

Immersive learning landscapes: Evaluating the role of virtual reality in crime scene investigator training

Project examining the role of immersive virtual reality (VR) in crime scene investigation training.

Key details

Lead institution	Staffordshire University
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Police region	West Midlands
Level of research	PhD
Project start date	January 2021
Date due for completion	February 2027

Research context

This PhD project examines the role of immersive virtual reality (VR) in crime scene investigation training. The research compares VR-based crime scene scenarios with traditional practical training methods, including the Crime Scene House, to evaluate how different simulated environments support the development of investigative observation, procedural decision-making, documentation and confidence.

The study is designed to explore whether VR can offer a realistic, controlled, repeatable and accessible training environment for CSI learners and practitioners. It considers both the opportunities and limitations of VR, including its potential to support experiential learning, standardise scenario delivery, provide safe exposure to complex scenes and complement existing

face-to-face practical training.

Participants complete a traditional crime-scene scenario, followed by one or more VR-based scenarios. The research gathers data on participant performance, decision-making, user experience, perceived realism, confidence and training value. This allows the project to assess not only whether VR is effective, but also where it may be most appropriately integrated within CSI training provision.

The project aims to contribute to evidence-informed forensic education by identifying how immersive technologies may enhance, supplement or challenge current approaches to crime scene training.

Research methodology

This is a mixed-methods study using qualitative and quantitative research approaches. If you would like to be involved in the research or find out more detail about the project, please [contact the researcher](#).

Interim reports or publications

Markillie L. 2025. 'Searching for standards'. [Police Professional](#).

This article discusses issues relating to standards, consistency and professional practice within crime scene investigation and forensic training.