

Initial and refresher training on handcuffing

Using in-person training on handcuffing for all officers to ensure a consistent approach.

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Key details

Does it work?	Promising
Focus	Organisational
Topic	Offender management
Organisation	Essex Police
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Region	Eastern
Partners	Police
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	April 2023
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Children and young people

Aim

This initiative aims to provide training on handcuffing for every student officer during both initial and refresher personal safety training. The training aims to:

- reinforce that any intentional application of force to a person, including handcuffing, is unlawful unless it can be justified
- explain that justification comes not only from establishing a legal right to use handcuffs, but also by identifying good objective reasons
- give officers clear guidance and advice, not only regarding the initial arrest but also on how long handcuffs should be used for
- enable officers feel confident in identifying when handcuffs can or should be used

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of this initiative are:

- to ensure the safety of operational officers coupled with public reassurance and offender safe management
- to improve consistency across training delivery
- to gain insights from surveys regarding quality of training and measure the impact of the training before and after lessons

Description

Essex Police have embedded handcuffing training into the annual mandatory public & personal safety training (PPST) refresher sessions that are delivered to the entire operational establishment. This was re-established in Essex Police after certain skills (including handcuffing) were identified as needed development for some officers. It was decided that regular refresher sessions would be beneficial to ensure consistent and appropriate handcuff use.

During the sessions, officers are taught to ensure that their decisions on when to use handcuffs are guided by a combination of the national decision model, the police [code of ethics](#) and impact factors such as the individual's age, strength and the seriousness of the offence.

In April 2023, their first trial was carried out in with student officers, however there are plans to conduct both initial and refresher PPST and handcuffing training with a variety of different officers and special constables.

Overall impact

Approximately 500 surveys were completed by student officers both before and immediately after training. It has been found that confidence levels in officers when applying handcuffs has increased.

Student surveys assess the impact of the sessions. Students are asked to grade the overall training from 0 to 5. They are also asked whether the training was sufficient, together with understanding of the lesson taught before and after participation. Overall student survey feedback indicates a 4.7 out of 5 rating across the board in terms of overall satisfaction.

This is then fed back into various boards through independent advisory groups and representatives from working groups that are invited to observe training incrementally. These observations help reassure the public of policing standards.

Learning

To ensure the success of this initiative, it is important to conduct training evaluations and observations by internal assessors to ensure training is being delivered as intended.

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Tags

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