

OVERSIGHT

newsletter

Welcome to our monthly newsletter which provides updates about the work of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The newsletter is for complaint handlers in forces and local policing bodies (LPBs).

Minimum standards for referrals guide

We recently published our [Minimum standards for referrals guide](#). This guide is for those who make referrals and sets out the minimum information and documentation required.

The IOPC assessment unit will often need to request more information on referrals and this can create delays and further work for both parties. By using our new guide, we hope those making referrals will better understand the minimum information required, for us to make a mode of investigation decision without delay.

For any questions or feedback about the guide, please contact the assessment unit - assessmentteam@policeconduct.gov.uk.

New Focus guidance

Focus issue 21 – Reflective Practice

A new issue of Focus on reflective practice, is available on our [website](#). This issue looks at the reflective practice framework as a whole, the use of reflective practice for complaints, as well as ways of implementing a reflective practice culture within forces more generally.

To support this publication, we also attached a link to our [Reflective practice review process summary report](#), showing some of the work we carried out before drafting this issue of Focus. We would like to again thank the forces and local policing bodies who gave up their time towards the end of last year to help us to understand how reflective practice worked in their individual force areas. Their involvement helped us to identify effective practice and to see areas where further guidance would be helpful. From record keeping to handling situations where an officer refuses to engage in the process, we captured the issues raised, and feedback received in our professional discussions, and suggest practical solutions.

If you would like guidance on other areas of reflective practice, please contact your Oversight Liaison. We will collate this feedback and identify the best ways to provide you with further advice or share effective practices.

Focus issue 22 – Handling complaints involving race discrimination

A new issue of Focus on handling allegations involving race discrimination, is now available on our [website](#).

This issue is a special edition produced as part of the wider thematic work we are undertaking at the IOPC on race discrimination. The guidance is arranged into four complementary sections to

allow you to read it as a complete guidance document, or use it as a chapter-based reference guide, as follows:

- Foreword by Regional Director for London and IOPC Strategic Lead on Discrimination, Sal Naseem
- Section 1 – Challenges around complaints handling
- Section 2 – Initiatives and practices
- Section 3 – Supporting information

Thank you for all of the feedback we received on this issue. Thank you also to the forces and LPBs who engaged in open and frank discussions about the challenges faced by complaint handlers, and provided positive stories about steps being taken to improve complaints handling. We could not have done this without your assistance and support. We will respond to all of the stakeholders that engaged with us during the external consultation process and, where you responded with details of initiatives and practices happening in your force area, we will contact you to discuss them further.

As part of our wider thematic work, we are revising our [Discrimination Guidelines](#). Once this is complete, we will contact you to discuss our organisational approach to embedding the overall guidance with forces and LPBs.

Please discard the draft version of this Focus that we sent out to you on Monday 22 August 2022.

We hope you find this guidance useful. If you would like more information about this work, or if you have any questions, please contact Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk.

Complaint handler workshops 2023

We will host a series of face-to-face workshops for PSD and LPB complaint handlers in February and March 2023. You will have received a 'save the date' notification for your region, that was sent on 14 December 2022. We will soon send out invitations with more information about the workshops and will ask for attendee details at that stage.

We hope you have the opportunity to read our recent issue of Focus on reflective practice, ahead of the workshops. By digesting the content and putting it into practice beforehand, we can learn from your different experiences and have a practical and interactive discussion. The workshops will also be an opportunity for complaint handlers to network with others from different forces, and for us working at the IOPC, to engage with you too.

If you have any questions about the workshops, please contact Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk

Recent information

Impact report

Engaging, Learning and Improving, our impact report for 2021/22, sets out our achievements during the last year and how we are working with stakeholders to make a positive difference to policing. It uses real case studies, about real people, to show the real impact we are having, and includes testimonials from a range of service users and stakeholders.

We highlight the impact of our collaborative work with our policing partners and other oversight bodies to improve the police complaints system. We evidence our commitment to identify and share learning opportunities, including examples of how these have led to positive changes in police practice.

We outline how we are listening and responding to the issues that matter most to the public, through our thematic work in areas such as stop and search and use of Taser. We also share the valuable work we are doing with our stakeholders, as well as the achievements of our Youth Panel, to improve confidence in policing.

We also demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality and valuing diversity, through initiatives such as our reverse mentoring programme, staff networks, and Aspiring Professionals Programme.

We hope you find our 2021/22 report of interest - you can [download your copy now](#) (English version) or [view the Welsh version](#) of the report. Please tell us what you think of our report by completing [our short survey](#).

Youth Panel National Survey

On 28 November 2022, we shared our new IOPC [Youth Panel National Survey Report](#) co-produced by the IOPC's Youth Panel and Leaders Unlocked.

The survey was produced to examine young people's views and experiences of policing and police complaints. Young people were asked how much they trust the police, whether that view had changed in the past year, and what could be done to improve it. Feedback was also sought on whether it was felt the police treat young people fairly and what issues the police should focus on.

The findings will inform our forward planning in this area, please see the report for more information.

? Common questions from forces and LPBs

Q: Before leaving the force, a former officer was a subject in a misconduct investigation that was never made public. The former officer now complains that a still-serving officer shared sensitive details of the misconduct investigation with mutual friends who are members of the public. Should this be dealt with as off-duty conduct?

A: The former officer alleges that a serving officer has accessed and shared information that was only available to them due to their role in the police. As with other allegations of improperly accessing and sharing police information, the alleged conduct would not be considered to have occurred off-duty, even if the sharing occurred off-duty. This is because the information was allegedly obtained through the serving officer's policing duties.

Corporate news

IOPC wins two customer service awards

At the [Assessment Services Ltd Annual Awards](#), we won two awards in the categories of 'Using standards to support change' and 'Maintaining a customer focused organisation'.

The judges recognised not only the senior leadership team in the drive for putting the service user at the heart of what we do, but also the commitment in the wider organisation to achieving Customer Service Excellence® accreditation. This accreditation is a nationally recognised standard that is seen as a mark of quality in customer care.

Paul Bridle, CEO of ex2 Academy, which hosts the awards said: “The commitment from the very top and senior management team is very evident. The IOPC has been able to measure the improvement in the culture of the organisation year on year.”

“It is very impressive that the IOPC deals with complaints against the police from the public. The nature of their job is that one side or the other is likely to not be happy with the result, which means that 50% of the time they are likely to not have a happy customer. So for the IOPC not to shy away from this, but instead focus on being a customer-focused organisation, is impressive. This makes the results they achieve even more outstanding and a credit to the whole organisation at every level.”

Statement from IOPC senior non-executive Director Julia Mulligan

“The [IOPC Unitary Board appointed Tom Whiting as interim Director General](#) at a special meeting on Sunday 4 December.

“Michael Lockwood resigned from the post on Friday 2 December 2022 with immediate effect.

“In line with the Police Reform Act 2002, Mr Whiting’s appointment has been ratified by the Home Secretary to whom the Director General is directly accountable. Mr Whiting has been the deputy Director General of the IOPC since February 2019.

“It is vital the IOPC continues to fulfil its statutory duties and we are confident that Mr Whiting can provide the necessary leadership and reassurance to our staff and stakeholders at this challenging time, until a permanent director general is appointed.”

Latest news

Keep up to date on our investigations and other work to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. You can find our [latest IOPC news](#) on our website.

[Former Cheshire officer to appear in court charged with misconduct in public office for abuse of position for sexual purpose](#)

[Former City of London Police officer charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm](#)

[Dismissal rulings for six officers for gross misconduct for sending inappropriate WhatsApp messages](#)

[Met Police officer given final written warning for gross misconduct relating to strip search of woman](#)

[Investigation under way into fatal police shooting in Cumbria](#)

[Investigation into death of man in custody found that Thames Valley Police did not contribute to death](#)

Correction: In last month's newsletter the following link should have said West Midlands Police, not West Yorkshire Police. Apologies for this error.

[Inquest found failings and missed opportunities regarding West Midlands police contact with two women before they were murdered](#)

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If you have any questions, please get in touch with your Oversight Liaison or a member of the Oversight team.

