

New safety training for officers

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Our scenario-based safety training is being implemented in forces across England and Wales following a successful pilot

News 2 mins read

All forces across England and Wales will deliver our new national curriculum for safety training by April 2024. From then officers must have at least 12 hours of public and personal safety training (PPST) a year.

Our new curriculum was a commitment made in the 2020 officer and staff safety review.

The training focuses on scenario-based incidents that officers are likely to deal with on a daily basis, including de-escalation and communication tactics. Officers are taught how they can protect themselves, colleagues and members of the public.

During a year-long pilot in Avon and Somerset:

- 89% of officers said the course was relevant to the demands of their job
- 83% said it gave them personalised feedback

As we expect police officers to deal with the most serious situations and run towards danger, it is crucial that we equip them with the best possible training to do so.

The new public and personal safety training will give officers the chance to apply their skills to scenarios based on real-life incidents, and receive personalised feedback and support where they can discuss the rationale of their decision making.

The national curriculum will mean all officers in England and Wales will be trained to a consistent high standard and the College of Policing will support forces with its implementation over the next year.

Superintendent Gaynor Wardle, College of Policing lead for specialist operations

We've held several 'train the trainer' events over the past year. These ensure the course can be delivered locally but to the same national high standard.

New authorised professional practice (APP) on public and personal safety training is being published soon to provide further support.

In the year ending March 2022 there were just over 41,000 assaults on police officers in England and Wales. Assaults without injury increased by 11% on the year before, while those causing injury rose by more than 2%.

Sergeant Dan Phillips worked on developing the training and is currently reviewing the personal safety training (PST) manual.

I've been an officer safety trainer for over 20 years and this new course is a great improvement. It will allow officers to see how the tactics they learn can be applied in real-life scenarios, providing them with the opportunity to respond, react and learn in a realistic situation.

It's very learner focused and concentrates on what works for the person taking part, giving them the opportunity to test their decision making and personal capabilities. The instructor is now more like a coach talking through scenarios, making sure that the training has a link to something near reality.

It includes greater input on practicing how to de-escalate situations, whilst still focusing on the tactics for officers dealing with violence and aggression. The feedback so far has been great.

The training will continue to evolve and one of our next projects is looking at the PST manual.

Sergeant Dan Phillips

Take our survey to let us know what you want to see in the PST manual.

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