

Scenario Two

Introduction

Within this scenario, I would invite the Ethics Committee to consider the appropriate sanction / outcome for an officer who has been investigated for matters of Honesty and Integrity.

Legislation / Guidance

Police (Conduct) Regulations 2012 (Schedule 2)

Honesty and Integrity: Police officers are honest, act with integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position

Circumstances

Police Officer A was a specialist road policing officer whose role included the accurate and evidence based assessment of road traffic collisions and supporting provision of evidence to judicial proceedings. The officer had been supported by the Force to receive training in the discipline of accident investigation. The training was University accredited and involved the officer completing a number of modular assignments, with the expectation that each would be passed prior to receipt of a final, nationally recognised qualification. Successful completion of this qualification enabled the officer to continue and advance within the role and also added weight to the quality of expert evidence that they could offer during relevant judicial proceedings. The course was fully funded by the Police Service.

During submission of a particular assignment to the University for marking, it became apparent that much of the analytical content had been copied from an assignment submitted by another officer a year earlier.

The officer was interviewed over the matter and accepted that certain aspects of the assignment had not been their own work. Furthermore the officer accepted that they had made superficial changes to the research taken from the earlier officer's work, so it did not readily appear to be plagiarised once inserted in their own assignment. In mitigation they stated that they were under considerable personal pressures at home, and apologised on this occasion for plagiarism.

1. What is the view of the Ethics Committee in respect of whether this amounts to Misconduct or Gross Misconduct?
2. On the circumstances presented, what is the appropriate sanction / discipline outcome?