

Reference List

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The Role of a Police Constable

This essay will reflect on the task to understand the role of a police constable using Gibbs (1988 cited in The University of Edinburgh 2024) reflective cycle. This reflective essay I will be using reliable academic sources, Journals and official government websites. When using that format it is consisted of six stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, conclusion and action plan. (1988 cited in The University of Edinburgh 2024)

Description

For this task, I researched what a police constable does in the United Kingdom. I had to find at least twenty good and recent sources from 2019 to 2025 that talked about the job, the training, the rules, and how people become police constables.

I used websites such as the College of Policing, the Home Office, and the Metropolitan Police because they are official and trustworthy. I also looked at online articles and

studies through the University of Wales Trinity Saint David library. Some of these came from Taylor & Francis Online and sage journals.

My aim was to understand what is expected of a police constable today, how the job has changed over time, and how the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) has changed the way people join the police.

Feelings

At the start, I felt unsure about how to begin and a bit overwhelmed by how much information there was about policing. It was difficult to tell which websites were trustworthy. I relied on Google at first but then realised that I needed to use official websites that end in.gov.uk or .ac.uk. Once I did that, I started to feel more confident.

I also learned that checking when something was published is important because some of the older sources were out of date. As I read more, I became really interested in how police constables must follow the law, be fair, and gain trust from the public.

Evaluation

One thing that went well was learning to be more organised with my research. The College of Policing website was especially useful because it gave clear information about police roles and training. The University of Wales Trinity St David library also helped me find research studies like those by Rogers et al. (2022) and Watkinson-Miley (2021), which explained how police training has changed for the better.

A challenge I faced was deciding what counted as a strong, academic source. Some websites had lots of opinions but no real evidence that I could use in my assignments. I learned that the best sources are usually written by experts, universities, or government departments for example, 'The Home Office'. Another difficulty was staying focused because policing is such a vast job with many different branches. I had to make sure I stuck to learning about the constable role rather than the police in general.

Analysis

From my research, I learned that police constables are at the centre of policing in the United Kingdom. Their main jobs include preventing crime, protecting people, gathering evidence, and maintaining public order (College of Policing, 2024). The Home Office (2025) also explains that constables have powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and must follow the Code of Ethics to act fairly.

I found out that the police are becoming more professional. Officers now need better education and training. The Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) allows people to study for a degree while working (Skills England, 2024). Studies by Watkinson-

Miley (2021) showed that new recruits sometimes find it difficult to balance studying and working, which I think sounds quite challenging.

I also learned about evidence-based policing, where officers use research and facts to make better decisions within the role. Rogers et al. (2022) and Selby-Fell (2024) said that new officers are taught to think about why they make choices and to base their actions on evidence, not just experience.

This project helped me improve my research skills too. I made a spreadsheet of all my sources with notes on when they were written and why they were useful. This made it easier when it came to writing and referencing later.

Conclusion

Overall, I learned a lot about policing and how to do real research. I now know how to find reliable and up-to-date information and facts. Also, check if a source is trustworthy. I then learned the importance of planning before starting, taking notes as I go, and staying organised.

I understand much more about what a police constable does, including how they help communities, keep people safe, and act professionally. I also learned that modern policing relies a lot on fairness, respect, and knowledge.

If I did this task again, I would start earlier and plan my search better. I would also make sure I kept track of all my notes as I worked instead of leaving them until the end.

Action Plan

Next time I will:

- Plan my research before I start.
- Use library databases first before normal websites.
- Keep a research log or journal of what I find.
- Check that all my sources are recent and reliable.
- Reflect more often during the project instead of just at the end.

Doing this project helped me see that research and policing have a lot in common together. They Both require accuracy, honesty, and responsibility. I feel that I have built skills that will help me at university and a future career in the police force.

According to (Crown prosecution service, 2024), Theft is defined as dishonestly appropriating property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

Main Aspects

Section 1 defines theft as "dishonestly appropriating property belonging to another with intention of permanently depriving the other of it" (*theft act 1968*)

Dishonesty (Section 2): a person is not dishonest if they believe they have a legal right or the owners consent. (*theft act 1968*)

Appropriation (Section 3): taking over any of the owners rights counts as appropriation, even if the property was obtained honestly. (*theft act 1968*)

Intention to permanently deprive (Section 6): Borrowing can amount to theft if the property is treated as ones own (*Theft act 1968*)

How is the Theft Act used today?

The Theft Act 1968 is still used today to deal with crimes such as theft, burglary and robbery. It helps the police and courts decide whether someone has broken the law by taking something that does not belong to them. The law explains what theft means and what must be proven, such as whether a person acted dishonestly and intended to keep the item without returning it (Crown Prosecution Service, 2024).



Theft Act 1968

Additional Information

Before the Theft Act 1968, the law on theft in England and Wales was old and confusing. Crimes like larceny, embezzlement and fraudulent conversion were covered by different laws that often overlapped. This made it hard for courts to apply the law consistently and for prosecutors to prove cases. (Griffiths, 2024)

How the Courts Changed the Meaning of Theft

Since the Theft Act 1968 was introduced, courts have helped to explain how it should be used. In *R v Ghosh* (1982), judges made a two-part test which decided whether someone was being honest or dishonest. The Supreme court said that dishonesty should be judged by what ordinary people would think is dishonest (Wang, 2022)

Related Offences under the Theft Act

Under Section 8 of the Theft Act 1968, robbery occurs when a person commits theft and, either immediately before or during the act, uses or threatens to use force in order to carry out the theft (*Theft Act 1968, s.8*).

Burglary, as outlined in Section 9, has two main parts. Under Section 9(1)(a), an individual commits burglary by entering a building as a trespasser with the intention to steal, cause grievous bodily harm (GBH), or inflict damage. Under Section 9(1)(b), burglary is also committed if, after entering as a trespasser, the person actually steals or causes grievous bodily harm (*Theft Act 1968, s.9*).

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Image used in poster - <https://www.lathamsteeldoors.co.uk/blog/robber-vs-burglar-what-is-the-difference/>

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