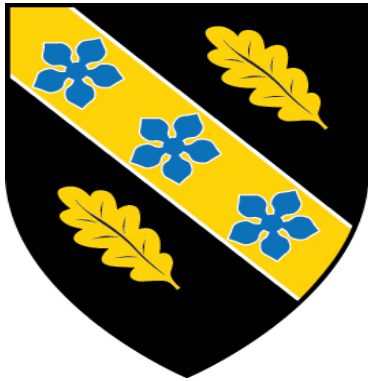




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**What are the training needs and confidence of
response police officers in counter terrorism, and
how can they be supported moving forward?**

Liam Ball

2222456

BSc (Hons) Professional Policing Practice

July 2024

Word count – 8034

Declaration

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

Signed: L.M.BALL

Date: 06/07/2025

STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA.

Signed: L.M.BALL

Date: 06/07/2025

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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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my partner and family for their support throughout my studies. I hope to continue learning throughout my career and am grateful for all the opportunities I have accessed thus far.

Abstract

This research project aims to examine the training needs of response police officers in counter terrorism (CT) with a focus on identifying how they can be better supported to improve officer confidence. The research has critically analysed existing relevant academic literature in relation to this topic.

To understand the views of response officers in relation to CT training and their confidence on the matter an online survey was completed by current serving response officers. This online survey was designed with existing academic literature in mind, so the questions asked were relevant to the research study.

The findings of this research project support the existing academic literature analysed within Chapter Two, with the themes identified being that response officers feel there is a clear need for further, high quality and updated training in relation to CT and this would have a positive impact on officers' confidence when dealing with the issue.

Following the completion of key objectives throughout this research project, the dissertation has achieved it's aim of providing an answer to the question: "What are the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism, and how can they be supported moving forward?" with the answer aligning with existing academic literature.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide background information and rationale for the chosen research study, whilst also addressing the aims and objectives of the research study.

The purpose of the research study is to evaluate the training that is currently provided to front line police response officers in counter terrorism and their confidence regarding this subject matter. The study addresses whether the training provided is adequate in ensuring that officers are equipped with the relevant level of training to successfully identify threats of terrorism within the United Kingdom (UK) and whether more or different training on the subject would be of benefit. This research study will focus on response officers from Gwent police and will aim to provide an answer to the following question:

“What are the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism, and how can they be supported moving forward?”

1.2 Background

Terrorists use violence and threats of violence to both intimidate the public in an attempt to influence governments through political, religious, racial or ideological cause (Military Intelligence Section Five ((MI5)), 2024). Terrorism presents an evolving and persistent challenge to public safety in the UK and globally.

There have been multiple terrorist incidents within the UK in recent times, many of these being high profile cases with vast media coverage. These include London bombings in 2005, the murders of Lee Rigby and Jo Cox MP, Westminster bridge attack 2017 and the Manchester Arena bombings in 2017 (Sky News, 2019). These incidents resulted in the loss of many innocent lives, affected thousands of families and unsettled the UK population.

The organisation Counter Terrorism Policing (2024) state that counter terrorism is a collaboration of forces that act on intelligence to help protect the public and national security by preventing, deterring and investigating terrorist activity.

There are five levels used to assess the current terrorism threat level within the UK, these levels are low, moderate, substantial, severe and critical (Metropolitan Police, 2020). At the time of this research, MI5 (2024b) state the current national threat level is set as substantial, which means an attack is likely within the UK, excluding Northern Ireland.

Whilst traditional counter terrorism responses for an ongoing incident would often require specialist units such as armed response teams, recent events such as the Manchester arena bombing in 2017 and London bridge attack in 2017 have shown the crucial role that response officers play in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack. Response officers are commonly the first responders on scene and are responsible for providing urgent medical care and assistance (Anderson, 2017). These incidents highlight that it is paramount frontline officers are not only present but prepared to act effectively in terror scenarios.

Despite their role as initial first attending officers, response officers often receive minimal formal counter terrorism training. A report carried out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) (2023) states that training provisions for response officers on counter terrorism are inconsistent across forces and practical exercises are rarely provided. Furthermore, as contemporary terrorist threats are decentralised and low-technology approaches, it is crucial that officers are equipped to recognise potential indicators of radicalisation and hostile reconnaissance within the context of policing.

Front line response officers preparedness and confidence are key to effective policing, particularly in high-stress environments. These qualities are influenced by factors such as frequency training, previous experience or exposure to critical incidents and solid leadership (Grossman and Christensen, 2008). In terrorism-related situations, a lack of knowledge and confidence can impact identification of threats, impact decision making and potentially affect safeguarding of both the public and the police.

1.3 Research rationale

Despite the increasing threat of terrorism and the further implications this poses, much of the current procedures and policy attention continues to focus on strategic frameworks, intelligence operations or specialist response capabilities. Whilst this work is vital in tackling and preventing terrorism, there is also an element of neglect among the experiences and training needs of frontline response officers (Innes, 2006).

The gap is highlighted as response officers are not only likely to be the first on scene when an incident occurs, but they are also responsible for early threat recognition, scene management and public communication. If frontline officers are underprepared or lack confidence, the quality of police response may be impacted. Furthermore, negative effects can include burnout and psychological stress, which can affect officer wellbeing (Murray, 2012).

Given the universal financial pressures of public services and local police forces, without sound evidence and justification that stipulates officers aren't confident and haven't had enough training, there is unlikely to be change in what is provided.

1.4 Aims and objectives

1.4.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to critically evaluate current existing academic research and collect further primary data to establish the current level of confidence of front line response officers in recognising early signs of terrorism. It aims to explore response officers' experiences, confidence levels and perceptions of their counter terrorism training. It also seeks to identify what further support might improve their readiness and effectiveness. By doing so, this study aims to provide actionable insights for police leadership, policy makers and training bodies to ensure the right level of frequent training is provided to front line response officers.

1.4.2 Objectives

Objective one: To examine the current counter terrorism training provided to police response officers and consider its effectiveness.

Objective two: To identify an appropriate research method to gather response officers' views on counter terrorism training they have received.

Objective three: To analyse the primary data collected to gain an understanding on police response officers views on counter terrorism training they receive and their confidence in dealing with the subject.

Objective four: To make evidence-based recommendations for improving counter terrorism training for response officers.

1.5 Research structure

To address the objectives of this research study there will be five chapters.

Chapter one has introduced this research study, highlighted the background and rationale for the study, and set out aims and objectives.

Chapter two critically analyses the role in which response officers currently undertake in terrorism and the evolving threat that is present. This chapter will also provide the current UK counter terrorism frameworks that are in place and the training that is currently provided to officers.

Chapter three will present and explain the research methods and techniques chosen to effectively conduct this study.

Chapter four will analyse the primary data gathered through use of an online questionnaire. Once analysed the findings will be presented and key themes identified.

Chapter five will provide recommendations and limitations to the research conducted, whilst also providing a conclusion to this research study.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review academic literature to ascertain if the current training provided to response police officers in counter terrorism is fit for purpose and to gain an understanding of potential implications linked from the training provided to response officers confidence on counter terrorism. The research will investigate this matter across all police forces within the UK.

This chapter will aim to achieve objective one of this research project, which is:

To examine the current counter terrorism training provided to police response officers and consider its effectiveness

Literature used within this research project will be obtained from academic journals, books, government publications, UK legislations and other sources authorised to publish information, accessed with the UWTSD online library and internet.

2.2 Understanding the role of response officers in counter terrorism

The increasing threat of terrorism continues to play a significant role on the safety of the UK. His Majesty's (HM) Government (2018) state that over the past two decades, there has been a shift from large scale terrorist attacks to smaller, less-detectable acts carried out by lone actors. These often involve knives, vehicles or homemade weapons carried out by individuals inspired by terrorist ideologies. A recent example of this includes an incident within the South Wales area whereby a member of the public attacked police officers at Talbot Green police station, injuring several officers in an attack inspired by issues such as immigration, anti-islamic sentiment and dissatisfaction with the British government. They used homemade weapons in the process of the attack with intent to murder a police officer (Davies, 2025).

The UK government aims to reduce the threat of terrorism by following a strategy known as Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) (Tudor, 2025). CONTEST is based on 4 principles, which include preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, to pursue and stop terrorist attacks happening, to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack and to prepare by minimising the impact of a terrorist attack so people can live freely and with confidence. As part of the training, it states that officers learn how to identify hostile reconnaissance, suspicious

behaviours and early signs of radicalisation. It also states that officers are able to identify individuals at risk and vulnerable to radicalisation, and as a result, should be able to make referrals to the PREVENT programme (Home Office, 2023).

Specialist counter terrorism units will primarily detect, monitor and pursue efforts, but response officers are also considered to play a key part in the prevent and protect principles of CONTEST. Routine engagement with the public on a daily basis within communities and being the first line of response makes them well placed to recognise early indicators of radicalisation and identify potential threat and/or targets (Innes, 2006).

The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) (2024) states that frontline officers must be able to identify signs of suspicious and innocent behaviour, particularly in crowded places, large events or busy transport routes/stations, and identify those at risk of radicalisation. It also mentions that understanding behavioural signs of radicalisation is crucial. The counter terrorism and security act 2015 (GOV UK, 2015) requires police officers to refer individuals showing signs of radicalisation through the appropriate safeguarding processes such as PREVENT.

A report carried out by HMICFRS (2023) into the police's contribution to the governments PREVENT programme states that there are identifiable gaps in knowledge of frontline officers and many police forces have been irregular in the training of their officers regarding the PREVENT strategy. It was also identified that there were inconsistencies in how officers interpret counter terrorism responsibilities, particularly around their role in intelligence gathering and early intervention.

As terrorism becomes more unpredictable, harder to identify and rapidly changing in how terrorists operate, response officers are increasingly expected to act as the first line of defence. Their ability to identify, assess and refer potential threats directly influences the effectiveness of the UK's wider counter terrorism efforts (Clarke and Newman, 2007). Officers understanding their role is essential by providing the appropriate training and support.

2.3 Current Counter-Terrorism training for police

Police forces within the UK receive counter terrorism training through a combination of national programmes and force level delivery, often during the initial training phase whilst in training school. The college of policing also provides standardised material such as Action Counters Terrorism (Action counter terrorism, 2024) awareness e-learning packages, which aim to provide guidance on understanding potential threats such as suspicious behaviour, threat indicators and signs of radicalisation. Other packages include Protect UK (ProtectUK, 2023). These packages are accessible and cost-effective, however raise concerns regarding their depth and consistency across forces (College of Policing, 2013).

Action Counter Terrorism is widely used to familiarise officers with the current threats and identifiable factors in relation to counter terrorism, however, like other e-learning packages, it's reliance on self-guided learning, lack of social interaction to address

queries from the learner and often considered to be lecture heavy, which has been criticised for not fully preparing officers for the complex and evolving nature of counter terrorism (Lemmetty, 2024). Another report carried out by BRIGGS (2010) touches on how training programmes such as PREVENT, designed to improve community engagement with the police on counter terrorism issues and raise awareness, can be provided but the ability for communities and the police to engage with another and work together is limited due to lack of information on real world application.

Training to embed terrorism training within a multi-agency response, such as emergency services and intelligence units, have shown an increase in operational readiness when responding to terrorist/major incidents as shown through the programme 'Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles' (JESIP). This provides a foundation for all multi-agency planning, response and recovery (College of Policing, 2013a). Joint multi agency training exercise are resource-intensive and not regularly accessible to all response officers. As a result, response officers therefore access and learn through mandatory e-learning packages, which do not provide the real life demands of decision making in terrorism scenarios (Aplin and Rogers, 2025).

Despite the use of a counter terrorism briefing during training school and other innovative practises such as tool kits through the use of Protect UK and Action Counters Terrorism, this does not provide a clear pathway for response officers in terms of dealing with terrorism. This contributes to an uneven preparedness among response officers nationwide in terms of what training response officers receive and how this is monitored. This inconsistency presents a challenge to achieving an integrated counter terrorism policing approach (HMICFRS, 2023).

2.4 Effectiveness of training and officer confidence

Training used to help officers make informed decisions based can only be effective if it is then used to make confident and competent decisions in a timely manner in real life situations. Confidence plays a key role in an officer's ability to make a decision, a course of action, detect possible threat and act decisively under pressure (Andersen and Gustafsberg, 2016).

A report carried out by HMICFRS (2023) into the police's contribution to the governments PREVENT programme states that there are identifiable gaps in knowledge of frontline officers and many police forces have been irregular in the training of their officers regarding the PREVENT strategy. The report goes on to highlight that certain police forces had made a computer-based training package to help inform officers but had no way of monitoring compliance and therefore could not state how many officers had completed the package. This suggest a gap in confidence and the reality of decision making by response officers, especially those who are young in service based on the level of training they receive and the confidence to then apply this as part of their decision making (Bradford and Quinton, 2014).

Further research by Van de Weert and Eijkman (2021) highlights that most front-line workers feel they are expected to make decisions on whether someone potentially may be at risk of radicalisation based on their moral judgement. Therefore, sufficient training should be provided to ensure there is solid evidence or potential flags that can be clearly identified to ensure the referrals are appropriate. Without this, the effectiveness of the policy could be under pressure and potentially lead to potential offenders being missed.

Existing police officers have also spoke about the need for better training for police officers when it comes to identifying signs or radicalisation or right-wing extremism. Sergeant Andy Webb, who serves as a PREVENT officer, has called for front line officers to have a better understanding of symbolism and ideologies to help identify and protect those who are at risk or pose a risk (Doyle and Webb, 2022). This is a key element as the training courses currently provided to police do not provide any information on the new and upcoming symbolism and ideologies.

The psychological readiness and resilience of police officers during a terrorist incident also comes into question. Shortland, Thompson and Alison (2020) talk about how officers with high maximisation tendencies take longer to make and commit to a decision. They were also more likely to overthink and experience decision fatigue, this can lead officers to a feeling of fear of error and moral pressure which can ultimately undermine decision making. Further research on scenario-based training can significantly improve officer confidence, particularly stimulated attacks or complex debrief scenarios which incorporates realistic time pressures and uncertainty (Wallace, 2018). However, these scenarios involve small teams and are not provided to all forces across the UK.

2.5 Gaps in the literature and research relevance

Another notable gap is the lack of research into ongoing support mechanisms and procedures, such as supervision, refresher training or psychological resilience programmes. Longitudinal studies tracking the sustained impact of counter terrorism training on response officers' confidence and performance are also missing. It is therefore difficult to assess whether existing programmes have a lasting effect of need redesigning.

As the report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS 2023) highlighted there are few studies which have directly interviewed or studied response officers' readiness or what types of training they find most effective on counter terrorism. Whilst this report highlights that confidence is cited as a concern, it is rarely investigated. This research project aims to capture the views and experiences of response officers themselves and fill the gaps mentioned.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the research study will aim to meet the following objectives:

Objective two: To identify an appropriate research method to gather response officers' views on counter terrorism training they have received.

Research is a systematic and organised process of investigating a specific subject, problem or question to generate new knowledge, an understanding and provide new insights (Jain, 2023).

Bouchrika (2025) states there are typically two types of research: primary and secondary. Primary research is information that has been collected via the use of surveys and observations by the researcher. When conducting primary research, the researcher gathers the information and data first hand whilst secondary research involves analysing existing data from other researchers through the use of academic journals, papers and government agencies.

Primary research will be required for this research project to better understand the views and opinions of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts. This chapter will now intend to state the methodology that will be used to conduct this research.

3.2 The research onion

When conducting primary research, the technique often used by research to follow is "The Research Onion" created by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019). As detailed in figure 1 below, there are six layers to the research onion that all must be explored. Each section provides techniques involved to help gain primary data.

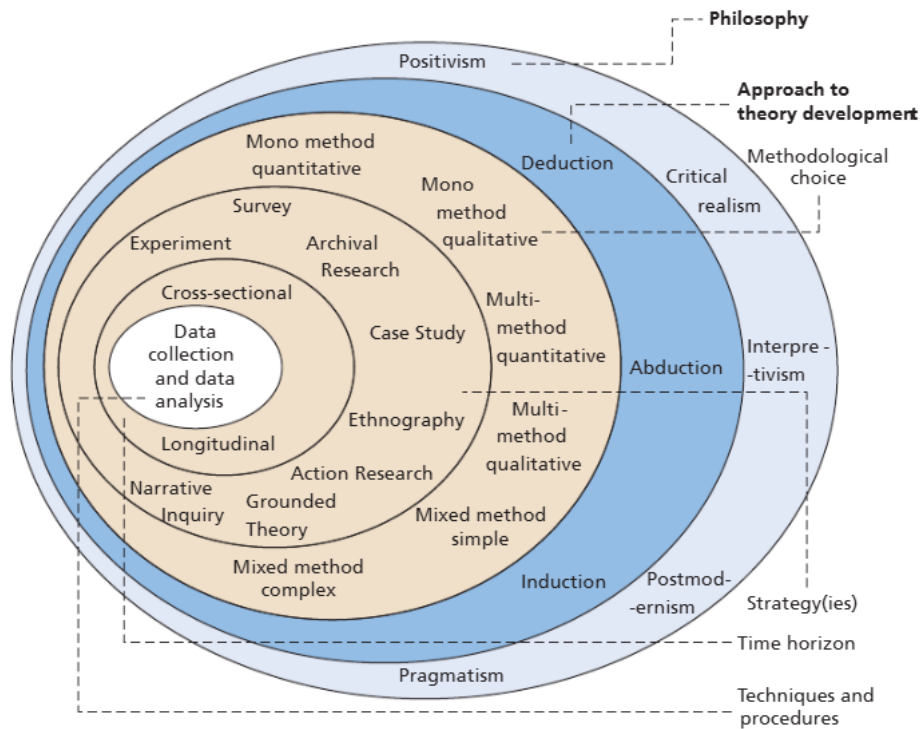


Figure 1: Annotated diagram - The Research Onion source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019).

The diagram in Figure 1 shows the preferred process for gathering primary data for this research project.

3.3 Research philosophy

The first layer of the onion is to understand the research philosophy, which Phair and Warren (2021) state is the foundation and set of beliefs which any study is built upon. The “what” and “how” of what we know as well as assumptions the research author may have. This study will adopt an interpretive philosophy as Bryman (2016) states that it focuses on understanding the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals.

The other stages of the onion include research approaches, research strategy, choices of research methods, time horizons and techniques and procedures when gathering the data, all of which will be mentioned in the rest of this chapter.

3.4 Research design

A mixed method approach was employed, a combination quantitative and qualitative data. A quantitative approach is the collection numerical data which is then analysed using statistical methods to help identify patterns or make predictions. A qualitative approach gathers non-numerical data to analyse subjective attitudes and experiences (McLeod, 2025)

The research data was obtained via means of an online questionnaire to explore the training needs and confidence levels of response police officers in counter terrorism. See Appendix A for details of the questionnaire. This approach allowed for the collection of both measurable trends via Likert-scale, and deeper insights via open ended questions to capture and understand police officers' experiences and thoughts.

3.5 Participants and sampling

The target audience for the online questionnaire were current serving response officers from one particular police force within the UK, Gwent police. The researcher made use of purposive sampling in order to recruit participants who could provide their views and informed perspectives whilst specifically serving in the role of a response officer. Convenience sampling was employed as the questionnaire was shared via internal police communications and professional networks allowing for colleagues to participate. This meant participation was voluntary and confidential.

3.6 Data collection method

To obtain the study data, a multiple-choice questionnaire was created on Microsoft forms. A direct link was shared to colleagues via police systems such as 'The BEAT' which is a main information hub that only police officers within the particular force can access.

The benefits of using an online questionnaire include being able to reach a larger audience via the use of an online link. It provides ease of use and convenience for the researcher and more flexibility for participants to complete the online survey at a time that is suitable for them and to provide their views (Evans and Mathur, 2005).

A range of closed questions such as Likert scales were included within the questionnaire along with open-ended questions, allowing officers to provide their thoughts and opinions on the subject or question.

3.7 Questionnaire development

Questions within the questionnaire were chosen to help gain an understanding of response officers' knowledge of counter terrorism, training history and their confidence in dealing with the issue and identifying signs of new upcoming threats. Other questions were used to gain the current views and opinions of serving frontline officers to help identify possible areas in which police forces could further help support officers in counter terrorism efforts and training.

3.8 Data analysis

Data from the questionnaire will be analysed and presented to the reader through a variety of means.

Quantitative responses from closed-ended questions will be analysed using descriptive statistics, in order to summarise the findings. This will include percentages and frequencies, and presented through graphs that support visual understanding of the data.

Qualitative responses from the open-ended questions will be analysed using thematic analysis, identifying common themes within the answers received to identify training needs and officer's confidence in relation to the subject. Following the six-step framework of Caulfield (2019), this will help to identify and present the information by:

- Familiarisation with data.
- Generating initial codes.
- Searching for themes.
- Reviewing themes.
- Defining and naming themes.
- Producing the report.

3.9 Ethical considerations

When conducting the research study, ethical considerations were kept in mind. For research studies that include human participants, ethical approval prior to data collection is paramount to consider possible risk and mitigate against these (Gelling, 2016). Ethical approval was obtained from St Davids University ethics committee prior to conducting the relevant research (see Appendix B). Participants were able to view an information section within the online questionnaire before they began (see Appendix A). Within this included information informing participants of the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time and highlighting that the questionnaire would be anonymous, meaning their names and details could not be used or mentioned within the results of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is stored on one drive to ensure it is securely stored and the data obtained is protected.

3.10 Limitations of the methodology

Limitations within the questionnaire could include an element of self-selection bias, meaning that respondents are allowed to decide for themselves if they wish to participate in the questionnaire. This means those with stronger opinions are most likely to respond and provide their opinion and may not represent the views of everyone within response policing (Olsen, 2025).

Data was collected from response officers in the organisation that the researcher works in. Whilst there are benefits of studying one team, such as the ability to complete a comprehensive and thorough analysis, there are many identified disadvantages. Collecting data from one team can provide doubt in the validity of the study as the results are local and not national. A broader perspective would support the identification of wider trends, common training-gaps in counter terrorism and make results more generalisable (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Other limitations include the use of a questionnaire compared to obtaining data through interviews or focus groups. As some of the questions are open ended, they may lack the insight or depth that might otherwise be best obtained through an interview or focus groups—where there is opportunity to probe or further explore unexpected themes. There may also be shallow data by the answers provided to certain questions and the possible risk of misinterpretation (Cox, 2008).

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has completed the aim of:

Objective two: To identify an appropriate research method to gather response officers' views on counter terrorism training they have received.

This chapter has met the aim of objective two by demonstrating the appropriate research and methodology used in this research study.

Chapter Four: Data analysis

4.1 Introduction

The fourth chapter aims to achieve the third objective, which is:

Objective three: To analyse the primary data collected to gain an understanding on police response officers views on counter terrorism training they receive and their confidence in dealing with the subject.

The primary data that was collected through the researcher's research will be analysed and presented throughout this chapter. The primary data was sourced through an online questionnaire, which was completed by 12 response officers within Gwent police. To ensure transparency of data, the complete set of questionnaire responses is provided in Appendix C. The questionnaire allowed officers to provide their thoughts on the training they currently receive in regards to counter terrorism and their confidence on the subject.

4.2 Data Analysis and Demographics

4.2.1 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically collecting, describing, presenting and interpreting data. This allows the researcher to discover useful information, draw conclusions and supports decision making (Eldridge, 2023). The data gathering within this research project was obtained via an online questionnaire created on Microsoft forms. Using Microsoft forms, the researcher was able to draw the information obtained through the questionnaire by its participants and display this information through graphs for quantitative data and word clouds for the qualitative data. The use of this online questionnaire allowed for participants to easily access the questionnaire via a direct link. It also allowed for the data to be collected in a timely manner and presented in an easy-to-read analysis of the final results for each question.

4.2.2 Demographics

The primary data produced within this research study were obtained by response officers from one police force, Gwent police. The information provided at the beginning of the questionnaire before the participants began to complete it stipulated that it should be completed by response officers only. This was also reiterated by the researcher when disseminating the questionnaire to participants. All other information such as gender, age and years of service was not collected via the questionnaire.

4.3 Survey Findings

4.3.1: Participants from the response department were asked if they have ever been involved in a counter terrorism incident or operation. 58% of participants answered 'Yes' to being involved in a counter terrorism related incident or operation. 42% of participants answered 'No'.

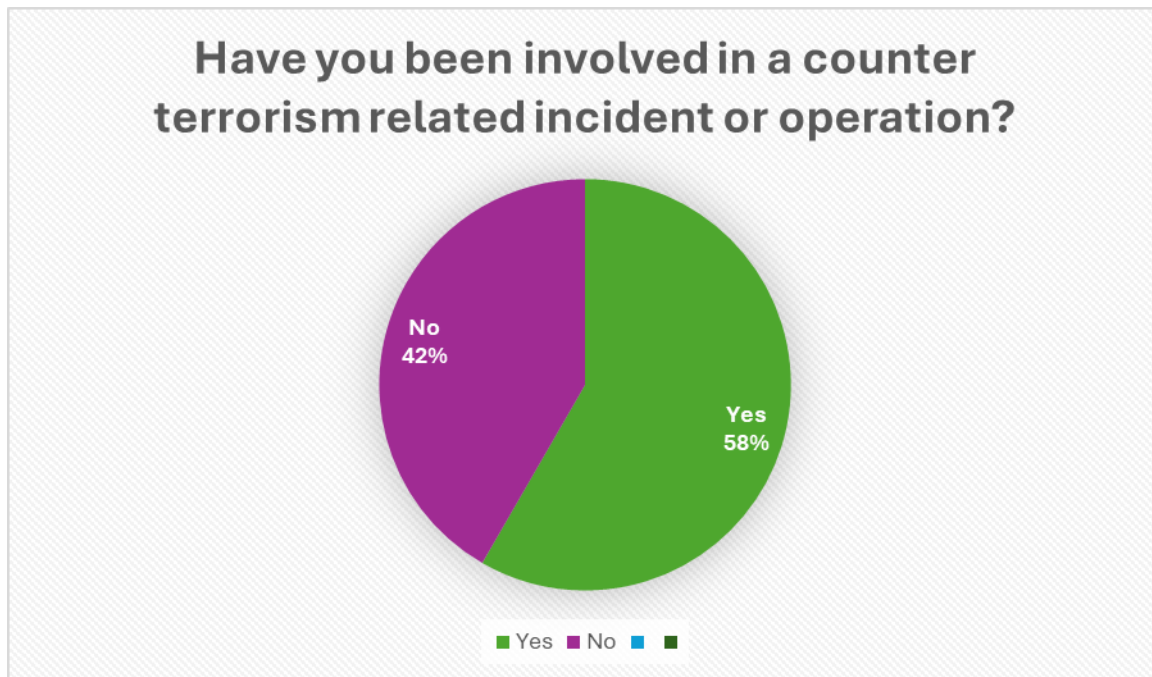


Figure 2: Graph showing participants responses to question 1: Have you ever been involved in a counter terrorism related incident or operation?

4.3.2: Response officers that completed the questionnaire were asked if they feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents. Notably, the majority, 92% of officers, stated 'No', implying that they did not feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents. 8% answered 'Yes'.

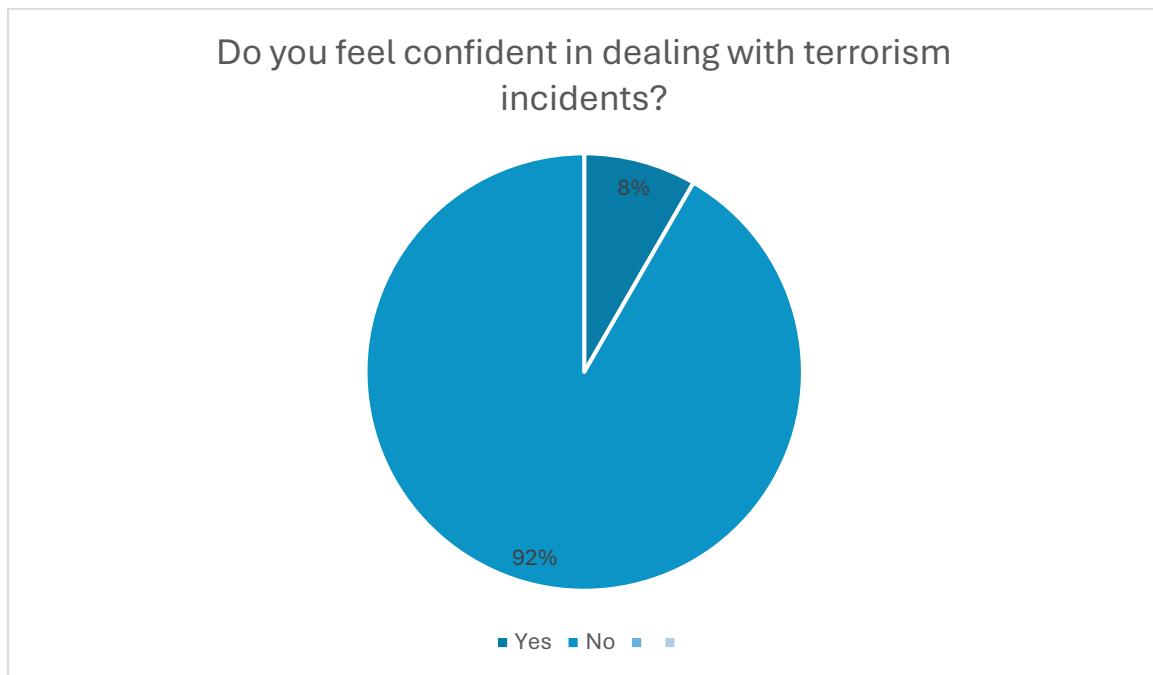


Figure 3: Graph showing participants responses to question 2: Do you feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents?

4.3.3: Response officers that completed the questionnaire were asked if they had received any formal counter terrorism training within the past two years. 83% of participants answered 'No' implying they had not received any counter terrorism training in the past two years. Two participants answered 'Yes'.

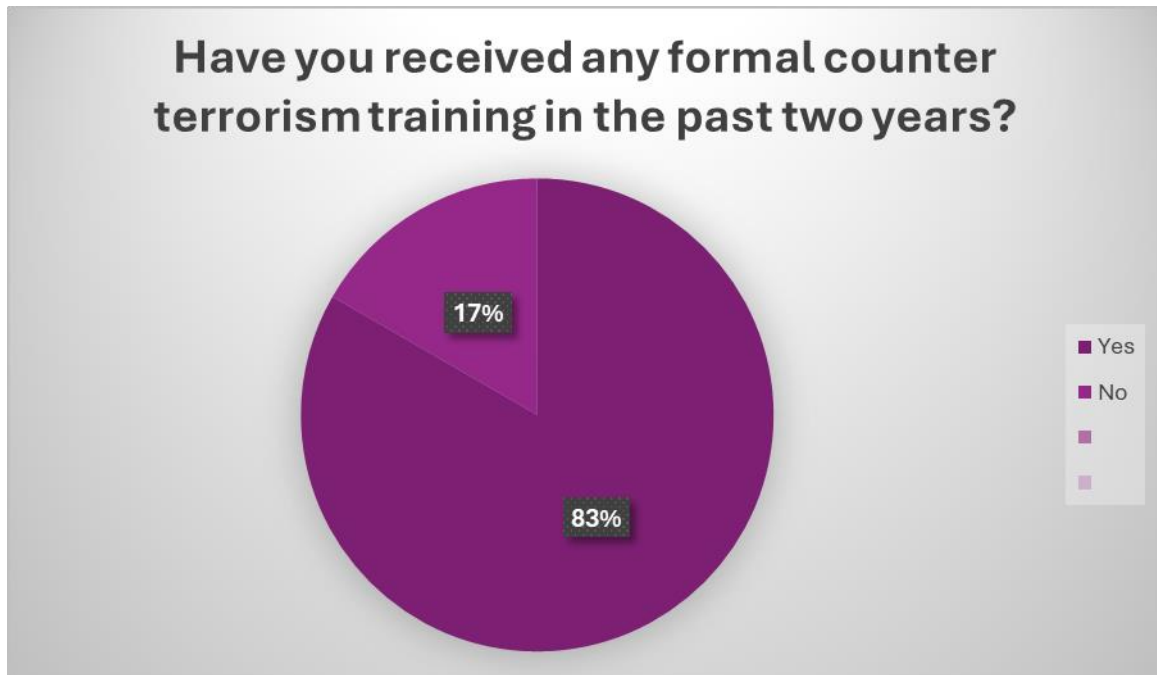


Figure 4: Graph showing participants responses to question 3: Have you received any formal counter terrorism training in the past two years?

4.3.4: Response officers that completed questionnaire were asked if they feel more training on counter terrorism should be provided, with the majority answering yes. The below pie chart shows that 17% of participants felt that more training should not be provided. 83% of participants felt more training should be provided.

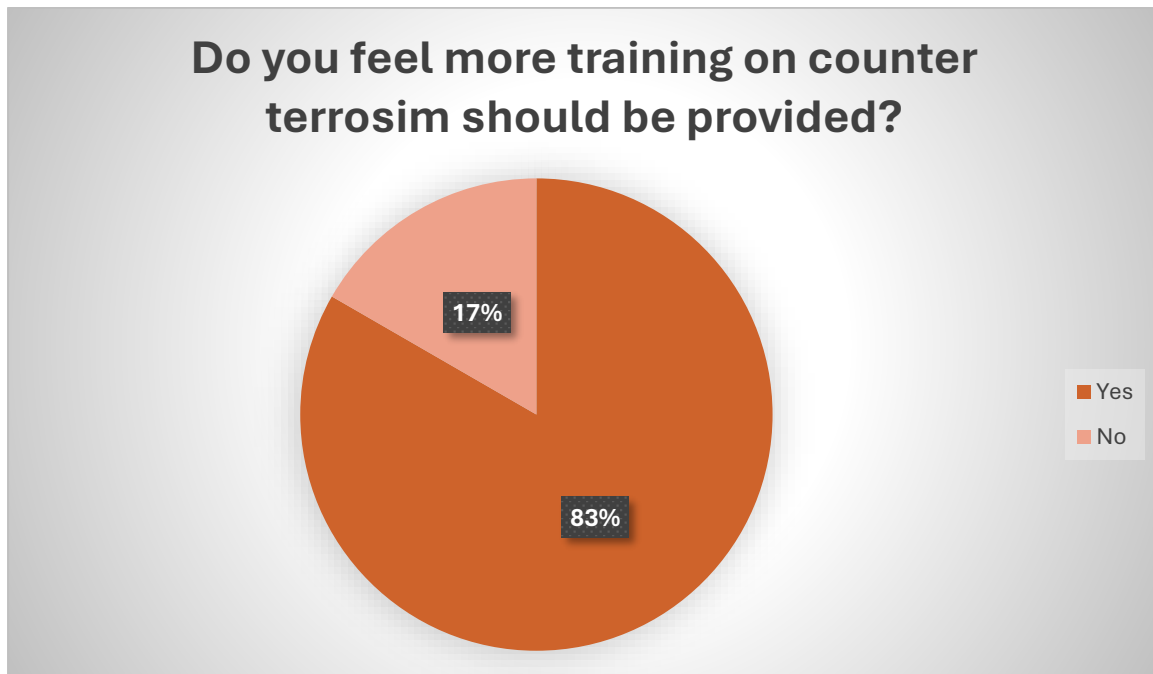


Figure 5: Graph showing participants responses to question 4: Do you feel more training on counter terrorism should be provided?

4.3.5: Participants were asked if they believe that regular counter terrorism training for response officers is necessary to help identify possible risks or signs. 92% of participants felt that further training would be necessary, whereas 8% did not:

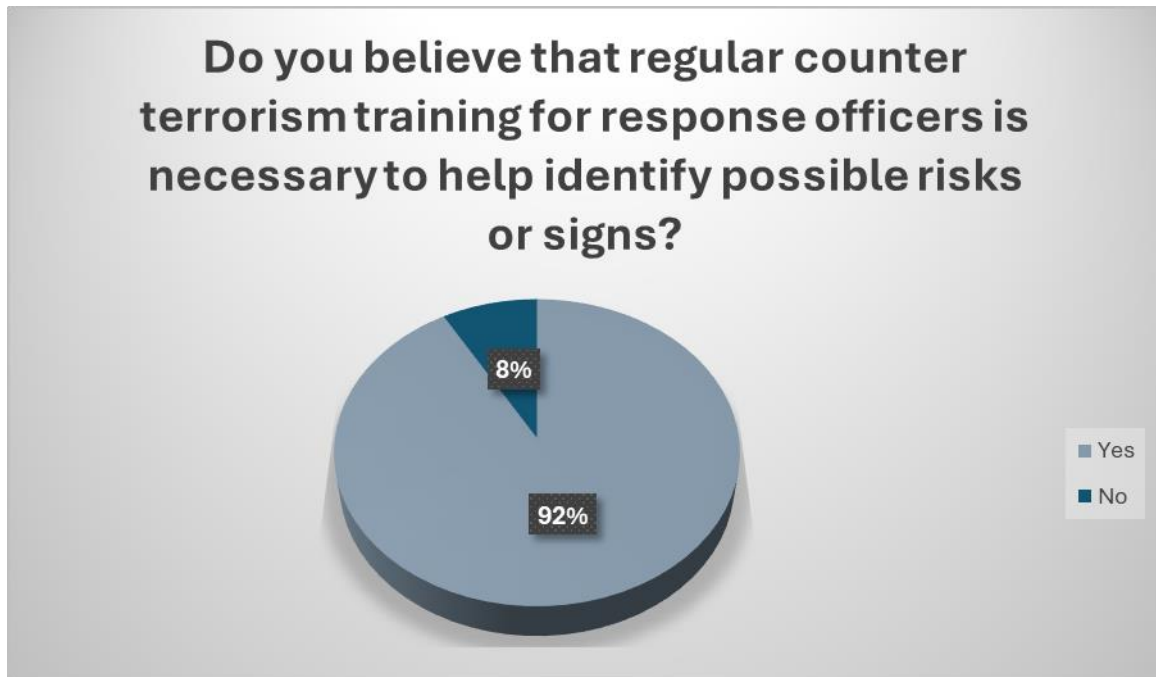


Figure 6: Graph showing participants responses to question 5: Do you believe that regular counter terrorism training for response officers is necessary to help identify possible risks or signs?

4.3.6: Response officers that completed the questionnaire were asked if they were aware of national counter terrorism strategies such as CONTEST or PREVENT. From the results below, one third of the participants were not aware of CONTEST or PREVENT, two major counter terrorism strategies. Two thirds of participants were aware of the strategies.

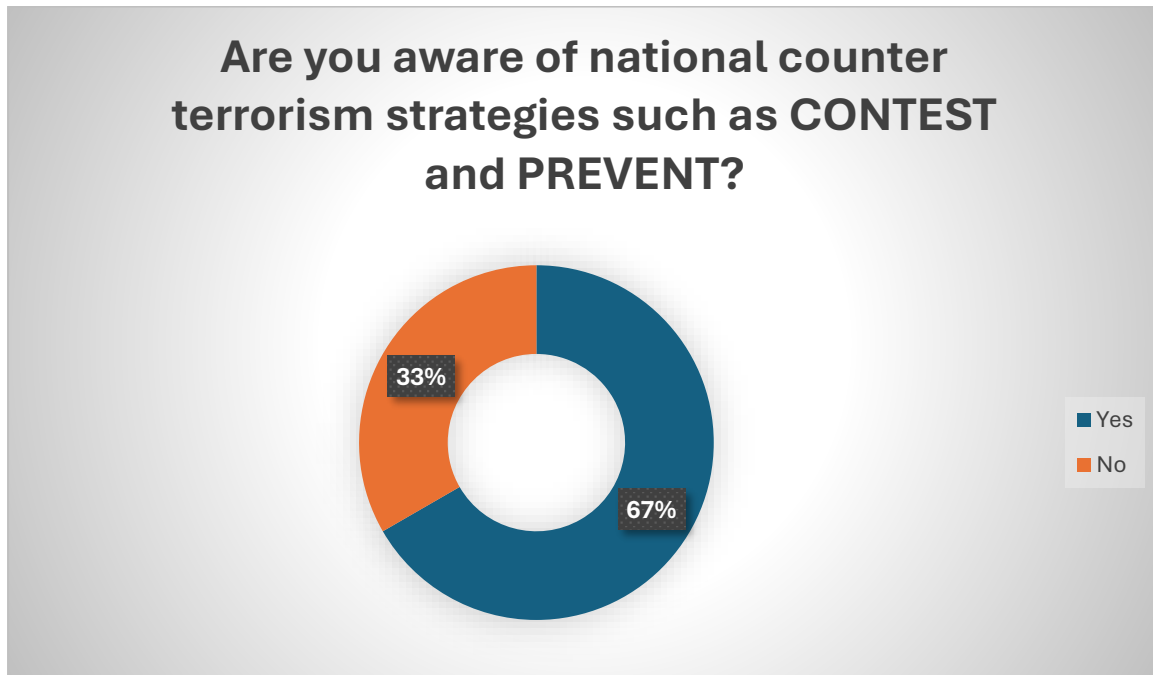


Figure 7: Graph showing participants responses to question 6: Are you aware of national counter terrorism strategies such as CONTEST and PREVENT?

4.3.7: Participants were asked how they felt in regard to four statements. The statements were in relation to training and knowledge, such as whether counter terrorism training could be improved, ability to identify radicalisation or terrorist logos or propaganda, whether training they had currently received prepares officers for terrorism situation and whether regular training courses on counter terrorism are necessary for response officers. Participants had five options to choose from; strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, agree and strongly agree. The results can be found in the graph below:

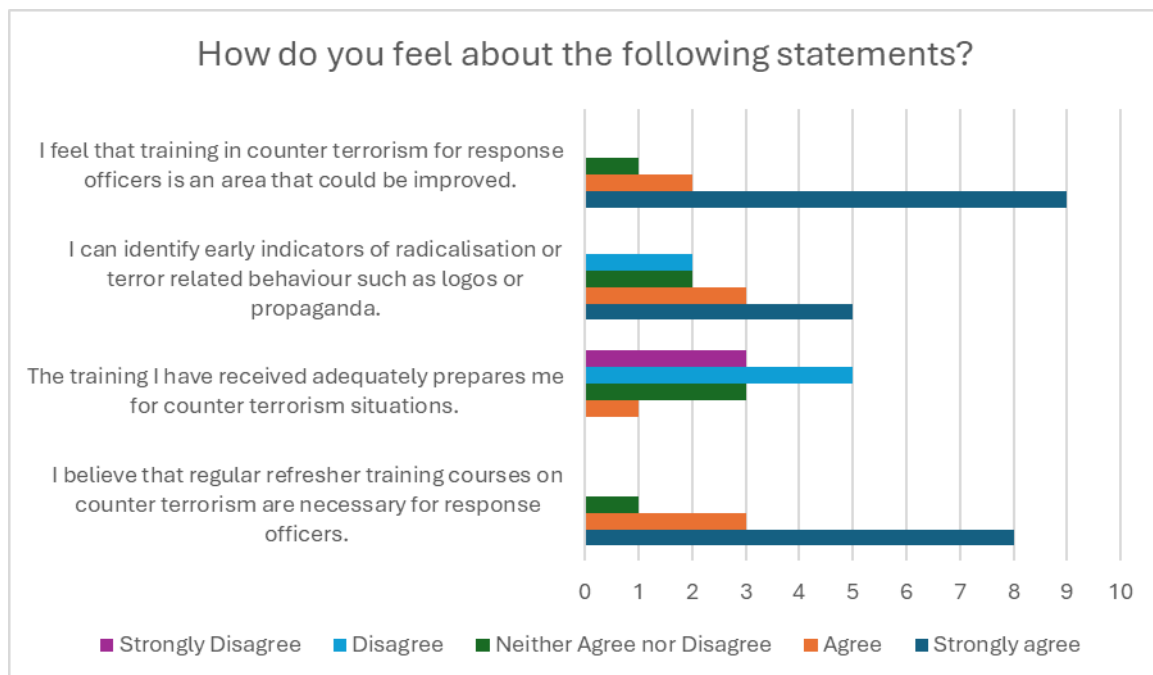


Figure 8: Graph showing participants responses to question 7.

The first statement shows that 9 participants strongly agreed that counter terrorism training for response officers was an area that could be improved. 2 participants agreed whilst one participant neither agreed or disagreed.

The second statement shows that 5 participants strongly agreed that they could identify early indicators or radicalisation or terror related behaviour such as logos or propaganda. 3 other participants agreed with the statement whilst 2 participants neither agreed or disagreed and 2 other participants disagreed with the statement.

The third statement asked participants if the training they have received adequately prepares them for counter terrorism situations. 5 participants disagreed with the statement. 3 participants strongly disagreed and 3 other participants neither agreed or disagreed with the statement. 1 participant agreed.

The fourth statement asked participants if they believe that regular refresher training courses on counter terrorism are necessary for response officers. 8 participants

strongly agreed whilst 3 other participants agreed with the statement. 1 participant neither agreed or disagreed with the statement.

4.3.8: Theme one: Community presence

Question 8 asked participants ‘Do you feel that response officers have a role in counter terrorism? If so, why?’.

From analysis of the comments left by participants, all but one of the participants felt that response officers do have a role in counter terrorism. Key comments have been rounded up and produced in the word cloud below.



Figure 9: Word cloud displaying data received to question 8: Do you feel response officers have a role in counter terrorism? If so, why?.

Participants mention a key point which is a response officers' role within the local community, their presence in the community whilst carrying out daily tasks and at times of crisis or terrorist attack. This is key to identifying potential signs, as illustrated by participant 6's answer, who stated:

“Yes. Our role is to share information that we have on the public with specialist officers and teams. We work in the community and build relationships with the public and so may notice things that others don't.”

Another participant stated:

“Response officers are the first point of contact. They will be the one going into the hours or flats or other building for an unrelated matter. They will provide the intel for the CT team.”

Participant 4's answer to question 8.

These answers back the report by Innes (2006) whereby an officer's role of routine community engagement on a daily basis and being the first line of response makes them well placed to identify potential indicators of radicalisation and potential threat. Response officers are aware of the impact they can have on counter terrorism efforts based off these answers and the intelligence they can provide.

Briggs (2010) discusses how programmes, such as PREVENT, are designed to encourage community engagement by raising awareness on counter terrorism, but contains a lack of real world application which officers are not able to engage appropriately and may lead to missed opportunities. This may be true if the correct training is not effectively provided.

4.3.9: Theme two: Training discrepancies

Question 9 asked participants "What training have you received from the police force in relation to counter terrorism?"

A word cloud has been created to summaries the general comments left by participants in relation to this answer below:

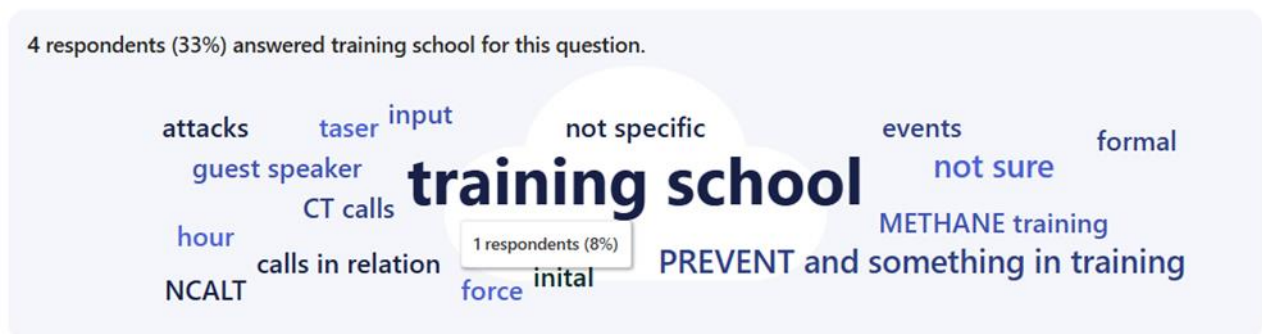


Figure 10: Word cloud displaying data received to question 9: What training have you received from the police force in relation to counter terrorism?

A lot of participants mentioned that they had received an input of some kind during training school, but were unable to state exactly what it was as revealed by the following answers:

"Could not specify as it was during training school."

Participant 4's answer to question 9.

Another participant stated:

"I'm not sure exactly, it was during training school, wasn't specific."

Participant 6's answer to question 9.

Whilst another participant stated:

“PREVENT and something in training school”

Participant 7’s answer to question 9.

And finally, another participant touched on the fact they had no further training on the subject since leaving training school, stating:

“Nothing since being in the force other than during training”.

Participant 12’s response to question 9.

These answers show trend around the fact that some officers are not able to recall what training they have received on counter terrorism whilst serving as a response officer. This helps support HMICFRS (2023) claim that there are concerns around frontline officers identifiable gaps in knowledge regarding the PREVENT strategy. A further report by Bradford and Quinton (2014) touched on how this gap in knowledge can affect officer confidence based on what training they have received and their confidence to then apply this within their line of work and decision making.

Whilst a few of the responses to this question did mention PREVENT, this suggests that some officers have completed the computer based training package, however it further reinstates the point raised within the report by HMICFRS (2023) that police forces are not able to monitor compliance and therefore cannot say how many officers have actually completed the package or are even aware of it.

This can ultimately have a knock-on effect on how officers deal with potential warning signs, which the Home Office (2023) states that officers are able to identify individuals at risk to radicalisation and early signs and therefore be able to make referrals to the PREVENT programme. The answers to this question raises concern to how accurate this information is and how often the appropriate referrals are made, and if more can be done.

4.3.10: Theme three: Training demand

Question 10 asks participants “What aspects of counter terrorism training do you feel need improvement and updating?”.

A word cloud has been created to summaries the general comments left by participants in relation to this answer below:

6 respondents (50%) answered Training for this question.



Figure 11: Word cloud displaying data received to question 10: What aspects of counter terrorism training do you feel need improvement and why?

The majority of participants discussed the need for further training within the replies to this question. With the majority asking for more formal inputs as the answers below show:

“More formal training. I would like to hear from the specialist teams about how they feel we could help”

Participant 6’s answer to question 10

With another participant stating:

“Any training we can get. Would like to hear from the specialist teams about how we can help them”.

Participant 12’s answer to question 10

These statements show that further training on counter terrorism would be welcomed by response officers, especially more formal inputs by specialist teams. Lemmetty (2024) states how current training provided through the reliance of self-guided learning from online packages are considered to be lecture heavy and lack social interaction to address queries. In person inputs would help address this particular concern.

The need for further training was highlighted by existing police officers who work within PREVENT. Doyle and Webb (2022) called for further frontline officer training on understanding symbolism and ideologies as the current training courses provided to police do not include information on new and upcoming recognisable threats of this kind. This report was backed where one of the participants from the questionnaire stated:

“Would like up to date training on early indicators because these things change rapidly like with politics and religion”.

Participant 9’s partial answer to question 10

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has successfully achieved the third objective: which is:

To analyse the primary data collected to gain an understanding on police response officers views on counter terrorism training they receive and their confidence in dealing with the subject.

In conclusion the finds of this study indicate that response officers do not feel confident in their ability to identify potential signs of radicalisation and their role within counter terrorism. The-majority of officers feel that more training and support is needed in regard to counter terrorism by formal regular in person inputs from specialist teams rather than online learning packages.

Chapter Five: Findings and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will now seek to achieve objective four, which is:

To make evidence-based recommendations for improving counter terrorism training for response officers.

This chapter will also evaluate the current training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts and how they can be better supported. It was also highlight limitations and provide potential avenues of further future research of this subject area.

5.2 Findings

Firstly, it was found that from the front line response officers that completed the questionnaire, 92% did not feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents with a further 83% of respondents not having any counter terrorism training within the past two years. Thus backs the reports made by HMICFRS (2023) in relation to the training that is currently provided to officers not being consistent enough. The information gathered also supports Bradford and Quinton (2014) and Gustafsberg (2016) in how the gaps in knowledge can play a key role in officers confidence and their decision making.

Secondly, the questionnaire identified that officers felt they had a role to play in counter terrorism as first responders to all incidents and the level of engagement they have within their communities. These findings support research conducted by Van de Weert and Eijkman (2021) on how officers may be left to make decisions on whether someone may be at risk based on their moral judgements. This also puts the report by Home officer (2023) into doubt as the report states that officers are able to identify those at risk of radicalisation and make the relevant referrals to PREVENT.

Thirdly, it was clear from the results of the questionnaire that response officers regular counter terrorism training was needed to help identify possible signs and risks. 92% of officers agreed that more regular training was needed. Within the questionnaire, officers could not recall exactly what training they had received other than a brief cover of the subject during training school and the few officers that had heard of PREVENT and possibly completed the online learning package. It is highlighted within the results that officers felt more formal regular inputs from specialist counter terrorism teams would be beneficial as it would make officers more aware of how they could help support counter terrorism efforts.

5.3 Recommendations

From analysis of the results of this study there are three key recommendations that can be made to current training provided to response police officers in counter terrorism. The aim of these recommendations is to bring positive changes to the current training that is available and help support officer confidence.

Recommendation one is the introduction of more regular mandatory training on counter terrorism for response officers. Requirements should be introduced to allow for response officers to receive regular refresher training on counter terrorism. At present, specialist counter terrorism teams receive the relevant training to tackle terrorism, which is acceptable as it is primarily their role. But further training for response officers can further equip the relevant specialist teams with the potential for more intelligence and suspects identified by response officers from their day to day interaction within the communities they serve. This help supports the governments CONTEST and PREVENT strategies which aims to meets it's four principles: preventing people becoming terrorists and supporting terrorism, to peruse and stop terrorist attacks happening, to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack and minimising the impact of a terrorist attack so people can live freely and with confidence (Home Office, 2023).

The second recommendation is to introduce a better and more updated level of training on counter terrorism to response officers. Joint emergency services training exercises in response to major incidents such as terror attacks are not regularly accessible to all officers and as a result officers are left to obtain their knowledge of what to do in such incidents through the use of online learning packages. This means they do not provide the real life demands of decision making in fast paced high danger scenarios and contributes to an uneven preparedness among response officers (Aplin and Rogers, 2025). More regular scenario-based training exercises will provide officers with the knowledge and confidence in knowing what to do in such events and help reduce the time taken to make decisions. As a result, officers would be less likely to overthink and experience decision fatigue which could lead to errors and then suffer from psychological and mental strains in the future and instead improve officer confidence (Shortland, Thompson and Alison 2020: Wallace, 2018).

The third recommendation is to make changes to the training that is currently provided to response officers from online e-learning packages to a more hybrid style of in person specialist inputs and to also continue to make use of the online packages. As the results gathered from the questionnaire showed, response officers are open to the idea of having more formal inputs from specialist teams to know how they feel response officers can help. This would help address the points mentioned by Lemmetty (2024) within the literature review that online e-learning packages are

considered to be lecture heavy, rely on self-guided learning and lack social interaction to address queries that participants may have. By moving to a mix of both formal inputs and online e-learning packages, this would ensure that following a formal input, officers can be made aware of the further online packages that are available. These online packages can regularly updated and used as a way of keeping officers updated on the latest symbolisms ideologies in an ever-changing world as terrorism becomes more unpredictable and harder to identify, addressing concerns made by Clarke and Newman (2007) and Doyle and Webb (2022) within the literature review. This will allow the packages to be cost-effective and provide consistency across all UK police forces.

5.4 Completion and Achievement of Objectives

This study has achieved the following objectives:

- 1. To examine the current counter terrorism training provided to police response officers and consider its effectiveness.*

This objective was completed in Chapter Two as previous research was analysed relating to counter terrorism training provided to officers.

- 2. To identify an appropriate research method to gather response officers' views on counter terrorism training they have received.*

The objective was achieved in Chapter Three and involved the use of the research onion (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2019). The chapter identified that the best way to collect data for this research project was through an online survey.

- 3. To analyse the primary data collected to gain an understanding on police response officers views on counter terrorism training they receive and their confidence in dealing with the subject.*

This objective was achieved in Chapter Four using the six-step framework of Caulfield (2019) to help present my findings and identify key themes.

- 4. To make evidence-based recommendations for improving counter terrorism training for response officers.*

This objective was achieved in Chapter Five following analysis of the themes identified in the previous chapter.

5.5 Limitations

There were two key limitations to this research for this study. The questionnaire used to gather the data used was only shared with police response officers from Gwent police force. Due to this, the information collected may not represent each force and how they deliver counter terrorism training to their officers (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Another limitation was that only 12 officers completed the questionnaire. A larger sample size may provide more accuracy in the data collected and a wider range of perspectives and views on the relevant topics (Gumpili and Das, 2022).

5.6 Future research

The primary data collected in this research study was collected from one out of forty-eight UK police forces. This was due to the study needing to be smaller in scale given time constraints and to ensure data collected was a manageable size for analysis by the researcher. If this research project was to be conducted again it would be extremely beneficial to include a range of forces from all over the UK, targeting a larger network of potential participants to understand how training and officer confidence in counter terrorism is across multiple forces.

Future research should prioritise examining specific counter terrorism training provided to response officers and its effectiveness. Research should consider the manner in which the training is delivered, the frequency, and the extent to which learning from counter terrorism is retained over time.

5.7 Conclusion

This research study has successfully achieved its objectives and answered the following research question “*What are the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts, and how can they be supported moving forward?*”.

This research study has also given the reader an insight into officer confidence when dealing with terrorism incidents and the current levels of training that response police officers receive in counter terrorism.

Throughout this research project the aim has been to establish the level of training that is provided to response officers and to gather officers’ views on whether more training should be provided around counter terrorism. It has identified that this is an area that can be improved, and officers would be willing to engage with specialist

teams to learn how they can offer more in the fight against terrorism and keeping the public safe. It is hoped that further research within this area is conducted to make positive changes moving forward.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Copy of online survey

Response officers knowledge and confidence in dealing with counter terrorism (2)

Please complete this questionnaire if you are a currently employed police response officer. The information gathered in regards to this questionnaire will be used for a dissertation for a BSc in professional police practise. Participants will remain anonymous. You are not required to complete this questionnaire and may withdraw from doing so at any stage. The information gathered through this questionnaire will be analysed to make recommendations for future training in counter terrorism.

For any further queries, please contact me via email, 2222456@student.uwtsd.ac.uk.

1. Have you ever been involved in a counter terrorism related incident or operation?

☐ YES

☐ NO

2. Do you feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Have you received any formal counter terrorism training in the past 2 years?

☐ YES

☐ NO

4. Do you feel more training on counter terrorism should be provided?

☐ YES

☐ NO

5. Do you believe that regular counter terrorism training for response officers is necessary to help identify possible risks or signs?

☐ YES

☐ NO

6. Are you aware of national counter terrorism strategies such as CONTEST and PREVENT?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

7. How do you feel about the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I believe that regular refresher training courses on counter terrorism are necessary for response officers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The training I have received adequately prepares me for counter terrorism situations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can identify early indicators of radicalisation or terror related behaviour such as logos or propaganda.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel that training in counter terrorism for response officers is an area that could be improved.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Do you feel that response officers have a role in counter terrorism? If so, why?

Enter your answer

9. What training have you received from the police force in relation to counter terrorism?

Enter your answer

10. What aspects of counter terrorism training do you feel need improvement or updating?

Enter your answer

Appendix B – Ethics Form

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 , 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:	Liam Michael Ball			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☒	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student

3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	IMH
4	Campus:	SWANSEA
5	E-mail address:	2222456@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
6	Contact Telephone Number:	
For students:		
7	Student Number:	2222456
8	Programme of Study:	BSc (Hons) 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? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
		Institute Research Committee	☐		
		Other Jane Davies	☒	27/11/24	

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	<u>UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice</u>	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>	☐

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					
2	Contact person name					
3	Contact person e-mail address					
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
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	☐	NO	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) (If NO the application cannot continue)	YES	☐	NO	☐

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

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
	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:	Evaluating the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts.
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2	Proposed start date:	27/11/2024	Proposed end date:	30/06/2024
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			
3	Terrorism is the use or threat of violence in an attempt to intimidate the public. The motive of this violence can be political, religious or ideological beliefs. The threat level of terrorism within the UK is currently graded as substantial, which means an attack is likely. Within recent years the threat level has changed four times since 2020 between substantial and severe, which means an attack is highly likely. The threat level is constantly reviewed and amended based on the available intelligence, terrorist capabilities, intentions and timescale. Terror incidents can be connected to political issues or wars happening outside of the UK. The current ongoing situation in Gaza is a just a recent example of ongoing conflict happening elsewhere being protested within the UK. This highlights that terrorism within all parts of the UK is very much a modern issue within today's society. The aim of the project is to conduct research into the threat of modern day terrorism and the counter efforts that are put in place. This research will aim to answer the question: What are the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts, and how can they be supported moving forward? The researcher will conduct research into the training that is provided to police response officers, whether it is for for purpose given the level of threat posed and their confidence in carrying out such skills that they have been taught. The researcher aims to gather information on the measures in place to support response police officers in counter terrorism efforts and what extra training and			

	support could be provided to the police to ensure they receive the right training and have the confidence to implement it. The research objectives are as follows: - To use a questionnaire to complete an audit on the training active response officers have received regarding counter terrorism. - Identify training needs on counter terrorism and highlight the potential impacts they may have on front line officers. - To gain an understanding of the level of confidence active front line officers have in recognising potential indicators and threats of radicalisation or terrorism within a community or area and their confidence in dealing with the issue. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question – what you want to find out. This research will aim to answer the question: What are the training needs and confidence of response police officers in counter terrorism efforts, and how can they be supported moving forward? The researcher aims to carry out research into gathering the opinions of current serving response officers and whether they feel they receive the necessary training on counter terrorism matters, such being kept up to date with the latest radical groups or relevant issues/signs within the local area. The research also aims to evaluate front line officers confidence on dealing with the issue. (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity – break it down to what you want to find out To gain the thoughts and opinions of current serving response officers in regards to their knowledge and confidence on deal with counter terrorism efforts. To review what training is provided to officers and to gather information on whether there are opportunities for further training. To also evaluate the use of modern communications and whether there is a need for better communication to frontline officers when being kept up to date with current ongoing affairs in the world or local community that could be linked to terrorism.

	(this box should expand as you type)
6	Objectives of Research Activity – objective is to use a variety of sources. The research objectives are as follows: - To use a questionnaire to complete an audit on the training active response officers have received regarding counter terrorism. - Identify training needs on counter terrorism and highlight the potential impacts they may have on front line officers. - To gain an understanding of the level of confidence active front line officers have in recognising potential indicators and threats of radicalisation or terrorism within a community or area and their confidence in dealing with the issue. This research will gather information from a range of sources. These includes, websites, journals and articles along with a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be completed by current serving police officers to help gain relevant information and statistics. (this box should expand as you type)
	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may 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.
7	A questionnaire will be created on Microsoft Forms. The questionnaire will be anonymous. It will be a number of questions, a mixture of free text boxes and Likert scales. When participants open the link for the questionnaire, participants will be presented with information on the questionnaire, its purpose and how information gathered will be used. The information will inform participants that the questionnaire is optional, and by completing the questionnaire they are giving consent for their answers to be used in the research. The link for the questionnaire will be posted onto the 'intranet' Home Page of the police locality, where police officers visit regularly. It will also be emailed out to colleagues of the researcher.

	A mixed-methods approach to data analysis will be taken. In order to obtain information and statistics that are both relevant and provide an insight into the views of officers, the use of a qualitative and quantitative questionnaire will be considered. The questionnaire will contain questions that provide an opportunity for active police officers to participate, and from the results will allow the researcher to identify potential themes or patterns from the answers obtained. Some questions within the questionnaire will have text boxes with free text options. This will allow the researcher to gather qualitative data. This data will then be analysed through thematic analysis. The Braun and Clarke 6-step process of thematic analysis will be used. This will allow the researcher to identify key themes when analysing and interpreting the research topics. Questions with a likert scale will also be considered. By offering questions with answers such as 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree', this can help place participants into a category, where depending on their answers to each question, allows for statistical data to be obtained and then categorised when presenting the results of the questionnaire. The researcher will use descriptive statistics to present this data when appropriate. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	Maindee Police station (this box should expand as you type)
	Research activity outside of the UK 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.

9	N/A (this box should expand as you type)

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <u>NOT</u> publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
11	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. (this box should expand as you type)		

	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	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☐	☒
14	A healthier Wales	☐	☒
15	A more equal Wales	☐	☒
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	(this box should expand as you type)		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	☒
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒

4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	☒
	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?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒

5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

	Participant numbers and source 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?	Unknown number of participants as this will be an optional questionnaire and therefore it is not guaranteed that all of those who receive a link will complete the questionnaire. (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be?	The participants will be active police officers currently serving for the identified police force. (this box should expand as you type)
12	How will you identify the participants?	An email will be sent to a colleagues of the researcher active police officers asking if they could take part in a questionnaire by answering a number of questions relating to the topic. This will be shared between officers on shift but also to a wider number of officers via a link on the police force 'intranet' home page which is visible to all officers across the force. (this box should expand as you type)

	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?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☐	☒	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒

18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☐	☐	☒
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
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?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☒	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	This will be an optional questionnaire, officers will not be forced to complete the questionnaire if they do not wish to do so therefore they will not be a need for written consent for participation. The research is not expected to have an emotional response on officers and will be optional, and therefore the need to debrief is felt unnecessary. The researchers email will be provided, should participants want to make contact following completion of the questionnaire. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
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 ☐	No ☒
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	Risk to participants: Transfer of personal data <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: All information gathered will be anonymous and not able to be re-identified. <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		
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest		

	Risk to the investigator: None identified <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: None identified <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: None identified <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	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.	YES	NO	N/A
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☐	☒
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	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
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	If anyone who completes the questionnaire would like to know the final results I would be happy to provide my email address and provide a brief update of my findings once my dissertation has been submitted and marked. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent 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.
	Police officers who complete the questionnaire will be informed that the information they provide will be used within the dissertation. All the names of those completing the questionnaire will be completely anonymous and will not be revealed at any point. Before starting the questionnaire, this will be explained so that all participants are aware before they proceed with answering the questions. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity 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.
	There will not be an option to insert your name or any other personal details within the questionnaire. The questions within the questionnaire will only be related to the relevant topic. Should any personal identifiable information be disclosed during the questionnaire, this will be omitted or replaced with fictitious initials by the researcher during the analysis process. <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	“Personal data” 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	☐	x ☐

	<i>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.</i>		
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	x ☐
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
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:		
	Data (anonymous) will be kept on the researchers work laptop, which is password protected and used by only the researcher.		

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

	Data Protection		
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☐	☒
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
20	Data archiving?	☐	☒
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 (this box should expand as you type)		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher will have access on their work laptop which is not shared and is password protected. (this box should expand as you type)		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	The researcher only. (this box should expand as you type)		
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.		
	Data will be saved on the researchers work laptop, on cloud storage. This is password protected and not a shared laptop. The data will be deleted upon completion of the dissertation as it will not be required further. (this box should expand as you type)		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. (Most relevant to academic staff)		
	N/A		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtسد.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
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	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

	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. 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: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	L M Ball	Date: 16/12/2024

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
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:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	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.
☒	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 , 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 C – Questionnaire answers

Question 1	
Have you been involved in a counter terrorism related incident or operation?	Participant 1 - YES
	Participant 2 – NO
	Participant - YES
	Participant - NO
	Participant - NO
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – NO
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant - NO

Question 2	
Do you feel confident in dealing with terrorism incidents?	Participant 1 - YES
	Participant 2 – NO
	Participant 3 - NO
	Participant 4 - NO
	Participant 5 - NO
	Participant 6 – NO
	Participant 7 – NO
	Participant 8 – NO
	Participant 9 – YES
	Participant 10 – NO
	Participant 11 – NO
	Participant 12 - NO

Question 3	
Have you received any formal counter terrorism in the past two years?	Participant 1 - NO
	Participant 2 – YES
	Participant - YES
	Participant - YES
	Participant - NO
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant - NO

Question 4	
Do you feel more training on counter terrorism should be provided?	Participant 1 - YES
	Participant 2 – NO
	Participant - YES
	Participant - NO
	Participant - YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES

	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant - YES

Question 5	
Do you believe that regular counter terrorism training for response officers is necessary to help identify possible risks or signs?	Participant 1 - YES
	Participant 2 – NO
	Participant - YES
	Participant - YES
	Participant - YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant – YES
	Participant - YES

Question 6	
Are you aware of national counter terrorism strategies such as CONTEST and PREVENT?	Participant 1 - YES
	Participant 2 – NO
	Participant 3 - YES
	Participant 4 - NO
	Participant 5 - YES
	Participant 6 – YES
	Participant 7 – YES
	Participant 8 – YES
	Participant 9 – YES
	Participant 10 – NO
	Participant 11 – NO
	Participant 12 – YES

Question 7 (1/4)	
How do you feel about the following statement: I believe that regular refresher training courses on counter terrorism are necessary for response officers?	Participant 1 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 2 – NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 3 - AGREE
	Participant 4 - AGREE
	Participant 5 - STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 6 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 7 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 8 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 9 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 10 – AGREE
	Participant 11 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 12 - STRONGLY AGREE

Question 7 (2/4)	
How do you feel about the	Participant 1 – STRONGLY DISAGREE
	Participant 2 – NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE

following statement: The training I have received adequately prepares me for counter terrorism situations?	Participant 3 - AGREE
	Participant 4 - NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 5 - NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 6 – DISAGREE
	Participant 7 – DISAGREE
	Participant 8 – DISAGREE
	Participant 9 – DISAGREE
	Participant 10 – STRONGLY DISAGREE
	Participant 11 – DISAGREE
	Participant 12 - STRONGLY DISAGREE

Question 7 (3/4)	
How do you feel about the following statement: I can identify early indicators of radicalisation or terror related behaviour such as logos or propaganda?	Participant 1 – DISAGREE
	Participant 2 – NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 3 - AGREE
	Participant 4 - NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 5 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 6 – AGREE
	Participant 7 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 8 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 9 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 10 – AGREE
	Participant 11 – STRONGLY DISAGREE
	Participant 12 - DISAGREE

Question 7 (4/4)	
How do you feel about the following statement: I feel that training in counter terrorism for response officers is an area that could be improved?	Participant 1 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 2 – NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
	Participant 3 - AGREE
	Participant 4 - AGREE
	Participant 5 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 6 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 7 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 8 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 9 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 10 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 11 – STRONGLY AGREE
	Participant 12 - STRONGLY AGREE

Question 8	
Do you feel that response officers have a role in counter terrorism? If so, why?	Participant 1 – We are first responders to these types of incidents before more specialised units can attend
	Participant 2 – Nah
	Participant 3 - Yes, as an initial responders we would be duty bound to protect the public in such events as per instructions by SMT
	Participant 4 - Response officers are the first point of contact. They will be the one going into the hours or flats or other building for an unrelated matter. They will provide the intel for the CT team.
	Participant 5 – yes - you never know when you may come across it
	Participant 6 – Yes. Our role is to share information that we have on the public with specialist officers and teams. We work in the community and build relationships with the public and so May notice things that others don't
	Participant 7 – Yes as we often come across early indicators when carrying out our normal duties

	Participant 8 – We are the ones who come into contact with different environments and communities. We also work with vulnerable people that are at risk of being radicalised
	Participant 9 – First ones at any emergency getting key information
	Participant 10 – Yes we know the communities we work in and need to do what we can to protect them
	Participant 11 – Yes - First responders with a duty of care
	Participant 12 - It is a real issue so important that we have confidence in dealing with it when it comes about

Question 9	
What training have you received from the police force in relation to counter terrorism?	Participant 1 – PREVENT / METHANE training
	Participant 2 – NCALT
	Participant 3 - responding to initial CT calls in relation to carrying taser for events such as marauding attacks.
	Participant 4 - Could not specify as it was during training school.
	Participant 5 – one input in training school
	Participant 6 – I’m not sure exactly, it was during training school, wasn’t specific
	Participant 7 – PREVENT and something in training school
	Participant 8 – PREVENT training
	Participant 9 – Training school - not specific
	Participant 10 – Not sure, a guest speaker for half an hour, nothing formal
	Participant 11 – PREVENT and something else I can’t remember
	Participant 12 - Nothing since being in the force other than during training

Question 10	
What aspects of counter terrorism training do you feel need improvement or updating?	Participant 1 – more regular inputs from specialist teams
	Participant 2 – None
	Participant 3 - All.
	Participant 4 - Identifying
	Participant 5 – Training to be introduced
	Participant 6 – More formal training. I would like to hear from the specialist teams about how they feel we could help
	Participant 7 – Identifying early indicators as I feel that’s what we are most likely to come into contact with and be more helpful with
	Participant 8 – I would welcome any training and would also like to hear from the specialist teams
	Participant 9 – Would like up to date training on early indicators because these things change rapidly like with politics and religion but the only training was some time ago in training school
	Participant 10 – Any training possible
	Participant 11 – Up to date symbolism, small things to look out for when working with the public
	Participant 12 - Any training we can get. Would like to hear from the specialist teams about how we can help them