

Thomas Griffiths Workbook 3

by Thomas Griffiths

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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)**

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Learner's University Registration Number: 2236403

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.*

Contents

Workbook	Area of Professional Practice	Word count
Task 1	Understanding the Police Officer Role	2000
Task 2	Communication Skills – social media	2000
Task 3	Leadership and Team Working	2000
Task 4	Coaching, Mentoring, Assessment	2000
	Bibliography	
	Total	8000

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:

Within this essay I will evaluate the strategic role of the College of Policing in developing the professionalism of the UK police force. The College of Policing is instrumental in turning policing into a skilled profession, which is both modern and accountable (College of Policing, 2022). I will also analyse how other national frameworks have influenced the organisational practices and expectations along with frontline practice.

I will also endeavour to show how I have developed to achieve the expectations of a modern professional police officer. I will also analyse and reflect on my changing role during my final probationary year. I will look at how the increasing responsibility, independence and professionalism shaped my development through my probationary period.

Within modern policing in the UK there are national strategic documents which show professional standards and expectations that outline what is essential in the development of the modern police service. For example, The Strategic Policing Requirement (Home Office, 2023), Policing Vision 2025 (NPCC, 2025), the Workforce Transformation Programme (NPCC, 2018) and the College's own five-year strategic plan (College of Policing, 2022) all of these each specify what modern policing should be.

Through my own personal reflection and through analysis of the strategic role of the College of Policing, I will endeavour to explore whether the College of Policing increases consistency and professionalism or does it possibly create rigidity and distance from the reality of policing on the frontline.

Introduction

Introduction

The main and fundamental role of the College of Policing is to set national standards across police forces, where forces have guidelines and standards for training, recruitment and leadership (College of Policing, 2022). The College of Policing is providing qualifications whereas police officers have standard training across England and Wales. This aligns policing with other professions such as teaching, law and nursing, where there are standard qualifications and continuous professional development.

College of Policing

There are a number of positives within this as there is a consistent approach to skills and learning across police forces. It encourages an ethos of continued learning and evidence-based practice. However, alongside the positives there can be perceived to be some negatives, such as, some concerns that the academic side of training does not always reflect the realities of policing. There is also differences in how the implementation of standards can vary across forces.

Critical analysis

'Variable implementation across a disaggregated system means that some forces have issues, while others are making good progress. Better consistency, driven from the centre with direct intervention, could be beneficial' (College of Policing, 2022a).

The College of Policing's Code of Ethics is at the heart of modern policing and is used to help strengthen public trust and gives police officers the competencies and moral code that all officers must have. Integrity, honesty, accountability, fairness, leadership, openness, and respect (College of Policing, 2023).

This forms the backbone of modern policing and requires all forces to place ethical decision making into training and organisational culture. It allows forces to have a shared language and understanding and improved transparency in misconduct situations and strengthens systems of public accountability. It also allows the encouragement of reflective policing practice and ethical decision making (College of Policing, 2023).

Ethical policing is at the heart of modern -day policing and as a police officer in my final year of probation it is fundamental to my decision making. It is important to consider that professionalism requires not only standards but also the conditions for those standards to grow and develop. 'The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) plays a crucial role in allowing me to set the direction against the biggest threats to public safety and ensuring the police have the capabilities to deliver an appropriately robust, national response ensuring common sense policing prevails' (Home Office, 2023).

Ethics in policing

SPR

This is highly relevant to professionalism as it encourages police forces to develop powers beyond what is happening locally. It also supports shared operational standards and reinforces the need for a skilled and adaptable police service. However, the Strategic Policing Requirement can create tension between national and local priorities, and some may argue that it centralises policing at the expense of community focused practice (Police Foundation, 2020).

Professionalism

The Policing Vision 2025 is a long- term strategic plan which focuses on improving digital capabilities, fostering collaboration, and strengthening neighbourhood policing to enhance public trust, efficiency, and safety (NPCC, 2025).

The Policing Vision 2025 sets out national standards and encourages consistent professional standards across forces. It states that trust and legitimacy is at the heart of professional practice. It also states that the link between community and the police is fundamental to policing. That when officers understand the needs of their communities and respond appropriately with trust and ethical practice is when policing is at its best. It encourages and drives forward the complexity of modern threats such as cybercrime, organised crime and exploitation. Together, these elements create a policing model that is more accountable, skilled, consistent, and aligned with public expectations (NPCC, 2025).

Policing Vision 2025

The Workforce Transformation Programme is an initiative set to modernise the police workforce. It wants to develop a more skilled, adaptable and professional workforce through changes to recruitment, training, leadership, and career pathways (NPCC, 2018). It moves policing away from a purely vocational model toward a modern profession with clear standards, qualifications, and development pathways. It also develops support for officer's wellbeing and encourages flexible career

Workforce Transformation

pathways. However, the pressures of the job and various demands can often undermine wellbeing initiatives.

On reflection through my probationary period I have found that in the beginning of my probation I relied on following the correct processes as set out in policy and guidance but as I gained more experience and confidence within my role I became more confident in my own ethical judgement rather than purely following rules. The Code of Ethics has enabled me to reflect on my decision making ensuring I think about fairness, proportionality and respect. I increasingly reflect on whether enforcement is the most ethical and effective option, ensuring my decisions uphold integrity and accountability at all times (College of Policing, 2023).

Evidence of reflection

Code of Ethics

During my probationary time I have increasingly used models such as SARA and increasingly use the best based evidence available to guide and inform my decision making, particularly when dealing with repeat victims and neighbourhood issues (Goldstein, 1990). For example, I have used tools such as crime mapping software to identify repeat locations and offenders, worked with local agencies to address underlying causes of harm, and evaluated interventions such as repeat offender diversion schemes and community reassurance patrols to see which approaches were effective and why (College of Policing, 2022b).

SARA

During my final year as a probationary police officer, the College of Policing standards provided a crucial framework to guide my practice and support my decision-making, particularly during challenging incidents. The national standards, including the Code of Ethics and professional competencies, reinforced the importance of integrity, accountability, and fairness in every decision I made (College of Policing, 2023). When responding to complex situations, such as community disorder or incidents involving violent offenders armed with crossbows, I relied on these standards to remain calm, assess risks objectively, and make proportionate decisions that prioritised public and officer safety. The emphasis on evidence-based practice and ethical decision-making encouraged me to evaluate each situation critically, consider multiple courses of action, and choose strategies that balanced operational effectiveness with legal and ethical responsibilities. This approach not only enhanced my confidence and resilience under pressure but also ensured that my actions reflected the professional values expected of a modern police officer. By applying the College of Policing standards consistently, I was able to navigate high-risk scenarios safely, maintain public trust, and reinforce my own development as a competent, reflective, and accountable officer.

Evidence of development

Policing Values

Also, during my final year there has been an increase in my investigative responsibilities. I now manage more complex cases, prepare files independently and use digital evidence more confidently. I increasingly used digital tools such as body-worn camera footage and mobile phone evidence to support investigations independently. In one case, reviewing CCTV and cross-referencing with local intelligence allowed me to identify an offender and recommend suitable interventions. This demonstrated how the College of Policing's emphasis on professional standards and ethical decision-making supports practical skill development and investigative confidence (College of Policing, 2022b). As I approach the end of my probationary period I have found I have grown in confidence and my ability in my decision making and when de-escalating situations and in community engagement. I am now far more confident in leading incidents, mentoring new officers and representing the police in a professional manner. I have also supported new probationary officers in using problem-solving models and evidence-based practice to deliver local interventions, reflecting how national strategies translate into personal development (College of Policing, 2022b).

Evidence of development

Evidence of reflection

The College of Policing is fundamental in its role of professionalising policing in the UK. It does this through setting out national standards, along with ethical frameworks and long-term planning. My own development reflects many of these themes such as my own growing ethical judgement and my increase in responsibility and my focus on community-based police work. I feel very strongly about building trust within communities through honesty and integrity and building positive relationships and public trust, as this plays a vital role in policing. I have found that through reflection yes, national standards are vitally important and this is what I use to inform my decision making, my professionalism and my ethical values but I have also realised that my development is also a very personal journey shaped by everyday practice and by those colleagues around me who support, mentor and guide me. It is therefore both a structural and personal journey (College of Policing, 2022; College of Policing, 2023).

Conclusion

The word allocation for the task was 2000 +/- 10%. You have used 1720 which is below that. Use the full word allocation to maximise your opportunity for higher marks. You have evidenced an understanding of the role of the College of Policing but did not reflect on a specific policing incident and discuss what happened. You have referred to strategic documents such as the SPR but you needed to discuss in more detail on how they impacted on you. You could have discussed your experiences of the PCDA programme and how it has shaped you in your probationary period.

Word Count 1720

**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 has become an important tool within modern policing. It is a rapidly evolving part of policing and can be used in a number of ways. It allows police forces to share information quickly, it also allows police forces to communicate and reach a vast range of audiences which previously was not as easy to achieve. This enables the police force to engage with communities in an active manner and leads to community partnerships which otherwise would be difficult to achieve (College of Policing, 2021).

Introduction

The purpose of the essay is to critically evaluate my own experience as a police officer in using social media to inform the public, engage with communities, and promote policy initiatives. I will assess how the use of social media has affected my ability to communicate effectively and whether it has had both positive and negative consequences. I will assess how social media has had an impact on community relations and look in detail at the challenges and ethical considerations that need to be taken into account when using social media platforms in a policing context (College of Policing, 2023a). Through this, the essay will aim to evaluate the challenges, risks and the opportunities that arise from social media use within policing. I will also reflect on how these experiences can help improve my practice as I continue within my career as a police officer.

Over the past 20 years how police forces have communicated with the public has changed dramatically. It has transformed from using things such as local meetings, leaflets, press releases to the use of social media platforms which can have an immediate impact on communication with the public. Whereas previously communication was much slower and mainly focused through the use of the media- newspaper reports or television broadcasts. Digital platforms allows, the police force to share information and communicate with the public on a far quicker platform, allowing the public to raise questions, respond or communicate more or less instantly. This has however created the expectation that the public expect quick updates and accessible channels for discussions and communication (Bullock, 2018). Social media has not only become a useful tool for communicating with the public but also in building relationships and building public trust in a fast -moving social media society (Crump, 2011).

Social media issues

Gwent's Police's approach to the use of social media is affected both by National guidance from the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice and its own organisational policies on the use of social media for communication purposes (College of Policing, 2021). The policy emphasises that social media should provide the public with up to date and timely information, it should be used to help develop and strengthen community relations and help support neighbourhood policing. As a police officer I am encouraged to use social media within the well -defined boundaries, I am encouraged to avoid giving out any details of any on going operations. I should refrain from any political views or commentary or anything that could have a negative impact on public trust or anything that could have an impact on any ongoing investigations. The guidance and policies have a direct impact on my use of social media. They have been useful as a framework to aide me in what I am able to share and how to frame and word messages. The guidance also helped me to think about the risks involved in social media posts, especially around keeping victims safe and confidentiality. It also made me very aware when responding to the public to ensure that the reputation of my police force was not put into jeopardy (College of Policing, 2023a).

Social media policy

Social Media has become a great tool during my time as a probationary police officer. I have been able to use a range of digital platforms to share urgent updates on missing people. Social Media has become a great tool during my time as a probationary police officer. I have been able to use a range of digital platforms to share urgent updates on missing people. For example, I helped to find a missing person by engaging the public for information using a number of social media platforms. This engagement was invaluable in helping to locate the missing person quickly and safely, ensuring a positive outcome for both the individual and their family (Crump, 2011). The responses back from the public enabled me to locate a vulnerable missing person quickly which had a positive outcome for the person and their family. This showed me the benefits of social media, reaching far more people and in much quicker manner than old traditional methods (Crump, 2011). This had a highly positive outcome for all involved. The responses back from the public enabled me to locate a vulnerable missing person quickly which had a positive outcome for the person and their family. This showed me the benefits of social media, reaching far more people and in much quicker manner than old traditional methods (Crump, 2011). This had a highly positive outcome for all involved. Another use that enables the public to have instant information and is very useful is when there are road closures or road incidents. These posts can be shared very quickly to hundreds of people which then allows the public to make other travel arrangements or journeys which then helps to stop public frustration and helps to foster good relations. Another use of social media is to inform the public on crime prevention, if there has been a spate of burglaries in the area or online frauds. This encourages pubic engagement with the public able to ask questions or give valuable information. It can foster a shared responsibility for local safety (College of Policing, 2021).

Social media use

Repeated sentences

Social media use

There are however challenges with using social media within my role as a police officer and within the police force as a whole. Managing the expectations of the public can be challenging as information being shared must be accurate as well as fast, sometimes the disclosure of information has to be times appropriately. Before any sharing of information, there has to be careful consideration around the fact that the information being shared does not affect an ongoing investigation, officer safety or a tactical response. Information shared has to be accurate so it is vitally important that any information shared is verified before being shared. It is also important that any witnesses or victims are protected and information shared does not compromise any Data Protection or court rules (Information Commissioner's Office, 2018). This can cause friction between the public and the police force as the public may want information instantly but policing requires checks and caution before sharing the information on social media.

Social media risks

One of the challenges of social media is the fact that once information has been shared it can move very quickly and can get shared rapidly, this can be a positive but on the flip side can be a challenge as it is difficult to control. Social media posts can be open to interpretation and be misunderstood by the person reading it. It is important to ensure updates are written clearly simply stating the facts to avoid any speculation or ambiguity. It is important to think about and consider how the public may respond to the information being shared and make sure to correct any misinformation in a calm, professional and responsible way (College of Policing, 2021). Due to the growth and development of social media the public can see this as a direct line to the police. The publics expectation can be difficult to monitor as there is a growing expectation of immediate responses from the police and being available 24 hours a day (Bullock, 2018). However due to the job role it is very challenging to

Social media risks

monitor social media channels as they are not emergency routes. It can be challenging as there are many positives within the use of social media as previously stated, there is a delicate balance to be had. The public can assume that a lack of response to a post from the public may be seen as a lack of care but there may not be any officers available to respond to the posts due to the busyness of the job.

Gwent Police have policies and guidelines that have to be followed in regards to social media. These guidelines are essential for protecting victims and not posting their details. It is vital that posts align with legal guidance and must be politically unbiased and neutral. These rules are vital but can affect how quickly information or responses can be shared (College of Policing, 2023a).

When I first began as a police officer in Gwent police, I thought using social media would be straight forward but as I development my role I quickly began to understand the complex issues that go hand in hand with using social media. I began to evaluate the positive aspects and also to think carefully about the challenges that came to my attention. I began to think carefully about communication with the public, responsibility that I have as a police officer to ensure accurate posts and the management of public expectations with is essential in developing positive relationships between the public and my role as a police officer. One of the hardest and most challenging aspect of using social media as part of my job was the constant pressure of ensuring information shared is accurate, the speed at which information can be shared, managing the expectation of the public when something is going on in their community and they want updates or information on what is happening. I have come to a growing understanding the people in the community feel strongly about having reassurance and a sense of safety and clarity around an incident, but from within my role I am constantly weighing up what the right information is to be shared. Is the post giving up to much information, am I protecting for example a vulnerable person or victim. I have begun writing posts to then read over them and delete half of it as I was not happy with what I had written. It is a balancing act between being transparent but realising that there are limits to what I am able to post and to ensure that I am following the rules and guidelines within Gwent police when using social media. I also have a concern that what I have written may be misunderstood and that once something has been posted it can move very quickly and shared rapidly. I try to think about how the post may be interpreted but this can be difficult to anticipate. This can feel like I have a lack of control on the information that is being shared. Balancing the expectation of the public is I have found challenging as I have been out dealing with serious incidents only to come back to find public frustration and negativity around the lack of responses to messages on social media. This can unfortunately have the impression that I don't care but it is simply due to the nature of the job and I have an important job role in being out helping the community and this does mean messages will have to wait for a response. Although I have discovered that social media does have benefits, particularly around fostering positive relationships with the public and sharing good news stories on line is both beneficial to the police force itself and building relationships with the public (Crump, 2011). One of the most rewarding ways of using social media I have found is when I have been looking for missing persons and help from the public has been invaluable to finding the missing person and reuniting them safely with their families. This has also shown me how powerful these platforms can be when used effectively.

Evidence of reflection

Critical analysis

Critical analysis

Conclusion

Word Count 2000

You have evidenced an effective understanding of the key issues relating to the police use of social media and referred to your Force policy and the APP. You briefly discussed your use of social media but the incidents referred to could have been discussed in more detail. You could also have discussed the risk of the misuse of social media by police officers on and off duty in forums such as WhatsApp groups.

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 policing is never a fixed or static skill, it is something shaped by experience, reflection, and the unpredictable nature of operational work. Effective policing depends not only on the ability of individuals to lead but also on the capacity of teams to work cohesively under pressure. Leadership shapes the quality of teamwork, while teamwork provides the foundation upon which leadership can operate. In a profession defined by risk, uncertainty, and public scrutiny, the relationship between leadership and teamwork becomes central to operational effectiveness, officer well-being, and public trust. Policing is inherently a team-based profession. Officers rarely work in isolation, and even when they do, they remain part of a wider organisational system that relies on shared information, coordinated responses, and collective decision-making. Teamwork is essential for maintaining safety, particularly in high-risk situations such as violent confrontations, public-order incidents, or safeguarding vulnerable individuals. In these moments, officers depend on one another for situational awareness, tactical support, and emotional reassurance. When teamwork functions well, it reduces the likelihood of escalation and improves the chances of a safe resolution. When it breaks down, the consequences can be severe. Critical incident reviews frequently highlight communication failures, unclear roles, and lack of coordination as major contributors to operational failures. This demonstrates that teamwork is not simply a desirable trait but a structural necessity.

As I near the end of my probation on response, I've come to appreciate just how essential strong teamwork is to the role. Response policing is fast-paced, unpredictable, and often high-risk, and working within a close, supportive team has been crucial to my development. Being surrounded by colleagues who are quick to step in, share their experience, and back each other during challenging incidents has helped me build confidence and improve my decision-making under pressure. Whether attending volatile domestics, searching for missing people, or dealing with vulnerable individuals in crisis, knowing that my team communicates openly and looks out for one another has made me a more resilient and capable officer. It's taught me that effective policing on response isn't about acting alone, it's about trusting your team, learning from them, and working together to keep the public and each other safe.

Introduction

Teamwork

Teamwork
Evidence of reflection

So far in my career, I have encountered a wide range of situations that have challenged my assumptions about leadership and forced me to adapt my approach. These experiences have included dealing with confrontational individuals, coordinating missing-person investigations, and supporting vulnerable young people at risk of self-harm. Each incident has contributed to my understanding of leadership within the policing context, where values such as safeguarding, community well-being, and ethical decision-making are central. Reflecting on these experiences has allowed me to critically analyse how I have developed and adapted my leadership strategies, drawing on recognised models such as situational leadership, transformational leadership, and the National Decision Model (NDM).

Leadership
Evidence of reflection

One of the earliest situations that tested my leadership was an incident involving a highly confrontational man during a neighbourhood dispute. The atmosphere was volatile from the moment we arrived. The man was shouting aggressively at neighbours and officers, and the risk of violence was clear. In that moment, my instinct was to adopt a directive leadership style, consistent with Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model, which emphasises the need for leaders to adjust their behaviour depending on the competence and motivation of their team (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). I issued clear instructions to my other colleagues, established containment, and ensured that tactical options were ready if required. This approach was necessary to stabilise the situation and protect both the public and my colleagues.

Leadership skills

However, once the immediate threat had reduced, I recognised that remaining in a command-and-control mode would likely escalate tensions again. I consciously shifted towards a more supportive style, encouraging my colleagues to use de-escalation techniques and communication skills. This transition reflected my growing confidence in adapting my leadership style as circumstances changed. Research supports this flexible approach, Engel et al. (2020) argue that de-escalation is most effective when leaders model calm behaviour and prioritise communication over force. By demonstrating this change myself, I noticed that my colleagues followed my change in behaviour, and the situation was resolved without the need for physical intervention.

Leadership style

Reflecting on this incident later, I realised how much my leadership had evolved. Earlier in my career, I might have remained in a directive style throughout, driven by a belief that authority alone would resolve the situation. Experience has taught me that leadership in policing is not about rigid control but about reading the environment, understanding the emotional state of those involved, and adjusting accordingly. This adaptability aligns closely with the values embedded in policing, particularly the emphasis on proportionality and community-focused problem-solving.

Evidence of reflection
Evidence of development

A very different leadership challenge emerged during a missing-person investigation involving a teenage girl with a history of exploitation. Unlike the confrontational incident, this situation required a collaborative and transformational approach. The case demanded coordination with multiple agencies, including social services, health professionals, and voluntary search organisations. I was involved in a multi-agency briefing where I encouraged open communication and ensured that each partner understood their role. Transformational leadership, which focuses on motivating and inspiring others towards a shared goal (Bass & Riggio, 2006), proved particularly effective here. By fostering a sense of shared responsibility, I found that partners were more willing to contribute information and resources.

Leadership style
Leadership skills

However, I also recognised the limitations of relying solely on a collaborative approach. Missing-person cases are time-critical, and excessive consultation can slow progress. To address this, I balanced open discussion with decisive leadership, using the NDM to structure decisions around risk, powers, and proportionality (College of Policing, 2020). This ensured that while the team felt valued and included, the investigation maintained momentum. Reflecting on this experience, I realised how important emotional intelligence is in leadership. Understanding when to listen, when to direct, and when to challenge others is essential in safeguarding-focused work, particularly within the policing context, where the Well-being of Future Generations Act emphasises long-term, preventative approaches (Welsh Government, 2015).

NDM

Evidence of reflection
Emotional intelligence

The most emotionally challenging leadership experience I have faced involved supporting a vulnerable 15-year-old who had expressed intent to harm themselves. When we arrived, the young person was distressed, withdrawn, and initially unwilling to engage. In this situation, a directive leadership style would have been entirely inappropriate. Instead, I adopted a supportive,

Leadership style

trauma-informed approach, encouraging an atmosphere of rapport-building, reassurance and trust. I modelled calm, empathetic communication, drawing on crisis-intervention principles and ensuring that myself, my colleagues and the young person involved understood the importance of patience and sensitivity.

At one point, the young person attempted to run, and I had to briefly shift into a more directive style to ensure their immediate safety. This moment highlighted the dynamic nature of leadership in safeguarding incidents. Even when empathy and support are the primary tools, there are moments when decisive action is necessary. Carleton et al. (2019) note that emotionally intelligent leadership improves outcomes in mental-health-related incidents, and my experience reinforced this. The young person responded more effectively when I demonstrated empathy and composure, and the young person eventually agreed to engage with mental-health professionals.

Leadership skills

After the incident, I had a debrief with my colleagues and Sergeant. I recognised that situations involving vulnerable young people can have a significant emotional impact on others, and my Sergeant wanted to ensure that I had space to reflect and process the experience. Supporting officer well-being is an essential part of leadership, particularly, where policing culture increasingly prioritises mental health and resilience. This is where officers can use the TRIM meeting, this is where they will have access to a support person or persons, they will organise a meeting within the first 72 hours of a traumatic incident, they will then assess myself or other officers to see if they need support. This will also give the officers reflective practice. As myself or my colleagues will need to speak about the incident in full and will think of things that I should have done and will try to do next time. This reflective practice also allowed me to examine my own emotional response and identify areas for further development.

Well being
Supportive leadership
Evidence of reflection

Across these varied experiences, a consistent theme has been the need to adapt leadership style to changing circumstances. The NDM has been invaluable in supporting this adaptability, providing a structured framework for ethical decision-making. Dynamic risk assessment has allowed me to shift between directive, supportive, and collaborative approaches as situations evolve. Emotional intelligence has helped me recognise the needs of both the public and my team, while effective communication has been central to maintaining trust and clarity.

NDM
Risk assessment
Emotional intelligence

Another important aspect of my leadership development has been recognising the ethical dimension of every decision. The Code of Ethics underpins all policing in UK, and I have learned that leadership is not simply about operational effectiveness but about modelling fairness, respect, and integrity. Whether dealing with a confrontational individual or a vulnerable young person, the way I behave can set the tone for how others behave. This awareness has encouraged me to be more reflective and intentional in my actions.

Code of Ethics

Reflective practice has been crucial in consolidating my learning. After each significant incident, I take time to consider what went well, what could have been improved, and how my leadership style influenced the outcome. This reflective cycle aligns with professional standards and supports continuous improvement. It has also helped me identify patterns in my behaviour, such as my early tendency to default to a directive style, and has allowed me to consciously develop a more flexible and emotionally intelligent approach. Reflective practice is always on police officers' minds, I will sometimes take time to reflect by myself, however due to the close knit bond I have on my response shift, I will mostly talk to my colleagues, personally I think that this is better, this is due to being able to bounce off each other of what went well, what needs to improve and how we will do it better next time. I now understand that working as part of a team is essential and reflective practice is needed to keep improving as a police officer

Evidence of reflection

In conclusion, my experiences across a range of operational situations have shaped my understanding of leadership in policing. Dealing with confrontational individuals taught me the importance of adaptability and de-escalation. Coordinating missing-person investigations highlighted the value of collaboration and transformational leadership. Supporting vulnerable young people reinforced the need for empathy, emotional intelligence, and trauma-informed practice. These experiences, combined with theoretical models and the ethical framework of policing, have enabled me to develop a leadership style that is dynamic, reflective, and grounded in the values of safeguarding and community well-being. Leadership in policing will always be challenging, but

Conclusion

through continuous reflection and adaptation, I have strengthened my ability to lead effectively and ethically in diverse and demanding circumstances

Word Count 1801

An effective answer in which you have evidenced an understanding of different leadership styles and how you have demonstrated effective leadership skills in a number of incidents. If you had used the full word allocation, you could have developed your answer further to discuss other leadership styles.

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:

As I am coming **to end** of my probationary period with Gwent police it allows me to reflect on my time. My journey thus far has been developmental, demanding and exciting. I have developed my confidence as a police officer and through my three years I have had to learn to be flexible, calm when under pressure and develop my communication skills. It has been vitally important for me to reflect on my practice in order to progress and develop further as a police officer. Within this essay I will reflect upon the mentoring and coaching opportunities that I have been involved in which has helped support me during my probationary period. I will evaluate how working alongside experienced colleagues has enabled me to elevate my professional and personal growth. I will also reflect upon how coaching and mentoring has helped me to have a better understanding of policing values, expectations and standards and how this has enabled me develop my policing skills and to perform effectively within my job role.

Introduction

Evidence of reflection

I have found that during my first three years I have encountered complex situations and the fact that there are a number mentoring and coaching strategies available to me was essential to my development. I was fortunate to have an excellent tutor for my first 12 weeks in the station. My mentor guided me with supportive but structured tutoring which gave me the confidence to grow as a police officer. On reflection my mentor gave me immediate, constructive after incidents which enabled me to reflect on my actions and enabled me to develop my skills. This aligns with structured professional development frameworks such as Gwent Police's Perform review process, where regular meetings with my Sergeant enabled discussion of progress, identification of development needs and setting of clear objectives to support my ongoing performance and growth (Gwent Police, 2022).

Evidence of development

I will look to analyse how various coaching and mentoring theories such as developmental mentoring, performance coaching, experiential learning, the use of reflective models and my own experience have crafted my development as a police officer (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). This analysis and reflection will also look at some of the challenges I have faced during my probationary period and how the support and mentoring I have been given has helped me to overcome them.

During my probationary journey it has taken me through 3 distinct phases from my initial training to the tutoring phase to the realities of frontline policing on my own. Each brought its own challenges and enabled me to build confidence and reflect on each part of my journey. Within my first phase I

was in a classroom learning about operational procedures, legal framework and learning about the Code of Ethics and other core skills needed to becoming a confident police officer (College of Policing, 2023a). I was surrounded by extremely supportive and friendly cohort of probationary police officers. My tutors were also extremely supportive and informative about what our job role would entail. However, at times I did feel swamped by the volume of information shared and the responsibility and professionalism I needed to develop quickly in order to fulfil my role.

Honesty

During my time in the classroom it helped me to develop my understanding of policing legislation, develop my understanding of the importance of keeping myself and other officers safe, helping to develop my communication skills through a variety of role play activities. However, it became evident that the true learning and application of the skills I had developed would only be tested once I was in live situations.

During the next phase of my probation the tutoring section, this I found to be the most challenging, rewarding and the time I learnt to put my skills into practice. I was lucky to have a very experienced and inspiring tutor who gave me constructive guidance and advice but would also challenge me to ensure I developed well through this period. My tutor also provided me with practical guidance and reassurance through my tutoring period. My tutor enabled me to reflect on my progress in a safe and constructive way, when I struggled with decision making under pressure, my tutor would talk me through each point of my decision making and how I could improve these skills in a step by step way. This helped me to see clearly any mistakes I made and how I could make better decision under pressure in the future. Regular coaching conversations and reflective debriefs gave me the opportunity to learn from my mistakes in a supportive and constructive way, reflecting principles of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984).

Tutoring
Evidence of reflection and development
Need to define coaching and mentoring

When I attained my Independent Patrol Status it was an exciting but somewhat apprehensive time. This was the time I felt the responsibility of the job and not having the constant reassurance of my tutor meant that I had to rely on my own judgements and knowledge. At this point it most definitely pushed and encouraged me to develop my confidence, resilience and to trust in the skills and training I had received. I was able to grow in confidence whilst still having the reassurance from my more experienced colleagues around me. I found I was able to discuss situations with them when I needed to which allowed me to reflect on my actions and helped me to develop my communication and problem-solving skills particularly when dealing with more complex situations or safeguarding incidents.

Evidence of development

During my three years probationary time I had to complete and partake in regular meetings to review my development and to complete ongoing assessments. These assessments are in line with the College of Policing standards (College of Policing, 2023b) and Gwent police strategic leadership plan (Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner, 2022). Through these organisational expectations I was able to ensure my development was focused and structured. A consistent point of reference for me was using the Code of Ethics to ensure my decisions were guiding me in the right way (College of Policing, 2023a). The emphasis on being reflective during my probationary period allowed me to evaluate and analyse situations and my decisions and actions in a critical manner. This allowed me to develop and learn from both my mistakes and my successes (Schön, 1983).

Code of Ethics
Evidence of reflection

At the start of my probationary period as an independent patrol officer I found I felt less confident when dealing with situations which required quick decision making, I also found managing confrontational situations challenging. However, as I progressed and my experience grew, I found that structured feedback, mentoring discussions with my colleagues and sergeant and my self-reflection enabled me to develop a more confident, secure and consistent approach when dealing with a wide range of situations. Watching and listening to how my more experienced colleagues spoke to victims, suspects and vulnerable people taught me how I could change my style of communication according to the situation I was dealing with. This enabled me to grow in confidence and to become more proactive when dealing with the public. This also enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of how I present myself to the public has a profound effect on public trust and confidence.

Evidence of reflection and development.
Feedback

My colleagues encouraged me to ask questions and would tell me that I could not 'know everything' immediately and to ask for advice was an important part of my development. This support network I had and still have enabled me to be less anxious during difficult and challenging situations and I was able to break down incidents afterwards, discussing what went well and ways in which I could

improve. This definitely helped me develop quickly in a safe space where I felt comfortable to discuss things I was worried about.

In order to develop and learn and progress in my role as a police officer, I found coaching from my colleagues to be invaluable. From things like statement taking my colleagues explained and showed me how to write a clear, chronological evidence-based statement and how to write in a professional way. I was coached on how to gather evidence correctly, scene preservation and how to fill in continuity logs. During more challenging situation such as confrontational situations I was able to develop my communication and de-escalation techniques in order to develop my conflict management skills. Discussions with my colleagues helped me to strengthen my confidence when managing volatile situations.

Coaching benefits
Evidence of reflection and development

Coaching from my more **experience** colleagues has been fundamental in my development and learning on a day to day basis. It has helped me to build my competence through practical real-life issues. It has helped me to improve my performance through structured and focused feedback enabling me to be self-reflective. It has helped me to become more confident when dealing with operational tasks. Through coaching it has enabled me to become more confident, capable and self-reflective and better equipped to do my job well.

Coaching and development

Feedback has also been a major tool in helping me to develop within my role. I have learnt to use feedback in order to progress and improve my performance and skills and to help build my confidence. I have also grown in confidence when giving constructive feedback to other colleagues in their probationary period. Having feedback meetings with my sergeant helped me to understand in a clear way how I was developing as a police officer. These reviews helped me to see how I was performing as part of a team. This I found invaluable as it not only focused on my own personal development but also seeing how I fitted in in the bigger picture as part of a team. Professional Development meetings helped me to focus and reflect on my development and set goals and what I could do to improve things I was finding more challenging. This helped me take ownership of my professional development.

Feedback
Evidence of development

At times I would find it difficult to receive constructive criticism and would get defensive and overthink things. However, over time I came to realise that this was the most valuable part of my development and being able to listen carefully and take the constructive criticism and turn it into a positive made a fundamental difference to my development. I began to understand that it helped to support my growth and understanding of the job role. It is always important to learn **from** mistakes and I realised that without mistakes and constructive criticism then I would not have developed as quickly as I have. It helped me to become more resilient and self-aware (Schön, 1983).

Feedback and self awareness

As I grew in confidence I found I was also able to give constructive advice to others in my situation but I always begin with a positive before I offer ways to improve. It is important to maintain positive working relationships with colleagues.

During my probationary period I found that both mentoring and coaching played a vital role in my development as a police officer. Mentoring helped me understand the culture and expectations involved in the job. While coaching from my colleagues played a vital role in strengthening my practical day to day skill development, from writing statements to how to change my communication style depending on the situation I was dealing with. Together this helped me to reach my personal goals of building confidence and resilience. It has also helped me to develop my core policing skills and helping with my rapport with the public.

Mentoring and coaching benefits

As I continue in my career I will continue to develop through feedback as I feel this aspect is vitally important in my continued development. My ability to be highly self-reflective is also an important tool to continue to use to develop further. I will also ensure I give the same advice and guidance to new probationary officers that has been given to me. I hope to contribute to a positive learning culture and help to support others so that they also gain in confidence and competence.

Conclusion

Word Count 1994

You have effectively reflected on your probation and discussed how coaching and mentoring have assisted in your development. However, you needed to define what coaching and mentoring are making appropriate academic references. You also could have referred to the GROW model of coaching and discussed how this could be used. You did evidence that you are reflecting on your experiences with a view to being self aware and continuously developing in your role. There were a few wording errors in this task.

Literature

You have used an appropriate range of sources which have been suitably referenced.

Knowledge & Understanding

You have evidenced a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding of the key issues in each task. However, some elements could have been answered in greater detail to fully evidence your knowledge and understanding e.g. GROW model in Task 4.

Cognitive Skills

You have evidenced that you have reflected on your experiences to identify the lessons you have learned in order to aid your development.

Practical and Transferrable skills

The tasks have generally been well written and presented although there were several wording errors in Task 4 in particular. The minimum word allocation was not met in Task 1 and meeting the word count gives you the best opportunity to maximise your mark. The workbook was also not signed at the end.

Thomas - there were several positive elements to the workbook such as your evidence of reflection and development. Some elements could have been answered in greater depth which would have enabled you to increase your potential mark. Nonetheless, a good effort. Thanks.

HM

Score 45

Bibliography

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

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