

Workbook 3

by Chris Gale

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BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

**Workbook title: Competency Based
Workbook 3 (PCDA)
8000 Words**

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

Learner name: _____

Learner's University Registration Number:

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Professional Police Practice 3 (PCDA) BMPP6000D

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

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

- Understanding the Police Officer role
- Modern Professional Police Officer
- Strategic Role of the College of Policing
- Communication Skills
- Social Media
- Leadership and Team Working
- Leadership style
- Flexibility and Leadership Strategy
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Professional and Organisational goals
- Assessment

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

How should the workbook be presented?

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

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

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

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

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

How is the workbook assessed?

Advice and support about the completion of this workbook was provided by university staff as part of your initial training day and further help and advice is available on Moodle.

Your tutor constable and in-force training staff will not be involved in assessing or marking your workbook after it has been submitted.

Dates of workbook submission will be made available and posted on Moodle.

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

NOTE

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

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

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

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

Guidance:

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

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Task 1

**Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:
Understanding the Police Officer Role.**

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

Critically evaluate the strategic role of the College of Police in professionalising policing in the U.K.

Evidence how you are working to fulfil the role of a modern professional police officer now that you are in your final year of probation.

Critically reflect upon how your final year of probation has seen your role as a police officer change.

Consider the strategic Policing requirement, Policing Vision 2025, the Workforce Transformation 2018 and the College of Policing's 5 Year Strategy.

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

ANSWER:

The modern police officer faces several challenges. At the heart of all of these is the professional standards that all police officers are expected to adhere to, introduced by the College of Policing (CoP).

The College of Policing was launched in 2013 and was the first UK wide body to focus entirely on improving professionalism within the industry of policing (NPCC, 2013). The CoP superseded the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) with the functions of the NPIA split between the College of Policing, the Home Office and the National Crime Agency.

The CoP exists with three core functions: leadership and development which centres on improving leadership capability, standards which provides authorised professional practice as well as the fundamental code of ethics and professional standards, and to improve police force performance with toolkits and good practice (College of Policing, 2021).

The policing community has recently been hounded by controversy, leaving the public outraged following a high-profile incident involving a serving police officer. The extensively reported and tragic murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens

prompted the Angiolini Enquiry and the baroness Casey review. Both inquests placed the police, particularly the Met in the spotlight and subjected them, rightfully, to intense scrutiny. These reviews and subsequent recommendations have promoted the College of Policing to implement more stringent vetting practices and to launch the National Group for Violence Against Women and Girls (College of Policing, 2024).

As part of its core roles of improving performance and the professional development of police officers, the CoP introduced the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF) with the intention of standardising initial recruit training across all 43 police forces (Kadry and Lambert, n.d.).

Like everything new, the PEQF met resistance as people criticised the idea of police officers having to undertake academic learning as they argued that it was at odds with principle seven of the Peelian principles (Tangen and Rudkin, 2023) that says the people are the police. This suggests that police officers should be recruited from the community they serve and any academic advantage that a police officer has is at odds with this.

There is further argument that the requirement for police officers to have a degree reduces workforce diversity. There appears to be no substance to this claim though and is refuted by the fact that 38% of PCDA recruits are female and there continues to be an increase in people from alternative backgrounds with 8% of PCDA officers now being from a non-white background (Andrews, 2023).

This encouraging increase in workforce diversity holds up principle seven of the Peelian principles, will improve public confidence in the police as the public see themselves represented in the people that have sworn to protect them from harm.

The aim of the PEQF is to improve police officer critical thinking, to encourage police officers to self-reflect and to promote continuous learning in a way that compliments the operational requirements and understanding of their role that police officers have (Williams, Norman and Rowe, 2019). The biggest benefit must be standardisation of teaching, what is taught in Devon and Cornwall is the same that is taught in Northumbria.

There appears to be as much criticism as there is support for the PEQF, and this comes from all corners of the policing world. The Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Constabulary launched an appeal in 2019 on the basis that all new recruits would at some point be removed from frontline policing to complete their academic studies thereby reducing the number of deployable officers (Kadry and Lambert, 2022).

The aim of the introduction of the PEQF and the degree framework was to professionalise policing and for society to hold it in the same professional regard as the medical and legal fields. This was to support and encourage the idea of evidence-based policing, to create police officers that have the knowledge required to deliver this and for policing to be considered a graduate profession (Martin, 2026).

The Home Secretary in 2023, published their strategic policing requirement, outlining seven national threats, which at the time of publishing were listed as; violence against women and girls (VAWG), terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber event, child sexual abuse, public disorder and civil emergencies (Gov.uk, 2023).

During a recent HMICFRS inspection, a series of recommendations were published which were accepted by the government, the CoP and the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) (Gov.uk, 2023). In response to this, there were several strategies implemented by the CoP and NPCC, which are encompassed by the National Centre for Violence Against Women, Girls and Public Protection (NVCPP) and the National Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Framework 2024-2027 (College of Policing, 2025). The CoP is now delivering this by releasing authorised professional practice, toolkits and the nationwide implementation of Operation Soteria which uses academic data and study to advise police forces how rape should be investigated (National Police Chief's Council, 2024). The efficacy of these strategies is yet to be determined as the work to combat VAWG is continuous and ever evolving.

Operation Soteria is the embodiment of the College of Policing's goal for policing to be evidence-based and has called for a fundamental shift in policing. Soteria aims to deliver victim centred and suspect focussed policing by using data, intelligence and analytics (Jacques, 2024).

One of the most significant advances that has been made by the intelligent use of data is the insight into the human psyche and how perpetrators exploit this in their victims. Operation Soteria aims to exploit this by studying offending behaviour and using their own tactics against them. The introduction of the PEQF has fostered critical thinkers with problem-solving skills that are best placed to support victims and bring offenders to justice (Crew, 2022).

Gibbs' reflective cycle is a well established and often used tool to critically analyse and evaluate a situation or task, split into six clear stages that allows the individual to think about each stage and provides an opportunity to learn from experience (The University of Edinburgh, 2024) and has allowed me to analyse my time as a probationary constable through to achieving independent patrol status.

The Competency and Values Framework (CVF) is at the core of every police officer's professional development. It underpins progression from tutorship through to achieving independent patrol status and encourages greater confidence in decision-making and reinforces the necessary and effective use of the National Decision Model.

Trying to balance academic study and tutorship required adaptation and flexibility. I demonstrated public service by immersing myself in my study and respect and empathy by doing everything I could to learn from my more experienced colleagues. Joining the police after a long career caused both trepidation and anticipation. Courage was essential to manage these feelings whilst ensuring that I maintained professional standards and delivered victim-centred policing.

Guidance from shift colleagues ensured rapid operational growth and allowed me to embed into shift quickly. What did become obvious was that the vast amounts of information I had to assimilate in a relatively short space of time commanded my full attention and I had to develop retention strategies that support this learning long-term.

The psychological and cognitive pressures were like those experienced by any other probationary officer. Using the CVF throughout my probation and beyond, particularly the values of critical analysis and ownership allowed me to meet operational demand, achieve independent status and be able to carry out further operational training.

I have identified the need for earlier recognition of doubt and seeking assistance sooner. Self-reflection such as this aligns with CVF values and strengthens professional integrity and team cohesion.

I will continue my personal development by undertaking more training, asking for support when needed and work on strengthening my own resilience. This development will continually align with the values of public service, courage and respect and empathy.

Within the CVF is the competency of being emotionally aware, this not only addresses supporting others but how to build one's own resilience when faced with high-pressure situations.

Being a probationary officer is exhausting, both mentally and physically. A student officer must navigate a whole gamut of firsts as well as being the one that the public will look to in a time of crisis and expect the officer to switch from total authoritarian to an emotionally intelligent victim-centred police officer within a matter of mere minutes.

The use of the national decision model (NDM) allows all police officers to make structured, well-rounded and defensible decisions and provides a framework for decision making in any situation (College of Policing, 2013) from a violent, dynamic street fight to a report of rogue traders. Either of these situations to a probationary officer has the potential to be overwhelming so having the knowledge and understanding of the NDM has the power to remove some of this uncertainty.

To conclude, the introduction of the CoP in 2013 has played a pivotal role in modern policing, with a central aim of raising standards and professional behaviour whilst encouraging police officers to make decisions using an evidence-based approach. The College of Policing has long sought to align policing with the traditional vocations of medicine and law and continues to take steps to establish policing as a recognised profession.

It has introduced the PEQF, a code of ethics, publishes approved professional practice guidance and has launched a national taskforce focussing on the strategic policing requirement following the recognition of the current biggest threats to national security.

This necessity cannot entirely be attributed to altruism though. The police's accountability, legitimacy, standards of behaviour, organisational culture, and latterly violence against women and girls has long been criticised, with the Scarman

Report and the Macpherson Enquiry delivering damning verdicts of police culture. This, combined with a rapid change in the complexity and nature of crime has meant that not only have police officers had to adapt (Parker-McLeod, 2026), the College of Policing has had to adapt as well, making sure officers remain ethical and stand up to scrutiny to become well-read, inquisitive officers fit for the 21st century.

What has become clear with the recent Angiolini enquiry, the Baroness Casey review, and supported by statistics, is that the police have got a long way to go for the public to trust the police again. Over half of the public do not think that their local police force in their area is performing positively (Office for National Statistics, 2025).

There has been a recent major overhaul announced for the current policing landscape in the United Kingdom. It has been introduced by the current government and is part of a long-term plan to improve policing, improve public confidence and equip police forces to deal with modern and complex crime as well as be prepared and have the resources to deploy to mass disorder events. The introduction of the National Police Service which will assimilate the College of Policing, which currently is the only agency that provides authorised professional practice to police forces. The hope is that this nationalisation of certain aspects of policing will allow the sharing of best practice and grow public confidence in the police once more (Home Office, 2026). **(1846 words)**

Task 2

**Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:
Communication Skills, social media, Communication Strategy**

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

Critically evaluate your experience of the use of social media as a means of informing and engaging with the community and promoting policy initiatives.

Consider the force policy on using social media for professional information and engagement purposes.

What social media platforms are used by policing?

What are the benefits and risks of using social media?

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

ANSWER:

Social media is best described as a collection of online platforms that allow instantaneous information sharing in the form of text, image and video. These platforms offer the capability to reach vast numbers of people quickly. This gives the police and other agencies the unique opportunity to reach audiences they might not usually engage with and allows it to be done when it is most needed.

The College of Policing (2023) says that anybody whose whereabouts and well-being is unknown will be considered as a missing person until either can be established.

Missing people are categorised according to the risk they pose to themselves and others, and this risk is kept under continuous review as new information emerges. Once an individual meets the threshold to be considered a missing person, they undergo a risk assessment that determines the proportionality of the policing response, including whether social media should be used, based on stringent deployment guidelines.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has published guidelines to all police forces on the use of social media, these guidelines set out the risks and benefits of the use of social media by police, and identifies five key areas of risk that it expects police forces to manage; breach of public trust and confidence, disclosure of personal data without consent, bringing the police into disrepute, revealing of personal information and disclosure of police methods and tactics (ACPO, 2013).

The College of Policing builds on the ACPOs guidelines further by detailing which departments may be likely to use social media and for what purpose. It recognises

the autonomy of police forces, and the policy empowers police services to make their own decisions about how best to utilise social media (College of Policing, 2026).

The obvious pitfall is that social media and the internet develop quicker than any policy, practice or guideline ever could and as a result any such guidance is retrospective, exposing police forces to further risk.

There is a further layer of protection in the form of the Management of Police Information (MOPI), which sets out all the expectations and requirements under the order. It divides police information into police corporate information and police operational information with bespoke guidance for each, operational information includes information that is collected and stored for the protection of life and property (College of Policing, 2023b) which is where information about a missing person would sit.

All this legal guidance, standards and guidance is all prepared to allow police forces to use social media in a proportionate and legal way and to maximise its effectiveness. It allows police forces to develop their own social media policies in line with the national guidance.

Gwent Police has written its own social media policy, the majority of which aligns with the nationally recognised standards and guidance and details the expectations it has of police officers and staff and the appropriate use of social media for a policing purpose. It sets out why police may use social media, stating that it allows the police to build public trust and allows police to reach audiences when vital information is needed, in this case about the movements of and whereabouts of a missing person.

Public trust in the police remains something that all police forces are working tirelessly to improve, and the use of social media to reach communities that feel unheard is one of the methods of doing this. Following the death of Mark Duggan in 2011, there was widespread unrest throughout the country. Greater Manchester Police provided 24/7 coverage of the events via Twitter. This prolonged use of social media to report on events following such a high-profile event that the police faced widespread criticism for showed that the police still had much to do when it came to its effective use of social media (Kershaw, 2023).

Social media inherently encourages two-way communication between parties; however, the police have adopted a stance that could be viewed as more traditional and that is one of one way broadcasting, akin to reading a newspaper or watching an advert on television. This one-way exchange of information has allowed public trust and confidence to grow as police forces share more insightful information that the public feel compelled to engage with and find more trustworthy (Cullen and Williams, 2026).

Gwent Police have their own missing person policy, with its aim solely on providing information on how the force should deal with missing persons and the associated safeguarding that would be required. It details in great length the considerations that officers should give when conducting missing person investigations, including detail

on risk grading, the steps to take according to that risk grading and the responsible officers for each step.

There is a section that details family support and involvement and suggests that consideration is given to the use of social media to advance an investigation with due thought given to whether the use of social media could exacerbate any safeguarding concerns.

Jones *et al.*, (2025) say that all police forces have an officially sanctioned visible presence on social media, most notably Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube. There are probably also other niche accounts from specialist departments active on social media as well. These platforms all have different audiences and enable the police to use them for diverse purposes varying from traffic updates to asking for community engagement with police initiatives and asking the public to assist with looking for missing people.

I was allocated this missing person from shift briefing and the name is one that frequently appears on our missing person whiteboard. This person is a young person in local authority care. They are currently living out of their home area, with their home local authority having parental responsibility which is conferred to the host local authority. This young person is allowed free time each day with a set curfew time, with approximately ten minutes leeway to allow for them to get home. Their carers are then to report them as per their guidelines as a missing person. When this young person does go missing, they are ordinarily missing for at least three or four days.

Shaw and Greenhow (2019) discuss the reasons why looked after children are more susceptible to the risks posed by childhood criminal and sexual exploitation. They say that because of the chaos of their formative years, often suffering abuse and neglect and the frequent moves that come with being in the care system, they are more open to manipulation. There is also research to suggest that offending behaviour from children is a coping mechanism for them as they come to terms with the harm they have suffered and the lack of stability they live with daily. All forms of childhood exploitation rely on power imbalance and often a lack of recognition on the part of the young person that they are being exploited.

There are further concerns that this young person is the victim of childhood criminal and sexual exploitation and several people have had childhood abduction warning notices (CAWNs) served against them to protect this young person from harm. This young person has also been involved in criminality and has been found to have drugs and mobile phones on their person that they could not account for.

The decision to use social media for this person was because their risk grading was high, they had been missing for several days by the time it had been allocated to me and their whereabouts were still unknown. This young person usually remains unaccounted for but will continue to contact their carers by telephone to inform them that they are safe and well but will not reveal their location. On this occasion, this young person had not contacted his carers either.

Social media was also used as this occasion as this was just after their partner, who is over eighteen, was issued with a CAWN to protect the young person from harm. There was also information to suggest that they had travelled at least out of local authority area and possibly out of force area as well. This, coupled with all local enquiries being exhausted gave further weight to considering social media.

The risks posed to this child added further complexities to this missing person case as the risk that making a public appeal about this missing person had to be carefully deliberated.

The NPCC (2025) has some sage advice for police services when considering social media appeals for missing people. Consent for missing person social media appeals should always be sought from family or care provider. It is imperative that the person providing consent is aware of what providing consent for a social media appeal entails and that in some cases the police may make the decision for them based on the best interests of the missing person. There are, of course, occasions where a social media appeal may place the person at more risk, this should also be discussed with family or other care provider.

The disappearance of Nicola Bulley in January 2023 became a high-profile case because of its bizarre nature. Bulley disappeared while on an ordinarily mundane activity – walking her dog. What followed could only be described as an absolute frenzy on social media that saw the investigation achieve unprecedented global notoriety. This intense public interest set a precedent in the development of police communication strategy. Especially when considered in the wider context of missing people in the UK, someone is reported as missing in this country every 90 seconds, approximately 160,000 annually (Missing People, 2023). These stark figures highlight the need for law enforcement to manage the so-called information vacuum that drives online speculation in cases that capture national media attention.

The Nicola Bulley case led to a review by the College of Policing (2023a) into Lancashire Constabulary's handling of this investigation. This review found that Lancashire Constabulary didn't declare the Bulley investigation acritical incident, even though the threshold had been met. This meant that the force could not control what was being posted on social media, leading to speculation and conspiracy theories being bandied around by social media users. This loss of control led to the unnecessary disclosure of Nicola's private medical information, which quickly damaged public confidence in the police.

As a result of this investigation, police forces have been advised to shift towards a more transparent and authoritative narrative when it comes to missing people and that the police should release non-reportable briefings to the media to dissuade public misinformation.

There is considerable guidance and authorised professional practice surrounding both missing people including operational response and the police's use of social media. Any policy, in the police or any other organisation is inherently retrospective, implemented after an incident has already occurred. This retrospective aspect is at odds with the rapidly evolving world of social media and more recently the introduction of AI into our daily lives. Social media remains a part of everybody's

lives and is an important tool in the arsenal of police force media communications. It allows for audiences to be reached quickly and in a targeted and meaningful way and allows for information to be shared far and wide. There are also inherent risks with social media, the information once published is in the public domain and can be interacted with, sometimes without any control over the narrative that is being shared.

There have been occasions, such as the tragic death of Nicola Bulley following a missing person report, that the police have got it fundamentally wrong with their use of social media. This led to trolling and a loss of public confidence. If there is social media, there will be those individuals that seek to discredit the police, and it is imperative that the police are first out of the gate and publish an authoritative and engaging narrative that drives public engagement. **(1971 words)**

Task 3

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Leadership and Teamworking

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

Critically evaluate and **evidence** your flexibility in leadership style.

Critically analyse leadership strategies that you have developed to manage a range of different operational situations.

Consider leadership models commonly used in policing.

How were you able to apply a change in leadership style/strategy to reflect changing circumstances?

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

ANSWER:

Leadership in the realm of policing is unique in its requirement for flexibility. Unlike the more traditional business environment, where leadership styles are often undynamic, a police officer must be able to deftly switch from an authoritarian to a coach and back again, often within seconds.

This essay shall study the necessity of flexibility, and shall study the contrast between leadership styles, specifically the authoritative model and the transformational style of leadership.

Policing in the UK has historically been more inclined towards the transactional and authoritative models, rooted in the origins of the police service. However, the modern policing plan and the national decision model calls for an alternative approach.

Goleman (2002, quoted in Stobierski, 2019) told the Harvard Business School that authoritative leaders are mentors guiding others towards a common goal, and having oversight of the challenges they face. This leader inspires and gently guides and coaches offering constructive feedback along the way, which ensures that people feel empowered and have a sense of accomplishment. In the policing world, this can translate to an officer taking charge at a road traffic collision (RTC) and directing members of the public to where they should go.

In contrast, transformational leadership focuses on relationship building, sharing a common goal and empowering a workforce (Ystaas *et al.*, 2023) and this leadership style delivers positive results across industries. This leadership style encourages employees to forego self interest for the good of the organisation. In the policing

context, this type of leadership is seen in the tutor/student relationship, in which the tutor imparts their knowledge to their student. This benefits the organisation by a student being declared operationally competent providing an additional resource for deployment.

Authoritative leadership is most often thought of when one thinks of leadership styles and the police. In its simplest form it is police officers telling people what they can and can't do with no room for negotiation.

The necessity of the authoritative style of leadership is most obvious at a serious incident. Thinking about a fatal RTC that I attended on a busy dual carriageway, operational priorities were the preservation of life, safety of others and scene preservation. In this environment, transformational leadership would be of no benefit as it relies on two-way conversation and focuses on emotional well-being. During this busy RTC scene that commanded a multi-agency response from police, ambulance, air ambulance and local authority, instructions had to be clear, one-dimensional, easy to understand commands that were inherently authoritative.

By utilising this leadership style, I was able to ensure that my colleagues at the scene were able to work safely, and they put their trust in my ability to manage the area I was responsible for, which, it could be argued, on their part at least was transformational leadership. I ensured that members of the public were kept away from what was a harrowing scene and were able to safely and quickly navigate away from the incident without causing any further issues for other members of the public.

This scene was made more complex by the fact that it took place just outside of a retail park and by pure coincidence, the deceased person's family were shopping in the retail park. This unfortunately provided them with firsthand access to the scene.

Because of this, I had to seamlessly and compassionately switch between leadership styles. To the family, I had to be a transformational leader, showing emotional intelligence and compassion but with firm undertones enabling me to maintain the cordon. As with any incident like this, there were those that were fascinated with what was going on but having no business being there, and those that thought the whole thing was nothing but an inconvenience to their day. These persons, who were trying to film what was happening or bypass the cordon so they could reach their destination experienced a firm authoritative leadership style, to maintain the dignity of the deceased individual and his nearby family and to protect the emergency services working at scene. This also aligns with the authorised professional practice from the College of Policing (2013) that says preservation of life and the need to secure any scene quickly is paramount in any incident such as this.

Long before this I was assigned a tutor constable to guide me towards operational competency, they used transformational leadership using a watch one, do one, lead one method of teaching which allowed me to achieve autonomy whilst still having the safety net of a tutor who could step in if things weren't going as well as they perhaps could have been (Brown, 2025).

The transition from student officer to independent status is governed by more than its operational success. It is rooted in the competency and values framework and while it is often seen as nothing more than a hurdle to overcome during that probationary period, the CVF serves as the permanent ethical archetype for every rank. It demands that all officers demonstrate the values of integrity in public service not just in high pressure high demand incidents but in the mundane day-to-day interactions the key to building Community Trust and restoring public relations.

When a tutor displays transformational leadership, they are embodying the competency values framework in real time. By creating an environment where a student feels safe to admit their mistakes, which aligns with the value of openness the tutor prevents the development desire to cover up the mistake which is the breeding ground for toxic behaviour. This transformational leadership is at the frontline defending against organisational failures that have been highlighted in recent years. For every police officer that is mentored with the competency values framework at the forefront of the tutor's mind the professional standards demanded by the public and the College of policing become an everyday reality rather than a paperwork exercise

By allowing a student to eventually lead and be observed by their tutor, a transformation takes place, an individual transforms from being a civilian to a student officer with limited knowledge to a competent officer safe to be deployed. This leadership style encourages high-level decision-making skills and encourages officers to have conviction in their decisions which an authoritative leader may discourage.

There is a further leadership style that aligns itself to one of the national threats under the strategic policing requirement that police officers must employ sadly on an almost daily basis, and that is one of a situational leader. The situational leader can adapt their leadership style according to the circumstance they find themselves in or the individuals they are faced with (Campbell, 2024). In the context of domestic abuse, this would mean an authoritarian approach when separating parties, this may also mean taking this approach with the victim for a short time, because in their heightened emotional state their ability to listen to instruction is diminished.

This would then become transformational, especially with the victim-survivor as the officer seeks to build trust and foster a relationship that allows for honest and open two-way conversation.

As with most things, there are pros and cons to both styles of leadership. Authoritative leadership has the benefit of allowing for rapid-decision making in times of critical need, it gives clear accountability to decision making and reduces the chance for misinterpretation. In contrast to this, the prolonged use of this style of leadership may reduce police legitimacy and doesn't promote autonomous decision-making (Stobierski, 2019b).

Even though transformative leadership could be seen as a more successful leadership style compared to authoritative, this style too comes with its own positives and negatives. Because of its leading by example ethos, transformative leadership enjoys the benefit of higher workplace honesty and integrity and

encourages professional development and individual contribution (Spalding University, 2023). Both qualities are cornerstones in the competency values framework issued by the College of Policing.

Conversely O'Reilly and Chatman (2020, quoted in Wenjuan *et al.*, 2024) says that caution should be exercised to avoid employee burnout, unethical behaviours often caused by erratic decision making as the leaders' motives are entirely self-centred rather than for the good of the team. In the policing world, this type of transformative leader would be extremely harmful and does not align with the competency values framework so would have no place in modern policing.

Police leaders have much to contend with in the way of priorities, ranging from employee welfare all the way up to the national threats as published in the national strategic requirement and everything in between. Public trust in the police continues to suffer, abetted in some part by the media. With atrocious incidents such as the murder of Sarah Everard, the finger of blame lays squarely at the police's door. Failure has come to the police's proverbial table in the form of poor leadership which has failed to eradicate unwanted behaviours (Williamson, 2024).

The tragic case of Wayne Couzens and the resulting enquiries has shown that for police officers that carry risk factors, close supervision is required to mitigate those risks (HMICFRS, n.d.) and the missed opportunity to mitigate these risks is a threat to the police forces. This continued perception of protecting police officers is damaging public trust and confidence and may never be rebuilt. While transformation a leadership may be the gold standard for police force growth it has been argued that this approach by middle and higher management allows for predatory and harmful behaviour to go unchecked. This suggests that the highest levels of leadership must incorporate some element of authoritative leadership by challenging those whose conduct is improper.

Leadership style directly effects a workforce and its capability. The Policing Vision 2025 aims to encourage individuals to seek to better themselves through continued professional development and self-reflection (NPCC, 2025b). These can only come from effective leadership that maximises its leadership potential by using the right style at the right time and being able to adjust accordingly.

Leadership in policing is not a choice. It is something that is expected of all police officers to some degree, and officers are expected to be both simultaneously and have the capability to seamlessly switch between styles. The fatal RTC that I attended showed that without an authoritative leader, the integrity of the scene could have been compromised, the safety of first responders put at risk and the dignity of the deceased not upheld.

Away from the chaos of a full road closure and fatal traffic collision, going from a student officer to independent status relied heavily on the transformational guidance of my tutor. Without this style of leadership, numbers of frontline officers become stagnant and skills and knowledge are lost. To meet the policing plan, senior leadership needs to be addressed to deliver a culture of growth, self-improvement and organisational change, while preserving the sanctity of the police officer's unique ability to make autonomous decisions.

There is no one size fits all where leadership styles are concerned and leadership styles in the business world may not necessarily translate to effective leadership in policing. There is much to learn from the business world as their models of business structure are much more efficient and streamlined (Williamson, 2024). **(1848 words)**

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Coaching, Mentoring, Assessment

Critically reflect upon your three-year probation:

How have you benefited from mentoring and coaching?
How has it helped you to meet personal, professional and organisational goals?
How has it aided you to learn, develop and perform in the workplace?

Consider relevant coaching and mentoring definitions along with current coaching and mentoring theories used in policing.

How do you provide and receive feedback?

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

ANSWER:

In the fast-paced environment of policing, the shift from theoretical learning in the classroom to operational competency is one that a student officer will never undertake alone. Coaching and mentoring have both established themselves as the foundations of professional development, acting as stepping stones for individual, professional and organisational success. While often used simultaneously to achieve the desired outcome, these two teaching methods have fundamental differences and outcomes.

I shall be looking at the efficacy of each method of teaching, its drawbacks and its long-term use in UK policing.

The primary difference between coaching and mentoring is its duration, balance of power and the goal.

Coaching can be defined as a short-term, task centred method of teaching. A successful coach will allow the individual to maximise their potential in both their personal and professional lives and allows for the student to problem solve by themselves under the watchful eye of their coach (International Coaching Federation, 2025). In the policing world, coaching is often performance driven focussing on a specific skill such as using the national decision model or the taking of effective and impactful victim statements. A coach does not have to be senior in rank, but they should have the necessary experience and expertise to be able to impart meaningful guidance.

Mentoring is the opposite to coaching, it is a longer-term journey centred on a positive relationship. It is development driven, looking beyond the immediate and looks towards longer term goals and ultimately organisational needs. As with a coach, a mentor does not need to hold a senior rank but should be senior in tenure

that can provide valuable lessons beyond the operational and can help a student navigate the alien world of policing. As discussed by Parsloe and Leedham (2009) a mentor not only provides for the short-term but for the lifetime of their mentee. A successful mentor should promote self-guided learning and encourage the individual to take accountability for their decision making and their ongoing personal development. A mentor should offer their learned advice at the most appropriate intervals to promote this self-learning and in such a way that does not demoralise the student. At the end of the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor should encourage self-reflection, and it can be helpful for them to maintain contact. In policing, one's tutor is usually an officer from the shift that the student is assigned to so a positive relationship can be maintained.

The effectiveness of coaching over mentoring depends entirely on the desired outcome. It can be said that coaching delivers results within a set timeframe and for a set end whereas mentoring delivers a more holistic approach, Balancing personal career goals with the needs of the organisation (Gulliver, 2024).

In the policing world, or indeed any other business, one cannot be said to be better or more effective than the other. Rather, they are mutually dependant on one another. A student officer needs to be coached in policy and procedure and mentored to be not only be operationally competent but an effective long-term colleague.

Whether being coached or mentored, the goals are broadly the same; to help an individual realise their own personal goals, professional or career goals and the needs of the organisation.

Coaching an individual encourages self-awareness. By using non direct questions, a coach helps an individual to identify their own cognitive biases or confidence gaps. Cognitive biases, those biases which seek information that supports ones pre-existing beliefs are extremely damaging in policing and will quickly eradicate public trust and confidence in the police (College of Policing, 2023b). This recognition and addressing of one's flaws quickly lead to self-improvement and self-awareness which is crucial in the business of policing.

Mentoring provides the student with previously unavailable opportunities. This is best described as social capital, which is explained by Knight and Malhotra (2025) as the creation of relationships that fosters trust, mutual care and paves the way for opportunities to the individual. In the context of mentor and mentee, the mentor usually has some length of service under their belt and can introduce the student to a variety of disciplines within policing that they may not have considered or been available to them.

For the police, the ideas of personal and professional goals are of particular interest as it allows for police officers to be trained effectively in all of the policies and procedures that come with policing, but it also ensures operational resilience by providing officers with long term career aspirations and creates well rounded, self-evaluating and focused individuals that remain victim centred.

An interesting and recently piloted concept in the Metropolitan Police, aimed at rebuilding public confidence in the police is the idea of reverse mentoring. While this pilot paired members of the public with senior leaders, it can just as easily be applied to police officers. The concept of reverse mentoring in this example paired young people from under-represented and disadvantaged London boroughs with senior police chiefs. The aim was for police leaders to have more empathy and understanding for the people that live and work in those communities and to empower the young people to feel heard (Fisher Moore and Johnstone, 2023). There was particular focus on domestic abuse and knife crime in this pilot, which has produced encouraging results.

This positive reverse mentoring could just as easily be applied to colleagues from under-represented communities from within the policing world.

Sir John Whitmore developed the GROW model in the 1980's and gives individuals the opportunity to identify what their goal is, what the reality of the situation is, what options are available and a productive and meaningful way forward to achieve this goal (Griffiths, 2018).

While this model is largely centred around senior leadership, it can just as easily be applied to the student officer as well. The conversation could focus on the goal of achieving independent patrol status and what things need to happen to achieve this or it might centre around long term career aspirations as part of an end of tutorship debrief.

Another valid theory is that of situational leadership as mooted by Hershey and Blanchard in the 1980's. This style of leadership depends on the supervisor adjusting their leadership style according to the maturity of their employees. In this context, maturity doesn't mean chronological age but instead refers to their experience of a particular role or team (Williams and Shaw, 2019). Within this leadership style there are four components; directing, coaching, supporting and delegating each phase depends on the maturity of the individual. In the case of a student officer all of these may be seen in their tutorship phase at one time or another depending on the situation that is evolving in front of them.

I shall reflect on my own experiences as a student officer using the model introduced initially for nursing, by Rolfe *et al.*, in it, three simple questions are asked; what? so what? and now what? (McLeod, 2024)

As a student officer fresh out of training school, having spent nine months in the classroom, I was thrust into the world of front-line policing and shift work. There was a feeling of apprehension as I was meeting my shift colleagues for the first time and be putting into practice everything I had learned and tried so hard to remember in the preceding nine months. I was assigned a shift tutor and prior to my deployment date I had not had the opportunity to meet them. This created a feeling of nervous excitement and anticipation about what lay ahead that day and beyond. I was my tutor's first student which created additional pressure for both of us as we attempted to navigate the unfamiliar. My tutor used a mix of mentoring and situational leadership appropriate to the circumstances we found ourselves in. Policing is inherently dynamic and as such teaching and learning method had to change to

reflect this. At the time of my deployment, I still hadn't really understood what my learning style was and how this might impact on my tutorship,

As my tutorship progressed, my confidence and competence grew, tutorship shifted more into situational leadership and particularly the supporting and delegating phases. My tutor remained positive and for the most part could be considered a transformational leader as they sought to encourage self-evaluation, often having debriefs in the car on the way back from a job. My tutor would also promote forward thinking before we attended an incident, he would ask my thoughts based on the limited information we had. As a student officer, this enhanced my critical thinking and problem-solving skills as I had to think on my feet, something which I was used to doing but not in a policing environment. I soon discovered that my learning style was very much watch one do one and my tutor supported me with that and provided constructive guidance when things didn't go as well as they could have.

Having experienced being a tutor constable and being in tutorship, I have some acknowledgement of how new student officers will be feeling on their posting to shift. I was fortunate to have had a positive tutor experience; however, I am aware that regrettably others have not. This has, in some way shaped my future policing career as it has led me to consider being a tutor constable to hopefully deliver a similar learning experience to the one I had. It has also led me to consider promotion to begin to rebuild public trust in the police and to create teams of officers that reflect the modern society that we live in that are self-evaluating critical thinkers who want to do the best for the public that we serve.

Coaching and mentoring are not only for the corporate or business worlds. They represent a real opportunity for police officers of all ranks to shape policing and to work towards rebuilding public confidence. While coaching can focus in on one skill or set of skills, mentoring provides well-rounded, resilient police officers fit for policing in the 21st century. Theorems such as the GROW model, although more targeted towards senior leadership, allows everybody to consider what is needed and how to best drive change forward. The beauty of the GROW model is that it can be scaled up or scaled down according to the desired outcome.

Policing, much like the rest of society is faced with so much uncertainty and is facing new and emerging threats, coaching, mentoring and leadership cannot afford to get left behind and must remain adaptable and fluid. Ultimately, a good police officer is one that has been coached on policy and procedure and understands the law and has been mentored to create a well-rounded, well-thought of police officer who has the resilience to deal with the challenges that modern police faces. Good mentoring programmes also produce officers that are independent thinkers, can self-analyse and are just as comfortable in the realms of evidence-based policing as they are in public order situations. A successful police officer is one that has been mentored to lead by example and to deliver the model policing plan. **(1850 words)**

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