



## **Module Specification**

### **Supporting Victims and Witnesses**

Version: 2023-24, v2.0, 18 May 2022

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## Part 1: Information

**Module title:** Supporting Victims and Witnesses

**Module code:** UZSYG7-15-2

**Level:** Level 5

**For implementation from:** 2023-24

**UWE credit rating:** 15

**ECTS credit rating:** 7.5

**Faculty:** Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

**Department:** HAS Dept of Social Sciences

**Partner institutions:** None

**Delivery locations:** Frenchay Campus

**Field:** Sociology and Criminology

**Module type:** Standard

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Excluded combinations:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

**Continuing professional development:** No

**Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements:** None

## Part 2: Description

**Overview:** This module will allow learners to understand how crime impacts on victims and witnesses and that they should be dealt with fairly, with respect and in an ethical and non-biased manner. You will revisit the Code of Ethics and how it applies to procedural justice and be able to outline the measures and support that is available to protect victims and witnesses in a criminal justice system context.

**Features:** Not applicable

**Educational aims:** This module aims to provide learners with an overview of legislation, codes of practice, and guidance that relate to the treatment of victims and witnesses. Develops understanding of the measures that are available to protect victims and witnesses including criminal disclosures, and specific measures available to victims of domestic abuse and stalking such as Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) and Stalking Protection Orders (SPO). Identifies the impact of proceedings on victims and witnesses within a Family Court setting, and the impact of Coronial processes on victims and witnesses (and families).

Provide opportunities to identify good practice when dealing with the individual needs of victims and witnesses by developing their understanding of the different categories of victims and witnesses, from the exposure to crime, abuse, trauma, and disaster, and what to consider when dealing with different categories of victims and witnesses. To enable victims and witnesses to give their best evidence, learners will examine tools and techniques that can be used to build rapport, obtain information, and to recognise the benefits of involving the victim and witnesses in the decision-making process. Prepare learners to examine the choices and autonomy available to victims in pursuing an outcome and what to do should they not support, or wish to pursue, a formal criminal justice outcome. Codes of practice relating to victim care highlight the importance of keeping the victims and witnesses updated on the investigatory process, and provide learners with a broader understanding of the police role in triaging (signposting) victims and witnesses to specialist support services and agencies, in addition to the services provided by Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH).

Legitimacy of the police and policing by consent are important factors for victims and witnesses when understanding the role of the police. Develop appropriate behaviours and attitudes when dealing with victims and witnesses including the awareness and development of the personal and professional communication skills required to support victims and witnesses. These include active-listening, non-verbal communication (NVC), knowing what and what not to say (for example, being able to differentiate between empathy and sympathy). For behavioural skills, learners will

evaluate the benefits of acting with compassion, empathy, and kindness, and recognise the importance of developing these skills to enable them to fully understand the victim's account in terms of completeness, coherence, and accuracy, evaluating the legal concepts of reliability and credibility, and the impact on those of assumptions around vulnerability.

The module details the actions to be taken on the first response to incidents, crimes, disasters or investigations, highlighting the process of providing appropriate ongoing victim care and examine specific considerations when supporting different categories of victims and witnesses and explores how vulnerability may change through ongoing review and assessment of needs. The module provides opportunities for learners to explore how the involvement of multi-agency professionals in building comprehensive victim risk assessments may change when victims have dependents, are primary carers, may be the parents of further victims or witnesses and, be able to measure the impact of investigative activity on victims, including expert witnesses, managing 'difficult' messages, and management of uncooperative or 'hostile' victims. Examine the principles of victim consent and their right to privacy through the review of guidance from the Director of Public Prosecutions and recognises the right to withdraw consent at any time. Other key aspects include the legitimacy of victim, witness, and defence accounts, conducting balanced and unbiased investigations in search of the truth. State the purpose and function of Family Liaison services and how they can provide additional information regarding support to officers in providing victim care by reducing the potential for victims to become dependent on the police, creating an exit strategy, managing complaints, and sharing good practice and lessons learned.

Distinguish the types of justice outcomes, including judicial and non-judicial, and examine the views of victims and witnesses to understand what justice means to them, and why victims and witnesses do not always seek judicial redress. Explore the range of possible outcomes such as employing restorative justice practices and evaluate the impact on victims and witnesses when the offender is either punished or not punished, the reasons why cases may not go to court including when victims are not eligible for a formal outcome due to no further action, the threshold test hasn't been met, or there are no reasonable lines of enquiry.

To allow learners to evaluate the impact of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) on victims and witnesses, the module provides opportunities to analyse and evaluate appropriate practices for the management of victims through the CJS post-judicial proceedings and describes how to enhance victim and witnesses' satisfaction in their dealings with the police and CJS. Discusses the role of specialist support agencies such as witness services, witness care unit and implementing special measures and how to use and employ expert evidence and expert witnesses. Describes how other agencies/specialist contribute to the proceedings and how to manage victims through the court process with these other agencies. After criminal justice outcomes, the module explains how to fulfil obligations and responsibilities to victims with the provision of information regarding the offender and understand the roles and responsibilities of the police, throughout prison, parole, and probation processes all relating to keeping victims and witnesses informed of potential developments in a case.

Victims and witnesses are at the heart of public protection, the module defines the effects of how personal attitudes, stereotyping views, values and biases can impact on a public protection investigation and identify strategies for dealing with the potential impact of such attitudes. Analyses the impact trauma on victims(s) and witnesses involved in complex and serious offending and highlight the professional support that is required including therapeutic support, consent issues and maintaining on-going support throughout the investigation. Describes the role of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), the right to review, and allows learners to develop a deeper understanding on the visible and invisible impact of abuse on a victim, the short, medium, and long-term impacts of abuse, and the cumulative effect of low-level abuse. Identify the link between abuse, depression, self-blame, and behavioural changes and recognise the link between abuse and the long-term effects on a victim's health, education, and wellbeing. Highlight the potential effects of rape and other sexual offences including poly-victimisation, understanding how perpetrators may exploit victims to avoid detection, and provide support and advice to prevent victimisation.

**Outline syllabus:** CoP Curriculum:

Public Protection:

3 Understand the impact of abuse on a victim

3.1 Impact of abuse on victims:

- Visible and invisible impact
- Short, medium and long-term impacts of abuse
- Cumulative effect of low-level abuse

3.2 Link between abuse, depression, trauma, self-blame and behavioural changes

3.3 Link between abuse and the long-term effects on a victim's health, education and social standing

3.4 Potential effects of rape and other sexual offences on victims

3.5 Poly-victimisation

3.6 How perpetrators may exploit victims in order to prevent detection

3.7 Advice to prevent victimisation

Victims and Witnesses:

1 Understand the law, policy and guidance in the treatment of victims and witnesses

1.1 Key legislation, codes of practice, guidance and policies when dealing with victims and witnesses:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
- Achieving Best Evidence 2022
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Victims' Code)
- The Witness Charter
- Victims' Right to Review
- Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Guidance
- Criminal Procedures Rules
- Data Protection Act

1.2 Ensuring victims and witnesses are dealt with fairly, with respect and in an ethical and non-biased manner:

- The Code of Ethics
  - Procedural justice
- 1.3 Measures available to protect victims and witnesses:
- Criminal disclosures
  - Measures applicable to victims of domestic abuse, stalking etc.
- 1.4 Purpose of protection orders:
- Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO)
  - Stalking Protection Orders (SPO) etc.
- 1.5 Impact of proceedings on victims and witnesses (or families)
- Coronial processes
  - Family court proceedings
- 3 Understand how to apply good practice when dealing with the individual needs of victims and witnesses
- 3.1 Different categories of victim and witness:
- Crime, abuse, trauma and disaster
  - What to consider when dealing with different categories of victim and witness
- 3.2 How to enable a victim or witness to give their best evidence:
- Tools and techniques that can be used to build rapport and assist with the sharing of information
  - How to involve the victim and witness in the decision-making process
- 3.3 The choices and autonomy available to victims in pursuing an outcome and what to do should they not support, or wish to pursue, a formal criminal justice outcome
- 3.4 How to keep the victims and witnesses updated
- 3.5 The police role in triaging (signposting) victims and witnesses to specialist support
- Safeguarding services and agencies e.g. MASH
- 4 Understand appropriate behaviours and attitudes when dealing with victims and witnesses
- 4.1 The legitimacy of the police and policing by consent:
- Victim and witness understanding of the role of the police
- 4.2 Personal and professional communication skills required to support the victim and witness, including:
- Active listening

- Non-verbal communication (NVC)
  - Knowing what and what not to say e.g. differentiating between empathy and sympathy
- 4.3 Behavioural skills that can provide additional support to victims and witnesses e.g.
- Acting with compassion, empathy and kindness
- 4.4 Understanding the victim's account in terms of completeness, coherence and accuracy
- 4.5 Legal concepts of reliability and credibility and the impact of assumptions around vulnerability
- 6 Understand how to provide appropriate ongoing victim care after first response to incidents, crimes, disasters or investigations
- 6.1 Specific considerations when supporting different categories of victims and witness e.g. those of:
- Crime
  - Abuse
  - Trauma
  - Disaster
- 6.2 How a victim's or witness's vulnerability may change:
- Ongoing review
  - Assessment of needs
- 6.3 Involvement of multi-agency professionals in building comprehensive victim risk assessments e.g. where victims:
- Have dependents
  - Are primary carers
  - May be the parents of further victims or witnesses
- 6.4 Impact of investigative activity on victims, including:
- Expert witnesses
  - Managing 'difficult' messages
  - Managing uncooperative or hostile victims
- 6.5 Principles of victim consent and their right to privacy:
- Adhering to relevant guidance
  - The right to withdraw consent at any time
  - Application of human rights and data protection law e.g. in relation to digital data



extraction

6.6 Legitimacy of victim and witness and defence accounts, to conduct balanced, unbiased investigations in search of the truth

6.7 How family liaison can provide additional information regarding support to officers in providing victim care:

- Reducing the potential for victims to become dependent on the police
- Creating an exit strategy
- Managing complaints, sharing good practice and lessons learned

7 Understand the various types of justice outcomes, both judicial and non-judicial

7.1 Views of the victim and witness as to what constitutes justice and why victims and witnesses do not always seek judicial redress

- Types of justice outcomes
- Evidence supporting restorative approaches
- Impact on victims and witnesses when offenders receive a punitive outcome or other type of outcome

7.2 Reasons why cases may not go to court

- Impact on victims and witnesses

7.3 Dealing with victims who are not eligible for a formal outcome

- No further action taken
- Threshold not met
- No reasonable lines of enquiry

8 Explain the processes used to manage victims through the criminal justice system post-judicial proceedings

8.1 Impact of the criminal justice system on victims and witnesses

8.2 Why it is important to enhance victim and witness satisfaction in their dealings with the police and CJS (policing by consent)

8.3 Specialist support agencies and their role in supporting victims through the criminal justice system e.g.

- Witness services
- Witness care units
- Implementing special measures

8.4 How to use and employ expert evidence and expert witnesses

8.5 How to manage victims through the court process with other agencies

8.6 How other agencies/specialists contribute to the proceedings

e.g. Europol, NCA International Officers and Victim Liaison

8.7 The police officer's responsibilities to victims after criminal justice system outcomes e.g. relaying of information regarding the offender(s)

8.8 Roles and responsibilities of the police, throughout prison, parole and probation processes, relating to keeping victims and witnesses informed of potential developments in a case

Police Investigations:

7 Explain how personal attitudes, values and biases can impact on a public protection investigation

7.1 Effects of personal attitudes, stereotyping views, values and bias on the investigation process

7.2 Strategies for dealing with the potential impact of such attitudes, stereotyping views, values or bias

9 Understand the intricacies associated with victim and witness care during a complex investigation

9.1 Impact of trauma on victim(s) and witnesses involved in complex and serious offending

9.2 Support required for victims, including therapeutic support, consent issues, and maintaining on-going support throughout the investigation and compliance with the Victims Code of Practice

9.3 Professional support that may be involved

9.4 The role of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

9.5 Victim's right to review

### **Part 3: Teaching and learning methods**

**Teaching and learning methods:** The module will employ a combination of lectures, seminars, and workshops, which may involve key external stakeholders. Our pedagogy is interactive, discussion-based, and student-facing. Students are an active part of the learning process, and will be asked to contribute ideas, questions,

and critical standpoints. The learning environment is designed to promote peer-to-peer support and exchange.

While teaching and learning will be predominantly classroom based, appropriate use will be made of online resources and learning environments.

**Module Learning outcomes:** On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

**MO1** Apply the law, policies, and guidance in the treatment of victims and witnesses within the criminal justice system.

**MO2** Critically evaluate the range of powers available to protect victims and witnesses and how these apply in a criminal justice system context.

**MO3** Clarify good practice guidance and how this enables victims and witnesses to give their best evidence.

**MO4** Analyse the impact of abuse when conducting complex investigations and the link to poly-victimisation.

**MO5** Describe appropriate ongoing victim care after the first response to incidents, crimes, disasters, or investigations.

**Hours to be allocated:** 150

**Contact hours:**

Independent study/self-guided study = 112.5 hours

Lectorials = 37.5 hours

Total = 150

**Reading list:** The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/B3A8E979-D219-F6F0-2AAD-7D1DC8A9479C.html?draft=1&lang=en-GB&login=1) via the following link <https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/B3A8E979-D219-F6F0-2AAD-7D1DC8A9479C.html?draft=1&lang=en-GB&login=1>

## **Part 4: Assessment**

**Assessment strategy:** Summative assessment for this module is based on one component.

Component A is a Live brief/primary source exercise.

Through teamwork, the learners will work together to consider real world challenges related to policing and hypothesise how they can be solved in ways which support key stakeholders, such as individual victims, victim groups, members of the public, charity groups and police organisations. As such the assessment may be presented in the form of live brief or a primary source exercise depending on the relevance of key issues and availability of support from external agencies. By learning about the work of external groups supporting the module, learners are therefore encouraged to develop a good understanding of key agencies which can support them as future police officers, but also think innovatively about the current challenges inherent in supporting victims and witnesses.

Resit rationale - As the first sit assessment was a group research and presentation task, the resit will be an individual poster presentation with summary of a chosen case study topic, and partnership agency working approach strategy.

Formative assessment of learning will take place during scheduled teaching building on content taught and independent study tasks. Methods comprise of question and answers, group discussions and debates, in-class knowledge checks, and work products as produced.

**Assessment components:**

**Primary Source Exercise - Component A (First Sit)**

Description: Group Case Study Summary and Strategy.

Learners will be provided study time to research and prepare. Indicative duration for the presentation of 10 minutes per group.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: Yes

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

**Poster - Component A (Resit)**

Description: As the first sit assessment was a group research and presentation task, the resit will be an individual poster presentation with summary of a case study and strategy.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

**Part 5: Contributes towards**

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Professional Policing [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Professional Policing [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Professional Policing [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23