

Findings chapter.

In this chapter of the research, the data collected from the survey will be looked into and analysed to find any trends amongst certain opinions and to also compare to claims made in the literature review to see if the survey results support or go against what has been stated in the literature review. The findings below help support what the set objectives are as a reminder of what the objectives are the first one is to critically evaluate fingerprinting through exploring forensic science, evaluating the reliability of forensics and why it is irreplaceable, the potential issues with forensics and finally, exploring how forensics can develop in the future.

One of the main types of data that needed to be collected was from the survey made to gauge the public's and those who have either previously served or currently serve in the police. The reasoning for this was to see if there was any divide in opinion between the public and police, or if they are on the same wavelength. The main data that needed to be collected were centred around the objectives for the dissertation and also seeing that if those who had done the survey, if in their opinion, it can affect how the public sees the police. To properly write up and display the empirical data, charts like pie charts and bar graphs will be used as a visual aid to better display any divides or main answers brought up. These photos of the charts will also have a little description at the bottom further explaining what is being shown and what it reveals. adding the extra information below allows the presented information to be fully understood and leaves no room for misinterpretation.

The way in which the data has been collected is through a survey that was made with the dissertation's objectives in mind. The way in which respondents were collected was through sending the survey to those who are known personally and also online and through work group chats. This method of spreading the survey around was

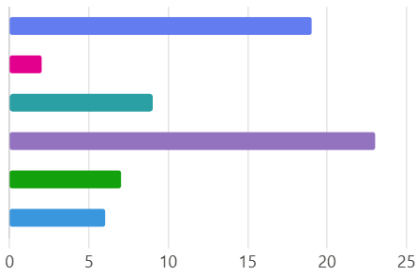
successful as it gained over 60 respondents. It is possible that due to the fact it was online, it made it easier to gain respondents due to the ease of sending it to others and them sending it to those they know, and it makes it very accessible.

4.2 Findings: Description of analysis and results:

1. What is your age range?

[More details](#)

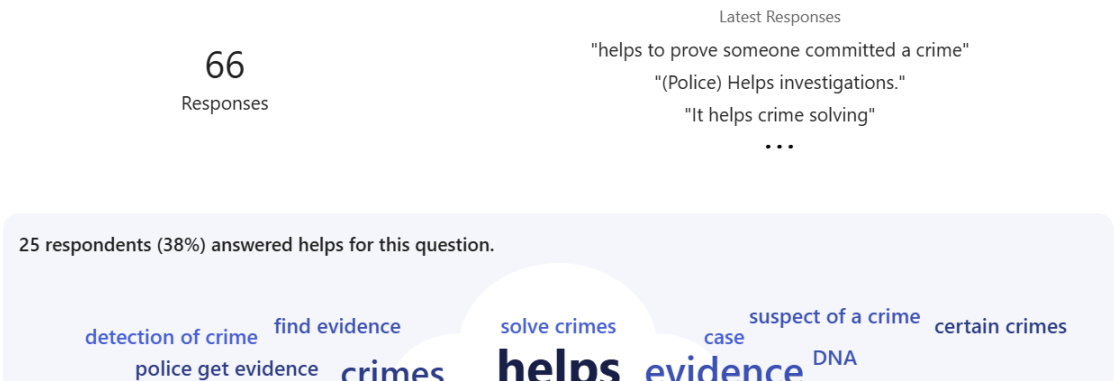
18-28	19
29-39	2
40-50	9
51-61	23
62-72	7
73+	6



Here it can be seen that the main age range between the participants are 51-61 with the run-up ages being 18-28.

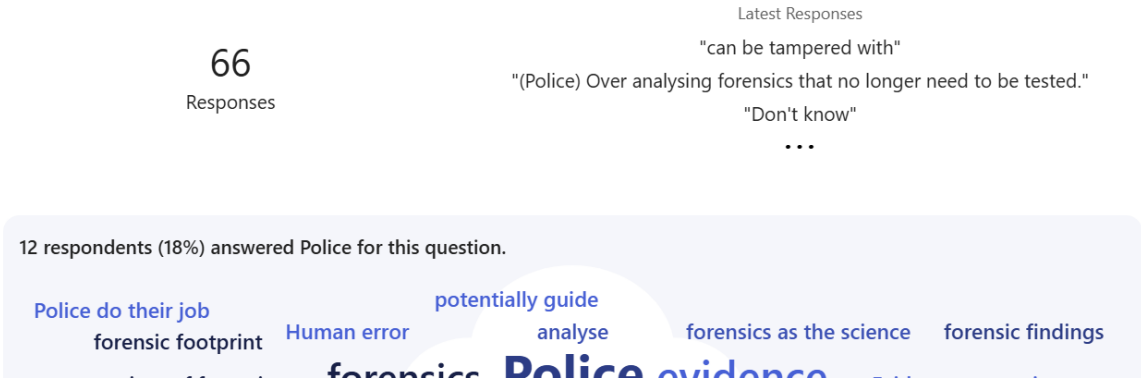
2. How do you think forensics helps aid the police? (If you used to work or currently work for the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer, thank you!)

[More details](#)



Most respondents here stated that forensics can help prove a crime with and find who the criminal was with 34 of the 66 participants or 51% stating this.

3. What, in your opinion, are the potential negatives of forensics? (If you used to work or currently work for the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.) [More details](#)



A lot of respondents here stated that they think one of the possible negatives of forensics is cross contamination, or wrongful convictions with 27 out of the 66 participants bringing up cross contamination or wrongful conviction or 40% of participants.

4. Do you think these negatives can affect how people view policing/ the police? [More details](#)



Here these results show that most of the respondents believe that the possible negatives of forensics can affect how the public view the police. This will link to the below image and help support what was previously found in the literature review.

5. Can you explain why on your above answer to question 4? (If you used to work or currently work for the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.)

[More details](#)

66

Responses

Latest Responses

"police are always under scrutiny if they falsely place someone as the criminal..."

"(Police) Public are unaware of that problem."

"Don't know"

...

33 respondents (50%) answered Police for this question.

Police investigations
forensic evidence

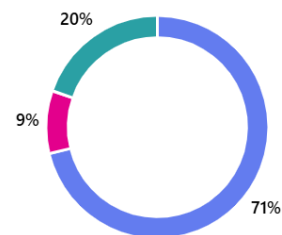
police to be effective
positivity toward police
police get it wrong
Police do there best

The main thing being brought up here was there is already a lot of distrust in the police now, and things like getting the wrong person because of forensics and taking too long to get a result.

6. Do you think that forensics has, in a way, taught criminals to better cover up their crimes?

[More details](#)

● Yes.	47
● No.	6
● Unsure.	13



Here it can be seen that over 70% of the respondents believe that forensics has in a way, taught criminal to better cover up. This can be used as further evidence of the possible negatives of forensics. This could also bring up questions like, the further forensics develop, do criminals better learn to cover up their crimes?

7. Can you further expand on your above answer to question 6? (If you used to work or currently work in the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.)

[More details](#)

66

Responses

Latest Responses

"you see people have learned to wear gloves to cover prints because it has b..."

"(Police) Criminals are much more cautious when committing crimes."

"Criminals are crafty."

...

29 respondents (44%) answered criminals for this question.

career criminals criminal evidence criminals awareness gloves criminals are likely

Most respondents here have stated about covering up prints like fingerprints through wearing gloves with 13 of the 66 mentioning gloves alone, or 19%. This once again can come up as a potential negative of forensics especially with fingerprinting being one of the objectives.

8. How do you think forensics can develop in the future? (If you used to work or currently work in the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.)

[More details](#)

66

Responses

Latest Responses

"I think it would become quicker to find results and see the tiniest details bet..."

"(Police) It will further develop investigation efficiency."

"It will be overwhelmed with crime."

...

12 respondents (18%) answered Police for this question.

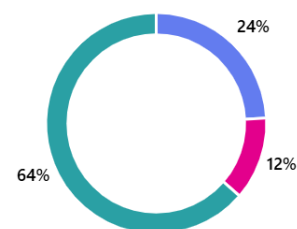
better use advance better storage forensic science use AI technology new forensic Police better

A lot of people stated that it would become quicker and more reliable, with quite a few also stating things along the lines of AI or new technology. 29 out of the 66 participants stated things similar to technology or forensics becoming quicker and more reliable. This equates to 43% of participants.

9. Artificial intelligence or A.I is becoming used more and more, and it has started branching to forensics. In your opinion, is this a good or bad thing?

[More details](#)

● Yes- This is a good thing.	16
● No- This is a bad thing.	8
● Unsure- I am a little in the middle on this.	42



Here it shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents are actually pretty unsure about where A.I will go in forensics.

10. Can you explain your above answer on question 9? (If you used to work or currently work in the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.)

[More details](#)

66
Responses

Latest Responses

"whilst it can make things quicker AI systems can break down and if it is relie..."

"A.I helps life."

"I'm unsure on ai."

...

10 respondents (15%) answered Police for this question.

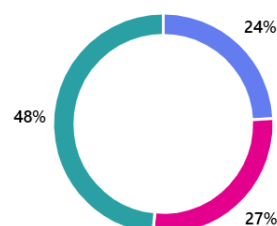
human intelligence AI is still prone skeptical of AI humans make more mistakes
AI can be positive humans Police good AI humans are more reliable

Once again a lot of people were unsure, but many people did bring up how it can be mishandled somehow with 15 out of the 66 participants mentioning the possibility of mishandling or, 22% of participants. A few did state it could be a good thing the more it develops.

11. Do you think the use of A.I in forensics can help with gaining public confidence in policing/ the police.

[More details](#)

● Yes.	16
● No.	18
● Unsure.	32

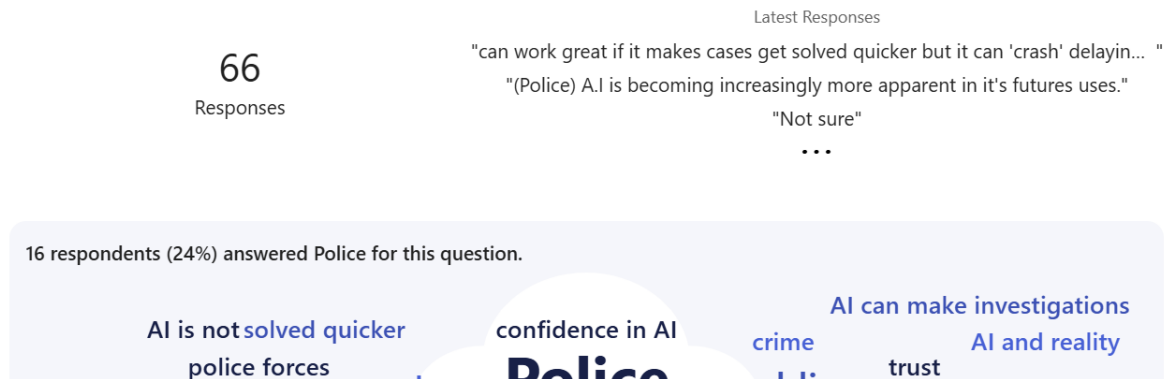


Once again most people are unsure but as the runup, the respondents stated

that they think the use of AI in policing will not help with public confidence in policing.

12. Can you explain your above answer on question 11? (If you used to work or currently work in the police, please state '(Police)' before your answer.)

[More details](#)



With this question 13 of the 66 respondents stated that there already is not a lot of trust in AI with the public so using it as a big chunk of forensics now may not be the best move in gaining public trust. This would equate to about 19% of respondents.

4.3 Synthesis of findings with literature review:

When it comes to the second question on the survey being 'how do you think forensics helps aid the police?'. A majority of the participants stated that it helps solve crimes but also finding out exactly who the criminal is. These results support what was stated in the literature review being 'forensics delivers an important and largely positive contribution to the criminal justice system' (Home Office, 2022). What was found in the next survey question was that 40% of the respondents found that the possible negative of forensics would be the possibility of cross contamination and wrongful convictions. These results can help further support what was said in the literature review, that being 'Currant lack of statutory enforcement powers for the Regulator with the assumption compliance is voluntary' (Forensic Science Regulator, 2021). In a nutshell this quote is basically saying some forensic evidence can be mishandled with little to no enforcement due to the lack of powers.

Another point brought up in the literature review that can be further supported is '4% reporting failure to do their job/ neglecting duties.' (IOPC, 2025). This is because 39% of respondents stated that the potential negatives can negatively affect how the public view the police, with a lot of participants stating that there is already a lot of distrust now and pinning the crime on the wrong person or how long it takes forensics affects the public's view on police negatively.

Question 7 is around whether forensics has in a way taught criminals to better cover up their crimes. This can be used as another negative to certain areas of forensics like collecting prints. The quote from the literature review being 'link a suspect to a crime and help interpret a scene.' (College of Policing, 2022). What the survey shows is that the police and public already know that criminals already know the basics like covering prints, it is not out of the picture to assume that career criminals can fully cover their tracks possibly making it harder for police and forensics to 'link a suspect to a crime.'

Question 8 is asking how the participants think forensics can develop in the future. 43% of the respondents stated that they believed forensics would become more reliable and quicker in the future. This does back up 'advances in digital forensics...machine learning and better data science...' (Accelerated Capability Environment, 2024). Then in question 9 and 10 it was centred around gathering what the participants thought about the use of AI in forensics with the overwhelming majority very much in the middle, what popped up a lot was the mishandling of AI in forensics with questions 11 and 12 further backing up that public already have mistrust in the police and using AI may not benefit in public view the can be used as an argument against the use 'It will focus on the future of forensic science in the UK... especially in digital forensics and AI' (UK Parliament, 2025).

4.4 Summary:

Overall, it was found that a lot of the survey answers do actually back up and further support what has already been presented in the literature review, but there was the opinion of the participants that have gone against certain findings like, the use of AI in forensics. It was also found that in basically all of the questions, the public and police or ex police are generally on the same wavelength when it comes to this topic at hand especially with their opinions on the use of AI in forensics and whether it can help with how the public views the police, with many of the respondents stating that they do not know enough on AI and that they are very in the middle on whether it is good or bad to use.

Reference list:

Accelerated Capability Environment 2024, *Exploring new and innovative forensic approaches*, available at: [Exploring new and innovative forensic approaches - Case study - GOV.UK](#) (accessed on 09/03/2026).

College of Policing 2022, *Forensics*, available at: [Forensics | College of Policing](#) (accessed on 09/03/2026).

Home Office 2022, *Impact of Forensic Science Project Phase 1 Report*, available at: [Impact of Forensic Science Project Phase 1 Report \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#) (Accessed on 08/03/2026).

IOPC 2025 *Public perceptions tracker summary report-2024/25*, available at: [Public perceptions tracker summary report - 2024/25 | Independent Office for Police Conduct \(IOPC\)](#) (Accessed on 08/03/2026).

UK Parliament 2025, *Forensic science follow-up inquired launched by Lords Science and Technology Committee*, available at: [Forensic science follow-up inquired launched by Lords Science and Technology Committee - Committees - UK Parliament](#) (accessed on 09/03/2026).