

Graduate Diploma Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

**Workbook title: Competency Based
Workbook 2 (DHEP)**

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

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**FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME**

Module title: Policing in the Workplace 3 (DHEP) - BMPP6001D

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully. They provide essential information. The documents you will use in developing your workbook are on the following pages.

What is the workbook for?

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

- Wellbeing and Resilience
- Criminal Justice
- Conducting Investigations
- Decision making and discretion
- Maintaining Professional Standards
- Leadership and Team working
- Policing the roads
- Information and Intelligence

You may wish to use the same incidents as you have 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 is available to you. Please contact Kelly Andrews direct using k.andrews@uwtsd.ac.uk with any questions or queries you may have.

Dates of workbook submission can be located within the General information tile within Moodle.

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently. You will be provided with individual feedback once the work has been marked.

Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

NOTE

Your workbook will be submitted electronically via Turnitin on Moodle. Guidance on this is in the Candidate 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 particularly 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 Candidate 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.***

Competency Based Workbook 2 - Learner Workbook

Guidance:

- Your workbook must contain items 1 - 5 below (in the order given).
- You should use the pro-forma to insert your text within each section.
- Note that this module has 2 components with each weighted at 50% of the overall 100% marks total.
- You should upload your completed document as a saved pdf file of this workbook; if this is not possible then a Word Doc 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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Component 1 50%	Area of Professional Practice	Word count
Task 1	Vulnerability and Risk Evidence-based policing	2000
Task 2	CHOOSE ONLY 1 OF THESE 'ADVANCED LEARNING AREA' OPTIONS. IT SHOULD BE ONE THAT HAS BEEN AGREED WITH THE FORCE TO STUDY IN YEAR 2.	All options are 2000 words
Task 2		2000
Option 1	Response Policing	
Option 2	Policing Communities	
Option 3	Road Policing	
Option 4	Information and Intelligence	
Option 5	Conducting Investigations	
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Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Vulnerability and Risk, Evidence-based policing

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a significant role with a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour 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.

Critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches (by professionals and the police) in supporting or managing vulnerable people or people at risk of harm.

Explore what works in relation to tackling repeat victimisation and repeat offending. Consider the use of evidence-based policing.

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

ANSWER:

The incident I've selected for reflection upon is one of domestic abuse. I will briefly explore this incident and my own actions using the National Decision Model (NDM) as a guide, then will explore different possible approaches through the lens of evidence-based policing (EBP). I have used Borton's reflective Framework as a guide, however please note that many of my observations are reflection 'on action' and will therefore fall into the 'now what?' part of the model.

Whilst monitoring the incidents for my local policing area towards the end of a tour of duty, I noted a call that had come in several days before. I reviewed this incident and was immediately concerned. A female had called saying she wanted advice, then proceeded to disclose she was living in fear of an ex-partner, and that he had recently struck her, strangled her, shown up in her back garden unannounced, and had threatened to kill her and to burn her house down. The victim said she was unavailable immediately following her call, and therefore nothing had been done for several days.

I had not been tasked with this incident but decided that leadership was needed in the form of assuming responsibility for the call. Leadership is defined as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2010, p. 3) meaning that, despite police forces being hierarchical in nature, any member can take this role. Other academics agree "anyone, irrespective

of formal position, can be a leader and exert influence in group settings” (Giblin, 2019, p. 5).

Before I explore this incident further, I will consider the legislative and social context. Legislatively, several offences had been disclosed. Specifically, non-fatal strangulation (Domestic Abuse Act 2021), assault occasioning actual bodily harm and threats to kill (Offences Against the Person Act 1861) and threats to commit arson (Criminal Damage Act 1971). In addition to this, the victim also disclosed the suspect to be excessively jealous and highly controlling so an offence of controlling and coercive behaviour could also be considered (Serious Crime Act 2015).

Within a social context, my own police force’s priorities include aims to “improve the overall criminal justice response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence” and to “support victims and protect the vulnerable” (Gwent Police, 2023). The subject of violence against women and girls has been one of intense media scrutiny in the United Kingdom, especially in the wake of the murder of Sarah Everard by serving police officer Wayne Couzens. Several reports have been done on this subject, some showing staggering statistics: “in the year ending March 2020, it is estimated that 1.6 million women (and 757,000 men) in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse” (HMICFRS, 2021). The same report goes on to describe this issue as an “epidemic”. More recent research shows that “6.9% of women aged 16 and over were victims of domestic abuse [in the year ending March 2022]” (U.K Government, 2023) and that “a woman is killed by a man every three days in the UK” (National Police Chiefs’ Council, 2023). Given this context, it was clear that this incident should have been considered a high priority.

I reviewed all available information and intelligence. I researched the suspect on police systems and found that he was known to be violent, had committed several dwelling burglaries, was an alcoholic and was linked to drug dealing. These factors served to increase my perceived risk of the situation.

Next, I contacted the victim to assess the risk fully. She did not want police to attend her address, but I was able to complete a D.A.S.H (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment) risk form with her remotely. I then graded the incident as ‘high risk’ on the understanding that, once ratified by my superiors, the crime would be passed to the investigations department to progress following the conclusion of my own shift. Before going off duty, I informed the next shift about the incident and completed the relevant safeguarding steps.

When I returned to work the next day, I was advised that the investigations department had downgraded my risk assessment to ‘medium’, and therefore no action had been taken overnight. Regrettably, the suspect had returned to the victims’ address and had assaulted her before fleeing. When reflecting on this, the potential danger of discord between different risk assessors is clear.

It might appear cynical to suggest that a risk assessment could be downgraded due to high workload, however there is evidence supporting this hypothesis. A study was completed reviewing police risk assessments within the Metropolitan Police and showed “caseload did appear to have a potential association with grading decisions...Officers working in Borough B and Borough A (the larger volume case load boroughs) appeared less likely to grade an incident as high risk” (Sebire and Barling, 2016, p. 355). The same study also showed that once police officers were reminded of the national standards of risk assessment, they tended to increase the level of risk “officers were more likely to increase the seriousness/severity of their grading”. (Sebire and Barling, 2016, p. 356).

Following the update of the further assault on the victim, I continued the NDM process and considered the available powers and policies, as well as any options or contingencies. Given all the circumstances, I knew I had the power to arrest the suspect and decided this was the most appropriate course of action – a voluntary interview with him was not an option, nor was opting not to affect an arrest. I spent my next shift visiting the victim in person (she now agreed to this) and searching for the suspect, who I located and arrested. I then visited the victim in person several times over the coming days – eventually she did make a formal statement, and the suspect has since been charged.

Upon reflection, although I utilised the NDM when providing an initial response to this incident, my actions were largely based on intuition and common sense. Whilst this is not without merit, an EPB approach would have been a more effective method of investigation. EPB has been defined as “the use of the best available research on the outcomes of police work to implement guidelines and evaluate agencies, units and officers” (Sherman, 1998 p.4 -5). Using EPB, I have since researched published reports on domestic abuse/violence and I will now explore these.

Evidence shows taking a victim-centred approach to domestic abuse investigations is key to success. This begins with correctly identifying a victim as vulnerable at the most early possible stage “where victims were identified as vulnerable at the very start of the process...victims can remain committed to the prosecution” (Williams, Norman and Wunsch, 2009, p. 6).

Whilst I am satisfied that I identified the victim as vulnerable, the importance of supporting them *throughout* the investigation is crucial. Research shows that in England and Wales the number of domestic-abuse related crimes being closed due to a victim not supporting police action has tended to increase – this was 42% in 2017 and rose to 54% in 2020, increasing year-on-year (HMICFRS, 2021). This indicates a need to prioritise victim support not only at the start of, but throughout an investigation. That said, specifically how best to do this is still an area of contention. One would assume a good source of support for a victim would be an IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor), however not all evidence supports this. For example, a study released in 2022 found that victims with access to an

IDVA at court were less likely to have a positive outcome, and were at much higher risk of repeat victimisation following the incident “Cases heard on days with access to the IDVA service at court were found to have a 12% reduced likelihood of their accused abusers being convicted, a 10% increased risk of repeat victimisation and harm of repeat crimes 700% higher than victims whose cases were heard without that opportunity” (Ross, Sebire and Strang, 2022). While the direct causation for this cannot be stated, I would suggest this shows a need for an individual approach of support for each victim that all relevant agencies should be aware of – IDVAs alone are not totally effective.

Another factor when considering a victim-based approach to domestic abuse is attitude. This may seem obvious, but when seventy victims were spoken to as part of a review into the police response to domestic abuse in England and Wales, the majority stated they had “experienced very poor attitudes...they felt judged and that some officers demonstrated a considerable lack of empathy and understanding” (HMIC, 2014, p. 11). Not only does this go against Gwent’s force value of ‘be compassionate’ and the policing code of ethics (treat everyone with respect) the potential consequences are clear - damage to victim’s confidence in police and a reluctance to report crime in the future. As part of this investigation, I had to review the victim’s calls to police, and was disappointed to see they had already been let down several times on this front – members of control staff had several times been sarcastic and ill-tempered when speaking to her. To attempt to off-set any potential damage in trust in police I apologised to her for this.

A further factor I did not consider at the time of this incident was that, following the second assault, the victim was now a repeat victim. Different police forces have different definitions of what constitutes a repeat victim, however Gwent Police define this as “a person who has within a twelve-month period suffered two or more domestic abuse incidents” (Gwent Police, 2023). Recognising a repeat victim is especially significant in the case of domestic abuse as they are “more likely to be repeat victims than are victims of any other crime type” (HMICFRS, 2019, p. 14).

Evidence shows several approaches can be effective at preventing further harm to repeat victims of domestic abuse, however these have highly differing levels of success. DVPOs (Domestic Violence Protection Orders) are a recent measure used in domestic abuse incidents, however research shows “DVPOs were associated with modest overall reductions in victimisation: around 2.6 fewer repeat incidents per victim compared with around 1.6 fewer incidents for arrest followed by no further action” (HMICFRS, 2019, p. 60). In comparison, MARAC referrals (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) following domestic incidents have been shown to be more effective “MARACs improve victims’ safety because both police and victim data revealed that 6 in 10 victims had not been revictimized” (Robinson, 2006, p. 1). This indicates the value of having the input of multiple agencies with different abilities and knowledge of the relevant parties. It should be noted that in many police forces a MARAC referral will not be triggered unless the victim of domestic abuse is assessed as ‘high risk’, representing a significant barrier to using this measure. Despite this I was, thankfully, able to use a MARAC referral on this occasion at my

own discretion. After seeing this evidence, I believe this was likely an effective measure in supporting the victim.

A similar supportive and interventional approach to offenders has been shown to be effective in reducing repeat offences – more so than any relevant charges or custodial sentences alone. For example, a study in Canada found that men who attended an intervention program following an offence were far less likely to commit further offences in the one year and two-year follow-up – 29.3% compared with 65.9% of reoffending in year one and 12.2% compared to 41.5% in year two (Scott et al, 2015). Interestingly this same study found “76% of the men who police-based clinicians were able to contact and invite to participate in this intervention chose to do so” appearing to show a willingness for rehabilitation. A similar study on the success of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) was carried out in Bristol, England (IOM is the multi-agency approach to offender management within England and Wales). This study also showed promising results “the analysis suggests a 67.0% reduction in the seriousness of offending in comparison with a 15.8% increase in the seriousness of offending for those who received no pathways intervention” (Williams and Ariel, 2013, p. 7). Despite the apparent effectiveness of IOM, its current performance has been described as ‘disappointing’, with Chief Inspector Russell stating “IOM now has a much lower profile compared to a few years ago and individuals are no longer getting priority access to much-needed services” (HMICFRS, 2020). This shows a need for further training, and a re-focus on IOM within Policing.

In conclusion, a combination of reflective practice and EPB has provided me with valuable knowledge that I will be able to use in similar incidents in the future. Specifically, I will be quick to consider using a MARAC referral for a victim wherever possible. I will also seek ways to link relevant offenders to IOMs in the hope of rehabilitation and prevention of further offending. I am also now aware of the risks of differing risk assessments and will seek to avoid this risk wherever possible.

Word count: 2172

Task 2

This is a reminder that this TASK 2 section is an opportunity for you to answer one question which should be relevant to the “advanced learning” area that you have chosen. The advanced learning lecture that you choose to attend will assist you in answering this task.

Choose 1 of these 5 options to answer

(Note for officers who have an interest in becoming a detective and wish to specialise in this role, you MUST choose option 5)

1. Response Policing.
2. Policing Communities.
3. Road Policing.
4. Information and Intelligence.
5. Conducting Investigations.

Task 2 Option 1:

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Response Policing

A core part of the policing mission is to prevent crime and disorder. Domestic abuse causes both serious harm and constitutes a considerable proportion of overall crime

You should choose a domestic abuse incident that was of a complex nature, in which you played a significant role in providing a response.

Critically assess the challenges associated with a domestic abuse incident that you have attended, and the strategies developed for effective policing in such challenging situations.

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

ANSWER:

Task 2 Option 2:

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Policing Communities

Criminal justice faces ever more challenges from society. While official figures show a drop in police recorded crime in the UK the distribution of crime shows a more complex pattern with violent crime showing a rise.

In regard to community policing chose an incident that you have attended that presented a complex issue for the community, and that you played a significant role in providing a response.

Critically evaluate a range of interventions that you have employed to promote community engagement that assisted in resolving the issue.

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

Answer:

Task 2 Option 3

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Road Policing

The police are the lead agency for collision investigation and have the primary duty to investigate and establish the circumstances that have led to road deaths and life changing injuries.

Describe a serious collision that you attended and in which you took a significant role (e.g., initial reporting officer, scene manager, lead investigator).

Critically evaluate the evidence base that you dealt with and strategies that could be implemented to reduce the likelihood of it reoccurring.

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

Answer:

Task 2 Option 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Information and Intelligence

You should choose an investigation that you have been involved in **that was of a complex nature**, in which you played a significant role.

Critically analyse an investigation, that you have led, commenting on the effectiveness of the National Intelligence Model and the importance of the role played by cross border cooperation in relation to your information and intelligence.

Reference how effective information and intelligence was used within your operation, and how you used specialist intelligence tools to support your complex investigation.

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

Answer:

Task 2 Option 5

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Conducting Investigations

You should choose an investigation that you have been involved in **that was of a complex nature**, in which you played a significant role.

Critically evaluate the processes employed in a complex investigation you have been involved in, and the fast-track actions that you have utilised.

Evaluate the support you have provided to victims, witnesses, and offenders (where appropriate) during a complex investigation and reference the management of your own personal values and attitudes in relation to this.

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

Answer:

I've chosen to reflect on a complex investigation into cyber-enabled malicious communications. Due to the nature of this incident, I will explore the investigation and my actions step by step. I will assess different approaches to investigation and fast-track actions, and how EBP (Evidence-Based Policing) can be applied to these. Following this, I will discuss victim support measures and how policing values can be applied to these.

As part of my role, I was tasked to attend a victim's home address after they had made a complaint of harassment against an ex-partner. This should be considered the starting point of the investigation. A criminal investigation is defined as "an investigation conducted by police officers with a view to it being ascertained whether a person should be charged with an offence" (Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 96). In the initial call to police, the victim stated the suspect had sent her several abusive messages via Facebook Messenger following the end of their relationship.

Prior to attending the victim's address, I decided to use the NDM (National Decision Model) as my investigation framework. Authorised professional practice states the NDM is "is suitable for all decisions and should be used by everyone in policing" (College of Policing, 2014). On review, however, there were other investigation processes that could have been considered – I will now explore these.

There are several documents that are frequently referred to as guides for investigation within policing, one such document is known as the VCMM (The Volume Crime Management Model). The VCMM recommends a process for investigation whereby each section or 'component' of an investigation is highlighted, and force policies are established and enforced at each stage to ensure correct actions are taken. The VCMM states this will "provide clarity...as individuals are more likely to be effective when they are fully informed about the objectives and methods of operation" (NPIA, 2009, p. 10). EBP (evidence-based policing) has shown that this can have a positive impact, with a pilot study showing an increased 6.3% one-year crime-detection rate (NPIA, 2009). Despite these statistics, this approach does have significant disadvantages. Whilst the VCMM can be effective for volume crime investigations where there are clear established procedures, it does not make provision for complex investigations that do not fit into these categories. As such, this approach would not have been effective for this incident.

The next document to consider is the MIM (Murder Investigation Manual). This is a document that was initially created to highlight good practice within homicide investigation, however it has since been used as guidance for criminal investigations of all kinds. The MIM does prescribe itself for these purposes "sections 1 to 8 deal with a number of issues which are likely to be relevant to all investigations" (NCPE, 2006, p. 17). The MIM also gives its own model for decision

making named the 'Idealised Investigative Decision-Making Process'. This process recommends frequently reviewing what is known by the investigating officers, what needs to be known, where the required information is likely to reside, and how to best gather this information. As with every decision-making model within policing, this model also has drawbacks. The idealised decision-making model recommends a thorough approach, which would be best utilised by a team of investigators, with allocated time and resources, and a SIO (senior investigating officer) to oversee the investigation. In the case of this investigation, no support was available in the form of additional resources.

Ultimately, had I been aware of them, I would have used a blend of these decision-making models. As I was still relatively inexperienced, this was not the case, and I opted to use the NDM. I now see the limitations of using this as an investigative tool. Specifically, the NDM is most effective when applied to singular decisions, and little research is available on its use as an investigative tool. For example, it has been pointed out available research "merely sets out its stages with little discussion or example of how it fits with established detective decision-making" (O'Neill, 2018 p. 83).

I began the NDM process by gathering available information and intelligence on both parties. I found that both parties were known to police and were shown to be vulnerable, with mental health concerns and learning disabilities. I also found that the victim had previously been convicted of hoax call offences. Before discussing this incident further, I will explore the concept of fast-track actions.

Fast-track actions are defined by the MIM as "any investigative actions which, if pursued immediately, are likely to establish important facts, preserve evidence or lead to the early resolution of the investigation" (NCPE, 2006, p. 41). I had already carried out my first fast-track actions by researching both the suspect and victim. I would argue that, if time allows, research should always be one of the first fast-track actions to be carried out. Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine highlights the use of this research in investigation "research should be conducted into the suspect's background and lifestyle. Such checks can strengthen and assist the case" (NCPE, 2005 p. 104). Furthermore, this document explains that research could indicate previous offences carried out with a similar *modus operandi*, thus supporting the identification of a suspect. Whilst this guidance suggests research is carried out on the suspect, I would make an argument for researching the suspect *and* the victim (as I did on this occasion). This allows for more hypotheses to be generated and gives the investigator a better idea of the 'bigger picture'. Carrying out this action would also fit into the 'investigative mindset' – an approach that encourages investigators to look at evidence they are given whilst "assuming nothing, believing nobody, and checking everything" (Bryant, R. and Bryant S. 2021 p. 563).

My next fast-track action was to attend the victim's address to take a formal statement from her. She also showed me screenshots of messages apparently

sent by the suspect and I had her send me these as evidence. I assessed the incident risk as 'low' – there were no direct threats within the messages, and no immediate risk to the victim.

Shortly after leaving the address, the victim contacted police to state the suspect had contacted her again, this time making direct threats to harm her. A family member of hers had also contacted police stating the suspect had also been making threats to them via instant message. I now considered the risk to be higher. I therefore carried out my next fast-track actions and arrested the suspect, interviewed him, and seized his phone in order to obtain evidence from it.

Whilst I am unable to critically evaluate every fast-track action taken within this investigation, I want to demonstrate that most actions *can* be critically evaluated, and that a successful investigator will take this into account. EBP is an effective evaluation tool. I will now evaluate suspect interviews, as an example of this.

After deciding to interview a suspect, one must consider specifically how to do this. Referring to existing literature shows two main approaches “accusatorial and information-gathering” (Chin, Milne and Bull, 2022, p. 3). Once this is established, the question becomes how an investigator can evaluate which approach is best, and EBP can provide answers. In this case, an available study shows that using an information-gathering and rapport-building approach was strongly linked to more successful suspect interviews “rapport is an important part of the interviewing of suspects, enabling them to supply information more freely”. (Walsh and Bull, 2021, p. 1). An investigator could, therefore, decide to approach the interview in an information-gathering manner, knowing evidence supports this approach. Of course, all studies have limitations, but referring to a range of peer-reviewed sources can help investigators draw more accurate conclusions. I was unaware of this research, so I interviewed the suspect without a clear approach. Although this was not optimal, the suspect answered all questions, and denied the offences and any knowledge of the messages.

Following the interview with the suspect, more reports were received from the victim and her family member. They both stated the messages were continuing and becoming more violent and explicit. The incident then became extremely complex. In very brief terms, the victim became the suspect. Digital evidence was gathered that strongly suggested the messages were being sent by the victim whilst she was impersonating the suspect via social media, and her family member also gave statements against her, giving more evidence that supported this. Research done on the initial suspect's phone supported this also. This development vindicated my earlier step of researching the victim, as I knew she had previously committed hoax call offences with a similar modus operandi. At the time of writing, this investigation is still ongoing. I will now discuss the issues of victim support surrounding this incident, and how this development impacted upon these.

One of the most important actions within victim support is keeping victims updated. The independent organisation Victim Support carried out a report on this area and highlighted this as a problem area for all those within the criminal justice system “many victims get little or no further communication from the police or any other CJS agency after they report their crime. This is often a source of distress, disappointment and frustration” (Victim Support, 2010). Owing to her vulnerabilities, I ensured that the initial victim of this incident was provided with an ‘enhanced’ level of service, meaning she would get more regular updates from a victim support team. The Victim Support report made several recommendations for improvements in victim support, one of which is that information supplied to the victim needs to be easily understandable. This is significant, as the criminal justice system can be highly complex, and victim’s levels of understanding can vary greatly, meaning there is need to tailor the way updates are conveyed to each person. A review carried out by the Ministry of Justice agrees: “victims’ needs are complex, dynamic and wide ranging. While broad categories of need were identified...providers stressed the importance of client-led approaches to identifying and meeting victims’ specific needs” (MOJ, 2012, p. 51). This review points out the wide range of available support for victims in the form of charities and independent organisations, and how essential these can be for police. The initial ‘victim’ for this incident already had a support worker from the charity ‘Mind’, so I made use of this and contacted her directly, opening a channel of communication. I believe this was an effective measure, as she has since contacted me on several occasions with concerns the victim had voiced to her. I was able to quickly answer these queries, and thus provide a better service to the victim. Existing guidance also endorses this multi-agency approach “effective sharing of information between agencies and professionals, whilst respecting necessary confidentiality, is key to improving the experiences of vulnerable people” (Home Office, 2015).

Whilst numerous reports are available regarding police support of victims and witnesses, less is written about support for suspects during an investigation. This is particularly relevant in this investigation where both parties were vulnerable, and both swapped roles during the investigation. My approach in this circumstance was to provide regular updates to all parties – the suspect, victim and witness (without disclosing any information that could jeopardise the investigation). This approach benefits all involved and is in line with the College of Policing’s CVF (Competency and Values Framework), specifically the ‘Transparency’ value which states, “we are transparent in our actions, decisions and communications with both the people we work with and those we serve” (College of Policing, 2016).

Providing updates to all relevant parties is not without challenges. It can be difficult not to become frustrated with suspects and victims, especially when evidence implies they are being dishonest (as was the case in this investigation). Despite my own frustrations I referred to the College of Policing’s Code of Ethics and Policing Principles. One of the nine policing principles states “you treat everyone with respect” (College of Policing, 2016). The wording ‘everyone’ shows a duty to include suspects and illustrates that there is no excuse for rudeness with any party, regardless of any of their actions. Furthermore, I also referred to the European

Convention of Human Rights, specifically article 7 – ‘no punishment without law’ (ECHR, 2019). To withhold basic updates from any party in this investigation prior to any criminal charge being brought against them seemed punitive, particularly when the lines between victim and suspect had been blurred.

In conclusion, the processes that can be used for criminal investigations are vast, as are the options for supporting victims, witnesses and suspects. It is crucial, therefore, to rely not only on personal experience but on evidence for effective measures for each investigation. In terms of support, it is best to tailor one’s approach to each individual and to utilise independent organisations and charities whenever possible, especially when dealing with vulnerabilities. When managing one’s own attitude the College of Policing’s Code of Ethics and Policing Principles should always be referred to and a standard of integrity, respect, empathy and openness should be maintained, with one’s own thoughts or feelings put aside or challenged if they contradict these.

Word count: 2189

Authentication signature:

Please sign to confirm that the work submitted is your own and has not been copied from another:

Signed: Glen Piper

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Piper', written in a cursive style.

Date:

06/08/2023

Bibliography

The bibliography should only include sources referenced within the workbook using the Harvard referencing system. Information about referencing in written assignments and how to avoid plagiarism can be found on Moodle. It is important that you are aware of the importance of ensuring that the work submitted is your original work.

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