

A study of police vetting decision making

This practice based PhD examines models of decision making, and how these are applied, supported or not in police vetting and quality of training.

Key details

Lead institution	University of Leicester
Principal researcher(s)	Marcus Griffiths mjmg1@leicester.ac.uk
Police region	East Midlands
Level of research	PhD
Project start date	October 2024
Date due for completion	January 2030

Research context

Police vetting is critical to ensuring only suitable individuals enter policing through initial recruitment and then are able to remain in policing, by both holding and maintaining the required vetting clearance. At the heart of this process there is a decision maker, who will on the information provided, ultimately make the decision whether to award a vetting clearance or withdraw an existing clearance. It is recognised that the quality of such decisions is highly variable, subjective and can suffer from bias.

The significance of these decisions has recently been brought into sharp focus as a result of a number of high-profile cases of police misconduct. These have raised questions around how such individuals were able to obtain vetting clearance in the first place and then maintain a vetting clearance subsequently.

The proposed research seeks to support policing in addressing this systemic problem through an evidence-based understanding of vetting decision making. This significantly has the potential to ensure policing has the right representation, through individuals who are and remain, suitable to work in policing

Research methodology

- phase one: structured interviews with force vetting managers
- phase two: vetting survey of vetting officers/practitioners/decision makers
- phase three: workshops using phase one and two data to develop intervention
- phase four: delivery of training intervention and assessment