

Policing has more than doubled target for number of officers receiving rape investigative training

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Policing in England and Wales has more than doubled a Government target for the number of officers given rape investigative training.

The target to train 2,000 officers by the end of April has been exceeded with a total of 4,540 having now completed the specialist course, known as the Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Investigative Skills Development Programme (RISDP).

The College of Policing training was developed by working with leading academics with the aim of training investigators so that victims receive the right support throughout the investigation.

The work has been undertaken in collaboration with Operation Soteria, a Home Office funded unit which brings together police forces with academics and policy experts to use evidence and new insight to transform the policing response to rape and serious sexual offences.

Our aim was to provide training to rapidly up-skill officers and staff who investigate rape and serious sexual assault cases.

We have more than doubled the initial target of training 2,000 investigators and it is testament to the drive within police forces to tackle these horrendous crimes.

As of today we know there are 4,540 officers and staff who are now specially trained due to the efforts of police forces, the College and Home Office. There is much more to be done and our focus remains fixed on bringing perpetrators to justice and protecting victims, mostly women, from harm.

Assistant Chief Constable Tom Harding, Director at the College of Policing

21/02/2026

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investigative training

The training focuses on the whole story surrounding a rape or sexual offence and ensures officers are taking a victim-centred approach.

No targets were set for individual police forces to be assessed against and training will continue across the country.

Tags

Rape and sexual offences Investigation