study conducted interviewed 30 superintendents from the Police Service of Scotland and asked for their experiences with mental health. Some of the factors contributing to mental health issues were described as occupational stressors such as workload, hours worked and not feeling valued. There was also a link between experienced trauma and perceived PTSD (Demou, et al., 2020).

While much has improved to support officers with work related stress and mental health issues there is still an onus on the individual to be resilient to some of the stressors and trauma they're exposed to. Even with the improvements made, mental health issues are underreported in officers due to an expectation that officers should be more mentally strong than your average person and the fear of stigmatisation. There is still a need for officers to be better educated of the causes and triggers of mental health issues (Bell & Eski, 2016).

During the initial 6 months training stress is a major factor. The changing work environment, pressures to perform academically and returning to education can be overwhelming. Reducing stress and building resilience is crucial to be able to perform the role of a police constable. There have been a few stressful situations during my initial 6 months training. The changing work environment and academic pressure were the main sources of stress for me. The police is such a massive organisational culture change, anyone who embarks on this career would be overwhelmed. However, I have used several strategies to help reduce stress such as gaming and physical exercise.

So, what coping strategies did I use to cope with the stress presented to me?

Gaming with friends has helped massively in adapting to my new professional environment and personal circumstances. The social aspect has been an overwhelming factor in reducing my stress. Due to covid restrictions it has been a difficult time connecting with friends and accessing some of the support networks I have. However, gaming online has allowed me to connect with friends and be able to share some of my experiences. Whilst I understand I cannot disclose certain information, having easy access to a support network of friends who work in similar high stress work environments had such a positive impact on my mental wellbeing. Research has shown how talking to someone can not only help reduce the initial impact of stressors but can also reduce the impact of a stressor when exposed repeatedly (Lepore, et al., 2000).

Physical exercise has been so important to reducing stress and helping build resilience during the initial 6 months training. I have found that exerting myself physically has allowed me to better respond to the repeated stresses related to Academia and a changing work environment. The benefits of physical exercise and reducing sensitivity to stress, anxiety and depression have been well researched. A clinical psychological study conducted by Peter Salmon of the University of Liverpool states "Effects related specifically to exertion include anxiolytic and antidepressant action, but also resistance to physiological and emotional consequences of psychological stressors." (Salmon, 2001). Also, the physical benefits cannot be overlooked, as a police officer we're required to maintain a level of physical fitness. Going to the gym has obviously helped in maintaining the required level of operational fitness.

Now what has the evidence shown and will I be using these coping strategies moving forward?

Evidence clearly shows the importance of managing stress levels and the impact high stress levels can have. The physiological and psychological effects of being exposed to trauma and constant occupational stressors is clear. Stress and trauma can be detrimental to our mental and physical wellbeing. It is clear more needs to be done to ensure officers wellbeing and more support is needed for those officers experiencing mental health issues.

The coping strategies outlined have both been extremely helpful in dealing with the stress related to the changing work environment and returning to academia. The evidence is clear, they are both effective tools in helping reduce stress and building resilience to repeat stressors. Evidence shows how the social aspect of gaming is effective in helping reduce the initial impact of stressors and the impact of repeated exposure to stressors, Evidence also shows how physical exercise not only helps with the psychological effects of stress but also helps with physiological changes in humans.

I am satisfied I have shown these strategies to be effective tools to cope with the stress related to my new role. I will be using these moving forward in my career.

1029 Words.

Task 2

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Communication Skills, Managing Conflict, Valuing Difference and Inclusion

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

I am going to be using Borton's reflective model to reflect on what effective communication was used, my decision-making process for whether use of force was necessary and my understanding of the application of core principles, ethics, equality and human rights (Borton, 1970).

During my time attached to the professional development unit I have dealt with numerous conflict situations. Quite a few of these have been while performing my duties on city safe. Policing the night-time economy come with its challenges and those are forever changing.

Whilst on duty a drunken male was causing issues with door staff. We noticed a lot of shouting and arguing so approached to assist the door staff. When arriving the male appeared to be very drunk and was getting quite agitated. He was refused entry due to being so drunk. When speaking to the door staff I established that no offences had been committed however the male was refusing to leave and his friends couldn't get him to back down. I approached the male and pulled him aside to talk to him. When speaking to the male I immediately notice how intoxicated he was and realised that

this may be an uphill struggle to convince him to leave and go home. I attempted to reason with the male, attempting to build a rapport to get across why he needed to leave. I explained to the male that if he didn't leave, he would be arrested for breach of the peace. My colleague kept speaking to the male while I spoke to his friends. I asked them to take him home and get a taxi as ideally, I didn't want to arrest him, however, if needed I would. After some time of trying to convince the male to leave and him still refusing I arrested the male for a breach of the peace. I took a hold of the male and led him to the taxi rank. My intention was to take the male to the taxi rank and give him the option to get a taxi home instead of being locked up for being drunk and disorderly. When at the taxi rank, I explained to the male that this was his last opportunity to get in a taxi and leave otherwise I would be arresting him for being drunk and disorderly. His friends were understanding of the situation and helped to convince him to go home. One of his friends accompanied him in the taxi at which point I de-arrested him as my necessity to prevent a breach of the peace was no longer needed due to him leaving the town.

In this incident I believe I made the right decision to de-arrest and allow his friend to take him home. On this shift there were limited resources (2 substantive officers, 2 PDU units) so I considered if taking units off the town centre would be the best outcome. Ultimately the low-level use of force was effective, as soon as I arrested and took a hold of the male he calmed down and probably realised that his best course of action would be to comply. He was compliant when taking him to the taxi rank and had friends around him who were trying to reason with him. He agreed himself to go home and apologised for causing an issue.

What is effective communication?

When looking at the fundamental elements of effective communication there are key elements which should be engaged to in conflict situations.

Active listening is a core principle of effective communication. The college of policing define active listening as "a system of opening and maintaining communications using empathy, listening and body language" (College of Policing, 2020).

Active listening is an effective tool in police officer's arsenal, it is a skill that can be learned but difficult to master. When communicating with a subject, being empathetic, open and listening to them can help build rapport with them, easing the tension of the situation. Keeping subjects talking allows for other resources to make way, using that officer presence effectively so that the subject is less likely to become violent. During my time in the professional development unit, I have witnessed several occasions where officer presence has negated the need for force.

Another aspect of effective communication is verbal communication skills. These are the words and phrases; tone of voice and expressions officers use when dealing with a subject. These are probably the best skills that officers use to de-escalate conflict situations and have been proven to be effective. We use these to slow down the situations and allow time to communicate with the subject to build a rapport. It also allows you to gather valuable information from the subject to make informed and impartial decisions (College of Policing, 2020).

The mnemonic LEAPS provides officers with a simple structured way for officers to approach communication.

Listen – Use active listening skills, listening for the whole message and not just taking the content at face value. Officers should keep an open mind, listen and hear, show they are actively listening and not interrupt.

Empathise - Empathy means the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Ask - Use effective questioning techniques to ask for clarification in order to establish facts, to seek opinion and to check for understanding.

Paraphrase - Repeat back your understanding of what you have heard.

Summarise – Summarise everything that has been said in a simply and concise statement.

When deciding if use of force was necessary, I used a few tools to help me decide if I needed to use force. First, I would like to talk about the national decision model.

When assessing the initial threat, I considered the fact the male was probably intoxicated and would be difficult to communicate effectively with. I also was conscious of the fact he was with friends who could have turned on us if the situation escalated. I knew I would have to really work with the male to calm him down.

I knew that if the male refused to leave, I would have a power to arrest to prevent a breach of the peace. If needed I knew after arrest, I would be able to remove the male using force, if necessary, under my S3 Criminal Law Act Powers.

As stated above I did have a power of arrest, but I also would attempt to convince the male that going home of his own accord would be the best course of action. As stated, resources were limited, and I would attempt to resolve the issue without taking the male to custody if possible. Failing that I considered my power of arrest which I could use to force the male to leave and as a last resort I would have to bring him in for being drunk and disorderly if he continued kicking off and didn't calm down.

When reflecting on the incident I can apply Kapman's Drama Triangle to analyse the male's behaviour and can see that he fitted into the persecutor role in this situation. He was visibly angry, he blamed everyone else for his actions and was dominating the situation. This was the strategy that he used to cope with the situation.

I could also see that his friend displayed the characteristics of the rescuer. He was trying to solve the problem by getting the male to go home. When he was speaking to the male, he was considerate towards him which also helped calm the male down.

I can also see how the male was clearly not using his rational brain. All his initial actions were emotionally driven. In a conflict situation our bodies go into fight or flight mode. This is obviously not a great frame of mind to be in when what is required is for you to think rationally about the situation. I think being intoxicated didn't help the male

think rationally about the situation. When he had calmed down, I noticed he was rationalising more. He apologised and agreed that sleeping it off was probably the best option.

Ultimately, I decided to use my arrest powers and low-level force to take the male to the taxi rank. I took a hold of the male's arm to take him there. I did this to prevent the male from escaping. I gave him a final warning that and in the end he complied. I believe this was the best possible outcome from the situation. The male became compliant when the seriousness of the situation sunk in. When the male agreed to go home, I then de arrested him as my necessity to prevent a breach of the peace was no longer there. My actions protected the limited resources allowing officers to remain present on the town centre and available if a more serious incident took place.

Breach of the peace is a controversial power that is available. Some argue that it has potential conflict with the Human Rights Act, specifically articles 5, 10 and 11. This is due to the loosely defined terms of breach of the peace and wide powers it offers. People have argued that it hasn't been defined sufficiently to comply with the requirement under the European Convention of Human Rights (Ferguson, 2001).

1542 Words

Task 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

In this essay I am going to use Driscoll's reflective model to reflect on this incident, what responsibilities I had in line with the victim's code of practice and how policing values were engaged (Driscoll, 2007).

Early on in my 12 weeks in the tutor hub, I was asked to attend a victim's address to take a statement from them as they had been assaulted by a neighbour. There was an ongoing neighbour dispute which had caused an argument and had caused a physical fight between the parties. The offence under consideration was a common assault as there were no serious injuries caused by the incident. When we attended, I spoke to the victim, offering some reassurance and safety planning to mitigate the risk of further harm. When taking the statement, I had to be conscious of the points to prove and that they were included. I also had consideration for the victim's views on how this impacted them. A victim personal statement was completed outlining the impact this incident had on the victim.

At the time I was empathetic towards the victim and saddened by the subject's actions. I felt sorry for the victim having to deal with the situation repeatedly but also glad that they finally came forward to provide a statement. When speaking to the victim they stated they were grateful for the reassurance provided by myself and my colleagues. The victim felt a little safer knowing that police were now involved and were providing support to them. They said they felt valued and listened to because in the past they

were brushed off. Sometimes victims don't receive the correct support for whatever reason and being able to give that great service was definitely a high point for me.

When dealing with instances of physical violence it is important that as police officers, we provide the best support we can and to empathise with victims. If violence is trivialised it can lead to the victim also trivialising the abuse, forming the opinion that it is too insignificant to prosecute (Birdsall, et al., 2016)

For me I was happy that we could offer that reassurance and peace of mind to the victim. The victim was happy with the service we provided, and I believe it helped build trust between them and the police. The statement was of a good quality and with other evidence we gathered we managed to secure an admission in interview. Unfortunately, I don't know the outcome, but I am happy I played a small part in helping the victim. In future I hope to be able to keep to the same standard displayed in this incident.

What are our responsibilities as police when dealing with victims of crime?

These responsibilities are outlined in the victim's code of practice. For this example, quite a few of these responsibilities fell to me.

The first right victims are entitled to is the right to be able to understand the information given to them and to be understood when making their complaint. It may be the case an interpreter would be needed so that the victim could have a full understanding of the process. In this case it was not needed but it is a right for all victims of crime.

The second right victims are entitled to is to have details of the crime recorded without unjust delay. In this instance we hit our arrival target time and recorded the details immediately upon arrival.

The third right victims are entitled to is to be provided with written confirmation when reporting a crime and provided with information about the criminal justice process. In this instance restorative justice was discussed with the victim but ultimately the victim was not happy with this resolution due to the history between parties.

The fourth right victims are entitled to is to be referred to victim services so they can provide tailored support to the victim. In this instance Gwent police have a victim care unit which aims to provide a better service to victims of crime. Details were shared with victim services in Gwent to provide support to the victim.

Studies have shown that victim satisfaction goes up when engaging with victim services. It also shows that victims of crime have a more favourable view of the criminal justice systems' fairness. By providing victims with a voice and a sense someone is listening and taking their concerns seriously it had led to overall higher levels of confidence in the criminal justice system (Bradford, 2011).

The seventh right which victims are entitled to is to make a victim personal statement. The victim personal statement and the process was explained to the victim. I explained that it would be used in helping sentence the offender and provides an opportunity for them to share how the incident has affected them. We discussed if the case was

brought to court what would be required, and the victim decided that they would like to provide one and believed it was the right choice for themselves.

A report for the Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses in England and Wales into victim personal statements stated that those victims who submitted statements appeared to be more satisfied with the sentencing process and the vast majority of those who submitted stated they would do so again if victimised in the future (Roberts & Manikis, 2011).

The eighth right victims are entitled to is to be given information about the trial, trial process and their role as a witness. This was discussed with the victim. Not every victim wishes to make a statement and as police officers we must respect that right. However, it is our job to do the very best to empower victims to be able to make an informed decision. We must provide victims with all the information about the trial process, what their role is and if there are any measures, we can put into place to help ensure court attendance.

The twelfth right victims are entitled to be able to make a complaint if they feel as if their rights are not being met. In this instance I don't believe the victim had any issues with the way in which they were dealt with.

When reflecting on my actions I believe I engaged well with the victim. I tried my best to offer support and build a rapport with them. I believe I did this successfully as the victim seemed a lot calmer and more comfortable talking to us compared to when we first arrived. I believe the empathy we showed helped build that relationship with the victim and allowed me to put myself in the victim's shoes which I believe allowed me to provide a better experience.

During this incident I believe I acted in line with the core policing principles. Unfortunately, I don't have the word count to delve into all policing principles. However, I'd like to provide a few poignant examples.

When initially speaking with the victim, I explained why there were so many officers due to me being a student officer and learning with my tutor. I think initially the victim was nervous with this many police officers attending. However, after explaining why the victim seemed more relaxed and was understanding.

I believe during this incident I lead by example and provided the best service possible to the victim. I followed procedure to make sure that the victim was fully supported through the process. I tried to understand the victim's feelings and views and was empathetic towards them. I used my active listening skills to engage with the victim and related back the incident to show my understanding. It was important to me to treat the victim respectfully to build rapport with them.

The victim is from a background where distrust in the police is prevalent. It was important to provide the best service possible to build that trust there should be between police and the public. I made a conscious effort to enter the incident with a non-judgemental mind set and open to a conversation with the victim. In giving that service I hope in future the victim feels comfortable and empowered to speak openly to police and engage with the support we offer. **1373 Words.**

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANSWER:

I am going to be using Borton's model during this essay to reflect on how I applied the national decision model in resolving this incident (Borton, 1970).

I attended a call that a shoplifter had been detained at a large retail store. Whilst on my way to the incident, initial considerations were given to potential disposal methods that would be available. Consideration was given to issuing a fixed penalty notice. Whilst making way to the store, an update was passed that the subject had become aggressive and attempted to bite the security guard. Once I had arrived, my colleagues and I took a hold of the subject to prevent escape. Once the subject had been secured, I spoke to the security guard they disclosed that the subject has committed 4 other offences of shoplifting, 2 of which were to the value of £500 each time. I then arrested them. The subject was conveyed to custody where their detention was authorised by the custody sergeant. I returned to take a witness statement. CCTV footage was obtained of the offences. An NGAP file was completed.

Reflecting on my use of the National Decision Model the initial threat was assessed and I believe restraining the subject was necessary to prevent escape as they had already attempted to escape from security and further harm as they had assaulted the security guard. I gathered information by PNC checking the subject and obtaining an account from the security guard and other staff members. Initial consideration was given to out of court disposals such as issuing a fixed penalty notice to the subject. However, when learning of the assault and the number of offences committed, I felt

that using discretion to issue a fixed penalty notice was not the appropriate disposal method. I believe arresting the subject was the only option to prevent further harm, loss and for a prompt and effective investigation of the offences.

Section 176 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act makes theft from a shop, of goods worth £200 or less a summary only offence. This is the only specific legislation I could find in relation to shoplifting. However, due to the value (£1000) this doesn't apply to this case.

The subject was charged with theft contrary to Section 7 of the Theft Act 1968 due to the value of the goods.

Discretion is a valuable tool on the belt of modern police officers. It can offer alternatives to strict enforcement by offering alternative disposal methods to crimes which in the past would have taken up valuable police time and resources. However, as you can see from the example above, discretion is not always appropriate. In this case due to the multiple offences and assault, using discretion to issue a fixed penalty notice would not have been appropriate.

Modern police officers "on the one hand, have the duty to enforce the law fairly and impartially, and on the other hand, the need to temper strict law enforcement for sound policy and operational reasons" (Bronitt & Stenning, 2011).

What responsibilities do we have as police officers when conducting investigations?

The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 came into force on the 1st of April 1997 and governs all criminal investigations. As a police officer it sets out the requirements of myself in criminal investigations. As police officers CPIA requires us to investigate all reasonable lines of enquiry, no matter if the resultant evidence assists the prosecution or defence. We are required to record and retain ALL relevant material created throughout the investigation. No matter what source generated the material, if it is relevant to the case, it MUST be retained and recorded in a suitable form. Using detailed schedules such as the MG5 and MG6 series forms, we have a duty to disclose this material to the prosecution. We must disclose this material even if it might be considered capable of undermining the prosecution case or assisting the defence. (UK Government, n.d.)

As police officers we should be fully aware of the requirements of us under The Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996.

So, what were my actions during this investigation?

I took witness statements which had to be recorded and retained in line with CPIA codes of practice. This is done by completing an MG11 form.

CCTV was also seized during this incident. A copy was made and uploaded to NICE which is the system that we use to retain copies of all video-photo evidence. Original copies of the CCTV were stored in property in line with CPIA codes of practice.

During this investigation, I had to complete a remand file which included an MG5. In the MG5 a summary of the key evidence is included detailing, in chronological order, a summary of the incident/offence, key evidence and key witnesses. A summary is included of the defendant's interview including the account given, any no comment interview and any CCTV shown during the interview. Also provided is a summary of non-key evidence and witnesses. Due to this case relying on CCTV evidence a summary was also included of visually recorded evidence. The MG5 should provide details to allow the CPS to decide if they will prosecute, the defence to enter a plea and allows the court to effectively manage the case depending on the plea entered by the defendant.

A streamlined disclosure certificate was also completed which replaces the 6 series in cases where the offence is summary only or either way and is likely to remain in magistrates court. This includes a full list of disclosable material including material that may aid the defendant or undermine the prosecutions case. In this case key witnesses had previous convictions for dishonesty offences which had to be disclosed. Some information included in disclosure needed to be redacted as it contained sensitive material.

During this incident I believe I acted in line with the core policing principles. Unfortunately, I don't have the word count to delve into all policing principles. However, I'd like to provide a few poignant examples.

I believe I was objective when deciding what action, I was going to take to resolve this issue. I hope from my reflection I have shown that my use of the national decision model allowed me to base my choice based on the evidence presented to myself and in my best professional judgement I made the right choice in arresting the subject.

When dealing with the subject I showed respect. I spoke to them calmly; I built a rapport with them allowing me to get them into a more comfortable position as they had calmed down. When presenting in custody, I checked on their welfare and showed an interest in their wellbeing.

Finally, I believe my actions were in the public interest. Drug use was a factor in this case, which suggested a reason as to why the subject was shoplifting. If I hadn't acted and arrested the subject, would this individual have kept on stealing? Would they have gotten help for their drug use? Could this be a turning point for them? I doubt it. However, if I had just issued a fixed penalty notice the answers to those questions would be a definitive no.

Another question would be of fairness and if bias played any part in the decision-making process?

So, what is bias?

The Imperial College of London defines unconscious bias as "a term that describes the associations we hold, outside our conscious awareness and control. Unconscious bias affects everyone".

Unconscious (or implicit) bias is triggered by our brains when making quick assessments of people or situation. This is influenced by our upbringing, socioeconomic background and personal experiences. It can have a major impact on decision making when dealing with others. Particularly when deciding what course of action to take for a given situation. It is almost impossible to eliminate unconscious bias as it is a learned, instinctive behaviour. However, there are steps one can take to reduce the impact on decision making (Imperial College of London, n.d.).

For example, in Gwent we have had unconscious bias training during training school where we explore the nature of unconscious bias and how we can reduce its effects. Using the national decision model provides a great framework to be able to justify your decisions. Taking your time to make an informed decision and look if unconscious bias played any part in the rationale forming the decision. Using force policy when applicable as these allow us to make objective choices.

In this instance I used the national decision model to rationalise my choice to arrest, I considered all evidence I was presented with and gave myself time to speak to witnesses and the victim before making that decision. I hope I have shown I did my best to mitigate implicit bias and act as fairly as possible.

1471 Words.

Task 5

Personal Development Plan (PDP) / Learning Plan.

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

Identified area for development	How it will be achieved	Who can provide support?	Timeline
Becoming more proficient in the use of Niche (Police information management system).	This is a natural area for progression that can be improved over time. When becoming independent I will have more exposure to Niche and will have more opportunities to use the system.	Experienced officers on shift and Digital services department.	6 months seems to be a realistic timeline to improve my knowledge and use of PIMS.
Improve upon my statement taking skills.	As this is going to be a big part of my role, I know that continuous improvement is inevitable.	Experienced officers on shift and speaking to the PDU tutors for some help.	I believe a 6 month timeframe is an attainable target to improve my statement writing skills.
Improve my writing skills (this may seem vague; however, I have noticed a change in writing style needed for writing up incidents and I need to adapt my writing style to become clearer and more concise).	I have some good examples available to me from the PDU and this is something I have been working on consistently during my time in the PDU by volunteering to write up more occurrences for practice.	Again, unfortunately I would have to rely on more experienced officers for initial guidance and some support is available from the PDU.	As I have already began to work on this area I believe another 3 months would be sufficient to improve my skills.

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

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

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

Signed: GRANT NICHOLSON (Learner - Electronic signature or type name)

Date: 06/09/2021