How does internal, initial police officer training affect police officer ethical decision-making?

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Criminal Justice at the University of Central Lancashire

September 2021

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Professional Doctorate

School
School of Justice

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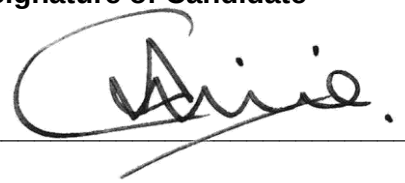

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I ABSTRACT

The legitimacy of the police service requires regular attention and care. The recent murder of George Floyd in the United States of America and subsequent worldwide Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement highlighted the fragility of that legitimacy. Every single police officer, every single contact with the public, and every single action by the police can make a difference to how the police are viewed. And this has a wider impact on law and order as discussed by Stenkamp et al. (2021) '…if people feel that [law enforcement]… behaves in a procedurally just manner, it will be deemed legitimate, resulting in greater voluntary compliance with its orders and instructions…' (p. 7).

Policing in the UK prides itself on officers having discretion; put simply, if an officer stops a motorist committing a speeding offence, that officer can decide what action, if any, to take against the motorist. But with discretion comes significant responsibility. Responsibility on the individual officers themselves, but also on police leaders to ensure that the training that officers receive is appropriate, effective and meets the learning outcomes, with the ultimate aim of ensuring ethical decision-making in every single situation.

In 2020, significant changes were made to police officer recruitment routes into policing (College of Policing, 2020). These changes incorporated a fundamental shift in the way that officers are trained during Initial Police Training with many new recruits now attending university for at least part of their training. However, there is no academic evidence-base of how the current training affects ethical decision-making, nor the efficacy of the current training provision to achieve this outcome.

In this study, the primary research questions were:

1. How effective is the current initial police training in shaping the ways in which student officers subsequently make decisions?
2. Is there alignment between policy intent and practice in the use of the College of Policing Code of Ethics by student officers in their everyday decision-making post-training?
3. Does student police officer decision-making change between three specific time junctures (their first week after joining the police service; immediately after initial police training, and six months later after becoming independent patrol officers)?

A qualitative, longitudinal approach was taken using semi-structured interviews, coupled with three vignettes (ethical dilemmas). Interviews were conducted with nineteen new,

student officers in a South West Police force in the United Kingdom. Identical interview questions, vignettes and the same student officers took part in the research at each of the three interview junctures. The interviews were thematically analysed using the Braun and Clarke (2006) six phase approach, in order to identify key themes and sub-themes that were common across participants/interview junctures.

Six major themes were identified, and fourteen sub-themes. The principal findings showed that:

- The teaching of ethics at initial police training led only to student officers learning about the meaning of ethics, rather than making them more ethical;
- Non-supervisory, experienced officers have a much greater impact on student officers than the training that those new officers receive;
- Use of the National Decision Model (NDM) – the model used across policing in England & Wales – diminishes over time, which is the opposite to what one would expect/hope to see;
- Knowledge of the Code of Ethics by new officers is limited and, in some cases, non-existent.

Several recommendations are made for the service which include a review of recruitment processes to ensure that ethical standards of potential recruits are tested; a focus on regular top-up training for non-supervisory, experienced officers, and the use of ethical dilemmas to facilitate such training.

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VI ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Unnamed Chief Officer, UK Police force – for allowing use of data;

Prof Allyson MacVean OBE, Bath Spa University – for constantly telling me that I could and should be doing a Doctorate!

Dr Elaine Wainwright, Bath Spa University – for her coaching, guidance and encouragement throughout. I am eternally grateful.

Dr Rebecca Phythian – for always being there and being a source of great encouragement, coupled with honesty for me!

Prof Stuart Kirby – for his encouragement in getting me started on the Professional Doctorate course at UCLan;

CI Mark Thomas – for assisting!

Sir Thomas Winsor – for his allowing me flexibility during my time at HMICFRS to conduct the interviews;

My supervisory team at UCLan;

The student officers (participants) who took part in the study, without whom the whole thesis would not have been possible;

My partner – who has demanded that I do not name him (!) – but for his unwavering belief in me and his patience as I have worked on the research over the past three years. I know that I have not been the most approachable person at times!

VII GLOSSARY OF TERMS

NDM	-	National Decision Model
Code	-	National Code of Ethics for Policing
ED1, ED2, ED3	-	Ethical dilemma 1, 2, & 3. Ethical dilemmas (vignettes) that were used across all interviews as part of the question-set
Time A	-	Week 1 of internal Initial Police Training
Time B	-	Week 26; first week post-Initial Police Training; start of tutorship period
Time C	-	Week 52; a year after joining the service. Post-tutorship; independent patrol status
College of Policing	-	Professional body for policing. Arms-length body of the Home Office. Established in 2012[1]
Student Officer	-	Any regular Police Constable who has not yet satisfied their probationary period (normally two years) in the service
Senior Police Officer	-	Any Police Officer of Inspector rank or above
NVivo	-	Qualitative data analysis computer software package[2]

[1] See: https://www.college.police.uk/about for more details.
[2] See: https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/about/nvivo for more details.

1 INTRODUCTION

How does internal police training affect ethical decision-making amongst student police officers?

1.1 Background

> *Police departments must gain their legitimacy—and keep it—through an ongoing daily dialogue about the moral basis of what police do. Police must persuade the public, as well as themselves, of the moral rightness of their work, their decisions, and their systems for hiring and retaining individuals who make those decisions. (*Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012 cited in Sherman, 2020, p. 8)

In his book *Humanity: a moral history of the twentieth century,* Glover (2001) talked about some of the atrocities in modern times – from the Nazis, to Hiroshima, to Apartheid. But a recurring theme in his book was the role of the police: at times acting as the strong-arm of Government or as the secret police in Moscow, and at other times as critical actors to secure the safety and security of everyday citizens. Perhaps the most striking part of his oratory on the police was his realisation that without trust in the police and wider public services, modern life as we know it would be difficult (p. 335).

The world of UK-policing is one that is forever-changing; from stop search to human rights, and more recently, ethics and sexual harassment[3]. But this forever-changing nature is important; it ensures that policing and those responsible for its delivery remain current and constantly evolve to provide the very best service to the communities that they serve. Inquiries into police misconduct or identified deficiencies and subsequent police reform are of course not restricted to UK-policing but are commonplace on the worldwide stage. (Alain 2004 cites nine enquiries over ten years in the Canadian province of Quebec alone (p. 40)). However, the UK has seen its share of inquiries from the Taylor Inquiry (Hillsborough), 1990; the Macpherson Inquiry (Stephen Lawrence),

[3] A search on *Scopus* for the terms 'police' + 'ethics' resulted in 2923 hits in 2020, compared with 1139 in 2010, and only 198 in 2000. The amount of research undertaken has continued to grow each year. Similarly, a search for the terms police + sexual harassment yielded 566 hits for 2020 compared with 185 in 2010 and only 45 in 2000.

1999, to the Jay report into child abuse in Rotherham, and more recently, the Undercover Policing Inquiry, 2018.

The way that the police are seen and operate across the world matters now more than ever. The expansion of the internet and more recently social media mean that things that go wrong or are dealt with badly in one country can have a significant impact in other places in the world. This was never truer than with the recent death of George Floyd in the USA which sparked the *Black Lives Matter* movement (BBC, 2020). Twitter saw the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter rise from under 100,000 mentions at the beginning of 2020 to 8.8 million uses of the hashtag on 28 May 2020 – three days after the death of Floyd (Pew Research Center, 2000). Riots took place in all major cities across the UK (The Guardian, 2020) with many calling to *defund the police*; a term used to divert money from policing into other services such as housing, employment, health and social care (The Guardian, 2020). This response is testament to the almost immediate exchange of news, information and opinion and the resultant global response to what was viewed as an injustice within policing in the USA.

1.2 Policing in the UK

With approximately 129,110 warranted police officers and 81,510 police staff working at 43 forces across England & Wales (Home Office, 2020), it is arguable that police misconduct or institutional failings will always happen. There will be pockets of superb, innovative work that go unreported and unpublished, and inevitable pockets of significant unknown or undiscovered failings, corruption or decay. However, over the last decade, perhaps since the establishment of the College of Policing in 2012, it could be argued that policing has moved toward a more moralistic, ethics-focused institution. This culminated in the production of a Code of Ethics (2014) for policing by the College of Policing in 2014 (this will be discussed in greater detail later)[4].

In her 2018 annual report on the Police Ethics' Network, Professor Allyson MacVean cited David Prince CBE, a member of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. In Prince's speech, he presented the fifteenth report of the Committee entitled 'Tone from the Top' (2015), Prince commented '…[that] organisations in every sector benefit from greater legitimacy when the public has confidence in their integrity. This is especially true

[4] The Code of Ethics applies to all members of the police service: police officers, police staff and special constables.

of the police whose frontline officers have to make real-life ethical decisions on every shift…' (p. 3). The fundamental point made by Prince is that of *real-life ethical decisions* by frontline officers: the question around decision-making, how these decisions are made, by whom and importantly on what basis (that is, the training that they received in order to make those decisions) is one that is central to this thesis. Millar & Palmer (2003) concurred with Prince stating that '…ethics in policing is not simply about compliance with minimum legal and moral standards, it is also about enhancing individual and collective virtues, and striving to improve one's performance' (p. 117).

Previous authors such as Neumann & Forsyth (2008) cited research by Van Valkenburg & Holden (2004) on training within healthcare and posed the question as to whether ethics are *caught* or *taught* by student health workers, or whether their ethics remain unchanged from when they start in their careers. Within policing, White (2006) also concluded the same as previous authors, stating that 'a policing ethic cannot be imposed, either by management decree or, more subtly, by being ''taught"' (p. 398). In order to answer the question of efficacy of ethical training with a strong degree of academic rigour, it is important to understand the background of how initial policing training at the turn of the 21st century was developed, so as to appreciate how and why initial police training is currently delivered. The same emphasis on the criticality of police officers' training was noted in a Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) debate on police reform where Hazel Blears, MP (2004) said that:

> *…unless we get the probationer [police] training right, the culture change that I talked about in terms of police reforms…is not going to happen…it is when people first come into the service that you are setting their standards, their ethos, their skills and the nature of the encounter that they have with the public (Q320).*

1.3 Contextualising the problem

As some of the literature above suggests, the training that is delivered to new police officers has been something that has attracted attention from the media, the press, academics and government for a significant amount of time.

In 1973, a Home Office review, conducted by a Working Party recommended the introduction of a central planning unit to oversee national police training. A review, as

cited by Charman (2017) was conducted by the University of East Anglia (commissioned by the Home Office) in 1986 which recommended a modular style of police training, rather than the previous linear approach. Charman (2017) cited the Scarman Report (1981) of the early 1980s as also playing a part in driving forward these reviews. Scarman's report (1981) received much acclaim within political circles, with Lord Belstead crystallising parliamentary opinion in his House of Lords speech (1981) when he hailed the report as being of very great importance to all and agreeing that '…there must now be more effort put into [police] training' (p. 774). Training changed at this juncture, moving to a mix of on-the-job learning (known within the service as tutorship; effectively undertaking the job, or a certain part therein with an experienced officer) and residential, classroom-based training, Peacock (2010).

In the late 1990s, training once again started to change, following the Home Office Review of National Police Training (1998). This review led to Part 4 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 which established the Central Police Training and Development Authority (CPTDA). This was the start of centralisation of police training, moving from the traditional individual-force training system to a more centralised, arguably more government-driven, form of training. With this centralisation came greater standardisation. Charman (2017) suggested that the HMIC report entitled 'Training Matters' (2002) and the BBC documentary *The Secret Policeman*, aired in 2003 were the stimuli that led to this radical overhaul of police training.

Despite the Parliamentary Act of 2001 and these reports as alluded to by Charman (2017), some six years later on 1 April 2007, Centrex, the common name for the CPTDA, merged with other policing organisations into the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), promising again to reform police training. This new body promised to '…[equip police officers]…for the challenges of the 21st century', (Peacock, 2008). Notwithstanding these early promises, just over four years later it was announced that the NPIA would close, being replaced in December 2012 by the College of Policing. The College has survived longer than the NPIA and has led several reforms since its inception. Mike Cunningham (2017) the most recent permanent Chief Executive promised that the College '…[would help] leaders at all levels work through the challenges, and [develop] a workforce that is well equipped to do the job asked of them'.

Prior to Centrex closing, the formation of the NPIA, and the subsequent merger into the College of Policing, Centrex directed the overhaul of the way in which initial police training was delivered. Six regional police training schools – known as foundation training sites – were closed, in favour of decentralising initial police training. The result of these closures was that police foundation training courses were delivered and continued to be delivered by individual forces since April 2006. This was renamed the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) and rolled out nationally (Peacock, 2010). One of the core modules of the IPLDP and the initial learning curriculum was the 'Code of Ethics' and evidenced-based policing (College of Policing, 2017).

In February 2016, the College of Policing launched a consultation on once again, changing the way in which police officers are trained upon joining the service (College of Policing, 2016). In mid-2018, the College launched the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) to ensure that policing, at all levels, has the correct national educational levels (College of Policing, 2018).

PEQF enables all 43 Home Office[5] forces to have the option to recruit new officers in one of two principal ways (there are subcategories, but these broadly fall into the two listed): either as a university undergraduate or as an apprentice. Apprentices follow an initial training course which is much broader than the previous IPLDP training. They will now follow a curriculum agreed, and in many cases, delivered by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in partnership with forces. This results in student officers graduating with a level six qualification after three years. University/HEI graduates are differentiated into two groups: those with a policing degree, and those with a non-policing degree. Graduates who enter with a non-policing degree follow a similar path to the apprenticeship route but without the requirement to complete a final year dissertation. By the end of their training, all new police officer recruits will have a level 6 policing qualification.

1.4 Significance of the study

Whether the changes discussed are for the better or worse, and regardless of the drivers behind them, the change in the way in which initial police training is delivered from the

[5] 'Home Office force' is a term used to describe the 43 police territorial police forces of England & Wales that receive their funding directly from the Home Office – see: https://www.college.police.uk/About/Copyright_Licensing/Pages/Home-Office-police-forces.aspx (College of Policing, 2020a).

previous model to the new PEQF training model should not be underestimated (Thornton, 2018). From 1 January 2020, all police officers in England & Wales have, or will be working towards an undergraduate degree in policing or a similar field. Similarly, supervisory and senior officers are also expected to undertake additional academic qualifications in order to gain promotion, termed the National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF), (College of Policing, 2020b)[6].

These changes have created both an opportunity and trepidation. Concern and trepidation by forces to ensure that the individuals whom they recruit are of the correct calibre. But more importantly, that the training that those individuals have received, if recruited with a pre-join degree in policing[7], was the best that it could be and reflected what forces require in their police officers in the 21st century. Similarly, it is crucial that the revised, slimmed-down-version of training (potentially half the length of the training for those joining with a non-policing degree) that those graduates receive is fit for purpose and draws on the very best of the current training syllabus. However, the predicament in which forces find themselves is that whilst their syllabuses and training departments have existed since 2005[8], the vast majority have not conducted any comprehensive review of the effectiveness of their current training[9]. For example, does training 'the Theft Act' in a certain way mean that the officers receiving that training are able to identify, interpret and effectively investigate incidents of theft that they are called to during the course of their careers? The evidence-base showing what works simply does not exist.

Significantly, the teaching and learning of 'ethics' and the way in which decisions are made based on ethics, has not been rigorously tested. Whilst forces may not prioritise ensuring a strong evidence-base in this area, favouring perhaps the basics of the Law, we have already seen the gargantuan impact that not policing with legitimacy, transparency and morality has on communities and their subsequent view of the police in the recent Black Lives Matter protests. Peace (2006) concurs with this assessment stating that '…overburden[ing the curriculum for new police officers] with "hard", technical

[6] We have yet to see the introduction of a graduate qualification being required in order to gain promotion at more senior ranks (that is, above Sergeant and Inspector). The initial consultation talked of those seeking promotion to Superintendent requiring a Master's degree or equivalent.
[7] Pre-join policing degree is the specific entry route where individuals follow a university course in the traditional way for three years and then apply to become a police officer as a postgraduate.
[8] This was when the departments were established following the decentralisation of training from Centrex as aforementioned.
[9] It is accepted that the reason for introducing PEQF is standardisation, and to move the training to evidence-based practice and critical-thinking.

aspects of law and procedures…[and] exclusion of the “softer” aspects such as problem analysis…could leave an empathy void in… officers’ skills’ (p. 343).

However, despite the lessons of history, it is difficult for one to negatively judge forces on what could be perceived as lack of planning, or a lack of awareness of past mistakes and pertinent research. So much of forces' efforts have been focused on working with universities to ensure that the courses being offered are appropriate, and commissioning them to provide apprenticeship and professional practice courses. Additionally, when discussing ethics specifically, the Code of Ethics (2014) was launched across policing in July 2014 so has only been a part of police training for seven years (Home Office, 2014). Furthermore, the backdrop of austerity over recent years has meant that many forces have not recruited, and by inference therefore not trained any new recruits until 2018, resulting in there being very little – if any – opportunity for forces to review the outcomes of their specific training on ethics for student officers[10].

1.5 The call for more evidence

This background has shown that forces across England and Wales are at risk of having moved to a new, radical approach to training newly-recruited officers without knowing whether their existing provision yielded the desired outcomes. Importantly, they also have no data to show what currently works and therefore what should or should not be included in the training that they individually offer when officers start on the enhanced training programmes.

The academic literature that exists on the subject of teaching ethics within policing is almost non-existent; however, the business world has conducted some relevant research in this critical area. Training and academic research in business studies identified that bringing a course or several courses together requires the efficacy of that training to be questioned. As highlighted by ethicists, ‘the question of effect of teaching ethics…become[s] more critical as business schools shift from a stand-alone business and society course to integrating ethics into courses across the entire business curriculum’ (Cage & Baucus, 2006, p. 213).

[10] It could also be argued that forces have had ample opportunity to carry out similar research since this time with the existing workforce. However, there is no academically robust literature to suggest that this has been undertaken.

In the literature review, the researcher will also evidence that little if any previous academic research exists around ethical decision-making within the police service, reinforcing the need to conduct research in this important area of policing. Miller & Blackler (2005) concur with the requirement of ethics to form an integral part of police training, highlighting that '…the desire and ability to do what is right needs to be continuously reinforced by ensuring that ethical issues in police work, including the ethical ends of policing itself, are matters of ongoing discussion and reflection in initial training programs…' (p. 140).

1.6 The gap in UK policing research

For years, the world of business has viewed ethics and business as synonymous (Awasthi, 2008). There is also significant research within the medical profession (Deshpande (2009); Grindstone-Amado (2006); Lutzen et al. (2000); and Oberle & Hughes (2001)) showing a disconnect between the ethical decision-making of doctors and that of their nursing counterparts.

As evidenced in the review of literature, there is a wealth of research on ethics, decision-making and significant research in ethics more generally within the other areas such as the business world. However, even on the international stage, policing has only seen pockets of research with very few authors discussing the efficacy of police internal training and associated outcomes for ethical decision-making. In his recent book *Black Box Thinking*, Matthew Syed (2015) questions how often we test our policies and strategies, highlighting that randomised trials to test the efficacy of these policies and procedures in medicine are commonplace but scarcely exist in criminal justice (p. 178).

The requirement for robust ethical decision-making which puts police integrity at the heart of police internal training was highlighted as a recommendation in the Rampart Inquiry (2000) following the identification of widespread corruption within the Rampart region of Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). This damning report (Newton et al., 2000) into the actions of the third-largest municipal police department in the USA showed what the LAPD Police Chief called the worst corruption scandal in the history of the force, where officers were found to be carrying out criminal acts. The Rampart Report (2000) is cited by many academics worldwide including the UK such as Neyroud & Beckley (2001), perhaps because of its wide-ranging findings and subsequent recommendations

to prevent corruption and improve police legitimacy. Central to this was the finding that 'ethics remains almost an afterthought in the training of the City's police officers' (Rampart Report, 2000, p. 7). One of the recommendations of the Rampart Report (2000) was '…we must develop a comprehensive training program on ethics, integrity, mentoring, and leadership'. (p. 350). The report also specifically mentioned decision-making strategies.

Despite numerous researchers, academics, police services across the world and Government committees arguing that decision-making is critical (some even specifically mentioning ethics), consistent training delivery and efficacy and outcome of police training in terms of ethical decision-making has not been academically measured, or at least, not publicly/academically published. This was further reinforced by a Scopus (2021) search for the terms: police, ethics, training and efficacy keywords which only found 1,124 academic texts worldwide[11], and fewer than 200 such academic references in the United Kingdom.

1.7 General aims

The study has three principal aims:

i. To examine the efficacy of initial police training on the ways in which student officers subsequently make decisions;
ii. To examine whether there is alignment between policy intent and practice around usage of the College of Policing Code of Ethics as part of student officer decision-making;
iii. To examine whether the decision-making of student police officers changes between three specific time-points (them first joining the police service; immediately after initial police training, and six months later after becoming independent patrol officers).

Overall, this research produces an evidence-base for understanding the relationship between police operational decision-making and the training that was received during initial police training. The aim is not to provide an exhaustive description of cognitive

[11] Published between 1981 – 2021.

processes, or produce a new model for ethical decision-making, but to establish a valid theoretical framework from which future research can be undertaken.

1.8 Structure of thesis

The thesis is divided into five main chapters:

Chapter 1 Introduction including thesis justification and research aims;

Chapter 2 Literature Review which details relevant literature on the areas discussed in the research aims;

Chapter 3 Methodology which talks about the approach that was used for the thesis;

Chapter 4 Analysis & Findings. This chapter details the findings and provides a discussion in each of the sub-theme areas;

Chapter 5 Conclusions of thesis including recommendations to be considered by the police service, College of Policing and other policing bodies.

1.9 Summary

This thesis provides a strong evidence base on the relationship between initial police training and subsequent operational ethical decision-making by student officers. The current literature in this area is non-existent in UK policing, and sparse internationally. Due to this, literature from outside of the policing and criminal justice world has been considered such as business and medicine.

The methodological approach was longitudinal ethical dilemmas (vignettes) which were used in order to triangulate simplistic responses by the same participants with how they applied those views/considerations in a real-life scenario.

Overall, the results indicate that the teaching of ethics within the classroom does not have the desired, sustained impact on everyday decision-making of student officers. Further, the results show that experienced officers and established internal culture is far more impactive on decision-making than the initial training that these student officers received.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of literature explores the academic and practitioner discussion that exists around the subject of the teaching of ethics. Whilst the over-arching focus is criminal justice, and more specifically policing, it seems that to produce a cogent exegesis of this literature requires examining other sectors such as the landscape of business and medicine. Ethics has been something that has existed within these professions for an extended period; the literature that exists is therefore more extensive, more developed, and does create some opportunity for cross-sector learning.

The review will initially define the concept of ethics, it will then explore the world of business ethics. The review is separated into sections on how demographics affect decision-making: specifically looking at gender, age and educational background. Culture and socialisation, and how these concepts affect ethical decision-making, are also considered. Later, it focuses on the link between training and ethics before more specifically examining the training of ethics within the police service. It will also explore other relevant criminal justice research outside of the policing world but that has synergy with elements of policing, decision-making or training linked to ethics. Finally, the requirement for further research within the field is discussed, examining the limited extent to which the current research provides a broad enough basis for decision-making by senior leaders within the police service.

2.1 Defining ethics

Many academic texts that examine ethics draw in some way on the ancient Buddhist and Chinese traditions; a great number go further back in history drawing on the work of Aristotle and the ancient Greeks. Singer (1993) cites the work of these ancient forefathers, stating that they believed that ‘knowing how to act, the possession of practical wisdom, means having an ‘eye’ for solutions; and that can only be developed through a combination of training in the right habits and direct acquaintance with practical situations’ (p. 10ii).

Academics, ethnographers and practitioners across many disciplines have described how they interpret the meanings of the terms *ethics* and to *behave ethically*. In general terms, the *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (2015) defines the term ethics as ‘commonly used interchangeably with 'morality'... and sometimes it is used more narrowly to mean the moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual’. Naaman et al. (2013) highlight the multi-faceted nature of ethics, but in an attempt to

describe the overarching term, they describe ethics as '…rational, optimal (*regarded as the best solution of the given options)* and appropriate decision brought on the basis of common sense' (p. 113). There are also a number of examples where researchers look to define what ethics means to specific organisations, exploring ethics within the military, politics and the public sector. Naaman et al. (2013) define public sector ethics specifically as:

> *…a set of principles that guide public officials in their service to their constituents, including their decision-making on behalf of their constituents. Fundamental to the concept of public sector ethics is the notion that decisions and actions are based on what best serves the public's interests, as opposed to the official's personal interests… (p. 123).*

In reference to police work in the United States, Heffernan (1997) says that ethics is concerned with how individuals should conduct themselves (p. 25). However, this definition is arguably more to do with conduct than ethics and decision-making. Husted (2008) cites the works of Hardin (1988), Rest (1986) and Trevino (1986) specifically from the perspective of decision-making, '…ethical decision making refers to discretionary decision-making behavior, which ''determin[es] how conflicts in human interests are to be settled and…optimiz[es] mutual benefit…[for] people living together in groups'" (Trevino, 1986, p. 293). Trevino's model of ethical decision-making is based on work by Kohlberg (discussed later).

Within UK policing, the Code of Ethics was launched in 2014; it defines ethical behaviour as '…com[ing] from the values, beliefs, attitudes and knowledge that guide the judgements of each individual' (College of Policing, 2014, p. iv). This is a statutory code of practice issued under section 39A of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 124 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014), and is binding on all police officers in England and Wales. Despite the wealth of literature that exists on ethics, the Code does not draw on any academic work in support of its definition of ethical behaviour, and does not define the word ethics per se. The Code consists of nine policing principles which are rooted in the Nolan principles for public life (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 1995). It could be argued that the Code – by virtue of not defining 'ethics' as a starting point – is unhelpful as a framing document for ethical behaviour within 21st century policing. As noted by Roycroft and Roach (2019), decision-makers should consider the Code of Ethics at the very outset of decision-making within any policing-based decision (p. 11). All police officers are expected to make their

decisions using the National Decision Model (NDM) which has the Code of Ethics at its heart.

Figure 1 – Code of Ethics, College of Policing (2014)Code of Ethics, College of Policing (2014)

2.2 Ethics in the world of business

As far back as the 1970s, a significant amount of research and journals are associated with 'business ethics', involving researchers such as Carr (1970); Carroll (1975); Ruch and Newstrom (1975); Nakano (1997) and others. This is significantly different from the ethics in law enforcement which has only become commonplace in academic work in any meaningful way since the turn of the twenty first century[3].

Over twenty years ago, Cole (1995) highlighted that in business, 'more than 25 business ethics textbooks have been published, and at least three academic journals are devoted to the topic [of ethics]' (p. 351). One specific journal which focuses exclusively on 'teaching business ethics' began in 1982, and produces 2,800 pages per year, being assessed by Springer publications (2018) as '…a remarkable success'. 84 articles were produced between 2004 to 2011 alone on ethical decision-making within a business setting (Craft, 2012). The case for why business has so readily embraced ethical behaviour is not evidenced or explained by any of the authors or academics that have written in this area. One can suppose that major scandals have driven shareholders and senior leaders to demand more ethical behaviour, but there is no definitive literature that gives plausible evidence to support this or any other claim as to why. However, even in

the context of business, ‘ethics’ as a key driver behind decision-making, and the training of ethics within the United Kingdom lagged behind other countries, most notably the USA (Whipple, 1992).

Despite the considerable amount of research that exists within the business world (regardless of whether in the UK or elsewhere) and many of the concepts, ideas and findings being transferable, little if any relate to the teaching of ‘ethics’ within the world of policing or the wider criminal justice system. Even fewer, if any at all, relate to the outcomes of ethical teachings on ethical decision-making amongst those who have received that training.

Previous studies, as cited by Loe et al. (2000) have evaluated models for decision-making drawing on age, nationality, religion and previous employment within the business world. However, none of these look specifically at whether the current employment – and specifically training given within that employment (the police in this specific instance) – make any difference to the ethical decision-making of those employees. O’Fallon and Butterfield (2005) concur with Loe et al.’s (2000) assessment that the majority of studies on ethical decision-making have focused on gender, education, employment and moral philosophy or value orientation as central themes. These authors further highlight the point that only very few academic papers have discussed the link between training and decision-making. Nakano (1997) concluded that company policy on ethics within the business world was the principal factor which influenced managers’ ethical decision-making, again with no mention to the training that those managers had received.

2.3 The effect of gender on ethical decision-making

This section specifically discusses the literature that exists on gender difference in decision-making.

In *A History of Policing*, Critchley (1978) discusses the introduction of women into policing dating back to the 1914 British Voluntary Women Police branch of the service. The police service within England & Wales has changed significantly over the past century in terms of its gender make-up, with the Office for National Statistics (2018) showing that as of 31 March 2018, 36,417 or 30% of the police force were female.

Gender – both generally and specifically relating to ethical decision-making – features highly in studies by Beekun (2010); Beltramani et al. (1984); Ferrell and Skinner (1988);

Jones and Gautschi (1988); Akaah (1989); Betz et al. (1989); Whipple and Swords (1992); Lane (1995); Glover et al. (2002); Fleischman and Valentine (2003); and Stedham et al. (2007). The majority of these studies examined gender and the differences that this simple difference can make within workplace management. They focus on how women make decisions; with a large number of the studies concluding that women are more ethical than men (Beekun 2010, p. 310). Beltramini et al. (1984) found that '…female [business] students in particular are more concerned about ethical issues than their male counterparts (p. 195); Betz et al. (1989) concurred that 'males were more than twice as likely as to say they would engage in actions regarded as less ethical [than their female counterparts]…' (p. 324). Akaah (1989) concluded that the increase of women in the business world would positively correlate with ethical decision-making in organisations (p. 378) and later, Lane (1995) also found that females responded more ethically than their male counterparts (p. 572). These studies concurred with research conducted by Cole and Smith, (1996) who found that '…male [business] students were more accepting of questionable ethical responses and saw less difference between typical and ethical responses than did the female students' (p. 889). The studies are comprehensive, drawing on the evidenced-differences that gender can make when it comes to ethical decision-making. None of these studies draw on any initial or continued professional development that the different genders experienced or whether training has had any impact on gender difference.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the debates between the genders are still evident in terms of ethical decision-making: Cagle and Baucus' 2006 study of students concluded that males were more accepting of ethically questionable behaviour than their female counterparts; consistent with the results found by Cole and Smith (1996) and Luthar et al. (1997) '…on average, females were reported to be more ethical than men in ten of the 38 findings…' (Bampton and Maclagan (2009); Elango et al. (2010); Eweje and Brunton (2010); Herington and Weaven (2008); Krambia-Kapardis and Zopiatis (2008); Marta et al. (2008); Nguyen et al. (2008b); Oumlil and Balloun (2009); Sweeney et al. (2010); Valentine and Rittenburg (2007))'. Craft (2012, p. 230).

A number of academics discuss other theories associated with gender and ethical decision-making, such as the theory of moral reasoning (Kohlberg 1969, 1974, 1984; Gilligan 1982; and Gilligan et al. 1988). White (1992) details the differences between what he describes as an *ethic of justice,* which is evident in the decision-making of men, versus an *ethic of care* associated with decision-making in women, with '…the theory suggesting that women emphasize interdependence and concern with

others…[whereas] in contrast, men operate with a greater degree of independence'. White fully agrees with the work of those before him, most notably that of Gilligan (1982).

The research suggests a significant base of evidence (38 different studies) where the decision-making of women in terms of ethics is stronger than their male counter-parts, although the reasons for this are seldom explored, other than conflating decision-making solely with gender.

However, the literature that exists on the point of gender being a driver behind decision-making is also contradictory. Craft (2012) cited the work of Marques and Azevedo-Pereira (2009), noting that they found '…that men were stricter than women when making ethical decisions'. Despite the large number of authors that she cited as finding men more ethical than their female counterparts, Craft (2012) noted that 'women's intention to behave ethically was also contextually dependent, [with] women rel[ying] on both justice and utilitarianism when making moral decisions, whereas men relied on only justice and their decisions were more universal rather than contextual'. Other researchers also observed mixed results: Beekun (2010) and Jaffe and Hyde (2000) conclude that gender alone is not a decisive factor in decision-making and empirical research fails to provide the definite results required to evidence gender differences. This finding was echoed by Loo's (2002) re-analyses of data from three independent studies conducted in Canada which showed that 'very few gender difference [exist] in ethical beliefs, when conservative statistical tests are used' (p. 169).

In summary, whilst some studies are in agreement that women tend to be more ethical than their male counterparts, the evidence is not without contradiction and consensus is not reached on whether gender has any effect on how one comes to a decision. There is no police or criminal justice-specific research that looks at gender as a catalyst for decision-making or that explores the differences in decisions made by females in comparison to their male counterparts.

2.4 The effect of age on ethical decision-making

The research around ethical decision-making from an age perspective has been reviewed to ascertain whether age has any effect on the way in which individuals make decisions.

Cadetships and other roles enable individuals to join the police service as a volunteer from as young as 13 years of age[12]. The age at which one is able to join the police service as a Constable in England and Wales is currently 18 years, 6 months. It is inevitable that individuals who join the police service – whatever their age or background – will have different life experiences that they bring with them, whether from employment, education or from everyday life. Life experience is something that is cited on almost every recruitment web page for police forces throughout England and Wales as a prerequisite to joining the service. However, age is an important consideration, as the mix of ages that join the police service varies from as young as 18 year 6 months to over 50 years of age[13].

Kohlberg (1981, 1984) argues that individuals achieve higher stages of reasoning as they mature. Other researchers concur, such as Thoma (1985) and Rest (1986), evidencing that as people get older, their ethical decision-making improves. They found that people become more ethical as they get older. This was supported by further research by Borkowski and Ugras (1998) which provided a meta-analysis of 35 studies and concluded that there is a positive correlation between age and ethical decision-making. In further agreement, Lane (1995) and Cole and Smith (1996) found higher ethical standards in older business men and women than their younger counterparts. However, Cagle and Baucus (2006, p. 219) later found there to be no statistically significant relationship when correlating age and ethical decision-making[14].

Other academics have tackled the differences that age brings from a different perspective, questioning whether those who are older are less willing to accept unethical behaviour than their younger counterparts (Green and Weber (1997); Parsa and Lankford (1999); and Borkowski and Ugras (1998)). However, the results of these studies, as cited by Cagle and Baucus (2006) '…contrast sharply with those of McCabe, Dukerich and Dutton (1991) who showed that MBA students tend to be less ethical than law students when entering graduate school…'. The inference those authors draw is that those studying MBAs are older and more experienced individuals, than those studying undergraduate law degrees. Whilst these academics all discuss the correlation between experience of the workplace – that is, that those studying MBAs generally have more work experience than undergraduates – they also state that age may play a part in

[12] Volunteer police cadets now operate in every force across the UK. Volunteer Police Cadets, 2021.
[13] Fewer than 2% of police officers in England & Wales are over the age of 55. Home Office, 2020.
[14] The correlation between age and decision-making is an important consideration for UK policing, especially in light of the recent PEQF changes to police education as already discussed which has resulted in officers joining far younger in age.

decision-making being improved. It is notable however, that there are also other significant factors such as the field of work / type of company or other demographic factor that may also play a factor in these outcomes, which the paper failed to examine or comment on. At a more a general level, this study is interesting to compare whether some professions are more ethical that others; unfortunately, the authors also fail to explore this variable.

Finally, and of potential significance for the police service, Herington (2008) found that of their 232 research participants, 'females continue to grow in moral reasoning ability until their 50's; males seems to grow only until their early 30's (on average) and then at best tend to remain static in the moral thinking, perhaps even steadily declining' (p. 509). This study used cluster analysis to explore conflicting results when using a Defined Issues Test (DIT) to explain moral reasoning in business situations. The DIT was used to determine each respondent's level of moral reasoning ability and robustly draws on previous work by notable academics such as Gibbs and Widaman, 1982; Goolsby and Hunt, 1992; Rest 1979, 1986. The findings of this study may be a significant factor in ethical decision-making, as the efficacy of the training may well correlate with the age of the individual when they receive that training, as an additional, otherwise unconsidered factor.

2.5 The effect of educational background on ethical decision-making

A number of academics have looked generally at whether educational background has any effect on decision-making, although these studies tend to look at education as a by-product of studying another more fundamental area of ethical decision-making (Borkowski and Ugras (1992); Cole and Smith (1996); Parsa and Lankford (1999); and Cagle and Baucus (2006)). Although such studies found that educational background did correlate with a difference in decision-making (Cole & Smith (1996); Parsa & Lankford (1999); Borkowski & Ugras (1992); and Cagle & Baucus (2006)) argued that when undergraduate and graduate responses to ethical dilemmas were compared, there were no statistical differences. As cited by Cagle and Baucus (2006), their results however contrast with the work of Cole and Smith (1996), Parsa and Lankford (1999) and Borkowski and Ugras (1992) who found that educational background did correlate with differences in decision-making. Any correlation between educational background and decision-making is therefore inconclusive.

2.6 The effect of supervisors on ethical decision-making

The academic literature that exists that specifically examines the effect of superiors within a work-based setting and in business in general is quite significant. However, limited research exists that is police-based, and even less that specifically examines frontline supervisors (that is sergeants) and the effect that they have on the frontline constables that they supervisor in terms of ethical decision-making. The research is also contradictory with some findings suggesting that supervisors do have a positive impact on their staff's decision-making, and others showing evidence to the contrary. Additionally, where research does exist, it is often USA-based, and its relevance is therefore diminished in a UK policing setting.

Rothwell and Baldwin (2006) examined the effect of supervisors in whistle-blowing and the overarching role that supervisors play in creating ethical workplaces. In their US-based study, they found a positive correlation between ethical supervisors and willingness of non-supervisory staff to report wrongdoing (2006, p. 237). This study conflicts with research conducted by Engel and Worden (2003) that looked at the how supervisory influences affect problem-solving. They found that non-supervisory officers' attitudes only weakly correlated with their supervisors' attitudes, principally because the perception of supervisors' attitudes were often inaccurate (p. 132).

2.7 The effect of national culture & ethical decision-making

Many commentators have looked at national culture and how one's national background affects ethical decision-making (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961); Hofstede (1980); Ronen & Shenkar (1985); Trompenaars (1994); Ahmed et al. (2003); and Vitell & Patwardhan (2008)). Beekun (2010) explored the relationship between gender and culture in terms of the culture of the country to which that individual defines themselves as being a part, whether born or otherwise. Vitell et al. (2008) looked at the differing responses to ethical decisions of Chinese businessmen and women versus those of their British counterparts. Other researchers have specifically looked at shared-cultures (from a country of origin perspective) and what effect, if any, this has on individuals; notably work undertaken by Owers, (2012) which is also detailed in Charman's 2017 book. Although several studies exist within this area, none are statistically significant in terms of drawing meaningful conclusions as to whether this makes any difference in terms of decision-making.

2.8 The impact of time on ethical compliance

The idea of time as a standalone entity having an effect on individuals – whether beneficial or deleterious – is one that is difficult to define or measure. This is because there are so many different variables that can also occur simultaneous to the passage of time, or an intervening act that, however small, can also have a potential impact on someone.

This is an important consideration within this research as it is longitudinal in nature. Time could have a potential impact on those participating in the study with training attrition, or drift a potential consequence of that time, and a potential explanation for any diversion from ethical standards.

2.9 Ethical drift

The term ethical drift is a concept that has gained traction of recent years.

Within the world of business, the concept of policy or regulatory drift is relatively commonplace[15], but the term ethical drift is far less so[16]. In his article on conservation, Ashley-Smith (2018) defines ethical drift as:

> *…processes whereby the intentions of policymakers and law-makers are slowly reinterpreted and altered step by step, almost unnoticed, until present practice bears little relationship to original intent* (p. 10).

Ashley-Smith (2018) talks about the term being reinvigorated by the former Bank of England Governor, Mark Carney when discussing moral attitudes in the financial sector[17]. However, this term is not something that has entered policing lexicon[18]. The term is used within the medical profession; Kleinman goes into greater detail about the imperceptibility of ethical drift and talks about how even major breaches within the medical profession are rationalised as reasonable. She also discusses how ethical drift can often occur at unknowingly and without the awareness of those who are *drifting* (2006, p. 73). Sternberg (2012) concurs with this assessment in the world of education,

[15] A simple search on Scopus shows 1,569 references for *policy drift* and 751 for *regulatory drift*. Scopus (2021).
[16] A simple search on Scopus shows 113 references for *ethical drift*. Scopus (2021).
[17] See: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/mark-carney/11666102/The-Age-of-Irresponsibility-is-over-Mark-Carneys-Mansion-House-speech-in-full.html
[18] Only 2 references appear on Scopus for *ethical drift police* – neither of these results relate directly to policing or the ethical debate in policing. Scopus (2021).

analogising of being at sea and not knowing that you are drifting until such time as it is too late (p. 58).

Within policing, ethical drift should be defined as: a slow, often imperceptible deviation from nationally/locally agreed policies and procedures. So imperceptible are these changes that often they go unnoticed by the individual officers or staff and their colleagues until the act being performed bears little resemblance to the original intention. This can occur in individuals, teams, stations, sectors or even forcewide.

Drift could be something that is identified within the study amongst individual officers, their teams or even as a collective.

2.10 The effect of culture & socialisation on ethical decision-making

Many academics have linked values and ethics with culture, perhaps most famously Rokeach (1979) who suggested that humans hold at most, 36 values[19], and that these are almost universally held. Honesty, as an example of one of these 36 values, is something that Rokeach suggests as being common to almost all human cultures. More recently, Hofstede (1980, 2001 and 2005) argued that no more than around five values are universally held. Kluckhohn and Strodtbec (1961) developed a theory that humans share biological traits that form the basis for the development of culture. The academics proposed four basic questions and value orientations which had a significant impact on the way in which culture was considered and led to future development of theories of universal values (that is, shared values by everyone). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's theory from 1961 has stood the test of time and is still widely used. Reiner (1992) also compared British policing culture with that in the United States, stating that his accounts of culture '…echo Skolnick's themes [from the USA] of suspicion, [and] social isolation coupled with internal solidarity…' (p. 465). Reiner (1992) also cited the work of Brewer (1990), and Magee (1991) in their study of policing in Northern Ireland, stating that '…routine policing in Northern Ireland underlines the resilience of police culture even in the most extreme circumstances' (p. 465). Notably, Reiner (1992) argues that the values of officers are '…reinforced by informal socialization processes…' (p. 468). Culture therefore has the potential to have an effect on the way in which decisions are made, as more recently discussed by Craft (2012). Craft (2012) holds the view that culture affects the way in which the workers within a company make decisions, noting that 'employees

[19] The 18 *highest values* are defined as: true friendship; a comfortable life; an exciting life; a sense of accomplishment; a world at peace; a world of beauty; family security; happiness; equality; inner harmony; national security; pleasure; salvation; social recognition; mature love; freedom; wisdom, and self-respect (Rokeach, 1979).

within a collective culture were more likely to indicate they would make an unethical business decision that benefits the organisation' (p. 231). Craft suggests that this collective-culture (a culture within a company), can be a driver for unethical practices within that organisation.

Defining the term 'culture' within policing

What is meant by the term culture is something that has been discussed by many researchers (Holdaway (1983); Manning (1989); Chan (1997); Reiner (2010); Craft (2012)). For the purpose of this study, Bacon's (2013) definition of '…the anthropological sense of the concept of 'culture' wedded to the police occupation' will be used (p. 104).

It has been suggested that one of the most powerful aesthetics of police culture is the sense of solidarity shared by its members (Manning,1977, p. 83). This solidarity is introduced as part of the police academy training[20], is enhanced in the rookies' first encounter with the occupation (where values, norms and a shared belief system are established), strengthened by the nature of the work itself, and transmitted by the shared relationships (Kingshott, 2003).

Within policing, Chan (1996) has been prominent in the field of culture within the police service both in Australia and other parts of the world. In 1996, Chan (1996) noted at this time that 'police culture ha[d] become a convenient label for a range of negative values, attitudes, and practice norms among police officers' (p. 110). Chan's work is important in conceptualising police culture and details the link between what Chan describes as the 'field' of policing and police organisational knowledge. Significantly, Chan (1996) criticised existing theory on police culture in four major ways[21]. In later years and in the context of UK-policing, culture within the police service is something that the Chief Inspector of Constabulary for England & Wales, Sir Thomas Winsor recently drew upon in his annual *State of Policing* report. Winsor (2017) said that '…the police service's cultural strength is also the source of one of its most persistent weaknesses' (p.11). Winsor cites the police service in general, lacking the ability to self-reform due to the

[20] US-based initial police training is conducted in a Police Academy.

[21] Chan (1996) noted these as:

i. the failure of existing definitions of police culture to account for internal differentiation and jurisdictional differences;
ii. implicit passivity of police officers in the acculturation process;
iii. police culture's apparent insularity from the social, political, legal, and organizational context of policing, and
iv. an all-powerful, homogeneous and deterministic conception of the police culture insulated from the external environment leaves little scope for a cultural change.

enduring willingness of frontline officers to make the best of the situation in which they find themselves.

Throughout the service, culture is seen as something that is critical to getting the job done and anecdotally, is one of the things commented on by new officers joining the service, similar to those joining the military (perhaps part of the reason that the service is seen as a vocation). Loftus (2009) concurs with this assessment concluding that whilst there have undoubtedly been changes in police culture, 'it would be erroneous to overstate the extent to which new emerging cultures have displaced the hegemonic police culture' (p. 193). Chan and colleagues further discuss police training and the effects of socialisation within the workplace culture: Chan et al. (2003) state, 'the conventional wisdom is that as recruits become integrated into the operational ('street cop') culture, they adopt…deviant practises' (p. iv). Chan et al. (2003) develop this further by stating that police culture is almost a breeding ground for unprofessional practises. Westmarland (2013) concurs with this view stating that regardless of senior officers' best intentions and clear professional ethical standards, police recruits are moulded and socialised by more experienced colleagues into the existing culture (p. 472). This was also a key message in Cockroft's (2012) work on police culture where he states that even improving training is unlikely to garner improvements in officer behaviour if internal pressures – for example from colleagues – exist to do things a certain way (p. 122). Charman (2017) is less proscriptive in her work but highlights that in terms of the individual(s) who have influenced them most during their first few years as a new police officer, 'overwhelmingly, tutors and police colleagues (in the form of the shift that they work with regularly) were evidenced as the most influential' (p. 220). There is a significant gap that exists in the literature about how training has an effect on ethics and the subsequent decision-making by police officers post-training.

Research on moral development has reported that when trying to create new and enhance existing relationships, this can come into significant tension. Whilst this research explored a sample of adolescents, this complements work by Chan in terms of police peer acceptance . Gilligan and Wiggins (2001) found that 'when the child's search for equality – the effort to become stronger and more competent, like the adult – comes into tension with the child's search for attachment [to peers] – the effort to create and sustain authentic relationships – the experience of moral dilemma may be most intense…' (p. 129). These academics show that in situations where young people are trying to create new, and enhance existing relationships, this can come into significant tension with their quest for making morally-strong decisions. Perhaps crossover can be drawn between these researchers' conclusions for young people and the experience of

new officers joining the police service and wanting to be accepted by their experienced peers, as cited by Chan et al., 2003.

Many commentators have studied police culture in general terms (Carter (1999); Barker & Carter (1999); Kraska & Kappeler (1995); Chan et al. (2003); Alain & Gregoire (2008); Van Hulst (2013) and Crank (2015)). In the mid to late 1980s, culture and the socialisation of new officers gained traction within the world of policing. Fielding (1988) states that '…the organisation has a good deal of influence; recruits have to know the system before they can play it…' (p. 16). This was also a theme that was identified by Westley (1970) where he talks about the expectation in US-policing of new officers to be '…the quiet one, the listener' (p. 181) and to learn, not to challenge their experienced colleagues. Of course, the word 'ethics' is something that is alien to the vocabulary of that time both in the US and UK-literature. The implication is not that policing was unethical, moreover that officers were guided by culture and local approaches rather than any England and Wales-wide code or statute. Much of the literature written on culture focuses on the negative aspects; Crank and Caldera (2000) for example, specifically look at culture within the police from a corruption perspective. As noted by Charman (2017) 'policing cultures remain an enduring field of enquiry…' (p. 127).

Ethics and culture play a part in some research, although rarely if at all as an exclusive focus of academic studies. Many authors include a small section talking about ethics in the context of wider research on policing culture. Crank (2015) for example specifically mentions ethics courses whilst discussing racial biases within the police service in the United States of America, highlighting that 'no ethics course can wipe away what every cop can see perfectly clearly on the street' (p. 257) – evidencing in his research that no amount of training can remove heavily embedded beliefs from the culture of the service. Crank (2015) also cites other areas of ethics within policing as being incomplete and often lacking, stating that 'a review of the many police ethics books shows that, with a few important exceptions, they seem to be more concerned with grafting and illegal economic gain – a free cup of coffee, for example…' (p. 5). Chan et al. (2003) concur with this assessment stating that '…no matter how enlightened the training program is intended to be, once recruits come face to face with the realities of operational police work, they fall under the negative influence of the 'street cop' culture that undermines professionalism' (p. 4). Chan and colleagues (2003) however do not suggest that the training is not useful, but that there is a training decay once people leave the training environment, that is, they are highly knowledgeable immediately after the training has been delivered (and by inference act in the desired way that has been trained), but that this 'learning' decays over time and its effectiveness diminishes.

McCombs Business School define conformity bias '…the tendency people have to behave like those around them rather than using their own personal judgment' (University of Texas, no date). In the world of medical ethics, conformity bias is something that is often discussed in academic papers Albisser et al. (2011). This is also a term that has become commonplace in business and the world of finance (Prentice, 2007). However, fewer academics have discussed the shared culture within the police service and how this affects ethical decision-making – the 'group-think' scenario based on what one *perceives* is right to do, based on the culture of the organisation, and not the *ethically right thing* to do. There are of course a few exceptions to this, some recent and some less so. In a study conducted on minorities and confrontation within the United States of America, Bayley and Mendelsohn (1969) state that a '[policeman's]…decisions are environment-specific; what action he takes depends upon what is perceived to be common for that area.' (p. 93). In this study however, the authors fail to describe what is meant by 'common for that area'; whether common to the local people in the area, as perhaps one would expect from the local police, or common to the shared values of the officers with whom that police officer works. In the mid-1970s, Van Maanen (1975) conducted a longitudinal study on the socialisation of new police officer recruits. He found that police socialisation was closely aligned to the length of time that the officer had been employed in the service, and that this change was quick and powerful (p. 207). Caldero et al. (2018) cite the work of Van Maanen (1978) and his view that new recruits adopt the views and perspective of experienced, longer-serving officers (p. 63). Van Mannen's work talks in detail about how this socialisation occurs and the importance of that socialisation. Caldero et al. (2018) state that 'every officer out on the street knows that if they turn on another cop, their life is going to take an unpleasant turn' - they go on to pose the important rhetorical, almost tongue-in-cheek question stating 'and we think we can provide ethics training in college or in training, and recruits can overcome this kind of organizational influence?' (p. 63). The point raised by Charman (2017) and Chan et al. (2003) is very significant: socialisation within the service is critical and this socialisation cannot be ignored when considering how ethical decision-making takes place by officers in the force and the effect that peers has on decision-making, sometimes in the most subtle ways.

Alain and Gregoire (2008) looked at how professional skills and ethical standpoints gradually merge (p. 169). The findings of their study, which were gathered via a questionnaire, identified 'disappointment' amongst new recruits and those with a year's service in the police force: they highlighted that whilst some of this could be attributed to the officers' idealised view of the job and the actual reality now that they were fully

pledged officers, '…other forms of disappointment are the result of the environment and contacts with colleagues…' (p. 186). Importantly, these researchers identified '…the onset of opinion shifts regarding ethical standards…[post] training…a bit later, earlier in their career…'. (p. 186). These findings mirrored those of Chan et al. (2003) in Australia where she found that 'recruits' attitudes towards the community became '…progressively and significantly more negative over the eighteen months of their training… [they also] developed a more negative attitude towards the criminal justice system' (p. 306). Charman (2017) notes that '…the strong and pervasive "high octane" cultures of the police, combined with the manner in which new recruits are trained and developed within the police, mean that the attitudes and beliefs of longer-serving police officers have the potential to be highly influential in a new recruit's socialisation'. (p. 21). This is also mirrored in the findings of Korać (2016) in the US where he showed how strongly the cultural environment shapes ethical decision-making, and concerningly how this eventually leads to breaching on ethical standards (p. 173). This is also evidenced in the recent work in the UK by Westmarland (2020) who found that pervasive culture within forces creates a 'blue code' of silence where solidarity with colleagues prevails, even when confronted with illegal activities by colleagues (p. 378). In her conclusion, Charman (2017) states that '[police officers]…organisational cultures are learned and shared in an environment that is characterised by socialisation with others and through the validation of others' (p. 340). Whether or not officers become less sanguine about their ability to shape their communities or their ability to positively affect community safety and law enforcement, there is clear evidence from a solid research base to conclude that organisational culture *is* learned and assimilated by new, student officers and that this does not always correlate with a positive outcome for ethical decision-making.

A final point of note concerning culture, socialisation and shared values is that one could argue that the discussion around these areas is relatively futile and perhaps even unnecessary, considering the opening comments of this review which detail how a significant part of police training will shortly move to become university / Higher Education-based. This is still of course of relevance and importance, as the sharing of culture and the socialisation of those within that culture is not confined to policing and has the potential to occur in other sectors, location and institutions. As cited by Charman (2017), Heslop (2011) concurs that '…the [fact that] police recruits spend time at a university campus rather than at a police academy seems merely to have swapped one cultural socialisation for another' (p. 310). Spending time at a university instead of a police training centre is therefore unlikely to be materially different in terms of socialisation of becoming part of a shared culture. Cox and Kirby (2018) also concur with that assessment that officers, even in a university setting, stick together in terms of

creating a shared culture, highlighting that the physical location/institution in which training is delivered is not significant in producing different outcomes.

2.11 The effect of training on ethical decision-making in the world of employment

This section looks specifically at how training affects ethical decision-making; the wider question around whether training is practically important.

Many contemporary authors and academics who study education, discuss the importance of teaching and learning being not just about the traditional didactic teaching (where the teacher gives information that the learners just receive), but the art of learning being a lifelong skill. When discussing moral sensibilities and the teaching of adolescents, Bardic (2001) states that 'as we help them to see and understand the realities, complexities, and laws of the world, we must also help them to hang on to their moral sensitivities and impulses' (p. 109). This is perhaps particularly pertinent to the training of initial police recruits. Drawing on the importance of the acquisition and teaching of law, but also the application thereafter in a moral, well-reasoned and ethical way, a point concurred by Miller et al. (1997). Roycroft (2019) highlights that at all levels of the service 'police decision making relies on professional judgement backed by training and legal constraints' (p. 4).

As already briefly discussed, Neumann and Forsyth (2008) specifically ask whether the College of Policing's Code of Ethics is '…caught or taught…' by student officers. There is some disagreement as to the efficacy of Code of Ethics training, perhaps due to such little research within this area. In the world of business. Borkowski and Ugras (1992) cite Kohlberg's theory of moral development, highlighting that ethics is something that is part of life-long learning – not just in adolescence – and that 'ethics therefore can be taught to students as part of the college and graduate school curricula' (p. 965). They conclude that based on Kohlberg's theory 'the integration of ethics into the spectrum of business courses should help students understand the ethical dimension in decision-making…' (p. 965). Significantly however, the authors fall short of suggesting that business courses integrated with ethics *will* help students' ethical decision-making. Stark (1993) noted that there were over 500 business ethics' courses being taught across the United States of America, and that 90% of university business schools – at that time – were offering training on ethics. However, as highlighted by Cole (1995) 'with all of this training and instruction in ethics, today's college business students should be ethical people. Recent research, however, indicates that this may not be the case' (p. 351). Cole's (1995) research found that 'students' responses did not appear to be greatly influenced by

whether or not they had taken ethics courses' (p. 354). Geary and Sims (1994) looked at the efficacy of ethics training for accounting students, concluding that 'a critical phase that should not be omitted in ethics training…is outcomes assessment' (p. 15). In comparison to the researchers that have not been so steadfast in their decision that codes of ethics and training *do* actually make a difference, Rottig et al. (2011) conclude that:

> *Although codes by themselves might not have a negligible independent effect on ethical behavior, when accompanied by other formal infrastructure elements, such as ethical training…may prove to be rather a useful tool… (p. 169).*

Rottig and Heischmidt (2007) highlighted the importance of ethical training for the improvement of ethical decision-making – drawing on evidence from Germany and the United States of America. This assessment of accompanying corporate codes of ethics with training on ethics having a positive impact on ethical decision-making was first evidenced by Pickard in 1995 as cited by O'Leary and Stewart (2007). Miner and Petocz (2003) agree that formal ethical training is widely considered necessary in the world of business. Bird and Gandz (1989) also agree with this, but from a slightly different perspective, stating that the very fact that ethics is trained or taught '…emphasize[s] top management's commitment to ethical behaviour within the organization…' (p. 2).

In the 1990s, Delaney and Sockell (1992) reviewed company ethics' training programmes in US businesses, concluding that these programmes had a positive effect on ethical behaviour within those institutions. Despite some early work around ethics' training, Green (1997) highlights the fact that 'there has been limited research assessing the effectiveness of ethics-orientated courses…[despite] research initially indicat[ing] that changes in student's ethical decision making may be due, in part, to ethics education' (p. 777). Craft (2012) concurs with Green, evidencing in her research that only two studies on ethical decision-making between 2004-2011 focused on 'training' as an 'organizational factor' (p. 225) within these academic papers – despite over 357 occurrences of different variables being identified within the studies reviewed. Craft (2012) calls for further study to take place to "…uncover what systems could be put in place to encourage the development of ethical culture on employees' awareness and perception of ethical culture throughout the organization". (p. 254). Cagle and Baucus (2006) concur with Craft's assessment in the world of finance. In comparison to these authors, Cubie et al. (2007) state that the basic question of whether ethics can be taught *has* been discussed within the world of business at some length, citing authors such as Agarwal and Malloy (2002); Bruton (2004); Felton and Sims (2005); Giacalone (2004),

Rossouw (2002); and Trevino and Nelson (1999). Ultimately, they concur with the overall view that 'there is still no agreement…on the debate' (p. 2).

Cagle and Baucus' (2006) study looked at 54 undergraduate and 32 MBA students at a private university, looking at ethical decision-making with a focus on the ethical training received as part of those courses. Their study focused on the world of finance, using finance students as their sample group. As alluded to in the introduction, they cite the changing of stand-alone business schools to bigger, business curricula across schools as being one of the drivers to review the efficacy of the teaching of ethics. (p. 213), and that a debate had begun around whether ethics can be taught in an integrated way, weaved through the curriculum or the requirements to have a stand-alone course for students specifically on ethics. Whilst the focus is wholly outside of the area of policing, Cagle and Baucus' (2006) study is nonetheless useful inasmuch as these academics looked at the effect of giving ethical scandals to students, attempting to create a causal link between studying these scandals and students' subsequent ethical decision-making abilities. Cagle and Baucus (2006) looked at the effect on the perceptions of students before and after they were shown ethical scandals within business, concluding that 'ethics' instruction can be effective in influencing students' attitudes' (p. 223). The study looked at the students' perception of ethics before and after being given a case study that specifically looked at business finance (p. 221); they found that for all ten of the questions that they posed, there was an increase in ethical standards after those students had completed the ethical case study. They concluded that 'research and presentations that increased students' awareness of the impact on others of ethical breaches appear to cause them to re-think what is ethical' (p. 221). They develop this further, stating that '…instructional methods can influence students' ethical perceptions as indicated by [their results]…' (p. 222). Cagle and Baucus (2006) make the strong connection that exposure to ethical dilemmas (as part of ethical training) '…favorably influences students' ethical standards' (p. 223).

Within the world of medicine, Bebeau and Thoma (1994) evidenced similar findings to those of Cagle and Baucus, noting that the moral reasoning skills of fourth year medical students improved following ethical training. In comparison, Schlaefli et al. (1985) found that short courses on ethics had no significant effect on moral reasoning. Cole and Smith's study (1995) also contrasts with the positive findings of these studies: they found that courses on ethics failed to significantly impact on decision-making. These findings were mirrored in the work of Feldman and Thompson (1999) who found that the attitudes of business students did not change after a specific course on business ethics. Izzo (2000) who conducted a study of sales people, found that compulsory ethics training

failed to yield any improvement in their moral reasoning ability. Cubie et al. (2007) posed the specific question as to whether ethical decision-making can be taught: disappointingly however, whilst preliminary results suggested that it *was* possible to teach ethical decision-making, the authors of this study were less committed in their overall findings, stating the model that they created – the 'JUSTICE' model – assisted in ethical decision-making, but they fell short of suggesting that ethical decision-making can be taught. More recently and in contradiction to Cubie et al.'s (2017) study, Caldero et al. (2018) stated that 'values don't emerge whole-cloth from police training and police work… police officers bring to their work a set of cultural predispositions, and police work has only a minor effect on these predispositions' (p. 20). Of particular note is Herington and Weaven's (2007) study of a group of Australian, post-graduate business students; they surveyed 369 students, with 232 usable responses being gained. They found that '…ethics training seemed to have a deleterious effect on moral reasoning ability…' (p. 509). Despite a representative sample and strong methodology, the results of this study are disappointingly ambiguous and fail to draw any definitive recommendations.

Craft (2012) calls for ethics to be at the heart of business, highlighting the deficiency of current research in this field, stating that 'further study should be done to uncover what systems could be put in place to encourage the development of ethical culture on employees' awareness and perception of ethical culture throughout the organisation' (p. 254). Even in recent years, academic research which looks at the effect of training on ethical decision-making is substantially incomplete. Lehnert et al. (2014) highlight that in their review of the research papers produced on the subject of business ethics and decision-making between 2004 - 2014, only one specifically examined 'training' as a factor for ethical decision-making (p. 199). This highlights that even in the world of business which has a proliferation of studies on ethics, there is a need for more extensive research to show the efficacy of training on ethical decision-making.

2.12 The impact of training ethical decision-making within the police service

Kleinig (1990) investigated the teaching and learning of ethics within the police service: whilst of arguable relevance at that time, this paper however is based on policing in the late 1980s to early 1990s which is far less cogent in 2021. The way in which ethics is taught (if taught at all) is very different from Kleinig's evidence almost thirty years ago. This paper focuses on ethics within law enforcement in the United States and looks more at what one should include in ethics training, and the way in which to deliver it as opposed to the efficacy of that training. Johnson and Cox (2004) highlight that even in the US, where ethics has played a part in policing since the 1980s, '…police academies…have

not focused on a true understanding of ethics and professionalism. Instead the focus is on familiarization with rules and regulations without any real explanation for having them' (p. 72). Johnson and Cox's (2004) study fails to look at the longer-term effects if any, of teaching ethics, instead focusing on the delivery and outcomes immediately thereafter. Conti and Nolan (2005) discuss ethics and the effect on student officer decision-making. Similarly, Caitlin and Maupin (2002), conducted a study in the USA which appears to be promising on the surface, but fails to elaborate on the efficacy of the training received by the students involved in their research. Unfortunately, the research discussed is USA-based, therefore has less efficacy in the wider discussion about the delivery of training for ethical decision-making in policing in the United Kingdom.

Caldero et al. (2018) offer a slightly more balanced view; they talk about there being both positive and negative aspects of ethics' training within the police service, but concur that values are an important aspect of police officer decision-making. These academics highlight that current ethics' training within the police service is not adequate and does not assist in effective decision-making, stating:

> *The down-side is that much ethics education and training does not occur at the level of the ethics problems faced by officers, and tends to make them out to be morally inadequate. It carries the implication that their moral identity is incomplete, and that training or education can fill the moral "gaps"…Our position, however, is that recruits tend to be exceptionally ethical (p. 51).*

Caldero et al. (2018) discuss the effect of training, highlighting that new recruits are not blank sheets of paper, lacking in morals, culture and ethics, who, post-ethics' training arrive at a 'eureka' moment (p. 56). The authors evidence the way in which ethics is delivered from a 'noble cause' perspective as oppose to specific decision-making. Later within their work however, Caldero and colleagues note that 'ethics training…if done right and applied practically to the work setting, can also affect how officers apply the values they have' (p. 106). Within their work, Caldero et al. conflate values and ethics; talking more about value-based decision-making, rather than ethical decision-making within the service. Whilst academically very valuable, the researchers make a significant number of statements around training and its efficacy, without drawing on specific studies or academic work on which to evidence these claims.

Allen et al. (2006) specifically look at ethical training within criminal justice, stating that 'training and education in proper behavior and professional standards is imperative in creating ethical workers' (p. 3). However, Allen et al. fail to recognise the challenge of

integrating ethics into the policing curriculum – stating that 'training in ethics is no different than training in other areas' (p. 3), suggesting that teaching ethics is as easy as teaching, for example the Theft Act 1968. Of course, teaching ethics may well be easy – making those who are learning from that teaching *more ethical* as oppose to increasing their knowledge of ethics is perhaps the more challenging part: Allen et al. offer no detail on this point, no data, evidence or research to back-up their claim in this article. In a College of Policing paper entitled Promoting Ethical Behaviour and Preventing Wrongdoing in Organisations, the College (2015a) state that '[police training is]… overly legalistic and not supporting ethical decision-making by officers' (p. 17). Similarly, in his book on *Ethics in Law Enforcement*, McCartney (2015) also discusses the teaching of ethics, stating that 'ethics training for management is important for enhancing the ethical decision making of leaders, thereby promoting ethical behaviour throughout the hierarchy' (ch. 7.5). He also clarifies that 'ethical behaviour should be woven throughout all training and stated in lesson plans' (ch. 7.5). McCartney like many others however, fails to talk about *how* the training achieves this outcome, offers no empirical evidence to support this, and does not talk about how having ethical leaders penetrates to those making the critical decisions with and about the public on the frontline. Westmarland (2013) concurs that even with ethical training and ethical codes, it is difficult to get officers to behave a specific way based on that training/those codes (p. 465).

Despite the International Association of Chief Police Officers (1999) stating that '…ethics is our greatest training and leadership need today and into the next century…' (p. 1), as cited by Neyroud and Beckley (2001, p. 38), many other academics are silent on their call for any new, additional training or change to existing training provision. Similarly, the main body that oversees the syllabus for police training, the College of Policing is silent on their call for mandating ethics into police syllabuses. In their 2015 (2015a) paper, where they conducted an exploratory study looking into the cases of alleged misconduct against chief police officers and staff, the College of Policing state that 'while training may be helpful, ethical intelligence is unlikely to be a competence that can be acquired simply through that process' (p. 75). In a second report entitled The Role of Leadership in Promoting Ethical Police Behaviour (2015b), the College repeat the call that leaders within the police service can significantly influence behaviour throughout the organisation by their own behaviour, and highlight that there is '…a widely recognised need for ethical decision-making to be supported (p. 29), yet once again, the College fail to link this to training or how to ensure that this happens. Neyroud and Beckley (2001) argue that current training provision '…focus[es] on skills, knowledge and procedure, rather than on the reasons lying behind them' (p. 39). The same authors are critical of the previous training regime (in the 1990s), as despite it creating a minimum standards checklist for

training new recruits, these standards fell short of mandating any training in police ethics (p. 177). In the Southern hemisphere, the Fitzgerald Inquiry looked at high-level police corruption reported to the Australian Prime Minister in 1989. This report – despite specifically looking at corruption did call for 'ethical education [to]… play a role in long term solutions to problems', citing that such education would help those making decisions to '…find the correct balance between competing considerations' (p. 151).

White (2006) concurs with the assessment that ethics is still not at the heart of police training, stating that 'police training currently has an ethical *intent*' (p. 394). He points out however that the *intent* versus the reality/outcome appears to be somewhat at odds. Conti and Nolan (2005) briefly discuss training and the way in which ethics is taught, however there is still a significant gap in UK-specific research which looks at how internal ethics training affects student-officer decision-making. The closest studies are those of Wyatt-Nichol and Franks (2009) which looked at ethics training amongst police chiefs throughout the United States, and that of Conti and Nolan as previously discussed, who looked at the way in which ethics is trained in a police academy in the USA (albeit not from an overarching perspective of ethical decision-making). Caitlin and Maupin (2002) conducted a study using an ethical orientation questionnaire, measuring scales of idealism and relativism amongst new police officers and those with one year's police service in a US-state police force. However, this study falls shorts of developing the *'so what'* question in terms of what the study means for police decision-making after that training has been delivered to those officers. The study fails to answer the arguably vital question: is there any difference in the way that officers act/behave or make decisions which one can attribute to the training that they received? Charman (2017) infers that another change in required to police training, finding in her study that '…police training as it is currently formulated [means]…that new recruits are learning in a rigid inflexible and behaviourist environment…' (p. 328).

White (2006) lambasts the efforts of the service stating that 'the philosophy underpinning the current approach to police training has developed in an intellectual vacuum, oblivious to the history of ideas' (p. 388), suggesting that best practice, knowledge and understanding from the world of education and further education is all but ignored. Donnelly and West (2019) argue a similar point that perhaps the way in which 'training' has been delivered and thought-of within the service is what has potentially held it back, highlighting that 'training constitutes the acquisition of skills through the learning of police procedure and then being able to perform the task required of a police officer' (p. 114). This is replicated in US-based policing where Bayley highlights that 'ethical behaviour is the foundation of any professional organisation' and argues that within law enforcement

'…the standard "one stop shop" for ethics training may not be the most practical or efficient way to give your officers the necessary tools to handle ethical challenges they are sure to face in today's ever changing world' (2009).

UK law-enforcement prides itself on discretion and the ability for individual officers to make a standalone decision based on their rationale *at that time* and on *the circumstances at that time.* This is one of the principal differences between UK-policing and the policing of other countries around the world. However, the individual discretion of police officers in the UK means that it is arguably of even greater importance that officers' decision-making is understood and ethically-based – and this is not just a matter about which senior officers, managers and the public should be concerned – but of paramount importance to the officers themselves to ensure that their decision-making is based wholly on their values, ethics and what is right. Goldstein (1977) states that '…discretion could be properly exercised through proper training and guidelines…'. Doob and Chan (1982) looked at factors affecting police decisions to take juveniles to court. However, whilst being centred on police decision-making, the paper fails to discuss ethics or the training received by those police to make these critical decisions.

Miller and Blackler (2005), well-known academics in the field of police ethics, note that '…it will never be sufficient for police simply to learn, and act in accordance with, the legally enshrined moral principles governing the use of [force]…' (p. 30); ethical decision-making is required by individuals who have a strong moral base. The same researchers state that they believe that '…the desire and ability to do what is right needs to be continuously reinforced by ensuring that ethical issues in police work, including the ethical ends of policing itself, are matters of ongoing discussion and reflection in initial police training programs' (p. 140). Miller and Gordon (2014) make a similar argument around decision-making in their book on investigative ethics, noting that '…we are suggesting, that in combating police corruption, more attention needs to be paid to the rational structure underlying individual police decision making…' (p. 221). This research couples ethics with corruption, the simple point around decision-making again highlights that there is a significant gap in research that poses the question *how effective* is our training at achieving its objectives from an ethical decision-making perspective. Similarly, White (2006) – although not specifically discussing the teaching of ethics – calls for the cementing of ethics within police evaluation, in the area of training, and calls for police training to be evaluated using an ethical framework (p. 397).

Within the world of police education and of significant relevance, Kleinig (1990) cites the work of Sherman et al. (1978) and Holland (1980) in their report on *The Quality of Police*

Education, highlighting that 'every police education program should include in its required curriculum, a thorough consideration of the value choices and ethical dilemmas of police work…' (p. 1). Kleinig (1990) laments that ten years later '…many of the report's recommendations remain unfulfilled' (p. 2). Barker (2011) concurs stating that a need still exists for accurate information on the ethics training, its nature and the extent of this training (p. 145). In his conclusion, Barker (2011) is clear that 'ethics training is important; however there is a need to know what effect, if any, the training has on officers (p.145). He continues to call for a longitudinal study into existing training programmes to test their efficacy. Westmarland (2005) argues that '[police officers] can find themselves in a powerful position regarding the outcome of incidents and the lives of people they encounter' (p. 90) – arguably without the requisite training to make those difficult decisions. Charman (2017) concurs, asking '…whether the current framework of police education and training is the most effective method of equipping young recruits for a career in the police service' (p. 9). She concludes that training does not focus enough on ethics and values, especially considering the amount of discretion – often with the decisions that can have the biggest direct impact on the public – not being at the heart of training delivery. Cox and Kirby (2018) concur that in order for community trust to flourish '…the police service needs officers who are unbiased, trustworthy and able to interpret situations and people without invoking prejudice' (p. 15). In 1990, Kleinig said that 'there is still much confusion over the teaching of police ethics…' (p. 1) – a picture which appears to have endured in the academic and operational policing world until the current day. So why is this the case? As cited by Pollock and Becker (1996), there are many decisions within the world of policing '[that]…no decision that the officer could make would be clearly wrong [or clearly right]' (p. 21), making the understanding of ethics by officers and the subsequent teaching of ethical decision-making difficult. Perhaps it is this difficulty that has also meant that research within this area has been so limited.

2.13 Learning decay

Learning decay is a phrase that was first coined by Edward Thorndike in 1914 (Creighton, 2018), used to describe the fading or attrition of something that one has learned. Research undertaken by the Centre for Applied Research in Education [CARE] showed that in Australian police training '…operational and occupational realities serve[d] to undermine both the formal curriculum…and the development of reflective and critical understanding (1990, cited in Chan et al., 2013). Chan et al. (2013) specifically mention training in the police context highlighting that 'the notion of training decay is consistent with the popular view that police culture undermines professionalism' (p.10).

This is an important factor for consideration as decay or attrition of training could mean that unethical practices happen without anyone noticing, including the individual themselves. The result is that without top-up or recurring training, a new way of working, wholly or at least partly inconsistent with initial police training could become commonplace.

2.14 Other relevant criminal justice-based research

In 1994, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority commissioned research on the ethical behaviour of their municipal officers. The study used hypothetical ethical dilemmas in its research, and was relatively large scale, in that it utilised over 800 officers from across the state. It focused on the corruption element of officer behaviour; their perceptions of what corruption looked like, and individual categorisation of unethical behaviour, rather than the way in which respondents would have reacted and/or how they came to those decisions (and therefore the ethics/values behind those decisions). This study provides a useful representative view of how officers in this State considered their own behaviour and how they arrived at decisions.

MacVean and Neyroud (2012) specifically looked at ethical decision-making within policing. They cite the work of Black (2003) in which he stated that 'in making professional ethical decisions, the person is required to decide and perform actions on behalf of the organisation for which they work' (p. 11) – the ethical framework of that individual making the decisions – and their understanding of the organisational ethical code – being critical to that decision-making. MacVean and Neyroud (2012) argue that 'all situations [within the police service] require an ethical response…' (p. 15). However, despite the clear emphasis that the authors place on ethics and ethical decision-making, their work centres on defining police values and ethics; they discuss the value of the code of ethics, and the importance of leadership and management in policing. They did not discuss the value of initial police training or ongoing continued professional development to address the issues that they raise within the service.

2.15 Conclusion

This literature review has evidenced the wealth of research that exists around ethics, with a large number of prominent researchers from the 1970s until the present day conducting important, notable research. Much of this research has focused around the world of business and more recently, the medical profession. Within these bodies of research, many hypotheses have been tested; from how different demographics of the players involved (that is gender, culture, academic background or age) affect decision-

making, to how the setting in which those players find themselves (that is the organisational culture) continues to play a part to shape the way in which they conduct their business. There is also a significant body of research that combines these different elements, sometimes individually, often collectively, in order to explore decision-making. However, far fewer researchers have investigated how ethical decision-making is affected by the training that individuals receive; notwithstanding some important research within the world of business by Schlaefli et al. (1985), Bebeau and Thoma (1994), Izzo (2000), Cagle and Baucus (2006), Cubie et al. (2007), Rottig and Heischmidt (2007) and Rottig et al. (2011). Despite this research, much of the academic findings are conflicting, non-committal in their results with words such as 'may' or 'might' being commonplace, or at best uncomplimentary of each other. Even in recent times, research is significantly under-developed around how training – internal or otherwise – affects ethical decision-making.

Turning specifically to policing, the body of research that focuses on police training and ethical decision is almost non-existent. Small pockets exist; the majority being USA-based. The College of Policing's Rapid Evidence Assessment in 2015 which had an overarching purpose of promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations, highlighted only five studies worldwide that explored the effect(s) of training; these studies were not only in policing but also encompassed the military (2015, p. 2). Disappointingly, none of the studies identified by the College (2015a & 2015b) looked at the efficacy of police training and ethical decision-making in a police-based setting.

Specific ethics research within policing has generally centred around the *negative* aspects of the policing world. These often include corruption (Gilbert and Gilbert (2016); Morgan et al. (2000); Dombrink (1988); Barker and Carter (1990); Armao and Cornfeld (1993); Schmalleger (1997)). They also included adverse incidents such as coercive force (Dick, 2005) or specific areas of police business, such as stop/search (Stout, 2011). There are also small pockets of research around the use of ethics within police recruitment and the search for values' driven traits during initial assessment of prospective candidates (Haberfield, 2016, p. 295). The principal research in this area is by Alain and Gregoire (2008, p. 186) who note that there '…appears [to be] a lack of integration between formal training and work and further research is needed to better understand the way attitudes and ethical positions are affected by particular organisation situations'. However, even in that study – like many others in the area of ethics – decision-making and policing are non-UK-based. This accords with Craft's (2012) call for further study in this important area, as already discussed. Other authors such as Hayes

(2002) also focused on recruitment and off-duty behaviour with a comprehensive discussion of ethics, but from across the Atlantic, based on Canadian police officers.

As discussed during the introduction, police training has gone through significant change over the past decades, with almost each decade seeing a new, often described, 'innovative approach' to delivering initial police training to new student police officers. Despite these claims of innovation, police officer initial development has failed to keep pace with other sectors and industries, instead favouring traditional legal-based scenarios, rather than an officer's cognitive ability to categorise, evaluate and understand from an ethics' perspective.

Ethics is integral within policing – without it, police officers would not be trusted, the police service would lack legitimacy and its ability to operate as a service that polices by consent would be significantly diminished. Research that exists to date has focused on a number of areas, for example gender, age and culture, however the research picture around ethics and decision-making is sporadic and incomplete. Research in the specific area of ethics, decision-making *and* the way in which training is delivered is ambiguous and within the world of policing, almost non-existent. This was confirmed by the College of Policing Rapid Evidence Assessment (2015, p. 2). As discussed throughout this review, even prominent academics have rarely posed the specific question about how internal training affects ethical decision-making.

Studies throughout the years by Buchan (2005), Watson and Berkley (2008), Fritzsche and Oz (2007), Watson et al. (2009), Deshpande (2009) and Brown et al. (2010) have shown that so many different variables from traditionalism, to empathy, to narcissism, to conformity all have an impact on the way in which decision-making is undertaken by individuals. Whilst some studies, as highlighted throughout this review of literature, have drawn on the effect of ethical decision-making based on training-course delivery, none have specifically tracked student police officers from their first days in their new career, throughout their training and into their first six months of making decisions in real-life police-based settings.

The answer of how to achieve and sustain ethical decision-making by the 130,000+ police officers in England and Wales is a significant one, but answering the obvious question about what works within existing training provision is a critical starting-point. The need for a strong empirical evidence-base has never been so important than at the present time, not least because of the recent fundamental changes to police training (introduction of PEQF) but also because police legitimacy is being questioned more than

ever in light of the killing of George Floyd in the USA in 2020 and the subsequent rise of the Black Lives Matter movement.

3 METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the research methods used in order to answer the overarching thesis question: *how does internal student police officers' training affect ethical decision-making?*

The research was conducted using one qualitative method, looking at one specific area of the police service at three different junctures, from an equal starting point for all participants to minimise the variables insofar as was possible. There are some quantitative numbers throughout the research that have also been included where this added value to the research. The research was undertaken in a single police force. For the most part, it was conducted by an individual researcher who is also a senior practitioner within the same police force. The student officer participants that were interviewed for the study all started their careers within the same police force, on the same date and in the same class in June 2018.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the principal research method, and those interviews were conducted longitudinally at three different junctures: time A, time B and time C (see Appendix D – Semi-structured interview questions and probes). Those specific junctures were carefully chosen in order to identify any potential link between training and student officer decision-making. All of the interviews were recorded and fully transcribed. Thematic analysis (using the Braun & Clarke (2006) six stage model) was undertaken on the transcribed interviews, assisted by NVivo, and themes and sub-themes were identified from the analysis.

3.2 Research aims

There are a myriad of competing values, behaviours, backgrounds and experiences that influence the way in which decision-making and the ethics associated with decision-making are constructed. This study is unique as it harmonises rich qualitative data from semi-structured interviews to evidence the effect of training on UK-based police officers, longitudinally over a one-year period.

The aims of this research were:

i. To evaluate the efficacy of internal police training on the way decisions are made; specifically, how those decisions are arrived at/the basis for those decisions amongst student police officers;
ii. To explore how, if at all, the training that student officers receive changes their decision-making;
iii. To examine whether student officers have freedom to change their minds without feeling constrained by colleagues, supervisors or other factors;
iv. To examine how significant a part, if at all, ethics and the Code of Ethics plays in student officer decision-making;
v. To examine whether the force ethics committee is well-known, understood and what part in plays in student officers' everyday decision-making.

3.3 Qualitative versus quantitative approach

Quantitative research is important in order to count and measure things and events (Bryman, 2016). But as highlighted by Berg (2013) 'the meanings that we give to events and things come from their qualities. To understand our lives, we need qualitative research' (p. 3). Within the context of this research, it was of great importance to understand not just what decisions participants made, but the basis of those decision – put simply, why they make them and what made them make the decisions in that specific way. Qualitative research has a long history within criminology – a hundred years in fact – when ethnographic studies of crime and deviance were undertaken between 1920 and 1930 by the Chicago School (Wincup, 2017, p. x).

That is not to say that quantitative research is not important and as explained by Wincup these types of research do not need to be mutually exclusive (2017, p. 3). There are elements of quantifiable data within the study, but these numbers are ultimately enriched by the extensive qualitative data that sit behind them. It was important to be able to explore in detail behind the reasons why the participants involved in the study made the decision that they did, and to be able to delve deeply in the background of their decision-making.

The research was undertaken from an inductive approach, with the data leading the researcher rather than from a pre-defined position or perspective. This was because very little or no existing literature existed in the specific field of the teaching of ethics within a UK-policing setting.

3.3.1 Research design

A number of different methods of collecting data were considered including ethnographic studies, questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. Consideration was also given to using mixed methods and triangulating the data but time constraints and cost prevented this from being a viable potential.

The initial proposed methodology for this study included conducting both focus groups with experienced officers and a forcewide survey in addition to the individual, semi-structured interviews. The researcher reflected upon this during this research and in consultation with his supervisor, decided that this was not required as the researcher had enough primary research data in order to fully answer the research question. It was not felt that conducting focus groups would enrich or add to the research. Focus groups were specifically discounted because of the potential for group-think, group culture and dominant responder as highlighted by Maxfield and Babbie, (2009). Many of the questions that were being posed in this study involved how the participant thinks as an individual; focus groups would have given the complete opposite.

It is also fully accepted that the best and evidentially robust way to conduct this research would have been to have a control group. A control group would have been subject to no inputs on ethics or the Code of Ethics (CoE). This group could then have been compared to the sample group. The use of a control group in this way was considered, however it would not have been possible to gain approval from Chief Officers from the force within which the research was conducted as this would have been too much of an operational risk to the force by not delivering ethical training or training on the CoE, especially as the NDM – the national standard model for decision-making – is wholly based on the Code. This made having a control group impossible.

Ethnographic methods were also considered including potentially reviewing body-worn video of officers. However, unless these were conducted covertly (which would have

been difficult to justify, both to the University and in terms of the police force's own ethical codes), these may have yielded very different results with such a senior officer standing over the shoulder of an inexperienced participant. Time would also have been a significant constraint in this method.

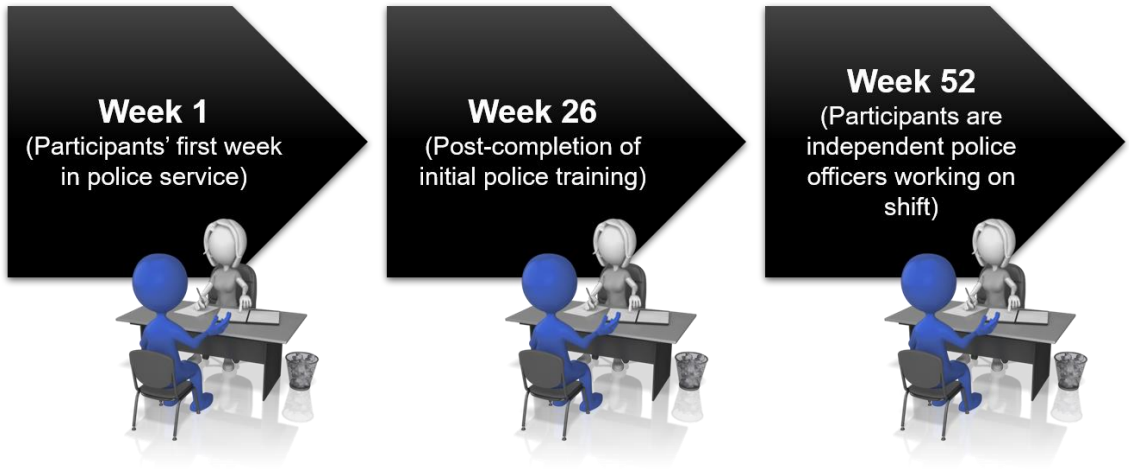
Interviews were considered in their broadest context with structured, unstructured and semi-structured all being considered. The researcher decided that interviews would be the most appropriate method in order to answer the research question. As highlighted by Jupp (1989) interviews often lead to a strong contribution to theory due to the rich data that is gained from this method. Seidman (2006) concurs that interviews give an in-depth snapshot into the world of social sciences, and talks about the appropriateness of this method for both Master's and Doctoral students completing their studies. McVey et al. (2015) also argued in favour of interviewing for practitioner-based research, contending that '…the approach enhanced [their] small-scale study by intensifying the researcher's engagement with the participant…' (p. 148).

3.4 Overview of studies

Three sets of interviews were undertaken for this research. All interviews took place in one specific police force and were conducted with the same sample and same question-set for each interview set.

The study was divided into three distinct junctures, dissevered naturally by the timetable of new police officers. These have been named Time A; time B, and time C for consistency throughout the study.

Figure 2 - Timeline of interviews for each participant



Time A (Week 1). The very start of police training when a new, student officer first walks into a police station/training facility to start their training.

This is the first opportunity to identify potential participants. All potential participants had little if any previous interactions within the police to influence the way in which they think and importantly, make decisions. This is the earliest stage in their career, prior to any formal training taking place. All of these individuals are also at an identical place in terms of their careers and be able to give responses that are not tainted in any way by their interaction with the police service.

Time B (Week 26). The week after those same student officers finish their initial training course; all classroom-based training as part of the Initial Police Learning Development Programme (IPLDP) including practical based scenarios and formal examinations will have all finished. Participants will have just started (or about to be starting) their tutorship period (the period where they work alongside an experienced officer to gain hands-on experience of undertaking a frontline policing role).

This was an ideal time to re-interview the same participants in order to capture an in-depth view of their understanding of ethics, decision-making and importantly to ask them how they now make decisions post-training. Specifically, this enabled a view to be taken as to what effect if any, the training had had up to this point having spent the last six months receiving training from the training department.

Time C (Week 52). A year after those same individuals started with the police service, by which time the officers will have completed all of their training and tutorship, and become fully independent (that is, have been signed-off as competent by the organisation to patrol on their own without constant supervision).

This juncture was a critical time for participants as whilst they are still classed as student officers, they now make their own decisions at incidents that they quite often attend alone. However, they also regularly work alongside more experienced officers and are able to see how a spectrum of more experienced officers make decisions. Week 52 also

served as a check as to whether participants had changed significantly between week 26 and week 52 - for example whether their training was still (if applicable) having any resonance in their decision-making, whether this had changed, or whether they had gained decision-making experience passed on from others.

3.5 Methodology

3.6 Ethics

In order to conduct this study, the researcher sought full ethical consent from the University of Central Lancashire's Ethics Committee (see Appendix C – Ethical Consent from University of Central Lancashire Ethics Committee). There were a number of things considered within the ethics submission including potential interviewer-effect due to the researcher being a senior officer within the force where the research was taking place; voluntary and true consent of participants and anonymity principles for those taking part.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was also considered and formed part of the submission to the Ethics Committee. This included giving participants information about consent, the fact that their participation was voluntary, and how their data would be used and stored thereafter. Anonymity and confidentiality were also covered in line with University principles and good practice (see Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet and Appendix B – Interview Consent Form).

3.7 Governance

In their chapter on *Field Research,* Maxfield and Babbie (2015) describe gaining access to criminal justice organisations as confusing and frustrating (p. 195) As an internal researcher, obtaining such approval was far easier than someone external. An informal 'in principle' conversation took place with a Chief Superintendent initially, and a subsequent formal meeting was held with the then Deputy Chief Constable (DCC). Following oral agreement from the DCC, written agreement was then given by the DCC for the study to take place and to use officers from within the force.

Other considerations such as the internal role of the research (as a serving police officer in the same force) were also considered and formed part of the ethics submission (see The role of the Researcher section below).

3.7.1 Participants and design

3.7.2 Research location

The research was conducted in a single police force which is one of 43 police forces across England and Wales by a police-based researcher who is a Superintendent within the same force. This enabled time-efficiency as the researcher knew the force, knew the procedures in the force and had unprecedented access to new student officers. The force in which the research was conducted is a medium sized organisation which made it large enough to be a worthy sample but not too big that the sample was unrepresentative of the cohort of student officers used. It also made the study more manageable as training was conducted in one geographical location only, and follow-up interviews with participants were not too demanding in terms of distance for the researcher to travel.

3.7.3 The role of the Researcher

As a previous Master's graduate who had previously conducted in-force research, the researcher understood the challenges of conducting police-based research as an internal researcher as alluded to by Davies (2016) and the challenges of maintaining legitimacy within the academic world. Additionally, as highlighted by Willis it was important to guarantee confidentiality to participants as an internal '…pracademic' combining both academic work and practitioner statuses (2016, p. 320).

Being an internal researcher also meant access to data/a sample that would have been far less accessible to an outside researcher. The researcher also already had the trust and confidence of the force which led to the granting of unprecedented access to this sample of student officers. This also came with some drawbacks inasmuch as being a Superintendent within the organisation had the potential to create a deleterious effect on how open participants would be and them wanting to please/give answers they perceived would be the *right* answer as oppose to what they really thought. This was mitigated by using first names and being in plain clothes (not uniform). Prospective participants were also given very clear oral information which was reinforced by a Participants' Information Sheet (see Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet) before the interviews took place. They were told that participation was completely voluntary, and the researcher left a booking sheet in the room to ensure that participants did not feel obliged or coerced in any way to take part in the study. The consent form that participants would be required to sign prior to commencing the interviews was also left in order for participants to review

prior to signing-up for the study (see *Sampling* section for more details). Participants were also told that they could withdraw from the study up until analysis of the data.

On reflection, there were potential benefits for the participants that one could have mentioned in the Participant Information Sheet. By taking part, participants had the potential to shape the training for future new recruits; a selfless act to improve policing for all. Also, any future changes to training would indirectly benefit the participants themselves, as this would ensure more focussed training for future police officers.

Reciprocity was considered from the outset, especially in light of the unique senior officer to junior officer relationship between researcher and participant as discussed in the *Ethical Considerations* section. The Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet) detailed the driver for the study, and the oral address given by the researcher when speaking with the cohort prior to the initial interviews alluded to the positive, significant impact that the research could have on the force and policing in general. Confidentiality and anonymity were discussed at this juncture and also included on the Consent Form, including how to withdraw from the study. As mentioned by Given (2008), one of the factors researchers should consider is the significant time commitment by participants. The research 'bargain' that Given (2008) alludes to the fact that participants were allowed to claim the time back that they spent in interviews at a later date. That meant that they would lose none of their own time taking part in the study[22].

Despite some of the challenges of being an internal researcher, there are also significant benefits as highlighted by Davies '…including better access to the field, opportunities for knowledge exchange, wider dissemination of results and greater policy impact' (IBID, p. 154). Additionally, knowing the topic in detail, knowing the processes in force and police parlance was also of benefit, as well as the ability to both directly and indirectly affect processes, decisions and future outcomes within the force meaning that the research findings can gain traction and have a direct impact quickly within the force and wider policing world. This was highlighted as important by Bayley (2015) where he commends internal research arguing that external research '…is often too theoretical and technical. It doesn't relate to the world as police experience it', something easily avoidable by internal researchers as they know the rules of engagement so well.

[22] Participants were given 'straight' time back; that is, if they spent an hour and a half being interviewed, then they could claim an hour and a half back at a later date. There was no monetary advantage or otherwise to them taking part.

On reflection, it was exceptionally challenging being a full-time police officer and a part-time academic studying at such an in-depth level of academia. It was possible to separate the police officer role from the researcher role in terms of the being objective in the research. However, it was very difficult to be able to concentrate at times on the day-job whilst constantly thinking about the research. This was especially true at key times such as during the analysis and pre-submission of the final thesis. It became far more challenging to concentrate on anything other than the research which presented a real dilemma in time management and creating a work/life and study/life balance.

3.7.4 How the recruitment process affects ethical understanding of new officers

There are several stages of recruitment to become a police officer in the United Kingdom. The College of Policing set the recruitment stages and standards for forces. One of the stages of recruitment into the police service is for prospective officers to attend an assessment centre. After this, candidates undergo verbal and numerical reasoning tests, a fitness test and medical. After successful completion of these stages, the College of Policing deems the candidate eligible for recruitment as a Constable. For a lot of forces, this is the end point of the recruitment and officers can start their police training. However, for this specific police force, and some others, there is an additional interview with a panel of experienced officers and staff from the force prior to being given a formal offer of employment. This is notable because a lot of applicants read widely before the interview, including national documentation such as the Code of Ethics. Because of this, one would expect that at least some new student officers would already know of the existence of the Code and potentially be able to talk generally about its content as they may have had questions, or at least expected questions on this within their force-based interview.

3.7.5 The teaching of ethics in police training school

The Code of Ethics (CoE) is said to be delivered as a golden-thread throughout a student officers' 25-week initial training course. The reason it is said to be a golden thread is that ethics is meant to form part of every officers' day job and most prevalent when making decisions using the National Decision Model (NDM) (see Figure 15) due to the Code being at the heart of the model.

The CoE standalone lesson is delivered on day three of a student officer's first week as a Police Constable. The delivery of this lesson looks specifically at the basis for the Code,

why it was introduced in 2014, and the importance of the Code in today's policing environment. This lesson is also discussed in detail when officers go on to speak about the NDM – as the Code is fundamental to this as it sits at the centre of the model. Officers are expected to consider the Code at each one of the five elements of the Model. The CoE also features significantly in the Professional Standards Department input where the Standards of Professional Behaviour and CoE are discussed in detail with new student officers; the purpose being to set a clear line as to what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, both on-duty and off-duty. As well as these standalone lessons/inputs, a number of lessons throughout the remaining 25-week programme also mention the NDM, and in every practical scenario, the NDM is used as the basis for decision-making.

That said, student officers should already be 'rational' thinkers with the ability to 'think on [their] feet – problem solving and responding to new challenges' and 'be decisive…' (HM Government, 2020). However, the purpose of the lesson that is delivered to student officers when they first start their career is to ensure that there is a consistent understanding of the Code and how to apply it, and to test and develop student officers' ethical decision-making. The participants are also given the Code as a 'pre-read'; the expectation being that they will have studied the Code in their own time prior to the lesson.

3.7.6 Appropriateness of the method of selection

The purpose of using interviews was to elicit the reasons behind/basis for decision-making and specifically the impact, if any that initial police training had on decision-making. Whilst all participants received the same lessons at police training school, learning and decision-making are very individual things and therefore each participant had the potential to give very different responses and want to talk about very different things within their interviews. As highlighted by Kvale (2007): 'the interview is a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects' everyday world' (p. 11).

Unstructured interviews were discounted as these had the potential to be too open and too individualised, making analysis and comparison between candidates more difficult. Fully structured interviews were not chosen as these were thought to be too rigid and would not have allowed enough exploration of the participants' reasons behind their decision-making and their experience of police training. This was highlighted as a

potential constraint by Fontana and Frey noting that ‘there is very little flexibility in the way questions are asked or answered in the structured interviewing setting’ (1998, p. 363).

Semi-structured interviews enabled a good balance that gave enough structure to be able to analyse the interviews and compare participants’ views effectively but without inhibiting the participants or interviewer to very specific, set questions. Three identical ethical dilemmas were also set at the end of each interview so that the interviewer was able to probe specifically around live-time decisions that the participants made and compare responses between interview times.

Enabling the researcher to have an element of flexibility in questioning and probing specific areas of the research was an important consideration. This was highlighted by Berg (2013) who cited a study that he and other researchers undertook which explored the Latino men who have sex with other men. Berg said that ‘the interviewer’s prepared questions and notes could not have anticipated [the way that the conversation went]…yet, to “stick to script” would involve ignoring a topic that is clearly central to this informant’s understanding of the subject being discussed’ (2013, p. 114). This was reinforced by Dantzker (2018) who talked about the importance of being able to ask follow-up questions, which are not necessarily apparent until the interviewer receives an initial response from the interviewee (p. 206). Dantzker also talks about the critical additional information that would never have been collected had a structured interview been undertaken instead of a semi-structured one (IBID, p. 206).

Within this research, the researcher wanted to be able to retain clear structure but also able to probe into things further, for example, there were times when a participant mentioned ‘upbringing’ as a key driver behind their decision-making; the semi-structured nature of the interview allowed the researcher the freedom to be able to understand context and probe this further rather than be constrained to strictly sticking to a script. It also allowed far more open recall by participants than would have been the case with structured interviews.

Charman (2017) talked about the advantages that a semi-structured approach has over other methods when involving police research (p. 176). Charman (2017) cites other

prominent authors such as Henerson et al. 1987; Richards 1996; Reiner 1991; Crewe 1974 and Brewer 1993 (p. 176). Bryman (2016) also agrees that semi-structured interviews give flexibility, but with the added bonus of potentially drawing out information in areas not previous considered.

3.7.7 The use of ethical dilemmas (vignettes)

Three ethical dilemmas (vignettes) were used that were all real-life situations in which officers had found themselves in anonymous forces throughout England and Wales (see Appendix D – Semi-structured interview questions and probes) . They were taken from the UK Police Ethical Guidance Group (UKPEGG) scenarios and reproduced with the permission of UKPEGG and the originating forces. All of the dilemmas were police-based but did not require any pre-existing police knowledge or any legislative knowledge[23]. Moreover, they were intended to provoke challenge and elicit participants' opinion and importantly their reasons for arriving at these conclusions.

As discussed in the literature review, previous research has shown vignettes/ethical dilemmas are useful in terms of drawing out the ethical decision-making of individuals without blatantly asking *'what do you think is ethical?'* (Cavanagh and Fritzsche (1985); Barnett, Bass, & Brown (1994); Lysonski & Gaidis (1991); Weber (1992); Hyman & Steiner (1996); Fritzsche (2000); Cagle & Baucus (2006)). Cagle and Baucus' study (2006) showed for example that 'the majority of students did not think their responses had changed [after being exposed to an ethical dilemma-type scenario]…' (p. 222); this was despite the study showing that their opinions had indeed changed. This was further reinforced in Fritzsche and Oz's study (2007) where they cited the importance of using vignettes to simulate realistic problems in order to elicit actual decision-making behaviour (p. 338). The benefits of using scenarios in this way are clear and negated some of the concerns raised by researchers such as Dantzker (2018) who suggested that with interviews, some participants are often trying to 'please' the interviewer and say what they perceive that the interviewer want to hear (p. 209). Furthermore, Sampson and Johnannessen (2019) highlight the usefulness of vignettes when participants are subject to rule-based behaviours, and found:

[23] It was felt that this was important so that participants' views were gained on the actual detail rather than on the policing activity itself. This was important as the focus was to understand what their decision was, and why the rationale behind why they arrived at that decision.

> *…that the use of 'real-life' vignettes also allowed research team members to rapidly establish credibility whilst maintaining discernible interest in participants' own perspectives amplifying their effect as stimulus materials* (p. 69).

Vignettes were specifically used by Ang (2020) in her interviews where she clarified that 'the vignette and interview responses convergence method were found to be particularly effective in illuminating tacit and deeper information, such as the values and attitudes of [participants]'. The vignettes in Ang's (2020) study were used for an identical purpose to this study – as '…[a] method to detect contradictions between the vignette responses and the interview responses, thereby leading to further probing' (IBID), thus testing what participants actually *did* versus what they said that they *would* do to triangulate their responses. This was found to be particularly useful within this study at triangulating what participants said with the action that they actually took and rationale for that action when probed on their responses to the ethical dilemmas.

3.7.8 Sampling

The sampling frame for the study was a list of new student officers, starting their police training for the first time in June 2018 in one specific police force. The details of all of those joining the force on this date was given by the People Services' department. The total cohort of new starters was 30 officers. Further justification for the sample size is discussed below.

The interviewer met with the whole cohort at the start of their training and explained the purpose of the study and asked for volunteers to take part. The basis, objectives and reasons behind the study were explained to the students and they were given the opportunity to ask questions. The cohort were told that participation was completely voluntary; that they would not get paid to take part, and that their participation in the study would remain anonymous. As mentioned in the *Researcher* section, the cohort were also left with a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form in order for them to peruse at their convenience prior to formally agreeing to taking part in the study. All participants were given a participant identification name, and no link was made between this number and their personal details (name, force ID number, collar number et cetera)' this was done to ensure anonymity throughout the research project.

The sample was a non-probability sample as this is often said to be the best method for qualitative research with probability sampling being '…largely inappropriate for qualitative research' (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 78). A non-probability sample means that a specific subset of the population is chosen as potential participants in the study – in this case, new student officers. However, within that subset, the participants (the sample) were chosen by self-selection from the cohort of student officers that were starting at that time. A blank list of interview times was left on a desk in the classroom with twenty available time slots for anyone within the cohort to write their name should they wish to volunteer to take part in the study. All participants were relevant to the study as they were chosen from the specific sampling frame, meaning that no individual had to be turned-down from taking part.

Selecting the sample in this way had a number of benefits; firstly, the individuals were more likely to be committed to the study and turn-up at their allocated time as they had agreed to take part. Secondly, it also ensured anonymity was retained and removed any inference or feeling of coercion to take part by leaving participation completely to the freewill of participants.

Other sampling methods were considered including *diversity sampling* to ensure a representative sample from the cohort. However, it was felt that in order to be completely subjective and unbiased, and for some of the reasons given above about willingness to take part and time-efficiency, self-selective sampling would be better and be the most representative way to conduct the research.

As noted by Maxfield and Babbie (2015), it is important that a sample is large enough that the aggregate characteristics of the sample closely approximate those same characteristics of the population as a whole (p. 136). It is generally accepted that it is rarely possible for the sample to be representative in all respects – but representativeness in the areas that are important to the study is what is required.

In order to decide on how many participants would take part, the planned intake numbers of new student officers for the year across Wales were considered. Achievability was also a factor as the study was undertaken for the most part by a sole researcher, studying part-time. It was felt that twenty interviews, conducted three times was a manageable

sample size which balanced being representative of the number of recruits across Wales for 2018/19 with being achievable within the confines of a Professional Doctorate. Nineteen participants represented 63% of the whole cohort of new recruits, and approximately 20% of the overall total new officers that the force recruited over the twelve-month period (19 of 93). In terms of wider representativeness, there were 312 new officers across the four Welsh forces who were recruited during the twelve-month period up to 31 March 2019 (Home Office, 2019). Therefore, the sample of this study represented approximately 6% of the overall police recruits for Wales for 2018/19.

In order to answer the research question of how initial police training affects ethical decision-making, it was important to interview all participants as soon as possible in week 1 of their employment within the service (see *Overview of Studies* section[24]). As discussed within other sections within this chapter, this would not have been achievable with solely one researcher as the participants were all undergoing full-time classroom-based training and would not have been able to miss any sessions. Other researchers assisted with these initial interviews in order to achieve the task of interviewing all participants before/after their working day. The only manageable amount of interviews that each of the four researchers could undertake was five in total – this meant that a maximum of twenty interviews could take place over the first two days. Schoot (2020) talks about the challenge of acquiring enough data to test hypothesises and the often-prohibitive costs of doing so. In this study, time was the prohibitive factor, but twenty participants were deemed manageable and representative (20% of the overall intake for 2018/19 for the force as discussed above). Willis (2016) also talks about the challenges and time-constraints that are often faced by 'pracademics' when conducting research in policing.

Twenty participants represented 66% of the sample frame. Due to some difficulties on the day of interview, one interviewee failed to take part resulting in 19 (63% of the sample frame) taking part in total: 17 participants took place in all three interviews; 2 took part in only 2 interviews each (see Table 10).

[24] The importance of doing this was to create a baseline in order to understand previous training that participants had received, and then be able to attribute any changes to their decision-making to the training or other internal policing factors. Without conducting the interviews at the earliest opportunity, there was a risk that other factors, for example early inputs from senior officers, or socialisation within the force may have had an impact on decision-making.

In terms of gender breakdown of the actual participants that took part, the sample in this study was 12 men to 7 women (37%) which was roughly the same as the gender breakdown for all four Welsh forces in their recruitment 2018/19.

The ethnicity of all participants in this sample was self-defined as White British or White Welsh. Government statistics for 2018/19 do not provide a breakdown to show the numbers of new recruits specifically. The statistics show only the overall number of recruits which includes officers transferring from other police forces. For the four Welsh police forces, 336 were White; 43 did not state their ethnicity and 18 were Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Home Office (2019). Excluding those who chose not to state their ethnicity, this shows that approximately 5% of recruits to police forces in Wales during that period were BAME. One important note is that of the cohort of 30 officers from which the sample derived, there were no recruits who were BAME.

The ages of the participants that took part in the study ranged between 20 and 31 years of age.

Of the seventeen participants that took part in all three interviews, five had previous police experience as either a Special Constable, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) or as a member of police staff in some other role. There were two other participants: one of these participants took part in interview 1 and interview 2; the other participant took part in interviews 2 and 3 - both individuals missed one of the interviews overall. One of those two participants had previously been a PCSO and both were female.

3.8 Data Collection

All participants were furnished with a Participant Information Sheet which gave details about the purpose of the study, the fact that participation was voluntary and what would happen to their data. This also signed the Interview Consent Form as discussed above. These were signed by each participant before the interviews took place. Participants were also given the opportunity to ask any questions about the study or any points of clarification prior to the interviews taking place.

55 semi-structured interviews were used as the principal method of data collection (see Appendix D – Semi-structured interview questions and probes). 19 different participants took part in the study; all of whom were offered an interview at each of the three interview junctures. The three identical ethical dilemmas (vignettes) were also used during each interview which sought participants' views, considerations, and deliberations as to what the right/wrong thing was to have done/one should now do. An identical question set including ethical dilemmas was used throughout all interviews/interview junctures.

The interviews were broadly separated into five sections:

i. background information about the participant;
ii. individual decision-making in the workplace;
iii. decision-making by leaders;
iv. ethics; and
v. ethical dilemmas.

More information about these subsections are included below:

3.8.1 Background information

Background questions were asked at each juncture including demographical data such as gender, age and ethnicity. Length of service was also used to ensure that this could easily be differentiated during the analysis stage.

3.8.2 Individual decision-making in the workplace

The questions initially sought to elicit details about participants' previous decision-making training. This was important in order to be able to show external validity, thus ensuring that each participant's previous learning and experiences were taken into account during the analysis stage. Participants were also asked about how they currently make decisions and the things that affect those decisions and whether their decision-making changes when they work alongside someone else. The reason behind these questions was to explore whether participants remain steadfast in their views or not when working alongside other colleagues.

3.8.3 Decision-making by leaders

Participants were asked more detailed questions (which became more relevant in time B and time C interviews) about how their supervisors make decisions and how they interact with each other. The questions derived from extensive reading around previous ethical studies (Cole & Smith (1996); Parsa & Lankford (1999); Borkowski & Ugras (1992); and Cagle and Baucus (2006)), and studies on culture (Carter (1999); Barker & Carter (1999); Kraska & Kappeler (1995); Chan et al. (2003); Alain & Gregoire (2008); Van Hulst (2013) and Crank (2015)) and decision-making in business and beyond. The researcher also drew on social research books that talked about the best way to devise questions (Kvale (2007); Bell (2014); Bryant (2016); and Ang (2020)).

Participants were asked about how they perceived that a changed decision is viewed by the organisation and their peers. This was done to understand better what drives their decision-making, and to gain an in-depth understanding as to the potential pressures within the organisation to conform or whether participants felt free to make/change/amend their own decisions as they chose.

3.8.4 Ethics

Participants were specifically asked about what the word 'ethics' means to them, whether they perceive the Code of Ethics as important, and whether this changes the way that they do their job. Additionally, there were some forcewide *procedural justice* style questions talking about whether participants perceived that the force acted openly and explained its decisions and whether the work of the force's Ethics Committee permeated their work.

3.8.5 Ethical dilemmas (vignettes)

Three dilemmas were given to participants. They were asked for their views, what they were considering and the reason behind these views. The overarching aim was to benchmark participants' views and reasons for those views at time A and compare their later views/reasons at time B and time C to ascertain any potential changes/similarities. In Westmarland et al.'s (2013) study, the purpose of vignettes was to uncover propensity of moral wrongdoing; this was not the case in this study. The purpose of the ethical dilemmas or vignettes in this study was not to test participants' moral compass or attempt to conclude whether their decision-making was right or wrong; it was to understand the

basis for decision-making and whether that decision-making, and the basis for it changed post-training. They were also used to try to identify the factors that affected this decision-making and ensure that the reasons that participants gave for their decisions for those dilemmas correlated with their earlier answers in the interview. Put simply, they were used as a reality check/triangulation of whether what participants *said* they would do actually bore truth in *what they did* when applied to a real-life situation.

3.8.6 Timeframe of the study

The original intention for this research had been to interview participants at the very start of participants' careers; again at a mid-point (3mths service), and finally at the end of their training (6mth point) However, after reading extensively around previous studies, speaking with experienced trainers and anecdotal evidence, it was decided that the time that training and embedding in an organisation takes to change behaviours and mindsets would better fit with the study being conducted at six monthly intervals.

Consideration was given as to how best to study the effects of training and be able to attribute any changes specifically to training rather than other factors. Paoline (2003) as cited by Charman (2017) shows the importance of longitudinal research to '...provide this richer and deeper understanding of cultural dynamics, particularly during socialisation stages.' (p. 171). Charman also highlighted the significant benefits that longitudinal studies bring in identifying attitude change in individuals (p. 172). It is for that reason that the researcher chose specifically to look beyond a simple 'before and after training' timeframe; rather to include additional interviews six months into socialisation within the workplace. The hope was to be able to show what effect, if any, this socialisation has had on ethical decision-making within the workplace and therefore separate socialisation from the effect of training.

The choice was therefore made to interview students in their first week of employment; after they completed their full initial training (around 6 months into their careers) and subsequently after they had been 'on the beat' as full-time, frontline officers for six months. The time frames of this study mirrors those of Charman (2017) who also conducted semi-structured interviews with police officers whilst looking at culture within the service: time A, time B and time C.

3.8.7 Conducting the interviews

The most time-pressured of the interviews was time A. This was because it was important to interview all participants within the first week of their employment in the service so as to ensure that they had not started their formal training around ethics and decision-making. In order to achieve this, a team from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), which comprised of one senior lecturer and two post-doctoral researchers, assisted with the time A interviews. This meant that the principal researcher and the team interviewed approximately five people each over consecutive two days.

Prior to time A interviews commencing, the principal researcher gave basic standardisation training to all interviewers to ensure that everyone asked the same questions in a similar way and understood what the researcher was trying to achieve based on the data collection approach and the overarching research questions. For example, the team discussed the importance of trying to ascertain not only *what* decision was made by participants, but specifically *how* the individual participants made those decisions and on what experience / knowledge / prior training did they draw from in order to inform their decision-making.

A debrief was also conducted after day one in order to fully reflect after the first set of interviews to ensure that everyone had conducted the interviews in a similar way and to iron out any issues in preparation for the next day. Solely data collection was undertaken by the team; no analysis took place. All other interviews (time B and C) were conducted solely by the principal researcher.

All interviews were digitally recorded. Due to the times of day that the interviews were conducted – very early morning or before the start of an officer's normal shift – disruption was kept to a minimum. The researcher took great care to conduct the interviews in parts of the police estate where distractions would be kept to a minimum to avoid any negative impact on participants. Herbert and Rubin (2005) talk about the importance of pre-planning before interviews in order to ensure that the interviewer and interviewee are as comfortable as possible (p. 80). This was also noted by Seidman who talked about the importance of spacing interviews so as not to affect the quality of the interviews (2006, p. 22).

Time A interviews took place in the police training centre as all participants were studying at that location every day. As in Chan's study (2012) with student police officers, there were strict constraints on when interviewers could take place due to these new student officers' timetables being busy. Interviews were therefore conducted before and after the working day (p. 4). The response rate was 100 per cent for the first set of interviews which were conducted in June 2018.

For the time B and time B interviews, all participants were contacted by e-mail beforehand in order to arrange a mutually convenient time/date/location for the interview to take place. The interviewer travelled to the participant so that the interview was conducted in the natural workplace of the participant which helped to make the participant naturally feel at greater ease. There was superb take-up by participants with 17 participants taking part in all three interviews. The attrition for the two candidates in time A and time C interviews can be attributed to sickness.

Table 10 – showing number of participants that took place in each interview.

Interview	Number of participants
Time A	18
Time B	19
Time C	18

3.8.8 Post-interview work

The researcher reflected at the end of each interview and at the end of time A, B and C to ensure that there was nothing of particular relevance that needed amending for the following interview-set. One such example was that after the time A, initial interviews (after conducting approximately five of the initial eighteen interviews), the researcher listened back to some of the responses given and identified that the knowledge and information shared during some of the interviews appeared at odds with someone just starting their careers in the police service. That is, it would be extremely unusual for the in-depth knowledge of the police / police culture to be known by these individuals without having a personal insight into the policing world. The researcher therefore decided to append one simple question at the outset of all future interviews to establish whether the individual being interviewed had previous experience within the police service – whether

in a police staff or policing context – for example as a Control Room Operator or a Special Constable. If the answer to this question was a 'yes', that did not necessarily detract from the usefulness of the information gained but was an important aspect with which the researcher was able to differentiate at the data analysis phase.

The interviews were transcribed word-for-word to ensure the nuances of every participant were captured. All of the interview recordings were erased following transcription taking place. Transcription yielded approximately 120 A4 pages of typed data, almost 78,000 words.

Use of the Welsh language was considered as part of the overall thesis, and the fact that some participants may be more comfortable conducting their interviews through the medium of Welsh. This was offered to all participants. Two of the nineteen participants chose to undertake their interviews in Welsh. These were conducted by the researcher (who is fluent in Welsh) and then transcribed fully in Welsh by the researcher and later translated by the researcher into English. Whilst this may perhaps appear an insignificant detail, this cultural and linguistic familiarity also assisted in creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for those two participants. It is possible that those participants would have felt less willing to take part, or have been less open had the interviews been conducted in English; their second language.

All of the records relating to the participants, including transcriptions, interview notes and participant information sheets were anonymised so as not to identify any participant by name. Throughout the study, the main researcher held details of the participants in order to ensure each interview was attributed to each other correctly. This list was destroyed after all interviews had taken place.

3.9 Data management and analysis

Bryant (2016) describes qualitative data analysis as cumbersome but also very rich in content and notes that there are '…few well-established and widely accepted rules for the analysis…' (p. 570) of this type of data. The researcher read widely around the different types of qualitative analysis including grounded theory, content, thematic and narrative analyses. However, the researcher discounted all but thematic and content analysis based on the most appropriate method to answer the research question.

Both remaining theories had advantages. However, there was more prescriptive detail on how to go about thematic analysis for a novice researcher than on content analysis. Content analysis appeared more appropriate for '...when no one wants to participate in an interview, respond to questionnaires, or enter a laboratory…' (Khadimally, no date) suggesting that thematic analysis is perhaps favoured when interviews have been used. This was reinforced by the work of Braun and Clarke (2006), and Kissling (1996).

Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that '…thematic analysis is a poorly demarcated and rarely-acknowledged, yet widely-used qualitative analytic method…' (p. 4) that gives strong results yet flexibility in the way in which data is analysed. It is acknowledged by Braun and Clarke and other commentators that there is no clear agreement about how one carries out this type of analysis but these authors draw on the work of Holloway and Todres (2003), and Ryan and Bernard (2000) in describing a 6-phase approach to doing thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke clarify that:

> *What is important is choosing a method that is appropriate to your research question, rather than falling victim to methodolatry, where you are committed to method rather than topic/content or research questions…* (p. 28)

3.9.1 Thematic analysis

The six stages of thematic analysis that were followed were those described by Braun and Clarke (2006). They were:

i. Familiarising yourself with the data;
ii. Generating initial codes;
iii. Searching for themes;
iv. Reviewing themes;
v. Defining and naming themes, and
vi. Producing the report

3.9.2 Stage one

Prior to even considering how to analyse the data, notes were made of any interesting things that were identified whilst transcribing the interviews. As well as doing this simultaneously to transcribing the interviews themselves, each interview was read-through upon completion of full transcription for accuracy and understanding which also created an opportunity to pick-up any further interesting things that emanated from the data. Whilst this was done rather unintentionally, this was the first phase of Braun & Clarke's (2006) model completed, as the researcher's understanding and familiarity with the data was very strong after going through the aforementioned process.

3.9.3 Stage two

The second part of the process was generating initial codes. Prior to generating any codes, the interviews were inputted into NVivo as they were transcribed. A journal was started so that any decisions about how the data would be analysed, any interesting findings or any initial themes could be captured. This also proved invaluable for picking-up the analysis from one day to the next. As highlighted by Kvale (2007) 'transcribing the interviews…is in itself an initial analysis'(p. 94).

Using NVivo enabled the collation of all interviews, codes, identified themes and a journal in one place. As highlighted by Welsh (2002) '…NVivo can add rigour to the analysis process by allowing the researcher to carry out quick and accurate searches of a particular type…and can add to the validity of the results by ensuring that all instances of a particular usage are found…' (p. 5). Prior to commencing stage two of the six stage process, the researcher attended NVivo training provided by UCLan. Three workshops were attended in total; one in person and two online. These gave an overview of the capabilities of the system, an introduction to thematic analysis and reflexivity and details on how to code and develop themes.

After all interviews were inputted into NVivo and the researcher had increased his knowledge of how to use the system, the researcher started stage two; generating the initial codes. This was done by initially coding Time A interviews dealing with each section of the question-set at a time, methodically moving from question to question, and also collating responses under headings. For example, if participants talked about the fact that they agreed that an apology should be given in ethical dilemma one, the

researcher grouped their responses under one heading of 'apology should be given'. This enabled the researcher to retain the nuance of what was said (that is, the detail of their response), but was also able to see at a glance as to whether they broadly agreed or disagreed. This also enabled a quantitative summary to be easily produced where appropriate – for example: ten participants agreed with the statement X.

Some researchers have tackled this type of coding differently, for example Toerien and Wilkinson (2004), preferring to tackle the data as a whole rather than coding each individual question. However, the researcher wanted to meticulously code each question in order to look comparatively across interview sets when analysing the data as a complete set in order to identify any similarities/differences between responses of participants at these different junctures (if they existed between time A, B and C), and ultimately determine the reasons for these differences/similarities. the researcher followed a similar method to what was suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2005) 'you can come up with ideas for concepts and themes by thinking about what different interviewees said on the same issues and then using the comparison to suggest the code' (p. 211).

3.9.4 Stage three

In a similar way to Toerien and Wilkinson (2004), the researcher took an inductive approach – that is starting with the observation rather than any defined theory. the researcher repeatedly read the interviews and coded and re-coded the data. As well as resulting in the researcher having a very high degree of familiarity with the data, this also enabled the researcher to conceptualise themes from the data itself rather than from any theoretical basis. This led well onto the third stage of Braun and Clarke's (2006) method of identifying themes. This method was one of the approaches favoured by Braun and Clarke (2006) where they describe an inductive approach as being '… a process of coding the data *without* trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions' (p. 12). This approach was particularly important for the researcher's data as there was very little prior literature (none in the UK) that had examined this specific area of ethics and the efficacy of training within the UK police service. Where a code recurred in time B and C interviews, these were coded identically insofar as possible in order to assist in comparison and later analysis.

Similar to the work of Toerian and Wilkinson (2004) '…themes were refined within the study through repeated investigation of both of patterns and commonality…' (p. 73). the researcher also took what Kissling (1996) described as an '…interpretive, voice-centred feminist approach…' (p. 488) where the researcher represented the experiences and decisions made by the officers in written text rather than replacing their words with psychological interpretations. The analysis therefore includes actual speech rather than the researcher's own interpretation of what the participants were trying to say.

3.9.5 Stage four

Where themes were identified as part of stage 3 of the six-stage process, they were written out in full so as to retain any nuances that had been picked-up. Direct quotes from participants were noted where they added context and meaningfulness to the theme as per the fourth stage of Braun and Clarke's six stages for thematic analysis. Quotes were written verbatim.

As part of stage four, the researcher reviewed all of the themes that the researcher had identified and grouped them into major themes and sub-themes, and then re-read through the initial codes to ensure that the researcher had captured everything that was important.

3.9.6 Stage five

In the fifth but equally important phase of the thematic analysis, all themes were then considered as a whole. This required reading across all interviews again, considering each participant across their own interviews (up to three each) and then each interview time phase (time A, B or C) and comparing the dataset as a whole. This enabled themes to be brought together into six major themes comprising of fourteen sub-themes and named appropriately.

For example, when looking at specific questions such as: *what should the officers have done?* (Section 5, Ethical Dilemma 3), comparisons were made between who had said what, how many times they said that and whether there was anything notable. That could be something such as whether the participant(s) changed their minds, or whether they were steadfast across the interview set. These responses were then compared with other areas of the interviews that were similar. In this example, answers for each individual

participant were compared across participants' full interview set for the question *what does the term ethics mean to you*, trying to identify if there was any correlation between those who said that they *wouldn't resuscitate* and those who said something specific for the meaning of the term ethics. This was done with several different questions across the question set, comparing sets of participants.

3.9.7 Stage six

The final part of the six-stage process was writing-up the analysis. This was made easier by the notes that the researcher had made in the initial stage and the comprehensive coding that the researcher had undertaken as part of stage two.

Demographic and other factors

Gender, ethnicity, age, and prior police experience were all considered during the analysis stage. There were some notable differences that have been discussed in the Analysis chapter which related to participants who had prior police experience (whether as police staff or as a Special Constable). There were no notable differences between participants in terms of gender or age; these were therefore not mentioned during the Analysis chapter.

3.10 Generalisation, reliability and validity

Bryman (2016) talked about the problems of associating with these terms within the field of qualitative research due to problems such as replicability, transparency and subjectiveness of the research (p. 398). Conversely, other researchers have argued that the challenges apply equally within quantitative research. Maxfield and Babbie (2015) discuss reliability in a criminal justice research context stating that it is the measurement stability and technique rather than yielding similar results that it is important in terms of reliability (p. 85). The technique within this thesis was very clear in terms of semi-structured interviews being used throughout, with pellucid questions and probes that were consistently followed in each interview. Full, verbatim transcripts of every interview were completed as discussed above. The selecting of participants was also very clear. The stability and technique used was therefore consistent and clear throughout the three sets of interviews and clearly defined from the outset.

3.10.1 Controlling variables & generalisability

Controlling the different variables (as discussed in *Limitations* section) as far as possible was the principal concern of the methodology, ensuring that generalisability could be achieved from the results and the usefulness of the study to police forces, universities and academics alike. Controlling for age, gender, academic background, culture and previous training on decision-making was very difficult; however, the methodology specifically sought to take each individual participant as they were, benchmarking their current decision-making (as discussed in *Sampling* section) and then later re-interviewing those individuals in order to identify differences. It is of course conceivable that a number of other factors including participants' life-experiences during that time, their age and other unconsidered things will have had an effect on their decision-making, outside of the training and immersed within the service. However, the design of the study was large enough to be able to mitigate the majority of these factors insofar as is possible.

It is almost impossible to create a sterile situation where someone joins the service, you interview them, and you then interview them again at different junctures without a multitude of different factors potentially having had an impact on them. Likewise, it was obvious with a number of participants – for example, one who had covered ethics in detail at university, and another who had played sport professionally – that they had a very clear, predefined idea of what ethics was, how to make a decision appropriately, and the basis of those decisions. Those anomalies are always going to exist, but it is worth noting as a potential impact on the results of this thesis.

3.10.2 Replicability

It was imperative in terms of comparison over time that the interviews retained their semi-structured approach (that is, that the same broad structure was used in each interview, at each different interview time), and that the analysis was methodical, structured and clear. The study could therefore easily be replicated in another force, in another country or a different sector with a strong element of portability and therefore replicability in the future. This is mentioned by Scaife (2004) who talks about the importance of consistency when interviewing to ensure that the data is collected in a consistent way in order to be able to draw reliable comparisons from them.

3.10.3 Internal validity

Internal validity has been strengthened by the use of a longitudinal study, asking the same questions to the same participants over three different time periods. This *cohort* style study; following the same group of individuals who entered the organisation at the same time, ensured that the researcher was able to test the reasons given for decisions by those individuals over this extended timeframe. This was highlighted as good practice by Dantzker (2018) who said that '[longitudinal studies] allows for the investigation of specifically identified patterns and events, growth, or change by collecting data at two of more distinctive time periods' (p. 188). The ethical dilemmas that were included in the interviews also added to the internal validity of the study by acting as a way of triangulating what participants had said. For example, if a participant said that their upbringing played an essential role in their decision-making when they were explicitly asked about decision-making, a more subtle, covert triangulation of this view was garnered with the responses given to the three ethical dilemmas. The interviewer was able to probe the specific reasons as to why the participant made the decision to do/not to do something as a oppose to the more generic 'tell me the basis of your decisions' questions asked earlier in the interviews. The tri-interview process coupled with the use of ethical dilemmas made causality far easier to show within the analysis of the results.

3.10.4 External validity

External validity is concerned with how this research can be generalised wider than the sample from which it was taken (Bryman, 2016). The use of ethical dilemmas that are common to policing, and the NDM and Code of Ethics which was consistent across England and Wales all help to increase the relevance of the study. The fact that police training is delivered in a relatively consistent way across policing within similar timescales, syllabi and the recent introduction of PEQF, all make the external validity of the findings significant. Craft (2012) specifically calls for more research to be conducted in the area of training and ethics within the police service.

3.11 Access approvals and ethical clearance

3.11.1 Ethical approval

There were a number of ethical considerations for this researcher some of which have been alluded to throughout this chapter. From the outset, the researcher took a rational stance on ethical requirements and approval concurring with the work of Wiles et al. (2006) inasmuch as '…seeking to develop a synthesis of the two positions in which

ethical research practice is treated neither as an automatic guarantee of, nor as an inevitable obstacle to, the collection of good-quality data' (p. 83). The researcher was also very conscious of the words of Berg (2013) who talked about the strong ethical obligation that social scientist – perhaps more so that the average citizen – have to their colleagues due to the way in which we peer in the lives of individuals (p. 61). And the researcher was also very aware of his position within the organisation as a senior officer.

3.11.2 Researcher-effect

The most prominent area of the research that was initially considered was the potential researcher-effect on participants as the research was conducted by a senior officer (Superintendent level) within the force in which the research was being conducted. One of the most important considerations highlighted in the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme *Qualitative Studies Checklist* (2020), cited in Galdas (2017) is that early consideration is given to researcher-effect and potential bias (p. 1). The potential for this was considered from the very outset of the study in the design of the questions for the interviews, in the writing of the Participant Information Sheet and the Participant Consent Form. There were other considerations that were highlighted by the Ethics Committee such as the importance of removing, insofar as was possible, the potential power-imbalance between the researcher and participants. More subtle things were done during the research such as the removal of the rank and normal e-mail signature of the researcher from all e-mails sent to participants, and the use of first-names, and undertaking interviews in plain clothes. There was also no suggestion in any way that participation in the study was a management-request or any dictation of compliance/participation within the study.

It was very clear that despite the principal researcher being a senior police officer within the force that participants either forgot about this or were willing to give their views regardless. For example, Participant 12 specifically said that he/she would disregard the feelings of the individual [in the ethical dilemma] as his/her greatest concern is his/her own job (p. 12, time B). This is clearly something that would never be said in front of a senior officer in normal conditions. His was a particularly useful illustration that interviewer-effect was very limited.

On reflection, the research found the whole process enlightening in terms of how much the participants were willing to open up. This is a potential valuable lesson for other senior police officers that if they should that they are willing and open to listen to ideas,

that regardless of their hierarchical status in the organisation, this may not necessarily preclude gaining invaluable insights from more junior colleagues.

3.11.3 Informed consent

True and informed consent by participants was carefully considered. Berg (2013) describes this as '…an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress or similar unfair inducement or manipulation' (p. 90). All prospective participants were furnished with a Participant Information Sheet and consent forms before even deciding to take part so that they understood fully what was being asked of them. This was repeated before each interview in which they took part. Wiles et al. (2007) describe how gaining informed consent '…is central to ethical research practice' (p. 99). They evidenced the growing body of evidence that calls for *signed* consent from participants and that many studies now call for a specific 'opt-in' process where the participant(s) sign a consent form (p. 104). Sin (2005) concurred stating that this also includes ensuring the prospective participants are furnished with enough information as to the extent of the research in order to make an informed decision (p. 279). The researcher was careful to make sure that this was the case in the research in order to mitigate any later problems.

The researcher was very aware of the potential skewing of results that could occur due to the fact that the researcher was a.) a police officer conducting research in his own force and b.) a senior officer. Westmarland (2005) notes that '…police officers are either dismissive about the topic at best, or at worst, antagonists…" (p. 163) when asked to participate in any sort of policing research. As already discussed, having external interviewers (researchers from UCLan) assisting in the initial time A interviews helped in this aspect. However, the researcher was also very clear that participation was wholly voluntary. This was made clear not just to the prospective participants but also with the class trainer[25]. The researcher explained to the class with whom he met, that whilst he obviously wanted as many participants as possible, he wanted willing volunteers only. This was an important part for the researcher, as researchers such as Miller and Kreiner (2008) have shown that a third of students would feel coerced if asked to participate in their own teachers' research - and whilst not the teacher in this scenario, the researcher was still a figure of authority within the same organisation.

[25] Class trainer refers to the Police Constable in charge of delivering the core syllabus of training to recruit during initial police training.

3.11.4 Respondent bias

Another aspect that was considered was the potential for respondent bias as described by Opinion Stage (no date) when participants '…choose answers that are more socially acceptable instead of ones that reflect what they truly think or feel…'. This was a real risk for this research with participants saying what they perceived the researcher/organisation would want them to say. The researcher tried to avoid this as discussed within the *Data Collection* section of this chapter by including ethical dilemmas (vignettes) to test participants' responses to the same theme in more than one area of the same interview, and across all three interview times.

3.11.5 Confidentiality and anonymity

There were two other equally important things that were considered: the potential disclosure by participants of something of significant risk to themselves or the researcher/organisation, and participant confidentiality. Confidentiality/anonymity were covered in both the Participants Information Sheet (see Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet) and the Consent Form (see Appendix B – Interview Consent Form). The Participant Information Sheet gave participants information about the purpose of the study, re-emphasised that participation was voluntary, and explained what would happen to participants' data (including withdrawing consent at a later date).

The Interview Consent Form was used to confirm that each participant had read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, explained how quotes would be used, and the potential risks to confidentiality. The Form was signed by each participant at each interview juncture and these have been retained in line with University policy and GDPR. The disclosure by a participant of something that could be of significant risk to them or someone else was covered in the Consent Form with a clear explanation of what would happen if this took place.

3.11.6 Other considerations

Peripheral considerations such as interview location, time, and gaining a rapport with each participant were also considered prior to every interview. Ahern (2012, p. 674) found that 'the knowledge and skill of the interviewer were instrumental in providing a safe environment for participants' (p. 674) in interviews and helped to mitigate any potential harm that an interview could have on a participant.

3.11.7 Limitations

There are significant other variables that could affect ethical decision-making outside of the passage of time (and thus length of service). As cited by Awasthi (2008) '…psychological studies have shown that framing can change the decisions individuals make' (p. 207). The mere fact that those taking part in this study knew that the focal point was around 'ethics' and 'ethical decision-making' – as mandated in the ethical approval for the study – may have been enough to focus participants' minds more on ethics and their own values behind decision-making than would have been the case had they not known the purpose of the study. This in itself does not detract from the usefulness of the conclusions made for the police service, as the Code of Ethics is a central point that the service has shown as being critical within decision-making within the NDM.

In common with other studies which have looked specifically at the effects of ethical training on ethical decision-making (Cagle & Baucus (2006); and Feldman & Thompson (1999)), this study does not look specifically at pedagogy. Despite a specific outcome showing the causal link between teaching and learning outcomes, this study only looks at the fact that those participants had received collective training, rather than the way in which that training was delivered, the type of training or whether the learning outcomes met the desired outcomes set by trainers.

Whilst this study specifically considered culture, this was researched principally from the perspective of police officers' socialisation post the formal training environment, hence the conducting of interviews with new student officers after six months of them being on patrol in their neighbourhood areas, as well as at the six-month juncture after commencing in the service and during training. One limitation that the study did not specifically consider is the socialisation that occurs during *training* itself. In her recent research, Charman (2017) suggests that '…new recruits are subject to influential formal socialisation via training centres…' (p. 94). This was considered to a degree inasmuch as the initial interviews were conducted in the very first week of the student officers' career within the service, however drawing a specific causal link between socialisation and when this occurs may be slightly more difficult due to the reasons stated by Charman (2017), Fielding & Fielding (1991) and Van Maanen (1975).

As mentioned in the *Research Design* section, another specific limitation was not having a control group. In an ideal scenario, a control group would have existed that did not

receive any sort of ethics training – one could then have been much more certain of the effects of training, as this group could have been compared with the sample that had been through the ethics training.

Additionally, had there been more time, it would have been useful to have run a small pilot group. This would have been of benefit as whilst the majority of the questions were fit-for-purpose and yielded insightful information, some of the questions about supervisors' decision-making and decision-making by the force as a whole, did not apply to officers in their time A interviews. This did not cause any problems in the research but would have been foreseen/anticipated had a pilot been run beforehand.

Some of the questions such as ‘does your supervisor make decisions in a similar way to you’ and ‘does the organisation make decisions in a similar way to you’ were not appropriate to be asked of officers who had just joined the service (in time A interviews) – they had no experience of the service or a direct line manager having just started in the role with the force. Whilst the participants were asked to talk about previous roles and think about whether their previous line managers made decisions in similar ways etc., these questions were too premature for these cohort of officers with this very limited time within the police service.

The same was apparent for the first ethical dilemma (ED1), as the first scenario was very difficult for inexperienced officers in time A interviews. Whilst the researcher was able to explain the scenario and ask from a moral/ethical perspective about whether one should apologise or not (and this may be useful to understand how these officers' opinions have changed over time), a less police-based, more generic ethical dilemma may have been more appropriate because of their lack of understanding of law and procedure in their first week of training.

3.11.8 Limitations of the questions

A factor that was not considered at any point during the interviews was whether the individual officer had undertaken a police degree or the Certificate of Knowledge in Policing (CKP). In the majority of cases, this became obvious during the three different interviews, as almost all participants alluded to this during at least one of the interviews, however this was not a distinct question that was asked. Had this training been received

by participants, those individuals may well have received training on the NDM and/or ethics as part of those courses. This is a potential limitation that skews the data.

Another area that one could raise of potential concern is that the same questions were asked in all three interviews (at the three different time frames). There were obvious benefits for using the identical question-set in terms of comparability over time, however some potential drawback may have existed inasmuch as participants could remember the questions and simply respond identically in later interviews to their earlier interview responses.

This was not found to be the case in almost every interview. Very few if any of the participants recalled anything from earlier interviews when responding to the same questions in later interviews. The only exception to this was during the ethical dilemmas where several participants (especially in the time C interviews), recalled being asked this specific scenario previously. This did not detract from the usefulness of asking the same question(s), as many participants *did* change their minds from one interview to the next. By time B interviews, at least six participants mentioned that they remembered the third ethical dilemma (ED3) about the DNR. One of the potential reasons for this is because this dilemma specific is so emotive and splits opinion. Some participants even remembered the answer that they had given to the dilemma last time, referencing it and saying things like: '*I'll stick with the same answer that I gave previously*' (part. 7, time B Int).

An important point to note with ethical dilemmas is that some participants were previous officers (special constables) or police staff so would have already thought more like police. The results may therefore be slightly skewed for some of the participants notwithstanding it was possible to differentiate between those who did/did not have previous police experience as this was asked at the start of interviews. Where this was this case, this was mentioned in the *Analysis* chapter.

In some questions such as *does the force make decisions in a similar way to you?* in section three of the question-set, the follow-up probes that were used would have benefitted from being slightly wider. For example, where participants talked about the fact that they did not feel that the force currently gives enough detail about the reasons

behind decisions, a useful follow-up would have been to ask how best this could be achieved. Whilst this does not detract from the usefulness of the data that was gained during the interviews in their current format, these follow-up questions would have been helpful to create more meaningful recommendations for future practice within forces.

Finally, it was relatively pointless asking 'have you heard of the CoE?' in time B and C interviews as it was completely obvious that participants would have heard of the Code as all participants had already received several lessons on this specific area by that juncture. The more important part of these questions was about what the Code meant to participants, their understanding of the code, and how they use it. On reflection, it might have been useful to specifically ask the question *do you use the Code on a day-to-day basis*, as whilst this was inferred, this was not directly asked of participants.

3.11.9 Changes made during the interview stages

After time A interviews, the researcher was aware that the *additional probes* that had been written for each question were actually an integral part to what the researcher was trying to ascertain. For example, if the participant said that they felt that they had been 'made to change' as part of the question-set around personal decision-making, it was important to follow-up by asking them specifically *why* they have changed. Was it the training that they had received to date? Was it the feeling that they received from starting in a very rank-orientated organisation? Was it some other reason?

In time A interviews, these probes were not necessarily asked by each interviewer. On reviewing the time A interviews and listening back to them and transcribing them, it was identified that this was a key area that needed improvement in order to enrich the answer to the overarching research question about what was affecting participants' change in decision-making where applicable.

Additionally, half-way through the initial (time A) interviews, the researcher identified that people weren't considering what *could* go wrong; that is they were unable to rationalise in any way why the force would not give a reference. Therefore, the researcher added in some devil's advocate by including the wording: *if the force were to give a reference to someone who had performed well, but the force later discovered that the person had indecent images of children on their laptop, their reputation would be in tatters.* Individuals were not asked to comment directly on that as a scenario but that provoked a more balanced view from them to seek their opinion.

Throughout the whole interviews, the type of questioning of participants was built-up to become more demanding as time went on. For example, all answers were taken completely on face-value in time A interviews. By time B interviews, participants were pushed a little further and questioning was a little more intrusive. By time C interviews, participants were asked far more about why they said what they did – and if they contradicted themselves, they were challenged them on this. The best example of this is when participants talked about the CoE. In time A interviews, the questioning style merely sought to elicit their knowledge of the Code etc; during time B interviews questioning increased to talk specifically about their application of the Code and knowledge of it. By time C interviews, if participants said that they regularly used the Code, but were unable to give any detailed information about the content of the Code, they were questioned purposively as to how it was possible that they were able to *apply* the Code without being able to give a specific detail about what the Code actually said.

4 ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

A total of 55 interviews with student police officers were conducted in this study. The interviews took place at key junctures within officers' policing service: week one – Time A; week 26 – Time B, and week 52 – Time C.

Semi-structured questions and ethical dilemmas (vignettes) were used for all interviews (Appendix D – Semi-structured interview questions and probes). Identical interview questions and ethical dilemmas were asked at each interview time (A, B & C). Conducting the interviews at these junctures and consistency in the question-set used enabled the researcher to qualitatively evaluate the impact and efficacy of training on participants' decision-making.

All interviews were subsequently fully transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis as described by Braun & Clarke (2006). The explanation and interpretation of these themes is contained within this chapter.

Six major themes were identified through the research and fourteen subthemes associated with each. The major themes were:

Theme 1 The Process of training that leads to decision-making;

Theme 2 Culture & decision-making – the effect of experienced colleagues; officers' feeling of public service, and how changing one's mind is perceived;

Theme 3 The ethics of decision-making – how much use is made of the NDM, and how well the decisions are communicated by the force;

Theme 4 Top down and bottom-up accountability – re. Discussions with managers/feedback etc.;

Theme 5 The tension between personal morality, politics and force policy;

Theme 6 Where are the ethics? – use of the Code of Ethics; off-duty matters, and latency of the force ethics committee.

A summary of the themes and subthemes can be found in Figure 14**.**

Each theme and their sub-themes will now be presented in turn. Each sub-theme starts with a brief introduction about why the sub-theme is important. The findings for each sub-theme are also presented, together with a discussion at the end of each sub-theme. Relationships with other sub-themes are also highlighted.

4.2 Theme 1 – The process of training that leads to decision-making

4.3 Theme 1A – Classroom ethics – the teaching of ethics in the classroom leads only to knowing about ethics and not making individuals more ethical.

4.3.1 Background

This sub-theme specifically talks about how effective the teaching of ethics was during initial student officer training in ensuring the subsequent understanding of participants of the meaning of the Code of Ethics and how to use it.

Participants were asked about any previous training that they may have received in order to ensure that this previous training did not have an impact on the way in which they subsequently answered the questions about ethics/the Code of Ethics.

At the start of their policing careers, 67% (n12) of participants said that they had not received any formal input on ethics except those who had previously been in the police service as special constables or in a police staff role. As discussed in the literature review, by the time interviews time B & C had taken place, participants had been through the whole initial, police training package; by this juncture, the organisational expectation is that participants understand the Code of Ethics (College of Policing, 2014) and can apply it within a work-based context as part of their everyday decision-making. Knowledge of the Code is therefore an essential part of participants' day job and by time C interviews, one could expect this knowledge, understanding and application to be almost second nature.

4.3.2 Impacts of training on decision-making over time

The initial section of the interview asked participants whether they felt that the training that they had received regarding decision-making had an effect on the way that they now make decisions[26]. 84% (n16) of participants in time B, and 89% (n16) of participants in time C said that they felt that the training had made a difference to the way in which they now make decisions:

[The training] definitely helped my decision-making (p. 3, time B)

[26] This question was not applicable to the time A interviews as these were conducted in participants' first week of employment – they had not received any training on ethics by that juncture.

[The training] makes you think about when… to go through the decision-making model (p. 13, time B).

However, despite the majority of participants agreeing that the training had an effect on the way that they now make decisions, when they were specifically asked whether they based their decisions on the 'training they had received', only 53% (n10) and 56% (n10) said that they did in time B & C interviews respectively. Participants placed almost the same weight on [getting to the] 'desired outcome' in time B and the 'way I was brought up' in both time B and time C interviews as they did on the 'training that they received', with a number of participants making comments such as '*I base my decisions, I suppose, on family background'* (p. 13, time B); and …'*based on my personal experiences'* (p. 9, time B).

Taking the participants and all interviews as a whole group, the research showed the majority of participants (83%; n15) changed their minds throughout the research in terms of the decisions they came to for the ethical dilemmas[27]. Some participants changed their minds more than once during an individual interview, whereas others changed their minds over time A, B and C interviews. Across all interviews, three participants (17%) were notable in this respect across all participants. These participants were notable because during all three ethical dilemmas and in times A, B and C, they were consistent in their answers to the questions posed. For example, if they said that the patient should be resuscitated in ethical dilemma one, time A, that participant repeated this view in both time B and time C interviews and also gave a consistent answer for each of the other two dilemmas across all three interviews.

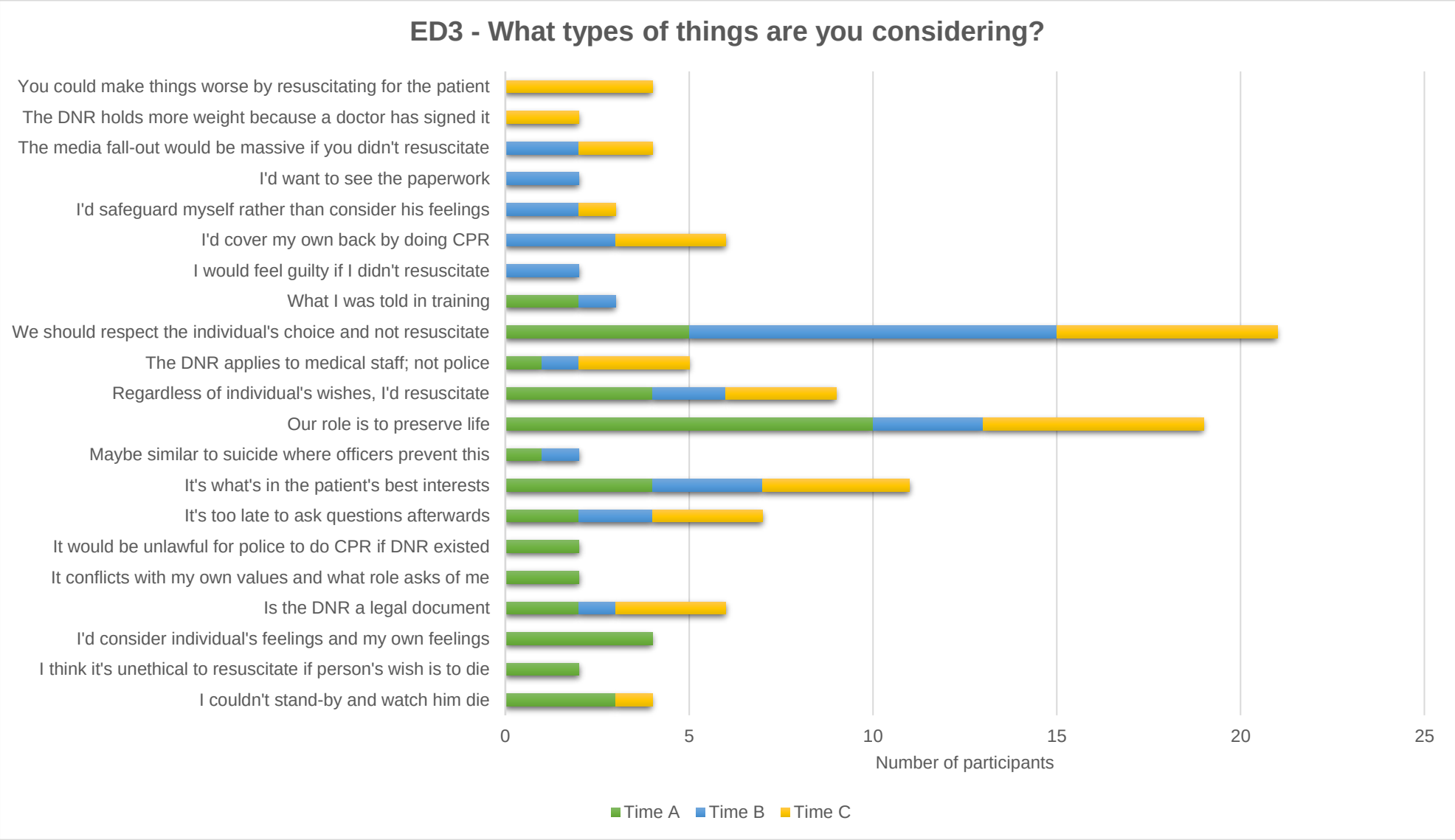
In comparison to the findings discussed above (83% (n15) changing their minds throughout the ethical dilemmas), there was a small amount of evidence that showed that some participants (n4) did change their minds, albeit this evidence was isolated to ethical dilemma 3 and specifically only time C interviews. For the first time throughout all interviews, around a quarter of participants appeared to become slightly more *practical* in their decision-making as opposed to solely considering the facts in front of them. They used greater supposition in some of their rationale and included wider considerations. These participants talked about the physical effect on the individual by resuscitating him saying that this could potentially make him worse (n4). For example, one participant said *'…he could have been living with horrific pain for the rest of his life and I wouldn't want*

[27] Only three participants were consistent in their responses in all three interviews, across all three dilemmas.

to be the person who sort of revives him and he lives another 5, 6, 7 years of living in hell, basically' (p. 14, time B).

The types of things that participants said that they were considering, and this notable shift of some participants becoming more practical in their decision-making can be seen clearly in the first bar in Graph 1 below. The reason for these participants specifically talking about more practical issues and considering the wider context had not been mentioned in time A or time B interviews. The reason for this change/additional consideration is unknown but could be attributed to training and considering the wider impact, effect, and ethics of that decision-making.

Graph 1 – Ethical dilemma 3 – Considerations when deciding to resuscitate or not. All interviews.



4.3.3 Discussion

This theme showed the tension between *knowing* and *being/doing.* Participants were often able to articulate what was important but were less able to evidence acting in the way that they had articulated when operating within the workplace.

The initial question around whether the training had made a difference yielded 84%; n16 (at time B) and 89%; n16 (at time C) of participants stating that the training that they had received had made a difference to the way in which they now make decisions. However, despite participants *saying* that this was the case, there was no evidence that the way in which participants actually went about decision-making changed across interviews. The research did not uncover *why* the training had not met its intended objectives in changing the way that participants actually think about ethics/make decisions in any significant way. There are many potential reasons; one could of course be that the training *did* make a difference but that this was so subtle that the participants did not even realise and therefore were unable to articulate this, or perhaps that ethics and the basis for one's decisions are ingrained and relatively unchangeable by one's twenties[28]. It is plausible that the officers are able to articulate more about the term ethics, rather than placing ethical considerations at the heart of their decision-making when having to make real-life decisions – and that this is something that they perhaps learn as they become more experienced. Another explanation could be that the training did not explicitly elicit from participants how their upbringing/personal experiences feed into decisions, and when these experiences might need to be supplemented/even subsumed into training. Or it could be that participants just did what was required to reach the mandatory standard in training and evidence this, rather than actually changing the way that they operate. Although the latter explanation is a potential reason, it does appear that participants were very honest during their interviews, so this explanation seems less plausible. Literature outside of the policing world, but on the subject of the efficacy of training on improved decision-making is sparse in general terms. This was confirmed by Craft (2012) who talked about only two studies having been conducted on ethical decision-making that specifically focussed on the training-aspect of ethics' teachings. The literature within a policing context is almost non-existent as discussed within the review of literature; Charman (2017) argued that more focus is required on ethics and values within police training.

[28] This is the age group of 89% of the sample. Two participants fell outside this range – one was 30; the other 31 years of age.

Participants also exhibited a deficient knowledge and understanding of the Standards of Professional Behaviour. The research uncovered significant differences between *intention* and *outcome,* that is what the training intended to achieve versus what the research showed that it had achieved. The purpose of the lesson that participants received from the Professional Standards' Department[29] was to ensure that they knew and understood the standards of professional behaviour and ensure that the way that they behave accords with these standards.

The findings showed that when student officers were asked about the Code of Ethics and asked to explain what the Code said, the principal thing mentioned was 'honesty and integrity' (67%; n12). This term is one of the guiding principles of the Standards of Professional Behaviour. Despite talking about this, even when participants referred to the standards of professional behaviour[30], it was not clear that the standards of professional behaviour to which they referred were fully understood, and participants were unable to articulate any in-depth understanding about the Standards.

Overall, the training appeared to have little effect on the way that participants thought about the ethical dilemmas, or the way in which they came to their decisions for these dilemmas. This is consistent with Caldero et al.'s research (2018) which questioned whether we should be treating new officers as blank canvasses. The research showed that post-training, participants changed their minds several times and for different reasons, and did not use any decision model or ethical framework in order to justify or discuss their decision-making. This is despite the NDM being used during training, during practical sessions, and during participants' tutorship period[31]. One explanation could be that participants do not see their more experienced peers using the NDM or Code of Ethics, or that they perceive the NDM/Code to be solely *training aides* and not valuable in real-world settings. The findings did not uncover the detailed reasons as to why the NDM was not used, and further research is required to understand why this was the case.

The three participants that were mentioned as being consistent in their decision-making were perhaps the most cogent in their responses. The responses from these participants indicated that the lessons that were delivered on ethics and the NDM did not yield the desired learning outcomes. This is not to say that those participants made the *wrong* decision, moreover that the way that they went about making that decision was not in line with what they were taught. This is important in evidencing that those individuals

[29] This less was also delivered to participants in week one of their training.
[30] This was mentioned 11 times by participants, cumulatively across all three interviews.
[31] See introduction section within *Theme 2A* for an explanation of the *tutorship period*.

were steadfast in their decision-making and more importantly, that despite the training that they had received, this appears to have had no effect on their decisions, or importantly, the way in which they make those decisions.

There are three potential reasons for the training having not had the desired/expected outcome:

- this could be that the training *confirmed* for these three participants that they were right in the first place;
- that the training had no effect at all; or
- that all three participants rejected the training wholeheartedly and retained their original views.

It was not possible to tell from the data why this was the case, but one would suppose that this is because of either training decay or that the training from the outset had little traction. Additionally, there was nothing unique about these participants; their ages varied, their genders varied, and two of the three had previous policing experience but the remaining one had no prior experience of the police. The specific reasons are unknown, but this is notable[32]. There is synergy between these findings and the previous research by Caldero et al. (2018) that highlighted the importance of applying knowledge practically as part of the training programme and the challenges of changing entrenched views as previously discussed. Without considering whether the training that is received by participants is being applied in a real-world setting, the whole intention of the initial training comes into question. Similarly, if existing, non-supervisory, experienced officers are not using the same methods that are taught to new officers, then the potential exists for the new officers to follow-suit and favour the methods used by these experienced officers, rather than their training.

In conclusion, this sub-theme showed that participants claimed that the training had an effect but there was a lack of evidence to show that this was the case. The participants were also unable to explain how the training had resulted in them making decisions differently across all interviews. The changes in opinions and approach across all three interviews could just as easily be explained by them following the lead of more experienced colleagues, or some other factor, than as a result of the training that they had received.

[32] Less weight should be given to one of the participants because that individual only took part in time B and C interviews (they were absent for time A), however the other two participants took part in all three interviews.

4.4 Theme 2 Culture & Decision-making

4.5 Theme 2A – Experienced colleagues trump training – the most significant driver behind new officer decision-making is their experienced colleagues rather than training, their own ethics or any other factors.

4.5.1 Background

Student police officers receive formal training for 26 weeks as detailed within the methodology section. However, once this training is complete, officers then undertake an extensive tutorship period lasting twelve weeks. This training consists of working through, alongside an experienced constable (a tutor constable), a comprehensive checklist to ensure that the student officer is exposed to as many varying incidents/crimes as possible during this time. This tutorship is not a standalone entity, rather a follow-on, integral part of the initial training programme. Student officers are expected to put into practice everything that they learnt in their initial 26 weeks of training. Feedback is also given by the experienced tutor, and the learning is very much experiential.

As discussed in the methods chapter, these time junctures (Week 1; week 26 and week 52) enabled analysis of the reasons that participants gave for making decisions at these key points within the initial training programme[33].

4.5.2 Training, colleagues or something else?

Participants were asked about the reasons why they thought that their decision-making had changed at time B and C[34]. The principal reasons given are shown below.

[33] Time A interviews were conducted at the very start of training; time B at the 26-week juncture (post-classroom training), and time C interviews were conducted at the 52-week juncture (post classroom training; post tutorship, and post-socialisation into the workplace, working on shift alongside regular colleagues.

[34] Time A interviews were not included as this was asking specifically about how their decision-making had changed from when they started in the force.

Table 1 – Showing reasons that participants gave for changing the way that they made decisions. Time B and C interviews.

	Just natural, no reason for change	**No answer given**	**Yes, because told must follow NDM**	**Yes, as a result of police training**	**Yes, as influenced by more experienced colleagues**
Time B	8	1	3	5	0
Time C	2	2	2	3	3

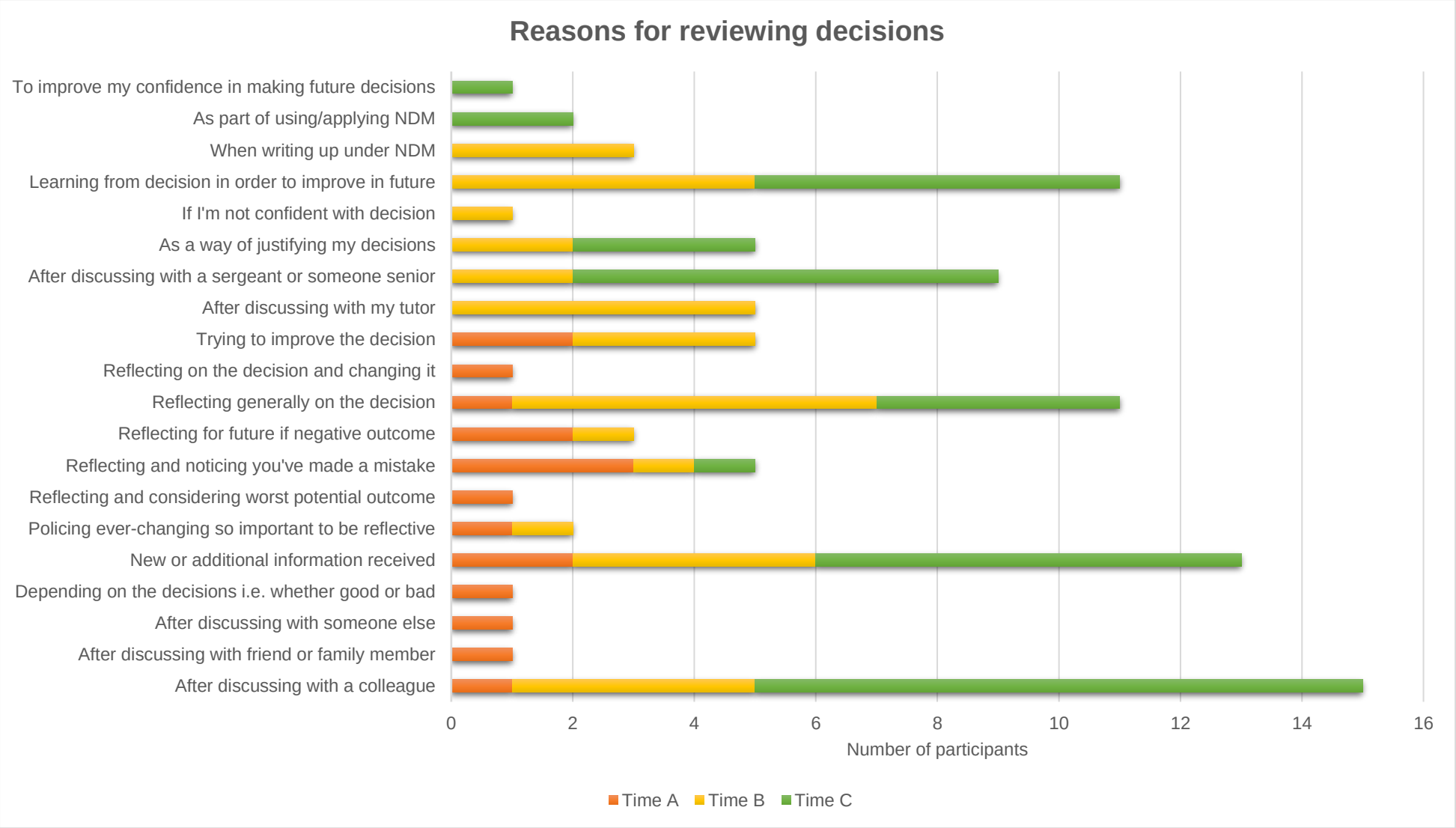
As the table shows, when asked about why they had changed, the principal reasons given by participants during the time B interviews were:

- ‘just natural’;
- ‘no reason for change’;
- ‘as a result of police training’; and
- ‘because I've been told to follow the NDM’.

By time C interviews, there was a more mixed set of responses given by participants as to why they had changed, with the highest numbers (3 participants each) saying that this was due to 'police training' and 'being influenced by more experienced colleagues'. This was corroborated by the further question 'has your decision-making changed over time?'. By the time C interviews, half of participants (n9) attributed the change in their decision-making to becoming more experienced; no other reason featured as significantly as this.

The effect of non-supervisory, experienced officers on student officers/less experienced officers is clear to see by time C interviews. When asked why they review their decisions, participants said that the principal reason for reviewing them was 'after discussing with a colleague' (n10), whereas in the time B interviews, 'reflecting generally on the decision' was the most prevalent reason. One participant said: *‘I would say I am influenced by people with more experience because I’d say their decisions are probably better than mine’* (p. 20, time C). Graph 2 below clearly shows the shift towards reliance on those more experienced and/or those more senior.

Graph 2 – Reasons that participants gave for why they review their decisions. All interviews.



Adding weight to the finding in this theme that experienced colleagues trump the training that participants received, in ethical dilemma 1, time C interviews, 89% (n16) of participants said that they would not apologise to the arrested individual[35] . 72% (n13) said that they felt that their decision-making had changed over time, and 67% (n12) attributed this change to some factor within the police. 17% (n3) of participants specifically mentioned that training had had an impact on their decision-making, whereas 33% (n6) attributed the change in their decision-making to be a result of working alongside colleagues and/or because of the culture in the organisation. This was a significant change from the time A and time B interviews. The table below shows the change in responses that participants gave across the three different time junctures to the question of whether the police should now apologise or not.

Table 2 – Responses given by all participants to the question 'should the police apologise to the party-goers?'. All interviews

	No	Yes	Unsure	Conditional
Time A	9	4	3	2
Time B	10	7	2	0
Time C	16	2	0	0

The data shows an inverse correlation between participants' likelihood to tender an apology to the party-goers and the length of time they had been in the police service. 33% (n6) attributed their change in decision-making to working alongside experienced police officers/culture, and 67% (n12) attributed their change in decision-making to some other factor in the service. The inference being that experience and culture within the service has had a far greater impact that the training that they had received, and thus their likelihood to apologise (only 17% (n3) mentioned training as being the principal factor for them changing their decision-making).

There was one notable exception to that overarching finding in this sub-theme that training is trumped by experienced colleagues, and that was evidence in the responses that three specific participants gave in ethical dilemma 1.

These three participants all said that an apology should not be given during their time A interviews. The participants were also relatively similar in their responses to the initial question about what they base their decisions on, with:

[35] Following the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) saying that the decision that the officers had made in the scenario was wrong.

- two of those participants saying ‘upbringing’;
- two saying ‘the effect on them and others’; and
- two saying ‘the outcome/consequences of the decision’.

Two of those three participants (who initially said that no apology should be given) remained consistent in this answer for all three interviews – continuing to argue that no apology should be given. All three participants agreed that they perceived that the officers in the dilemma had done the right thing by going into the property, and as such, should not apologise. One specifically said: *‘an apology almost, on that occasion I think would almost trigger an acceptance of guilt…’* (p. 1, time B) inferring that they would not want to accept any blame for this.

4.5.3 Discussion

It is notable that when participants were asked why they felt that their decision-making had changed, there was a shift between time B and time C interviews, with fewer attributing that change to the training that they had received in time C interviews than in time B interviews. This also correlated with more participants saying that they changed their decision as a result of discussing what to do with someone more experienced or senior. Whilst it is of great importance that student officers draw on the experience of those around them, and learn from them, it is concerning that some participants felt that this should be the principal driver behind their decision – rather than their own values, ethics or the training that they had received.

As cited by Sherman (1982) ‘…one way [to learn police ethics] is to learn on the job… these decisions are strongly influenced by peer group pressures, by personal self-interest, by passions and emotions in the heat of difficult situations’ (p. 10). Sherman (1982) argues that this way of learning is very ineffective, and that the efficacy of ethical training is far greater if delivered from an objective perspective rather than using snap judgment.

Learning through experience is important, and it is important for non-supervisory, experienced officers within the force to understand the critical role that they play – often subtly – to new officers’ development. However, ensuring that what is learnt in the training environment is the basis for important areas of policing such as decision-making is, arguably, of equal importance. It is only by ensuring that learning is translated into action that forces can prevent shortcomings such as ethical drift (Kleinman, 2006) or at the more serious end of the scalar, noble cause corruption. This is a point highlight by Caldero et al. (2018) who argue that training is ‘…not simply a matter of a few hours of

academy instruction on proper legal behaviour or ethical conduct' (p. 98), rather it is a matter of ongoing learning, re-training, role models and other factors. This is sacrosanct if ethical decision-making training is not to fall into what Caldero et al. describe as '…that great reservoir of unapplied training knowledge that is shelved…' (IBID, p. 272).

A significant problem with relying on the ethics of non-supervisory, experienced officers is the potential for the current culture to pervade new, less experienced officers. This is perhaps true for not only ethics but more broadly. As Westmarland and Rowe (2018) highlight 'one of the main issues around the adherence to the blue code is the way group solidarity may prevent unethical behaviour coming to light due to its fostering of a 'no-snitch' culture' (p. 855). This finding by Westmarland and Rowe is perhaps evident in participants' diminished willingness to apologise to party-goers in ethical dilemma 1 as they became more socialised within the culture of the force (from time A to time B to time C interviews). Westmarland and Rowe (2018) talk about the importance of culture and that strategy (the Code of Ethics) will serve no useful purpose if cultural codes exist within the workplace that are not driven out.

Within this research there was evidence of a strong culture with participants saying things such as:

…*obviously culture, different culture obviously [Station X] is very different to [Station Y]* (p. 7, time C) – with the participant highlighting how the culture has a potentially significant impact on officers, and

…there is a culture in the organisation where you are constantly reminded of your position, and rightfully so (p. 12, time C) – referring to younger-in-service officers being told clearly by more non-supervisory, experienced officers that their views are more important.

Reiner (2010) highlighted that understanding what drives recruits is of great importance due to the considerable discretion afforded to UK police officers. Without proper safeguards, there is a real potential for deviation from the law or organisational policy by individual or groups of officers (p. 115). Roach (2017) also agreed with this view talking about the role of confirmation bias of both peers and information that supports the decision-maker's own views (p. 143). The views of Reiner (2010) and Roach (2017) are supported by this research – highlighting how significant non-supervisory, experienced officers can be on new, student officers.

In conclusion, this sub-theme showed that the longer participants are in the police service, the more they appeared to be guided by the opinions and decision-making of their more experienced colleagues, and the less likely they were to refer to their training when making decisions. Participants became less reliant on their own values, favouring decision-making which was consistent with existing police culture. There was also some evidence of new recruits being more inclined to circle the wagons rather than accept that the police may have made a mistake as their length of service increased.

4.6 Theme 2B – Changed your mind? No problem! – there is a general acceptance of a changed decision/opinion; officers can change their minds without others perceiving it as a weakness.

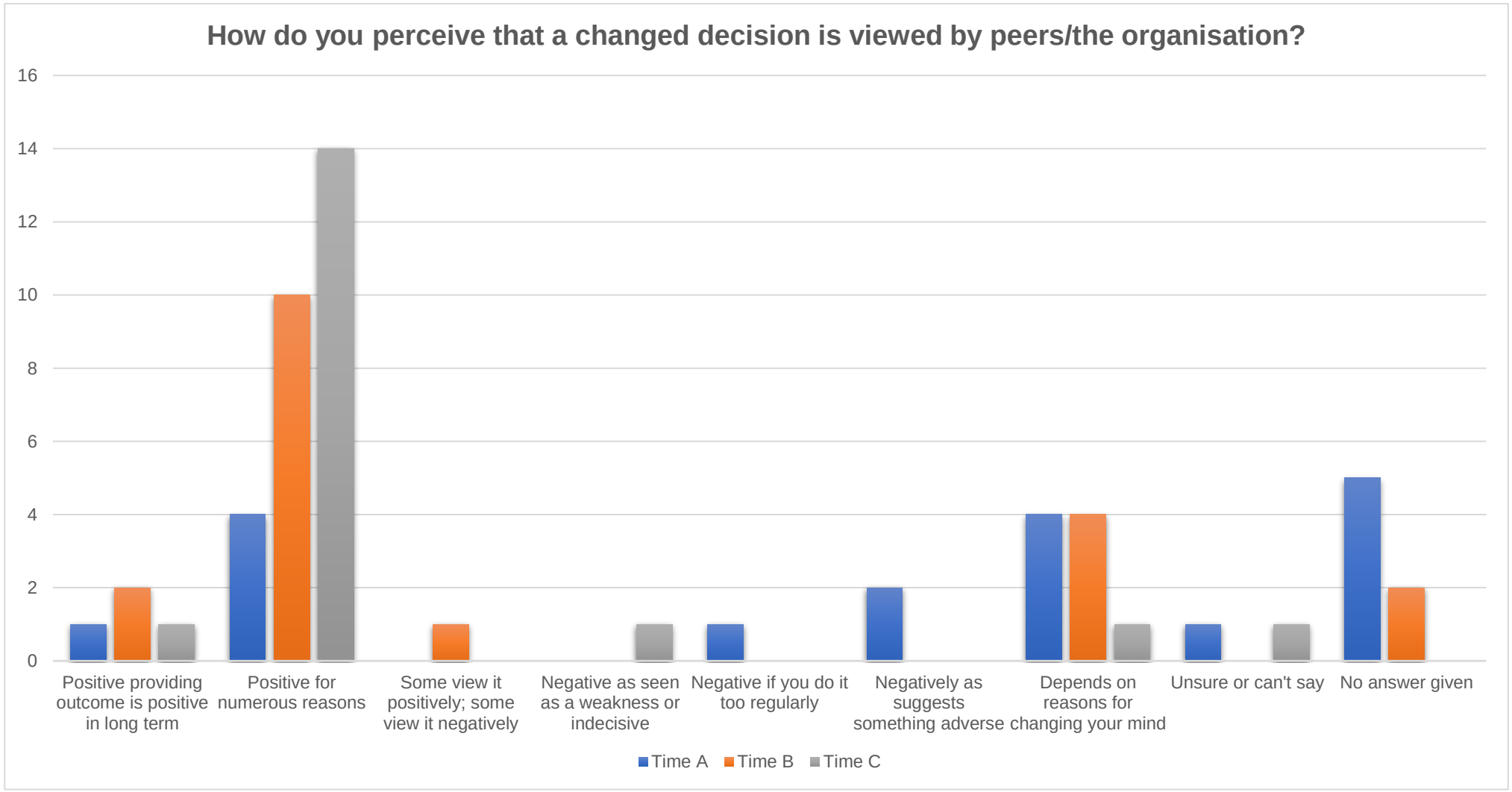
4.6.1 Background

There are many different potential influences on participants' decision-making during their early careers within the police service. Opinions were explored regarding how participants perceived that a changed opinion is viewed by the organisation and their peers. This was in order to understand whether the organisation or their peers were additional drivers behind participants' decision-making, and whether these were seen as enablers to reviewing their decision and changing their minds; or as disablers, disapproving of them changing their decision at a later juncture. The questions were designed to test participants' free will around decision-making drawing on the work of Chan et al. (2003) which talks about new recruits becoming embedded into existing culture and deviant practices (p. iv).

4.6.2 Participants' perceptions of a changed decision

The number of participants that said that they self-reflect on their decision-making diminished at each interview juncture. However, it did not appear that this was as a result of them perceiving that a changed decision is viewed negatively by the organisation or by their peers. There was a positive correlation between participants' length of service and how they perceived that a change in their decision is viewed, with 78% (n14) of participants saying that they perceived that changing your decision would be viewed as a positive by time C interviews (compared with 22% (n4) in time A interviews and 53% (n10) in time B interviews). Only one participant said that they perceived that this would be viewed negatively by time C interviews.

Graph 3 – Showing the way that participants perceived that a changed decision was viewed by their peers/the organisation. All interviews.



The fact that participants overall (78%; n14) felt that they were able to change their minds without criticism from the force or their colleagues is important in terms of decision-making. This importance is evidenced in ethical dilemma 3 when comparing the answers for participants who were consistent in their responses of whether to resuscitate or not resuscitate. It was no possible to ascertain the exact reason why participants felt so able to change their minds from the data.

Participants' answers to the question 'what should the officers have done – resuscitate or not' were compared with the answers that the participants gave as to whether or not they were reflective (that is, whether they review or change their decisions or not); this was done across all three interviews. There was a positive correlation between those participants that said that they were reflective, and those participants who were consistent across their decision-making as to whether the officers should have resuscitated or not. 73% (n8 of n11) of participants who were consistent across the three interviews for the question 'what should officers have done (resuscitate or not)' were also consistent across the question 'do you regularly review/change your decisions'.

Overall, there was very little if any correlation between the answers given by participants across interviews apart from two participants. Both of those two participants changed their minds about whether the officers should have resuscitated the patient between the different interview junctures. They also changed their minds about how they perceived that a changed decision is viewed by peers/the organisation: both participants moved from thinking that a changed decision was viewed negatively in time A interviews, to perceiving that it was viewed positively by time C interviews. Notably, both participants also moved from saying that they *would* initially resuscitate (time A interviews), to subsequently saying that they *would not* resuscitate (in time C interviews).

4.6.3 Discussion

This theme clearly shows that if an individual feels able to change their opinions without prejudice or a negative impact on how they are viewed, they are more likely to do so. This was evidenced across the sample when comparing the answers of participants to the question *what should officers have done* (ethical dilemma 3 – resuscitated or not) and the question *how is a changed decision viewed.* Whilst in the latter part of the results only a small number of the sample are discussed (n2), it remains striking as it evidences a causal link for these participants, in their belief that they can change their minds and subsequently making a different, perhaps more controversial decision in their final, time C interviews. This contrasts with the findings of Reiner (2010) who talks about '…policy

reforms producing at best cosmetic alterations' (p. 137) when discussing how he perceives that policy has not met its intended outcomes in reforming police culture. These findings show that the changes in police discipline regulations which have seen the police service move to a more *learn from your mistakes* culture from one that *blames* staff when things go wrong (Malthouse, 2020) have started to have an effect on the service and the way that decisions are made. Whilst these changes have only recently been enacted, they have been discussed and trialled in forces over the last three to four year.

These findings concur strongly with the work of Charman (2017) who talks about tutors and police colleagues being the most influential over new student officers (p. 220). Put simply, if student officers are given the latitude and freedom to make their own decisions and their own mistakes without fear of criticism by peers or organisation, then they are more likely to review, and potentially change their decisions.

In conclusion, this sub-theme showed that new recruits become less likely to review their decisions as they become more experienced. Despite this, as they become more experienced, they also believe that changing a decision is viewed more positively by the organisation/their peers. This is arguably a good thing: if one feels they are able to change their decision without prejudice, they are more likely to do so. Policies to move the police away from a blame culture appear to be taking effect.

4.7 Theme 2C – Officers become public servants – officers grow organically through experience, training and regular dealing with the public in terms of their feeling of 'duty' as a public servant, with this featuring more greatly as they become more experienced.

4.7.1 Background

When discussing the definition of *public sector ethics*, the term 'best serves the public's interests' is often used (Naamen et al., 2013, p. 123). Whilst the purpose of this research was not to gauge participants' feeling of public service in any way, this was a sub-theme that became apparent during the analysis phase. Public service/duty was not a standalone question within the research but was identified from in-depth analysis of the

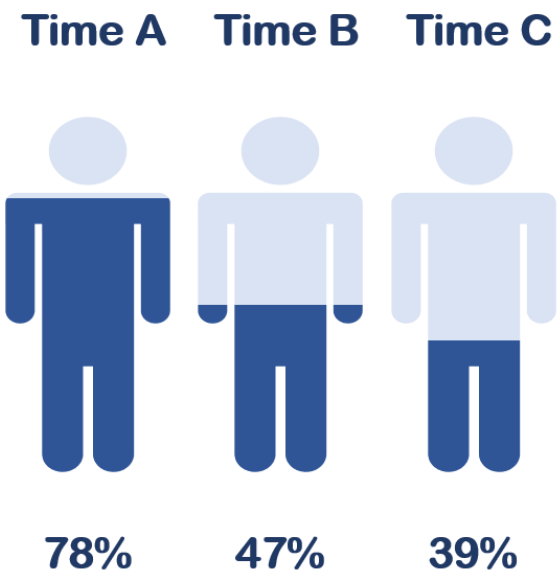
responses. This sub-theme was most apparent in participants' responses to the ethical dilemmas and the reasons that some participants gave for their responses therein.

4.7.2 A strong sense of duty and service to the public

Within the ethical dilemmas, at least 17% (n3) of participants explicitly talked about their sense of public service and duty with comments such as: *'I think an apology would help in terms of the way that the police is[sic] viewed in that community but also then maybe they've also got to have an understanding that we have a duty of care to members of the public too*' (p. 8, time B).

There was further evidence of this sub-theme occurring in ethical dilemma 2. Between time A, B and C interviews, there were significant differences between participants' perceptions about whether the policy of the force not to give references to former employees was fair or unfair. 78% (n14) of participants said that they thought that the policy was either 'unfair' or 'quite unfair' in the time A interviews, with participants' comments such as '*it's not really fair because like the way you've worked, all you want is something back*' (p. 4, time A). This had reduced to 47% (n9) by time B interviews; and to 39% (n7) saying that they thought that it was 'unfair' or 'quite unfair' by time C interviews. 39% (n7) also specifically said that they thought it was 'fair' by time C. See Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 – Illustration showing percentage of participants that said policy was unfair. All interviews



In addition to specifically talking about public-duty explicitly, a significant number of participants (in addition to the three mentioned above) gave a far more considered, organisational perspective by time B and C interviews with comments such as:

> *If you give someone a reference and say yes, he's great etc. and he turns out not to be, then it can look bad on the force, so that's why they don't do it* (p. 6, time B); and
>
> *I think working for the police and doing the job in itself is an achievement in itself in terms of… you know, I feel privileged coming into work everyday and I think that's the way people should look at it. I know that sounds cheesy, but, I think that's the way people should, you know* (p. 14, time C).

4.7.3 Discussion

Some participants had developed in their roles as police officers and public servants. The one detailed example given at the start of the sub-theme above (p. 8, time B) where the participant talks about an apology being given, and rationalises our duty of care as police officers, shows how the participant clearly considered the wider ramifications of their decisions, how the police service is viewed by the public and offered a reasoned approach to their policing methods. This was done with a sense of the police's reputation also being important to them, but with the individual at the heart of that decision-making.

Participants' responses in ED2 as shown above in the response given by participant 14 in their time C interview, gave clear consideration to how the police are viewed as a public service, or their duty as a police servant. This was not evident in earlier interviews. This shows participants' understanding and wider appreciation of public life and some of the sacrifices that come with the role as a police officer, and is consistent with the intention of the Nolan Principles (1995), and what Naamen et al. (2013) define as being the main intention of the Code of Ethics.

The reasons behind this shift towards some participants becoming more public-focussed, or at least considering this more in their decision-making needs further explanation. Van Maanen's research (1978) which evidenced how new recruits adopt the perspective and views of experienced, long-serving officers may be an explanation, but further research is required to fully understand why this was the case.

In conclusion, the longer participants do the job, the more that they consider the wider role and reputation of the police as public servants. This is a good thing, but it is not entirely clear from the research as to why this has happened.

4.8 Theme 3 – The ethics of decision-making

4.9 Theme 3A – NDM use diminishes – the basis for decision-making has diminishing returns (NDM is not used more than 33%);

4.9.1 Background

As discussed in the literature review, the National Decision Model (NDM) is the principal decision-making model used in UK-policing. The NDM is a standalone lesson within the first week of training for all student officers but a theme that is continued throughout the 26-week training period and subsequent tutorship. The expectation is set at this juncture that student officers will learn and put into practice the NDM for all operational decisions. As part of student officers' tutorship, their tutors will ask them to justify their decisions using the NDM, and the force records management[36] system (NICHE) mandates officers to record their decision-making for each crime utilising a template that follows the NDM structure.

4.9.2 The use of the NDM

Almost all participants (n16) said that they were better or slightly better at decision-making by the time C interviews, having been asked the question at each interview juncture. Only one participant said that they were 'unchanged' and this participant said that they perceived their decision-making unchanged in both time B and time C interviews. There was no correlation between those who said that they were better at decision-making and those individuals who regularly reviewed their decision-making. When specifically asked why they had changed, there was a spread of reasons given by participants across all interviews. However, by time C interviews there was no definitive reason offered by participants as to why they had changed (Figure 4).

[36] The records management system (NICHE RMS) is where all crime, intelligence, custody and person details are held about individuals who come into police contact. NICHE is one of several commercial products available but the force where the research was conducted utilises the NICHE system. NICHE allows forces some flexibility to be able to mandate specific templates within the system, depending on the specific needs of that force. More information can be found at: https://nicherms.com/

Figure 4 – Top 5 reasons given by participants for why they have changed the way in which they make decisions. All interviews

	Just natural, no reason for change	No answer given	Because told must follow NDM	As a result of police training	Influenced by more experienced colleagues
Time A	3	8	1	0	0
Time B	8	1	3	5	0
Time C	2	2	2	3	3

By time B interviews, every participant except one mentioned the NDM when asked about their previous decision-making experience or ethics training. Officer safety training[37] (OST), where the NDM features heavily, was also mentioned by half of the participants in both time B and time C interviews.

However, despite participants talking about the importance of the NDM, the term 'common sense' was used by participants far more by time C interviews than in time A and B interviews when discussing decision-making. In time A interviews, the term 'common sense' was used four times but by only one participant. Similarly, the term was used only once, by one participant in time B interviews. However, by time C interviews there was far greater prevalence of the term 'common sense' with four different participants using this as justification for their decision-making. One participant used the term twice, and three of those participants used the term specifically when describing ethics. Participants said things such as:

[When asked about compatibility of Code of Ethics with role of a police officer] *Ultimately, my feeling is that at every call you need to use common sense [when making decisions]* (p. 14, time C);

[Referring to what the word 'ethics' means] *They're just like common sense really, aren't they?* (p. 11, time C), and

[When asked how decision-making had changed over time] *Yeah experience, common sense probably…* (p. 7, time C).

[37] Officer Safety Training is mandatory training that takes place on a yearly basis. All frontline, operational police officers attend this training which includes conflict management; restraint techniques; handcuffing skills and other officer safety skills. The NDM features highly as the principal method to make a decision to use force or not. Officers are told that they should justify any decisions utilising this model. See: https://beta.college.police.uk/guidance/conflict-management for more details.

4.9.3 Use of the NDM across time A, B & C interviews

How participants made decisions was researched both explicitly and indirectly during the interviews. Direct, open questions were asked in section 2 of the interview about the basis for participants' decision-making. Participants were subsequently asked about what the Code of Ethics says in section 4 of the question-set.

Honesty and *integrity* were the top three things that were mentioned across all three interview sets when participants were asked to explain what the Code of Ethics says. By the second interviews (time B), 37% (n7) of participants said that they were unable to remember everything about the Code of Ethics; despite eight participants saying that they used the NDM to make decisions on a daily basis. One participant specifically mentioned the Code when talking about how he/she makes decisions, saying '*And you do think of the Code of Ethics…'* (p. 11, time B). However, this same participant struggled to describe more than three of the nine basic principles of the Code[38] when asked what the Code said later in the same interview, stating '*There are a lot of them, such as honesty, integrity… ummm, selflessness… it's things like that, isn't it'* (p. 11, time B).

In time B interviews, the two participants that said that they use the NDM as the principal factor on which they base their decisions were the same participants who subsequently said that they could 'not remember everything' about the Code of Ethics. There was nothing notable about these two individuals in terms of demographic differences or differences in background or experience. In time C interviews, this rose to 56% (n10) of participants saying that they could' not remember everything'. Only one of the ten participants mentioned above specifically said that they base their decisions on the NDM.

11% (n2) of participants said that they *could not remember anything* about the Code of Ethics by time B interviews; this was despite one of those participants stating that he/she based his/her decisions on the NDM[39]. By time C interviews, only one individual said that he/she 'could not remember anything' about the Code. However, notably this individual also said that he/she uses the NDM as a basis for his/her decision-making, stating: '*Ummm, oooow. I can't remember… obviously I've heard of it. I can't really remember much about it if I'm honest*' (p. 14, time C) when questioned further about what the Code says.

[38] See Literature Review for a fuller explanation of the Code. The complete version of the Code can be found at: https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

[39] See Code of Ethics and NDM section in Literature Review and/or subtheme 6A below.

When looking at the way in which participants made decisions and articulated the reasons for those decisions during the three ethical dilemmas, it was also apparent that their use of the NDM and Code of Ethics diminished.

In ethical dilemma 1, time C interviews, 22% (n4) of participants specifically said that the officers should have considered the whole incident utilising the NDM (as part of their decision-making). Participants said things such as:

I'd make sure I [recorded everything]…straight away using the NDM (p. 20, time C);

…*that's why you write the NDM – every time you go to an incident, you write an NDM to justify really'* (p. 11, time C).

This was an increase from 16% (n3) who said that this should have been the case in time B interviews. No-one mentioned this in time A interviews[40].

Despite all four of those participants saying that they would have considered the whole situation using the NDM – and the Code of Ethics being the centre of that NDM – none of those four participants were able to describe the Code in any detail when asked during their interviews. This is important because they all said that the NDM is the model that they use to make their decisions and talked about its importance when making those decisions, yet none of the four were able to describe the Code of Ethics in any meaningful detail.

In ethical dilemma 2 (whether the force should give a reference or not to police officers who leave the service), there was evidence that some participants had become more measured in their responses and responded with less haste by time B interviews. Some examples of the responses given were:

I'd want to know the force's rationale for the decision (p. 8, time B); and

Is there a possible policy or legal reason why that's the case to protect the force? (p. 12, time B).

[40] This can be explained at time A interviews because no formal teaching had taken place on the NDM by this point other than for those who had previous police experience.

Other participants also mentioned that they would want to understand why the original decision had been made and what the law says, in common with participant 12, time B interview above.

These participants displayed the basis for the NDM[41] which is also in agreement with the finding that 42% (n8) of participants also said that they utilise the NDM in their decision-making by time B interviews. One participant confirmed that he/she remembered what he/she had said during the time A interview (p. 14, time B) when asked about ethical dilemma 2. The participant said:

> *I remember last time that I said that I would give a reference to the individual, but knowing what I know now and the types of things that can happen, I wouldn't give the reference. At the time, maybe I was naïve – thinking someone who's been in 30yr must be a nice, good person and that I would have given him a reference, but after looking back on what can happen, I wouldn't give a reference* (p. 14, time B).

This evidences the view that this participant had become more considered but also raises a potential limitation of the research inasmuch as the participant(s) may have remembered some parts of the interview questions[42].

The importance of the NDM in consistent, evidenced, and ethical decision-making was further highlighted in participants' responses to ethical dilemma 3. Two different areas of the question-set were compared across all time A, B and C interviews: 'on what do you base your decisions', and 'should the officers have resuscitated the patient or not'. The results of this comparison showed that participants who were more likely to base their decision-making on 'known information' (n5) were also more likely to be consistent in their decision-making regarding whether to resuscitate the male or not across all interviews (80%; n4). However, those who said that they based their decisions solely on 'previous experience' were less likely to be consistent in their decision (to resuscitate or not) with 3 of 4 changing their mind over time A, B and C interviews.

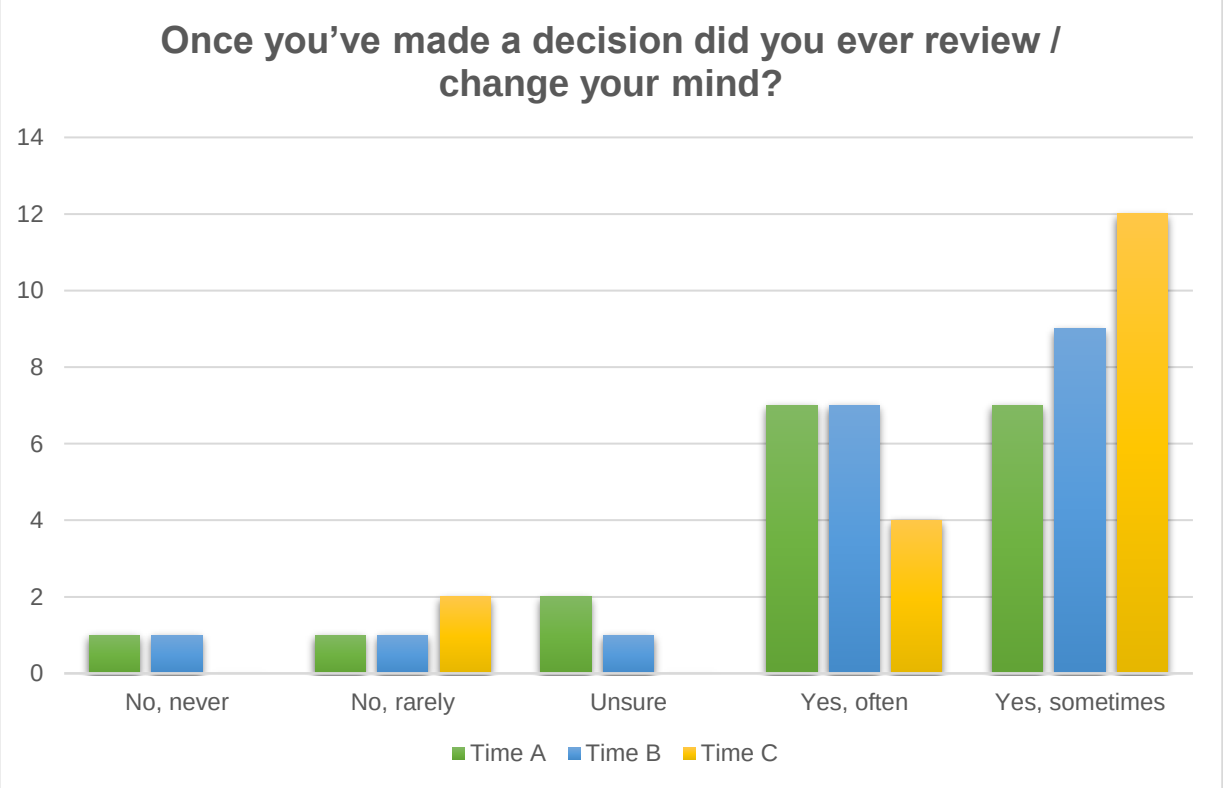
[41] A key component of the NDM is to consider powers (the law) and policy when arriving at decisions. The participants showed the initial building blocks, for example being able to articulate their decision-making broadly under the structure of the NDM, but did not mention the model in any way.

[42] This was only evident on very few occasions throughout the whole study. Where participants have mentioned this, this has been included within the analysis/limitations section within the methods chapter.

The other notable area within the study was participants' level of 'reflective practice' (similar to sub-theme 2B). Within the training environment, the importance of utilising the NDM for decisions – with one of the five key elements being 'take action and review what happened' – is emphasised significantly. This is also the case when dealing with police incidents/crimes on a day-to-day basis as regular police officers, with the NDM being considered an important part of an investigative action plan[43]. The expectation therefore is that reflective practice is built-in to all officers' decisions with a 'review' taking place after every decision made.

However, despite this intention within training and day-to-day policing policy, by time C interviews, participants were less reflective than they were in the time A and time B interviews respectively. By time C interviews, 22% (n4) of participants indicated that they 'often' review/change their decisions and 11% (n2) said that they 'rarely' review their decisions (although fewer say that they 'never' review them, and more say that they 'sometimes' do so). When participants did review or change a decision, they said that this was principally done informally rather than in writing/discussed formally.

Graph 4 – Showing how often participants review their decisions/change their minds. All interviews.



[43] See footnote above in theme 3A for explanation of the use of the NDM within crime investigations on NICHE.

Fewer participants *often* reviewed their decision-making, and more *rarely* did so by time C interviews. This evidences the fact that training had diminishing returns over time. Between time A and B interviews, there was consistency in the frequency that participants reviewed their decision-making, however there is a notable decline by time C.

4.9.4 Discussion

This sub-theme has shown that the use of the NDM has diminishing returns correlated with time in employment in the police service. More (22%; n4) participants attributed their decisions to 'common sense', and fewer participants to using the NDM in the way it was intended by time C interviews. When the NDM was used, very few participants were able to articulate any meaningful knowledge or understanding about the Code of Ethics that is a key feature of the NDM. There is no area within the NDM that asks for *common sense* to be applied. The phrase appears to be one that is commonly used as an explanation for decision-making, but without any basis or legitimacy in policy or training.

One would have hoped that by time C interviews, the NDM (and associated Code of Ethics) would have been embedded in officers' psyche and used ubiquitously almost as second nature. However, these results show that a number of participants *hid* behind the term 'common sense' far more in the later interviews – that is post-socialisation into the workforce – than was the case in time A and time B interviews.

There are a number of possible explanations for this. For example, *ethical drift* (Kleinman, 2006, p. 73); *learning fatigue* or *group-think* (Charman, 2017, p. 21) or participants having 'gone native' and have been nurtured into following what they have seen and heard from experienced colleagues as mentioned by Crank (2015, p. 257). The evidence points to *learning decay* as discussed by Creighton (2018). The reason for drawing this conclusion is that this sub-theme (the NDM has diminishing returns) coupled with the findings in sub-theme 2A (non-supervisory, experienced officers trumping training received in terms of decision-making), creates synergy between the work of Chan et al. (2013) who found that police culture undermines professionalism and is a driver for training decay. That is not to infer that participants become *unprofessional,* moreover that they fail to apply the training and the professional practice in the way that it was intended in initial police training.

By time C interviews, 22% (n4) of participants were adamant that the NDM was important for decision-making, yet these same participants (along with an additional 33% (n6) of the remaining participants) were completely unable to describe the key components of

the Code of Ethics which is at the very heart of the NDM. In addition to not being able to describe the Code, the majority of participants also failed to reference or talk around the subject/principles behind the Code of Ethics when discussing the reasons for their decisions.

It is striking that by time C interviews, not only did participants evidence using the NDM less, but they also concurred in terms of decision-making more with experienced colleagues, evidencing the effect of socialisation within the workplace as highlighted in the work of Chan et al. (2003, p. 220) when she talks about the adoption of existing culture and practices by new officers.

The fact that some participants articulated more sound reasoning by time B interviews (as evidenced for ED2) is a real positive. The reasons for thinking differently about the scenario are not certain but could be attributed to training; more experienced in the job; outside stimuli unrelated to the police; becoming more cautious around decision-making, or potentially the participant(s) remembering the question and had considerable time (six months) to consider their views. It is however clear that the way that participants came to the decision had changed and arguably improved insomuch as giving a definite rationale.

There was also a definite change in the way that participants viewed the 'no reference' policy for ED2 by time B interviews with strong views both in favour and opposing the policy. The majority gave a clear, sound rationale for their decision-making. Whilst one could infer use of the NDM, no-one specifically talked about the NDM in their decision-making and in how they arrived at the decision to give/not to give a reference. In comparison to the participants specifically mentioned above, the key components of the NDM were not present.

The findings for ED3 – that those who base their decisions on *previous experience* alone were less likely to be consistent in their decision (to resuscitate or not) – highlights the critical importance of a well-balanced, rationalised but independent perspective to decision-making. Just thinking *I'll do what I did last time* may work in non-complex, simple incidents where the outcome is not of any significance. However, this becomes less helpful as the stakes become higher – for example when making time-sensitive, life or death decisions when the need for rational thought increases. Depending solely on previous experience also relies wholly on the officer having experienced that type of incident previously which may not be the case.

In conclusion, reviewing decisions did not seem to lead to a perception of better decision-making by participants. Participants believed their decision-making had improved as their experience increased but gave no consistent reason as to why they thought this was the case.

The more experience participants became, the less they used the NDM. Despite participants claiming to use the NDM to make their decisions, this was clearly not the case, and almost all participants were unable to show a detailed understanding of the Code of Ethics upon which the NDM is based.

Participants who said that they based their decisions on 'previous experience' were less consistent in their decision-making. And overall, in terms of decision-making, the effect of their training diminished over time.

4.10 Theme 3B – The why needs explaining – forcewide decisions are communicated well with staff, but the reasons behind those decisions less-so, which may affect individuals' decision-making detrimentally and/or affect their view of procedural justice within the force.

4.10.1 Background

A multitude of forcewide decisions are made on a daily basis. These decisions are often collective decisions either by, or on behalf of Chief Officers. Many of these decisions go unnoticed by frontline staff and officers as they relate to finance, estate, procurement or some other important but relatively unseen area of policing.

However, there are some decisions that are communicated regularly to staff on the frontline, the most prevalent – and perhaps contentious – being cancellations of rest days[44]. There are other regular communications such as legislative amendments, policy changes or staff benefits, all of which are also publicised forcewide with a particular emphasis on frontline, operational staff.

[44] These are defined as officers having to work on a specific day in the future where they were otherwise rostered not to work as part of their normal working week.

The purpose of the question as to whether the force communicates the reasons behind their decisions or not was to ascertain whether staff perceived that the force followed their own rules in effect: does the force give their rationale behind decisions as they expect their staff to, and if not, does this have any impact on staff feeling of procedural justice within the force. The inference is that this could have an impact on how compliant staff are with the NDM and their decision-making if they perceive that the force does not practise what they preach in this important area.

In time A interviews, it was not possible for participants to comment on efficacy of decision-making by the force as they were new to the organisation. Similarly, by time B interviews, whilst many participants had seen force decision-making on the force intranet or received a forcewide e-mail, their understanding of this information would have been limited as they were only just finishing in the training environment by this juncture. However, by time C, participants were able to understand the reasons behind these e-mails and the potential effect on them as individuals of the decisions therein.

4.10.2 How well are the reasons behind force decisions communicated?

In time C interviews, participants were split on the question whether the force communicates the reasons for their decisions or not. 22% (n4) said that it was still 'too early to say', and 22% (n4) others said that the force only explain the reasons behind their decisions 'sometimes'. One participant gave a good example saying:

> *No, not much. Sometimes, yes. Sometimes not. Sometimes you just come into work and… for example, I noticed this morning on the briefing wall that missing person reports*[45] *are changing. No reason, just that they're changing. The notice says that they're changing from a specific date in July and that's it* (p. 11, time C).

One participant specifically said that they felt that the force explained their reasons within the Code of Ethics but did not give any more detail/expand on this answer stating: *'…they [the force] do think about the decisions they make and make sure they are in accordance with the Code of Ethics really'* (p. 2, time C).

[45] The participant talked about how changes were being made to the NICHE Records Management System, specifically around how missing people reports are managed within that system.

33% (n6) of participants said that they were 'unsure' as to whether the force makes decisions in a similar way to the way that they themselves make decisions; 22% (n4) said that the force 'did not make decisions in a similar way', and 44% (n8) said that they felt that the force 'did make decisions in a similar way'.

A number of participants noted that the force is good at giving information about things that are happening by time B interviews; participants mentioned the Beat[46] and the Chief's Blog[47]. However, around half noted that the *reasons behind those decisions* were not given enough and that whilst the decision itself was given, no rationale/context as to *why* the decision had been made was forthcoming.

The point of procedural justice was something that was highlighted in the responses of participants to ethical dilemma 2 (whether or not to give a reference to staff/officers). In the time B interviews, 16% (n3) of participants said that they perceived that not giving a reference breached the mutual trust between them and the force. To counter this slightly, by time C interviews, more participants (39%; n7) perceived the policy to be fair. More (44%; n8) also said that they felt that if an officer had done a good job, then this should be rewarded by them receiving a reference from the force. However, there were more that said that they were unsure as to whether they thought the policy was unfair or not by time B (32%; n6) and C interviews (22%; n4)[48].

It appeared by the time C interviews that whilst participants were very disappointed overall that they would not get a reference, they were far more understanding of the risks of giving a reference and the potential repercussions for the force of doing so. One participant for example said that whilst he/she was disappointed by the policy he/she could understand the force's reasoning saying: '…*if you give someone a reference and say yes, he's great etc. and he turns out not to be, then it can look bad on the force, so that's why they don't do it'* (p. 6, time C). Another participant agreed with the policy of not giving references stating: *'no it brings the force… it could jeopardise the force's reputation'* (p. 1, time C).

[46] *The Beat* is the name for the force's internal intranet.
[47] A weekly blog by the Chief Constable/Chief Officer talking about events, good work etc. from the previous week and about forthcoming things of note for the week ahead. Key messages from chief officers are also articulated via this medium.
[48] No participants said this in time A interviews.

4.10.3 Discussion

If the force fails to consistently give a clear rationale for their own decision-making, both student officers and experienced officers will not know the basis for the force's decisions. On the surface, this may not be a problem. However, it is contended that if the force *does* give its rationale, it can act provocatively to highlight the importance of using the NDM and Code of Ethics, and also helps confirm to officers that the way that they as individual officers are making decisions is the correct way (if those officers make decisions in a similar/identical way).

When participants talked about force decision-making, it was notable that there was a 50/50 split between those participants that thought that the force *did* publish their rationale and those who *did not*. Whilst this is a matter of fact – that is, one could easily review forcewide decisions and see whether the reasons behind these decisions were included or not – the fact that some believe the decisions are given, and some believe that they are not is an important point of note. Perhaps the method of communication, the wording of those communications, or some element needs to be changed or improved.

Critically, if the force does not explain their reasoning behind their decisions, their reasoning is left to supposition or conjecture by officers and there is a potential for a negative impact on procedural justice. This was evident in some of the responses by participants that used words such as *unfair,* and *inconsistent*. This was similar to the findings in research by Van Craen (2016) who said that *'…when officers experience their supervisors explaining decisions to them, they observe accountability in action and experience the importance of this principle'* (p. 6). Van Craen (2016) talked about how this has a positive effect on officers' actions when dealing with the public, as this encourages them to explain decisions and actions to citizens. Perhaps more importantly, Van Craen's research (2016) found that those officers *also '…imitate internal procedural unfairness…'* (p. 6) when dealing with the public if that is what they experience internally within the force.

On the point of giving references or not, the same message applies; a detailed rationale should be provided to officers regardless of whether the force chooses to give references or not. This was supported by the data: even when the outcome is perhaps opposed to what participants would have hoped to have seen, those participants are rational and able to understand the outcome, providing the reasons behind the decision are communicated to them. As evidenced by Worden and McLean '…the fairness officers attribute to their organizational environment influences their own willingness to embrace service-oriented policing' (2017, p. 176). This could be an important point for chief

officers to consider as forces move to a more transient workforce – newer officers felt that this is almost part of procedural justice within the force. If the reasons behind *not* providing references were articulated more clearly, this could have an impact on how this is perceived by officers and in some cases, win their active support for the policy and for other forcewide policies introduced by the force.

In conclusion, the force itself does not practise what it preaches when communicating forcewide decisions in that it often fails to explain the basis for the decisions that are made. This leads to a negative perception by many of the participants.

There was a 50/50 split between those who thought the force did and did not explain their decisions. This may be because the communication method or tone came across better to some participants than others. The implication is that the reasons appear to be left to interpretation by participants, meaning the true, underlying reason for a decision was often not understood.

4.11 Theme 4 – Top down and bottom-up accountability – re. Discussions with managers/feedback etc.

4.12 Theme 4A – Reality is trumping the process – supervisors rarely discuss decision-making with officers, resulting in those officers being more dependent on seeking advice or ratification of their decisions;

4.12.1 Background

Participants' views of their experiences with supervisors[49] were explored during the study; this was an important area to consider as several participants said that they referred things to their supervisors or learnt from them when making decisions. It was also felt that a supervisor can be extremely formative in the experience of student officers – both positively and negatively – and that some of the things that the supervisor teaches new officers at this point in their career can remain with them throughout their service. The purpose of the question was to gauge the effect of supervisors on participants'

[49] In this context, *supervisor* is taken to mean anyone with specific supervisory responsibility. For the majority, if not all of the participants in this study, this will be someone at *Sergeant* level within the organisation – the first supervisory rank within the UK police service.

decision-making. Therefore, participants were specifically asked whether supervisors give specific feedback to them and if they generally discuss decision-making[50].

Questions about supervisors were asked at all interview junctures however, the responses at time C interviews[51] were the most relevant as by that time participants were classed as independent officers[52] and had their own Sergeant allocated as their direct, first line manager. Much of the analysis has therefore been completed on time C interviews in order to draw conclusions for this theme, unless otherwise stated.

Participants' were also specifically asked about how they make joint decisions when working alongside colleagues, and whether that decision-making changes or remains identical to when they are working alone[53]. How participants would manage a situation if they came to conflicting views with colleagues was also explored. The purpose of this question was to understand the role of experienced colleagues on the decisions of more junior individuals in the organisation and ascertain whether the lessons learned from training prevailed in their circumstances.

4.12.2 The supervisory effect on decision-making

By time C interviews – critically when student officers are independent but very inexperienced and on-shift alongside regular colleagues – only 33% (n6) of participants said that their supervisor 'generally' or 'regularly' discusses decision-making with them. If responses are narrowed to include only 'regularly', then the number drops to only 11% (n2) of participants.

33% (n6) of participants said that in general terms decision-making is not discussed with them; one participant said *'no, not really, but we do go through my NICHE [crime-workload] once every three months'* (p. 11, time C) when asked about his/her experience of discussing decision-making with his/her sergeant. Half of those 33% (n6) participants (17%; n3 of the overall participants) also said that their supervisor only discusses decision-making with them if something is wrong or needs improving. One participant said that her/his sergeant would only discuss decision-making with him/her '*…if [I] made a mistake… so today was a perfect example: I didn't follow-up on certain lines of enquiry.*

[50] The force's expectation is that this is something that happens regularly during staff 1-2-1s, and as part of performance reviews and welfare/wellbeing support for officers.
[51] This is discussed later within the *limitations* section of the methods chapter.
[52] Signed-off as competent and able to patrol without direct tutorship or supervision. In practice, this means that they attend calls alone, have their own crime 'workload' that they investigate and deal directly with members of the public on their own.
[53] The length of experience was not important for these questions, only that the individual working alongside the participant had greater experience in terms of time-served in role.

He said I think you should do this and then and [I took that to mean] I don't think you made the correct decision there. And I just follow [what he asks]…' (p. 14, time C).

By time C interviews, half of participants (n9) said that they would escalate a matter to a sergeant if they disagreed with a colleague on a decision. They said things similar to:

I would try and stick to my guns if I thought mine was the right way. Maybe that's when you'd sort of ask the sergeant for a bit of guidance' (p. 13, time C), and

I'd probably give the Sergeant a shout and see what he thought the best decision to come to would be (p. 9, time C).

By time C interviews, more participants said that they would argue their point and then compromise than was the case in the time A and B interviews:

Time A – 11% (n2);
Time B – 11% (n2);
Time C – 28% (n5).

One participant said that he/she had already had to argue their point with a colleague, clarifying: *'I guess I had to sort of take, sort of covertly take control of the situation in a way and usurp their decision-making, even though they had more experience (I say more, maybe half a year more than me in the job), but in a way that it wasn't so evident to them'* (p. 12, time C).

Additionally, when specifically asked about a situation where there was a conflicting view, 22% (n4) of participants said that they would go with the more senior person[54] rather than standing up for what they thought was right by time C interviews (although this was a reduction from 32% (n6) of participants saying this from time B interviews). One participant said: '*I find that if you're new, you more or less listen to those who have more experience and go with that'* (p. 4, time C). This correlates with responses to the question 'on what do you base your decisions' where 'doing the right thing' featured in the top five considerations for participants in time A interviews (five participants said this) but was the eleventh most popular consideration in time C interviews (three participants said this). 'Doing the right thing' was not even mentioned as a consideration in time B interviews for this question.

[54] This was taken to mean someone with longer service/greater experience rather than seniority in terms of rank or supervisory responsibility.

When asked if their supervisor makes decisions in the same way as they do, 17% (n3) said that they do, and that their supervisors use the NDM too. Overall, 11% (n2) of participants said that they were 'unsure', but that their supervisor often came to the same conclusion as them. 50% (n9) of participants indicated that their supervisor generally makes decisions in a similar way to the way that they do (for numerous reasons). Whilst this number is half of the cohort for time C interviews (n9), 22% (n4) said that they did not feel that their supervisor made decisions in the same way, and a further 28% (n5) said that they were 'unsure'. Participants were not asked how confident they were at making decisions, but it is striking that by time C interviews a significant number (50%; n9) said that they would escalate matters to a Sergeant if they had conflicting views with a colleague. Comments such as: '*it's hard to say about their [sergeants] thought-process, but I like to think so'* (p. 12, time C) were made by participants when asked about whether their supervisor makes decisions in a similar way to them.

By time C interviews, if a decision was to be made then participants (39%; n7) said that in the majority of cases that their supervisor would make the decision but that they would give their views. 33% (n6) of participants said that they would make the decision but that they would consult with their supervisor for ratification. The general tendency towards seeking advice can be seen clearly in the response given by one participant in his/her time C interview:

> *…a lot of the time you can go to something that could be a bit tricky and knowing how to deal with it so I would normally get in touch with him [his/her sergeant] and state how I would deal with it and ask his opinion and how he would deal with it and sort of pool our ideas together then* (p. 10, time C).

The effect of officers seeking advice can be seen more explicitly in time C interviews when participants' opinion is sought for the third ethical dilemma. There was no significant difference between those participants who said that the officers *should* resuscitate compared with the participants who said that the officers *should not* resuscitate across time A, B and C interviews. However, the 60/40 split between participants shifted in the time B and C interviews compared with time A interviews, with more participants saying that the officers *should not* resuscitate (see Table 3 below).

Participants were far more likely to rationalise their decision in both time B and time C interviews by saying things such as '*if [the officers] were there and they knew he had a DNR I'd say [that they should] honour that DNR*' (p. 2, time C). The diminishing number

in time C interviews can be explained by those participants who did not express a view, rather saying that they would seek advice.

Table 3 – showing participants' views as to whether they should resuscitate or not in ethical dilemma 3. All interviews.

	They should resuscitate	**They should not resuscitate**
Time A interview	11	8
Time B interview	7	12
Time C interview	7	10

No participants said that they would seek advice on whether to resuscitate or not in time A interviews: participants were relatively steadfast in their views one way or another. However, by time B interviews, 11 % (n2) of participants said that they would have sought advice from someone (for example a Sergeant or someone more experienced).

The difference here could be explained by the participants in general not thinking in policing terms, and not knowing what support is routinely available. In time A and time B interviews, participants would not necessarily have known that they would be working alongside a Sergeant or an Inspector 24/7 who are able to provide advice and guidance. It is therefore not unexpected that in earlier interviews participants would not have mentioned seeking advice from these supervisory individuals. Similarly, for many of the participants this was their first form of employment and so they would not necessarily have had the experience of having had a line manager or someone senior to whom they could refer decisions/seek clarification or reassurance. This explanation needs to be balanced however, as one could contend that anyone entering the place of work knows that there are managers and supervisors available and more experienced colleagues from whom to seek advice.

More strikingly, by time C interviews, 17% (n3) of participants said that they would 'seek advice'. Notably, only one of the participants from time B interviews who said that they would seek advice also said this in time C interviews. Across both time B and time C interviews therefore, a total of 5 unique participants said that they would seek advice.

Table 4 – showing four specific participants that said that they would seek advice across different interviews. All interviews included.

	'I'd seek advice from someone' (time A interviews)	**'I'd seek advice from someone' (time B interviews)**	**'I'd seek advice from someone' (time C interviews)**
Participant 9	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Yes
Participant 10	Not mentioned	Yes	Not mentioned
Participant 11	Not mentioned	Yes	Yes
Participant 20	N/A *	Not mentioned	Yes

** Participant 20 did not participate in the first interviews.*

All participants' responses to 'whether they would seek advice or not', and the question 'does your sergeant discuss decision-making with you' were compared in order to analyse whether there was any correlation between responses to these two questions.

All three participants who said that they 'would seek advice from someone' in time C interviews also said that their supervisor 'discusses decision-making with them'. Therefore, it did not appear that a supervisor discussing decision-making with participants had any effect on whether or not the participant would seek advice from their supervisor when at an incident. Overall, participants generally said things such as: '*I would probably call the Sergeant for advice…'* (p. 9, time C), rather than making the decision themselves and rationalising that decision as they had been taught in their training.

4.12.3 Discussion

Asking participants whether their supervisor(s) gave them specific feedback or discussed decision-making with them was important in gaining a comprehensive, wider understanding of the overarching reasons behind participants' decision-making.

Overall, the results showed a mixed picture in terms of supervisory oversight around decision-making which does not correlate with the force intention/desire. This mirrors the findings of Engel and Peterson (2013) who found significant differences between supervisors in the same police forces (p. 400).

Despite being slightly more forthright by time C interviews, participants generally showed significant reliance on speaking with a supervisor which is surprising, and not something seen in earlier interviews. One would anticipate that as an individual grows in experience, knowledge and understanding that they would seek advice less, but this was not evidenced to be the case.

When probed in greater detail about how participants actually make their decisions whilst operationally active within the service, the analysis identified a significant sub-theme of 'seeking regular ratification or reassurance from their supervisors'. In some cases, this could be viewed as a positive thing – the *pooling* of ideas by the supervisor and participant. However, this does suggest an over-reliance on referring things to supervisors, and similarly to the question about whether their supervisor makes decisions in a similar way to the way that they do.

This increased reliance on supervisory confirmation of decisions, or involvement in the decision-making process was also evident in participants' responses to ethical dilemma 3, with a greater number seeking advice by time C interviews (17%; n3). It is clearly not the case that these participants have become more self-confident or self-sufficient in their decision-making by time C interviews; rather that the opposite is true.

It is possible that if sergeants explicitly discussed decision-making with these student officers, then those student officers may be more confident in their own decision-making ability and less likely to refer things to their sergeant. If participants regularly discussed these things with their sergeants, they would be more likely to know that their sergeant thinks similarly/is happy with the way that they make decisions, albeit the results tended to suggest that even when this happened, participants *still* sought advice. This explanation would be in common with findings by Rothwell and Baldwin in the US (2006) who found that often employees mis-judge how their supervisors view things. It is only therefore by regular, open discussions between employees and their supervisors that employees can be confident that they are making their decisions in line with what their supervisors want. Even when this happens, it is possible that the culture of the organisation, or concern over their own ability or some other factor, will mean that those officers will still seek ratification from supervisors.

There is also some synergy between this sub-theme and sub-themes 3B, 6A and 6B and the potential effect that supervisors can have on employee culture and ethical decision-making. This was similar to the finding in research conducted by Wimbush and Shepard (1994) that showed that supervisors can have a positive impact on employees'

perceptions of policies and practices within their organisation (p. 645). And also mirrors research by Sims and Keon (1999) who found that '…supervisor expectations…have significant influences on the ethical decision-making of employees' (p. 393).

These findings showed that supervisors are simply not having the effect that the organisation planned. The culture of 'he/she knows best because of time-served' prevails in too many instances and 'doing the right thing' diminished as a response to the overarching question of 'what do you base your decisions on' by time C interviews. This is unexpected considering that the intention of the training department is for critical-thinking and engendering standing-up for what is right. This could perhaps be explained by cultural acculturation (Sam & Berry (2010); Bacon (2013)).

In conclusion, generally, decision-making is not being discussed with or reviewed by the inexperienced participants. The more experienced participants became, the less likely they were to question the viewpoint of a more senior officer.

As the participants became more experienced, they seemed more likely to seek the opinion from others in making difficult decisions which is perhaps converse to what one would have expected. Whether participants regularly reviewed their decisions with their supervisors or not did not seem to have any influence over whether they would seek advice or not with a difficult decision. This is important because the views of their immediate supervisor can have a formative impact on these new recruits.

A good supervisor can therefore exert a lasting influence over a new recruit, but equally a bad supervisor has the opposite effect. Either way, the culture of 'he/she knows best because of time-served' prevails in too many instances and a participant being guided by 'doing the right thing' reduced with their length of experience.

4.13 Theme 5 – The tension between personal morality, politics and force policy

4.14 Theme 5A – Police versus the public – participants start very clear in their decision-making but move to a more 'police-strong' view – culture takes over their initial views;

4.14.1 Background

Participants' decision-making was tested in a number of different ways throughout each interview, and interview-set. Their views were also triangulated by utilising the ethical dilemmas (vignettes) in interview. Participants were not specifically asked about whether they favoured the views of their colleagues in any question, nor were they asked specifically about whether they related more to the views of their colleagues rather than the public. However, as the interviews progressed, this sub-theme of a police-centric view by participants became more evident over several different questions and participants, specifically within the ethical dilemmas.

4.14.2 Police sympathiser?

In ethical dilemma 1, time A interviews, there was a clear spread in terms of participants' views as to whether the police force should apologise or not for the action of the officers. Five participants (28%) said that they thought that the police *should not* apologise; three (17%) said that they thought that the officers definitely *should* apologise, and a further three (17%) said that they perceived that the police had acted reasonably.

By time B interviews, when asked the same question, the shift was unambiguous with over three times the number (53%; n10) of participants saying that that the police definitely *should not* apologise (for differing reasons), and 32% (n6) saying that the police should apologise.

The number of participants who thought that the police *should not* apologise had extended further by time C interviews with a total of 83% (n15) of participants giving this response. Of those eleven participants, six said that the officers should not apologise as they had acted reasonably; and five of them said that there should be no apology because the officers had been assaulted. Significantly fewer (n1) said that the police

should ‘definitely apologise’ and one other participant said that a 'limited apology' should be given.[55]

Table 5 – Showing the number of participants that said that the police should 'definitely apologise' or 'definitely not apologise' for their actions in Ethical Dilemma 1. All interviews.

	Definitely should apologise	**Definitely should not apologise**	**Unsure if should apologise but police did right thing**
Time A interview	3	5	3
Time B interview	6	10	0
Time C interview	1	15	0

In the same ethical dilemma, one participant was particularly noteworthy. This participant said that the officers should not have entered the property, however unexpectedly, he/she also said that ‘no apology’ should be given for the officers’ actions in the same scenario. This is significant because although the participant was of the view that the officers had acted incorrectly, he/she *still* thought that no apology should be tendered. The participant said:

> *…they’ve acted with the right intentions and I do think that the police tend to be quite trigger-happy in apologising a lot of the time and not rationalising why that decision has been taken* (p. 12, time C).

Yet they also clarified that:

> *It’s one of those things where I guess I would have to go, yeah, we don’t have any powers of entry at the time, we’re not being granted entry, so you’d have to go back and write the lengthiest pocket notebook entry and the lengthiest occurrence log update and then, NDM it accordingly, because at least then, you’ve turned around and you’ve done your sort of, your sort of job to the best of your ability. And I guess that’s the downfall of legislation and ummm, and policies and…* (IBID).

[55] There were a number of participants that said they were ‘unsure’ or gave no answer. This is the reason that the number of participants does not correlate with the total number of participants that took part in the interviews at each juncture.

This contrasted with this participant's views in his/her time A interview when he/she said: *'...I believe they did, the right [thing] to enter the premises...'* (p. 12, time A).

There was no significant difference in this participant's response to the question 'what does ethics mean to you' or any other factor that stood out to explain this. Likewise, this participant was not the oldest or youngest out of the sample. The only specific factor of note was that this participant – in comparison to all other participants – had previously been a manager of staff. However, there is no information to suggest a correlation between this fact and his/her decision-making now.

Further police-focussed views can be seen in another specific area of responses to ethical dilemma 1 throughout time A, B & C interviews, but to the greatest extent in time C interviews. In almost all respects, most participants were unable to relate to nor empathise in any way with the partygoers for assaulting the police officers in the scenario.

During the scenario, the extent of the assault on the police officers was not discussed. That means that the assault could have ranged from a grievous bodily harm[56] – the most severe – to a common assault or battery.[57] A battery is at the lowest level of the assault continuum and could be as simple as the partygoer pressing their finger against the officer's chest, or physically preventing the officer from entering the property. However, participants for the most part took this word *assault* to mean a *serious assault.* Even when some participants were asked follow-up questions about whether it is right to force your way into someone's house if no legal power exists, many remained steadfast and completely unable to see the potential correlation between the officers' actions – that is, the officers breaking the law – and the officers subsequently being assaulted.

When questioned in more detail about the scenario, a significant number of participants stated that they would have let the police officer into their own house had the roles being reversed and were therefore unable to see the Article 8 (Right to a private and family life) Human Rights[58] perspective of the party-goers/homeowners. Comments such as:

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[56] This would be classed as a section 18 or section 20 (Offences Against the Person Act 1861). These types of assaults are defined '...as either "wounding with intent" or "causing grievous bodily harm with intent" and is the most serious form of assault (save for murder and manslaughter) that can be committed, while accusing a person of Section 20 Assault means that the intent behind the wounding or bodily harm committed went no further' (DPP-Law, 2017).

[57] *Battery* is often confused with *Common Assault* – the difference being that *battery* relates to the actual application of force on another rather than the threat thereof. *Battery* is defined as '...[being] committed by the intentional or reckless application of unlawful force to another person' (CPS, 2020).

[58] See: https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf

…if an officer wanted to come into my house, I would let them in and there's no way I would push an officer out of my house (p. 20, time C), and

…I know they don't but if police came to my door, before I was a police officer and said that they need to go inside to check everything… even if knew there was no-one in there, I'd still let them because, I mean, why wouldn't I? Do you know what I mean?' (p. 13, time C).

Participant 13 even said: *'…what's their reason for not allowing police in the house? They've got to be hiding something'* (IBID). He/she made this comment despite knowing that the law did not allow this.

When considering all three ethical dilemmas collectively across time C interviews, clearer patterns emerged and showed further prevalence of this specific sub-theme in participants' decision-making.

Of the 39% (n7) of participants who said that the police *should* be given a reference in ethical dilemma 2, time C interviews, 28% (n5) of those participants were the same individuals who also thought that the force *should not* apologise in ethical dilemma 1. One of the remaining participants, 11% (n2) said that they were *unsure* when asked about apologising in ethical dilemma 1.

The seven participants (39% of participants overall) mentioned above who said that a reference should be given were analysed in more detail. It was found that for six of the seven participants, their responses to ethical dilemma 3 were all relatively similar too. Six of them also said that they thought that the police *had* done the right thing in resuscitating the unconscious male.

Figure 5 – Comparison of seven specific participants' responses across all three ethical dilemmas. Time C interviews.

	Good job – should have reference	Apology to be given? (ED1)[59]	Said police had done the right thing (ED3)	Previous police experience?	Age
Participant 2	Yes	No	Yes	No	26
Participant 4	Yes	No	Yes	No	20
Participant 11	Yes	No	Would not do CPR	Cadet	23
Participant 12	Yes	Unsure	Yes	Special	23
Participant 13	Yes	No	Yes	No	29
Participant 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	22
Participant 17	Yes	No	Yes	No	23

To further illustrate this sub-theme of participants becoming far more 'police-focused' in their responses, the individual responses to the question 'why do you think it's fair/unfair for the force to not give a reference' of one participant are shown below.

This specific participant was highlighted because this individual was unequivocal in his/her time A interview that because the policy is applied consistently for all officers, it *is* fair. Whereas in time B and C interviews the participant vacillated, moving to strongly oppose the policy and stated that it is unfair and does not enable a new employer to see the difficult job that they have undertaken:

Table 6 – Showing participant 5's responses across time A, B & C interview to ED2.

	Time A Interview	Time B Interview	Time C Interview
Participant 5	*Consistent therefore fair*	*Force lacking respect by not a reference*	*Important for new employer to have evidence of hard work of officer*

[59] ED1 = ethical dilemma 1; ED2 = ethical dilemma 2; ED3 = ethical dilemma 3.

4.14.3 Discussion

There are a number of examples within the ethical dilemmas that show the shift from participants thinking almost completely objectively as lay members of the public to thinking more police-centrically. This shift is gradual across interviews, but relatively quick in terms of time (within a year), and almost ubiquitous by time C interviews.

By time C, there was a noticeable change in the way that the majority (83%; n15) of participants perceived the first ethical dilemma with a clear correlation between the number of participants who thought that the police had done the right thing and their increased length of service within the police.

By time C interviews, most participants were far less ready to accept the CPS' legal interpretation of scenario ED1, preferring to side with the officers' account. Moreover, many participants stated that not only ethically, but *legally* the officers had done the right thing. This was despite an experienced, independent lawyer having reviewed the case and deemed the law had been applied *incorrectly*. This could be because the officers think that they now have a greater understanding of the law than they did when they were asked the same question twelve months previous (during time A interviews). Even if this is the case, it is concerning from the perspective of public-legitimacy that the officers perceive their own interpretation of the law to be superior to that of an independent, trained legal specialist. The purpose of the CPS is to provide reassurance to the public of independence and specialist scrutiny; if officers fail to understand this and operate accordingly, this potentially seeks to undermine that policy-intent.

One could attribute this shift of officers perceiving that their way is correct, to the training that they received, or due to their socialisation into the police service. Within policing, this is a real cause for concern due to the significant amount of discretion afforded to officers. The force, and perhaps importantly, the public, need to be reassured that the powers that the police have are used proportionately and with appropriate safeguards, checks and balances. If levels of reassurance diminish, the police are at risk at losing their legitimacy amongst communities.

One of the most striking and persuasive arguments in favour of participants' proclivity towards a police-centric view can be seen in the latter part of ethical dilemma 1 when participants were asked about the assault on the officers by the partygoers. Participants fervently defended their police officer colleagues during time B and C interviews, with many being unable to look beyond the point of the officers being assaulted or rationalise

the actions of the partygoers thereafter. The findings clearly showed a failure or at best inability to consider the whole scenario using the NDM and to *gather information/intelligence*[60] to ascertain the full details before coming to an outcome. Not one participant out of the whole sample asked about the extent of the assault, and no-one asked about the previous offending history of the partygoers[61]. This clemency towards police-decisions intensified as evidenced in the analysis from time A to time B, to time C interviews.

Additionally, a small number of participants said that because they are *the police* they should automatically be let into the house of the partygoers, regardless of whether they have a right in law to do so. This further cements the view that as participants' length of service increased, they became less able to rationalise from a non-police perspective.

Whilst one specific participant was singled-out as an example in the analysis section above, this participant stood out as he/she talked about on the NDM (as per his/her training) but still showed a striking police-centric view by time B and C interviews which was not exhibited in his/her initial interview. Whilst there were a number of other participants that also moved to that more police-centric viewpoint, this participant's responses gave more articulation as to his/her views for this.

The comparison of each participant's collective responses to all three ethical dilemmas in time C interviews also showed a similar pattern. Almost 40% (n7) gave a strong police-focussed perspective in each of their responses to the three dilemmas by their time C interviews. This further exposed a clear theme in the decision-making of those individuals which leant towards supporting the actions of the police or taking a police-centric view when making decisions by time C interviews. Only two of those original seven participants had previous police experience (one was a Cadet; one was a Special); there was also nothing notable about their ages[62].

In conclusion, within twelve months of becoming police officers the opinions of the participants had become far more defensive in favour of the police, even when the police had not complied with the Law themselves. Participants also seemed to be increasingly of the opinion that their individual interpretation of the Law was superior to that of wider reviews/lawyers etc. By the end of the twelve months, the participants were more readily able to rationalise doing things that they would have classed as unethical when they first

[60] This is the first part of the NDM. See subtheme 6A.
[61] Both of these things are what one would consider *the basics* in order to achieve a thorough understanding of an incident.
[62] All of their ages ranged between 20 to 29 years.

joined. This extended to participants increasingly becoming unable to see things from a non-police perspective.

This non-compliance with the Code of Ethics and NDM is a significant problem because of the level of power and autonomy afforded to PCs in applying the Law.

4.15 Theme 5B – Ethics versus the law – there is confusion over ethics/morality versus the law and how these two things co-exist and work together;

4.15.1 Background

During initial police training, new police officers are introduced to ethics through the medium of the *Code of Ethics* as discussed in the literature review. Whilst the term *lawfully* is a word regularly used throughout the Code (appearing thirteen times), the divagation of the terms *law* and *ethics* is not discussed.

The Ethics Centre (2016) state that:

> *Knowing the difference and relationship between [ethics and the law] is important though, because they can conflict with one another. If the law conflicts with our personal values or a moral system, we have to act – but to do so we need to be able to tell the difference between them.*

This is further explained in medical ethics by Hoffmann, the Lord Justice, as cited by Brassington (2018) '…I would expect medical ethics to be formed by the law rather than the reverse' (p. 225) – an important distinction, yet one that is not explored or discussed in any way during student officer training.

This sub-theme was evident to a small extent in time A interviews but became far more prevalent by time B interviews and bourgeoned by time C interviews.

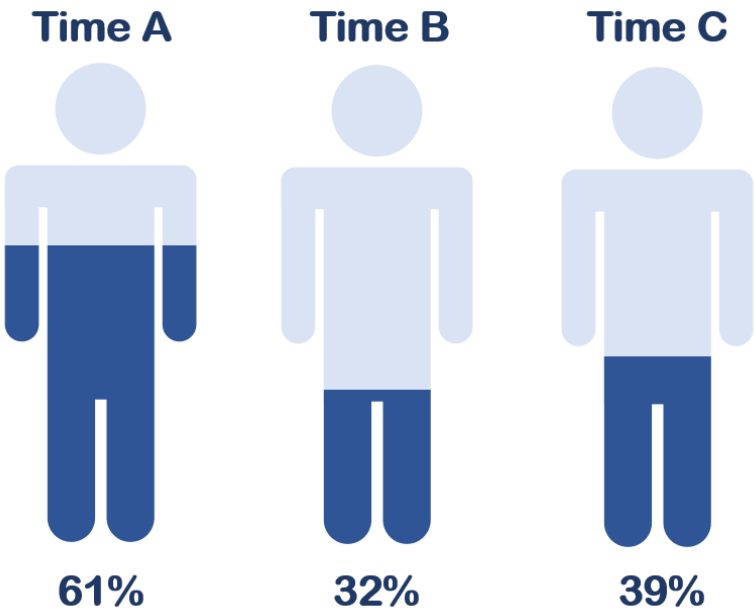
4.15.2 Confusion amongst participants

When asked about the types of things that they had considered in making their decision for ethical dilemma 3 (whether to resuscitate or not), there was a mixture of responses across all questions, but the majority – both for and against resuscitating the individual – centred around the individual's wishes or the officers' role to protect life.

Figure 6 – Showing number of participants that talked about 'person's wishes' or 'a police officer's role to preserve life' for ED3. All interviews.

	Time A	Time B	Time C
Person's wishes	10	12	6
Role preserve life	11	6	7

Figure 7 – Percentage of participants that indicated that they believed their primary role was to preserve life for ED3. All interviews.



Some participants talked about patient-choice and that the patient's wishes were paramount. One participant went into considerable detail about his/her rationale saying:

> *…I think that person has obviously made that decision, they haven't made it lightly, they've gone through all the right channels to do it, it's been authorised by a medical professional who thinks it's in their best interests as well…'* (p. 2, time C).

Other participants talked about how the fundamental role of the police was to save life and limb and that obligation was not negotiable, with some participants being concise

but direct in their responses saying things such as: *'we've got a duty to preserve life and limb'* (p. 1, time C), and others giving a very detailed rationale for their decision:

> *Again, obviously some people try to make the decision to end their own life, I suppose this in a way is kind of that. But as a police officer your upmost[sic] priority is to protect life and I think the officers going in there that would have been their upmost[sic] priority, they would have done that. You can't get frustrated at someone for saving someone's life no matter what that person thinks. You've a right to life it is Article 2 it's written there so I think the officers did a tremendous job doing that if obviously and again the reason behind the DNR I would never be sure what the reasons to that would be but its upmost [sic] your first priority is to protect life* (p. 17, time A).

Two (11%) participants talked about how they had personally experienced family members who had sought a DNR: where this was the case, both participants were far more likely to respect the DNR and *not* resuscitate regardless of their role. When asked to rationalise this, neither participant saw this as incompatible with their role.

83% (n15) of participants generally thought that there *was* a difference between something being 'legal' and something being 'ethical' when asked about this by time C interviews. Only one participant said that they were 'unsure', and two others said that this was 'possible'. This contrasts with time A and B interviews where more participants (28%; n5) were unsure about whether there was a difference or not.

When pressed on the question of ethics versus the law, almost half (n8) of participants thought that one does things differently if one is ethical by time C interviews; this was similar in time B interviews.

Some participants gave considered arguments for their views highlighting things such as '*the law tries its best to cover [ethics] as best it can, but umm, there's always going to be a grey area in every – you know, the law's never going to be perfect'* (p. 14, time C). However, more participants answered this question negatively in time C interviews (33%; n6) compared with time A and B interviews (28%; n5 and 26%; n5 respectively) with more participants saying that there is *no difference* between the way that you make decisions if you're ethical or not. The majority of these participants were unable to articulate any meaningful difference between being 'ethical' and 'unethical'. For example, one participant said: *'no, not really [there is not a difference]. Sometimes I think the term ethical is another word to describe what is expected of you'* (p. 11, time C). Whilst the

increase in participants who said that there was no difference was only a very small, it was nevertheless an increase, although the reasons for this need further research.

In the first ethical dilemma, most participants were consistent in their views of whether something could be ethical but 'illegal' across time A, B and C interviews. One participant stood out as saying *no* in the third interview only – this participant said that if it were illegal to enter the property, then regardless of ethics, the police should not enter the property. He/she said: '*no I wouldn't go in there if it was illegal then obviously you can't gain entry in line with the law…'* (p. 3, time C). Notably - and perhaps unexpectedly - this was the same participant that said that the police should not apologise for entering the property. This completely juxtaposed to that participant's answers in time A and B interviews (participant 3). This was despite that same participant saying that he/she thought that something *could* be illegal but still ethical when specifically asked this question earlier in the same interview. When applied to an incident, the participant thought that the most important thing was that the police acted lawfully regardless. This participant was also unable to give any meaningful detail about the Code of Ethics. This participant was notable because of this significant difference between time A and B answers as compared with time C interview responses. This example also highlighted the importance of the ethical dilemmas in triangulating participants' views.

Discussion

This sub-theme was less evident in time A interviews as the data shows. This may have been due to participants' knowledge and understanding of the law being very limited at that juncture. Participants were far clearer in time A interviews about the importance of justifiable, ethical decisions. However, there was evidence by time B interviews and a proliferation of comments by time C interviews, that showed that participants found the distinction between the *law* and *ethics* confusing, and at times indecipherable or even irrational to consider ethics and law in the same situation(s).

This confusion was seen to the highest degree in ethical dilemma 3, time C interviews, where a significant portion of the sample (44%; n8) were very confused about the conflation between the law, ethics and their own values. Some used the law to justify *not* doing CPR; whilst others used the law to justify why they *should do CPR*. Despite the confusion amongst participants, this question did separate participants from each other, inasmuch as the majority of participants being very definite about which way they would go and using various justifications for doing so.

The disparity between participants' views between time C interviews in comparison to time A and B interviews (on the subject of ethics versus the law), could possibly be explained by participants' increased knowledge and understanding of the law by time C interviews. In time A interviews, participants had limited, if any knowledge and understanding of the law. Another potential explanation is that this could be another example of the effect of peers/experience. By time B interviews, participants would have gained a broader understanding of the law and had received several lessons that talked about the Code of Ethics. By time C interviews, participants would have applied that understanding in a practical context and interacted with more experienced peers and supervisors. This may link to previous research conducted by Fielding (1988) who talked about the significant amount of influence that an organisation can have on new recruits. There is also potential synergy with research by Crank (2015) who found strong embedded cultures in US-policing and discussed the effect that these cultures can have on police officers and their views.

Overall, this sub-theme is an important finding for police training. It highlights the need to ensure that knowledge that is acquired within the classroom is applied in the expected way when that officer is conducting his/her everyday work. It is not enough for an individual to be able to talk through a scenario/respond in a specific way in a practical training scenario – the way that they respond to a real-life scenario needs to be tested to ensure the efficacy of the training, and ensure that the training is meeting its intended outcomes.

In conclusion, this sub-theme showed that almost all of the participants struggled to differentiate between something being ethical and something being lawful.

4.16 Theme 5C – The personal impact of decisions – some officers feel hamstrung by concerns about the effect of their decisions on them as individuals, which can have an overriding bearing on the decision to which they come.

4.16.1 Background

As discussed in the review of literature, the Professional Standards' Department (PSD) give an early input to all new officers on the standards that are expected of them, both on and off-duty. This takes place in the first week of initial police training. These expectations are clarified in recent Government statutory guidance on police conduct, efficiency and effectiveness, which said that 'the public and colleagues with whom police

officers work are entitled to expect the highest level of professional standards of officers' (Home Office, 2020, p. 39).

The translation of these professional standards within the workplace by junior officers is often different to what one would expect with an air of suspicion and concern from officers about the role of PSD. PSD, the expectations of police, and myth and conjecture about phishing exercises by the department are commonplace amongst junior-ranking officers. Often these tales arise from cases where officers have been sacked or had dealings with PSD where the facts of cases are not known in detail. Supposition is used to fill-in the missing parts by officers concerned that they will lose their jobs for any small misdemeanour or oversight on their part.

The initial aims of the question-set were not to specifically look at procedural justice or the role that the standards of professional behaviour played in officers' decision-making. However, an unanticipated finding from the research was this sub-theme. This showed that for some participants, underlying concern about their own jobs, incomes and the potential of getting fired dominated their decision-making.

4.16.2 Self-preservation coming before public-good

In time A interviews, there were some limited findings that suggested that officers' decision-making was not as selfless as one would hope. This was most prevalent in ethical dilemma 3, time A interviews where almost a quarter (n4) of participants mentioned that they would consider the patient's feelings but *also* their own feelings about the DNR when deciding whether to resuscitate or not. A number of participants rationalised their responses as follows:

[not resuscitating] …would make me feel uncomfortable because it is against what they want and that doesn't really sit well with me (p. 10, time A);

I don't think I could sit with not doing that, I really couldn't. I'd want to perform CPR on them. I'd find it very, very hard to just stand there and let a life go away. If I know they're old and the family has ordered it I'd find it a very hard thing for me (p. 15, time A).

As the two quotes show, the participants talked about how they would feel personally, noting that their personal feelings, but also consideration for the individual would be significant factors in their decision-making.

This changed markedly by time B and C interviews where there was a strong correlation between increased length of service and level of concern about the effect on participants personally rather than other factors. In time A interviews there were very few instances where participants talked about the ramifications on them as individuals. However, by time B interviews, a fifth of participants (n4) raised this as a consideration. In ethical dilemma 3, 16% (n3) of participants used terminology which inferred that they would 'cover their own backs' by doing CPR in both time B and time C interviews. Two participants in time B and one participant in time C interviews said that they would safeguard themselves rather than the feelings of the individual concerned, with a strong inference that they were more concerned about retaining their jobs (and not getting into any perceived trouble) than considering the individual's feelings or *doing the right thing*. One of those participants (of the two participants from time B who said they would safeguard themselves) said he/she would consider it unethical, but would do it anyway, saying:

[I'd] face the consequences of the fact that he's got a DNR, which although could be ethically wrong, it would sort of cover [my] own back (p. 10, time B).

Another participant went as far as talking about the potential of losing his/her personal pension if he/she made the wrong decision and that losing his/her job would always be in the back of his/her mind, saying:

…*if I've read that DNR wrong or got a little thing wrong and it later transpires that I should have then that's my pension gone, sort of thing* (p. 12, time B).

4.16.3 Discussion

There were clear views expressed throughout time B and C interviews by some participants who specifically mentioned how a decision would affect them personally. Some strongly inferred that this would result in them taking a different course of action or making a different decision as a direct result of their concerns about the potential adverse impact on them personally.

Whilst one could contend that those participants who said that they would be concerned about their own views/feelings were just being honest about the potential impact on them as individuals from a wellbeing/mental health perspective, it was interesting to identify that this was a real potential consideration for them. Despite participants talking about how they would consider their own feelings, no-one talked specifically about any potential

for disciplinary proceedings or investigation by PSD etc. but many participants including one participant (p. 12) did mention the final outcome inasmuch as potentially losing their jobs – inferring therefore that a disciplinary would result from their decisions and that this was an active part of their considerations when deciding on which course of action to take.

Why should we all be concerned about officers' worries about losing their job and their livelihood? Put simply, because if this is something that is at the forefront of some officers' minds as blatantly as participant 12 said in his/her time B interview, then the basis for decisions is potentially biased and distorted. Training has not yielded the results one had anticipated; recruitment has not worked in recruiting the right people, and the standards of professional behaviour, Code of Ethics and NDM are defunct. Furthermore, the message that has been passed-on during training, or during initial socialisation with training staff and others whilst in training has had a significant deleterious effect on participants' motivations behind their decision-making. It is notable that this sub-theme was not generally evident in time A interviews, but increased in prevalence and relevance as participants' length of service in the organisation increased. The whole basis for decision-making as defined by Naaman et al. (2013) of '…what best serves the public's interests' has completely misfired.

In conclusion, participants were very suspicious of PSD and almost thought of them as a KGB-style body that 'is out to trip them up'; perceiving any dealings with PSD as potentially risky to their career. This can have a substantial effect on decision-making, as officers become concerned about how a decision could affect them or their own career, interfering with the simpler choice of them deciding to 'do the right thing'.

4.17 Theme 6 – Where are the ethics?

4.18 Theme 6A – A hidden ethical basis? – ethical decision-making is not overt in participants' decision-making rationale; that is not to say they are unethical moreover ethics is not the 'golden thread' that was envisaged in training;

4.18.1 Background

The Code of Ethics sits at the heart of the NDM. The expectation is that at each juncture around the pentagonal model, the decision-maker refers back and forth to the nationally agreed Code of Ethics (2014) throughout their decision-making.

Figure 8 – National Decision Mode (NDM), College of Policing (2014).

Referring to the Code of Ethics at each point of the NDM is important as whilst the model works without reference to the Code, the Code is what the College of Policing (2014) describe as '*the element that binds the model together…'.* The College state that users of the model must consider the question: *'is what I am considering consistent with the Code of Ethics?'* throughout a situation. It is not therefore possible for one to ascribe to be using the NDM without understanding of and reference to the Code of Ethics at each phase of the model.

During participants' lesson on the Code of Ethics, one of the training outcomes on the lesson plan states '*the Code of Ethics is there to assist and support decisions made, whether complex or simple. You will be expected to have a good knowledge of the Code'* (Learning & Development Department, 2018, p. 8)

In order to gauge participants' understanding of the term ethics and how these affect their decision-making, participants were initially asked about what the term 'ethics' mean

to them. Analysis was undertaken to identify the prevalence of individual terms/words used to describe ethics across all interviews and participants and in order to show whether there had been any changes between each time period (time A, B and C).

4.18.2 The missing part of the model

The majority of participants (67%; n12) said that they had received little or no training on ethics or decision-making prior to joining the police force, when asked as one of the opening questions during their interviews. The notable exceptions were those who had worked as PCSOs, police staff or special constables (n6 of 19), all of whom had learnt about the Code of Ethics and/or NDM during the respective training for those roles. This was a sound basis on which to compare the prevalence of the Code of Ethics in the decision-making of participants as they commenced their policing careers.

Initial questions in section 4 of the question-set revealed that across all three interview sets, participants consistently mentioned 'morals' in the top five things that they associated with the word ethics.

The word 'behaviour' featured in the top two things considered in time A and time C interviews but did not feature at all in time B interviews[63]. *Doing the right* thing was in the top three words used to describe ethics in both time B and time C interviews (top 9 for time A interviews).

The *Code of Ethics* featured as the joint top word/term used to describe the term 'ethics' by time C interviews but did not feature at all in time A or time B interviews. And *professionalism* featured in the top six words for the time C interviews whereas it was not even in the top 13 in time A interviews nor in time B interviews.

The word *values* only appeared in the top nine in time A and time C interviews, and the top 14 for time B interviews. *Fairness* hardly featured in time A interviews (n1), whereas by time B interviews featured in the top 7 (n3). By time C interviews, the number of participants that mentioned *fairness* had not changed, but they had mentioned other things an equal number of times meaning that it fell to featuring in the top 11 (n3) by time C interviews. The differences between time A, B & C interviews are illustrated in Figure

[63] Although participants could have meant 'behaviour' when they talked about *how you conduct yourself* which did feature, all interview sets were identically 'coded' and *how you conduct yourself* featured separately in time A interviews.

9 below which shows generally what the make-up of a ‘generalised’ participant would be for each interview cross-section.

Figure 10, Figure 11 and Figure 12[64] below illustrate the number of times comparatively that participants used specific words across time A, B and C interviews.

[64] The larger the coloured block, the more participants that said this.

Figure 9 – Comparison of how a generalised participant would like at each stage of interview.

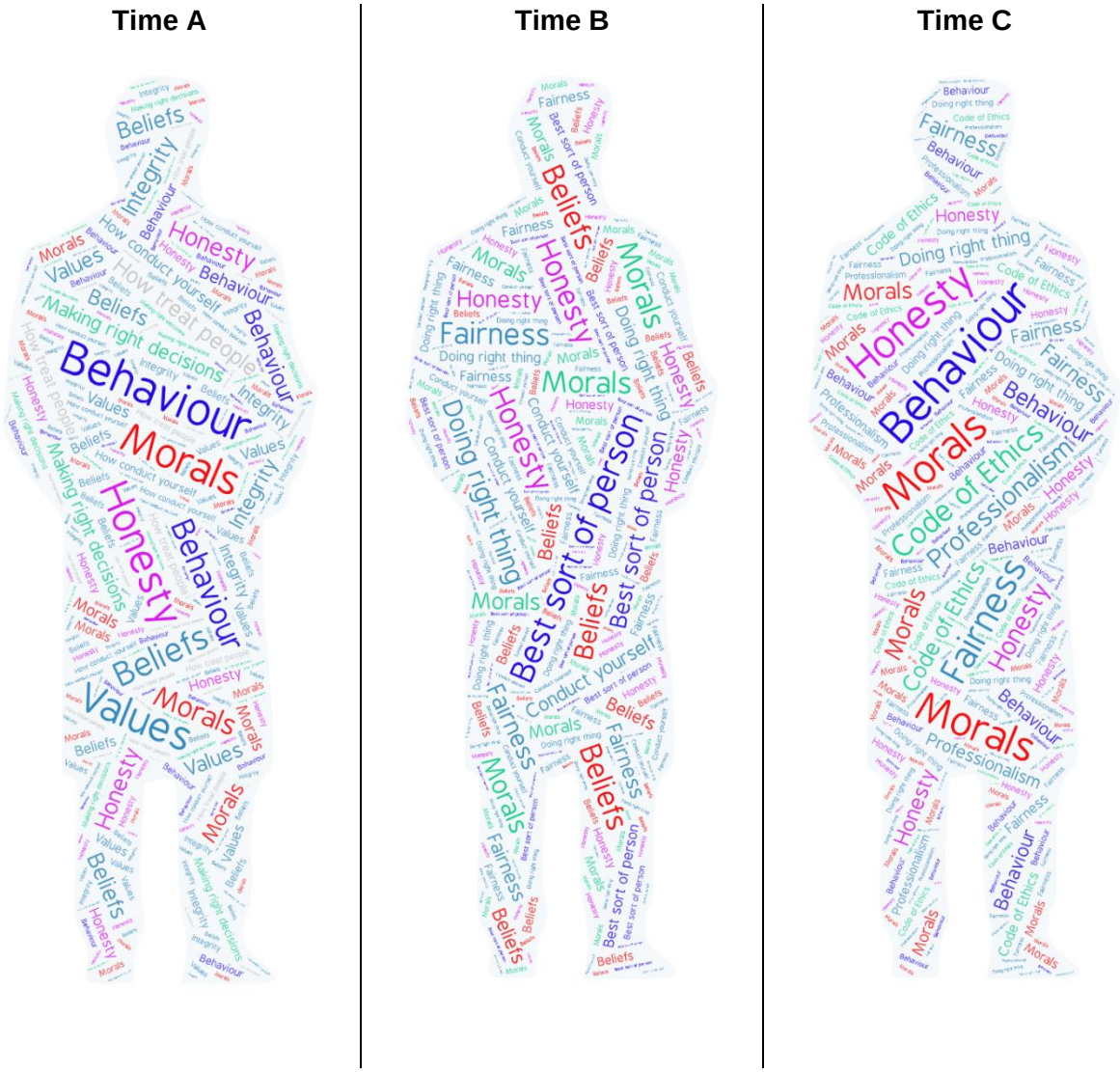


Figure 10 – Meaning of the term 'ethics', time A interviews.

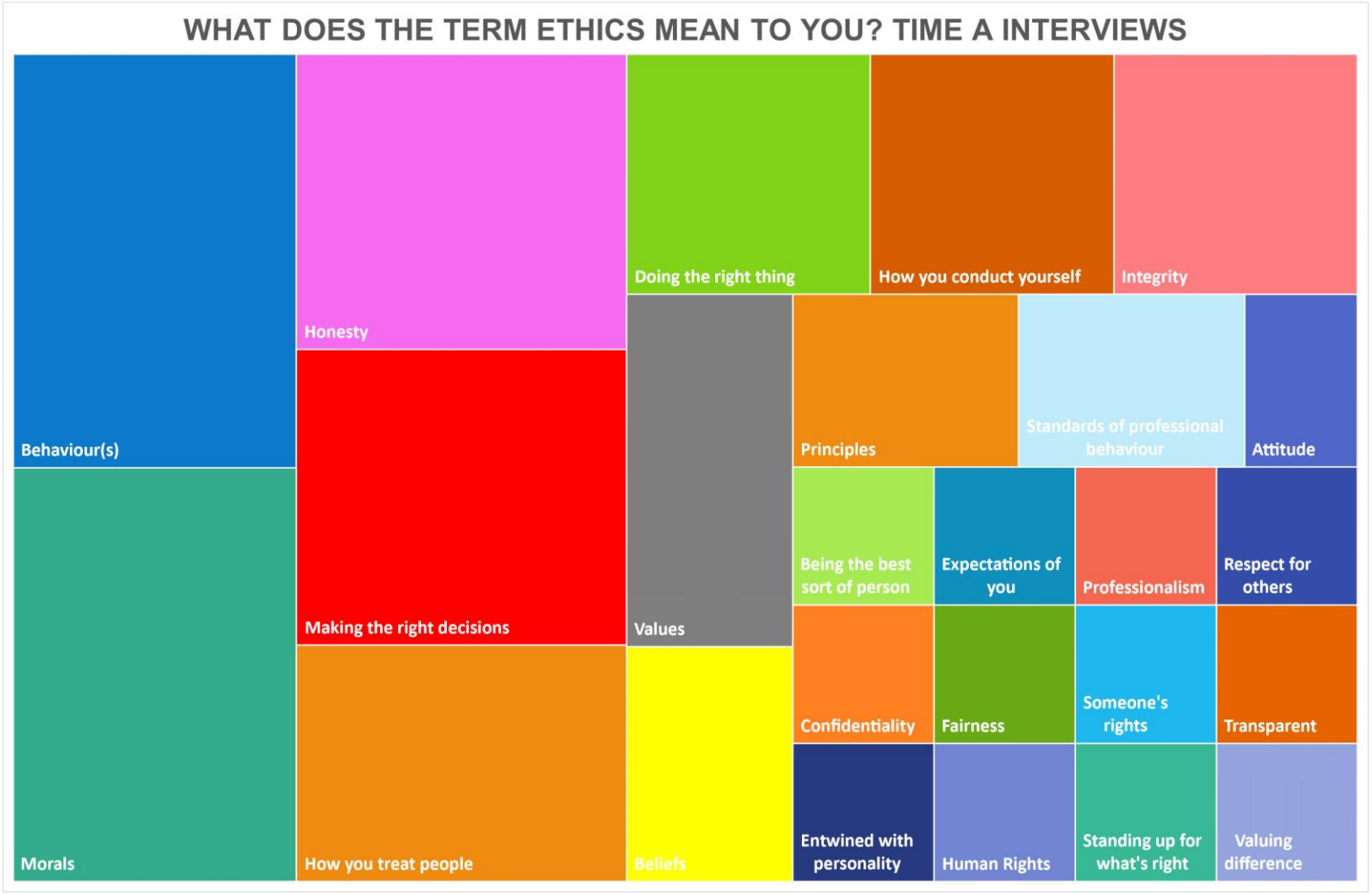


Figure 11 – Meaning of the term 'ethics', time B interviews.

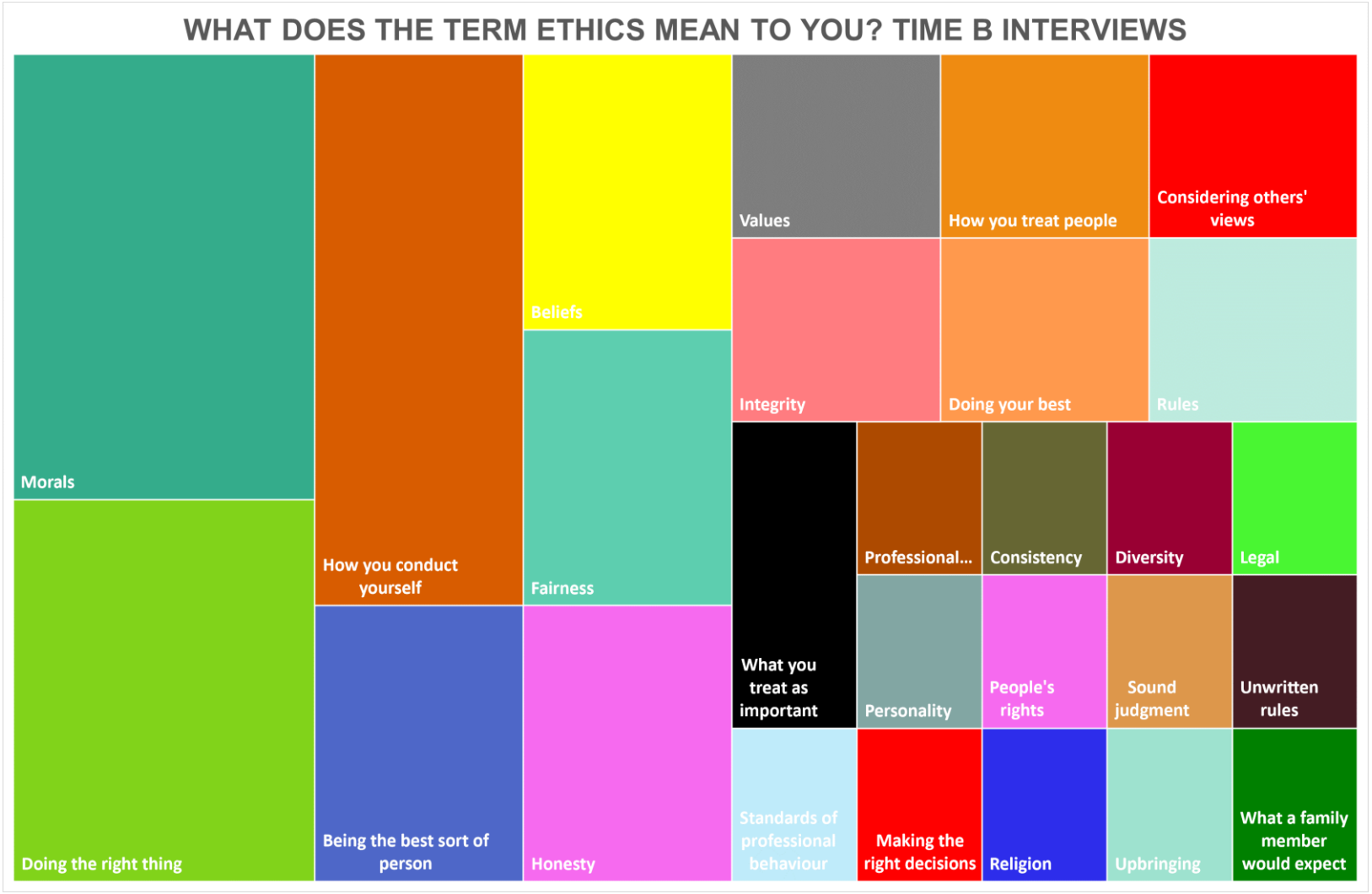
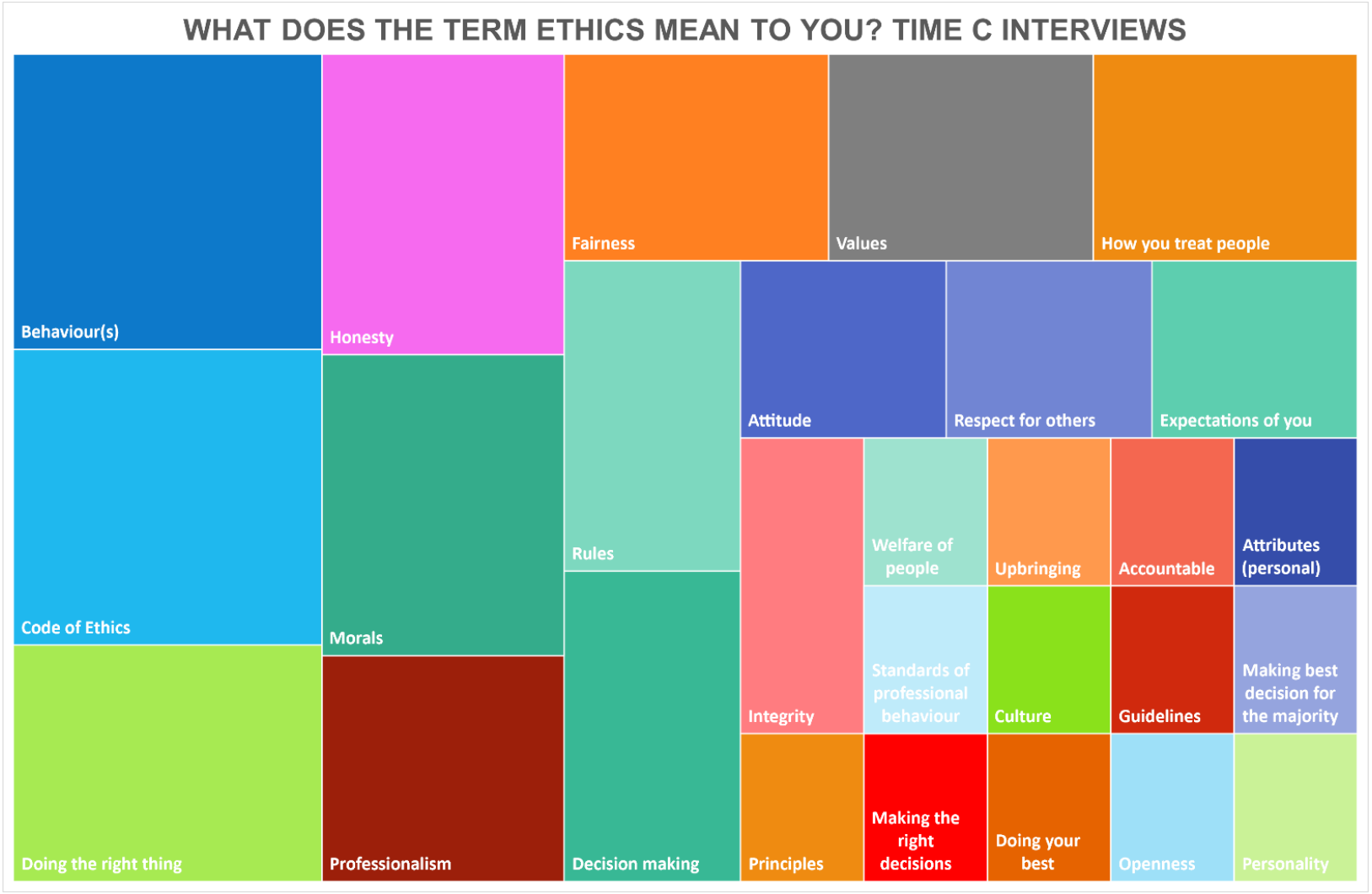


Figure 12 – Meaning of the term 'ethics', time C interviews.



In order to understand whether participants' decision-making correlated in any way with the way that they perceived the terms 'ethics', a number of other areas across the question-set were compared. For example, the initial question in section 2 of the question-set 'when making decision, what do you base your decisions on?' was compared. Participants' responses to the ethical dilemmas were also compared with the terms that they used to describe ethics to ascertain whether there was any link between these two things.

Despite participants noting that the Code of Ethics was what the term 'ethics' meant to them by time C interviews, this did not positively correlate with the factors upon which they said that they base their decisions. The same number of participants said that the *NDM* was one of the things that they base their decisions on in time B and time C interviews.

Similarly, despite 'how I've been brought-up/upbringing' featuring in the top five reasons for making a decision (50%; n9) in time C interviews, only one participant said that they correlated the term 'upbringing' with the meaning of the term of ethics:

> '*…I suppose people would have different ethics to the police, mine myself are very similar to the police ethics but I guess the way people are brought-up they have different ethics because not all people are honest'* (p. 9, time C).

No-one mentioned the 'law' as something they thought of when considering the term ethics by time C interviews. One person did mention the word during time B interviews (no-one said this in time A interviews). Again, this contrasts with just under a third of participants (n5) saying that they based their decisions on the law.

The NDM and the term ethics did not feature in participants' responses to the question of how they made decisions or evidenced in their considerations when pressed on how they *came* to those decisions. However, for those participants that were consistent in their views across all interview responses for ethical dilemma 3 (time A, B & C), there was evidence of some consistency with some of these participants across other question areas about ethics. When comparing participants' responses to the question 'what does the term ethics mean to you?' and their responses to ethical dilemma 3, there was some correlation between the responses to these two different questions across all interview times. When comparing participants' responses to the question of 'what does ethics mean to you?' and specifically looking at those that had said the same terms twice or

more, two said that ‘doing the right thing’ was what they considered to be the meaning of the term ethics; two said ‘behaviours’, and two said ‘morals’.

The words that participants used to describe ethics were considered and whether there was any commonality between those words and whether they chose to resuscitate the patient or not in ethical dilemma 3 across all three interviews. The analysis showed that there was no specific terms that any of the participants mentioned more than once about ethics that was common for those who said that they would or would not resuscitate.

However, when this was narrowed to just two of three interviews (time A, B or C) as opposed to all three, there were some common factors between the terms used to describe ethics and the participants' decision to resuscitate or not:

- Two of the four participants who said that the officers *should not resuscitate* also said that ‘morals’ were what they thought of when they considered the meaning of the term ethics;
- Two participants who said that the officers *should resuscitate* both said that ‘doing the right thing’ was how they viewed the term ethics.

There was no link in terms of the effect of time on participants across all interviews; that is some participants said similar things in time A and B interviews, whereas some said similar things in time A and C interviews; this was different for each participant and there was no common link.

When narrowing the criteria further to participants who only mentioned a term once across all interviews – that is in only one of the three interviews (time A, B or C) – there was a common feature for participants who were consistent across all interviews in their view to resuscitate or not. Five participants (28%) cited ‘morals*’* as being how they perceived the term ethics; four (22%) said that ‘how you treat people’ was how they viewed the term. ‘Code of ethics’; ‘decision-making’; and ‘fairness’ were also all mentioned three times (17%) respectively by those participants. This can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7 – Comparing participants who were consistent in their responses to ethical dilemma 3 (resuscitate or not) and how they described the term ethics. All interviews

Consistent in their responses across all questions to ED3		**Things mentioned twice or more as meaning of ethics, all interviews**
Participant 5	Should not resuscitate	Doing the right thing
Participant 7	Should not resuscitate	
Participant 8	Should not resuscitate	
Participant 9	Should not resuscitate	Behaviours; honesty; integrity; professionalism
Participant 11	Should not resuscitate	Doing the right thing; respect for others; behaviours
Participant 12	Should resuscitate	
Participant 14	Should not resuscitate	Morals
Participant 15	Should resuscitate	Morals
Participant 16	Should not resuscitate	
Participant 20	Should not resuscitate	

4.18.3 Discussion

Ethics is meant to form the basis of decision-making, and be the check and balance for all decisions within the police service. The College of Policing state that a good, working-knowledge is expected of the Code by all officers, and this knowledge and understanding of the Code is a key requirement if officers are going to achieve what the NDM sets out.

Participants received training early in their service (the first week) on the Code of Ethics. When conducting practical assessments of participants' abilities, the NDM and Code of Ethics are used and debriefed within the training department in an attempt to integrate these procedures/tools into participants' everyday decision-making.

However, the responses that participants gave to questions about the meaning of ethics showed a large distribution across a number of different terms. There was one notable change in that the term 'Code of Ethics' featured as the joint-highest term that participants used to describe ethics by time C interviews. Whilst this does not show anything about participants' understanding of the term (or the Code), it did show that that the terminology had become more commonplace in the lexicon of participants correlated with their increased length of police service. Despite small variations in the terms that participants used to describe the word 'ethics' across all interviews, there were no sustained changes in what participants associated with the term ethics (other than 'Code of Ethics' as

discussed), strongly evidencing that regardless of training, there was no change in the medium to long term way in which participants thought of the word ethics. There are two potential reasons for this: the first could be 'training decay' as described by Chan et al. (2003), or perhaps more likely the fact that the ethics of those participants are already in-built to the extent that changing them is not possible without sustained practical application and ongoing training as discussed by Caldero et al. (2018).

The analysis also identified that there were some similarities between those who described ethics in a certain way, with the way in which those same participants made their decisions in the ethical dilemmas. Whilst ethics and the basis for decision-making were not clear in participants' considerations in the rationale that they gave, there was some evidence that when the researcher pushed for further information or clarification around decision-making, there was some connection between the answers that participants gave in terms of *what ethics meant to them* and their decision around whether to resuscitate or not for example in ethical dilemma 3.

However, this connection could not be attributed to training because there was inconsistency generally between participants' decisions/reasons between time B (post-training) and time C interviews (post-tutorship).

When participants made decisions, there was little, if any evidence tendered of an ethical basis for those decisions (save for the example given above). Only one participant across all three interviews overtly and specifically mentioned ethics in coming to his/her decision and in his/her rationale. And remarkably, in this example, he/she decided to go against what he/she perceived was ethical (notwithstanding the important part being that he/she had actually considered ethics in coming to the decision).

In summary, participants started their careers without overtly considering ethics and despite the training that they received, this lack of overt consideration for ethics continued throughout the first year of their service. The findings in this sub-theme concur with Cole's (1995) research which showed that students were not particularly influenced by the ethics course that they had taken. It also further confirms the work of Westmarland (2013) who found that even with ethical codes and training, it is difficult to get police officers to behave in a certain way based on that training.

In conclusion, there was a lack of consistency between the participants, and even between the three interviews of each participant in how they define ethics. Generally,

participants talked about the link between ethics and morals, and the way they had been brought-up. However, there was a general lack of ability to articulate the meaning of the terms ethics.

The lack of ability by participants to articulate what is meant by the term ethics (other than to correlate it with a philosophy that is in-built within them, or a result of their upbringing) suggested that the ethical training they received since joining the police has not had the impact that was expected. In summary, participants' views on this topic were disparate and confused.

4.19 Theme 6B – Use of the Code of Ethics – the Code features less in participants' decisions as they get more experienced; whilst the term is mentioned, knowledge of the Code in any meaningful detail is limited;

4.19.1 Background

This sub-theme was similar to sub-theme 6A inasmuch as it was identified when considering the use of the Code of Ethics, but specifically participants' knowledge of the Code, and whether they were able to describe the Code of Ethics in enough detail to be able to apply it within the NDM.

4.19.2 Experience and the Code of Ethics

Only a small number of participants (17%; n3) mentioned the Code of Ethics as part of their overall decision-making; notably one participant in his/her time C interview (participant 18) when talking about how he/she is now better at making decisions.

Whilst a significant number of participants mentioned the NDM (42%; n8 in time B; 50%; n9 in time C interviews), only the aforementioned participant (5%; n1) mentioned the Code of Ethics in any specific detail when talking about how his/her decision-making had improved, specifically saying:

> *I know we've got loads of systems like Niche and PNC[65] that we can check to help us make our decisions based on potential markers or concerns regarding*

[65] PNC is the *Police National Computer*. PNC holds the details of all arrests and convictions throughout the UK. It also holds details of all vehicles and drivers licensed in the UK. The system is accessible by all forces throughout the UK.

certain people but if there's a lack of information in front of you and lack of action to take you just make a decision based on what you've got in front of you within the confines of the code of ethics and the law (p. 18, time C).

By time C interviews, there were varying reasons that participants gave as to why they felt that their decision-making had changed. For example, in time B interviews, 42% (n8) said that there was 'no reason for the change; it was just natural', whereas there was a much broader spread of opinion by time C interviews with participants saying that they'd changed because:

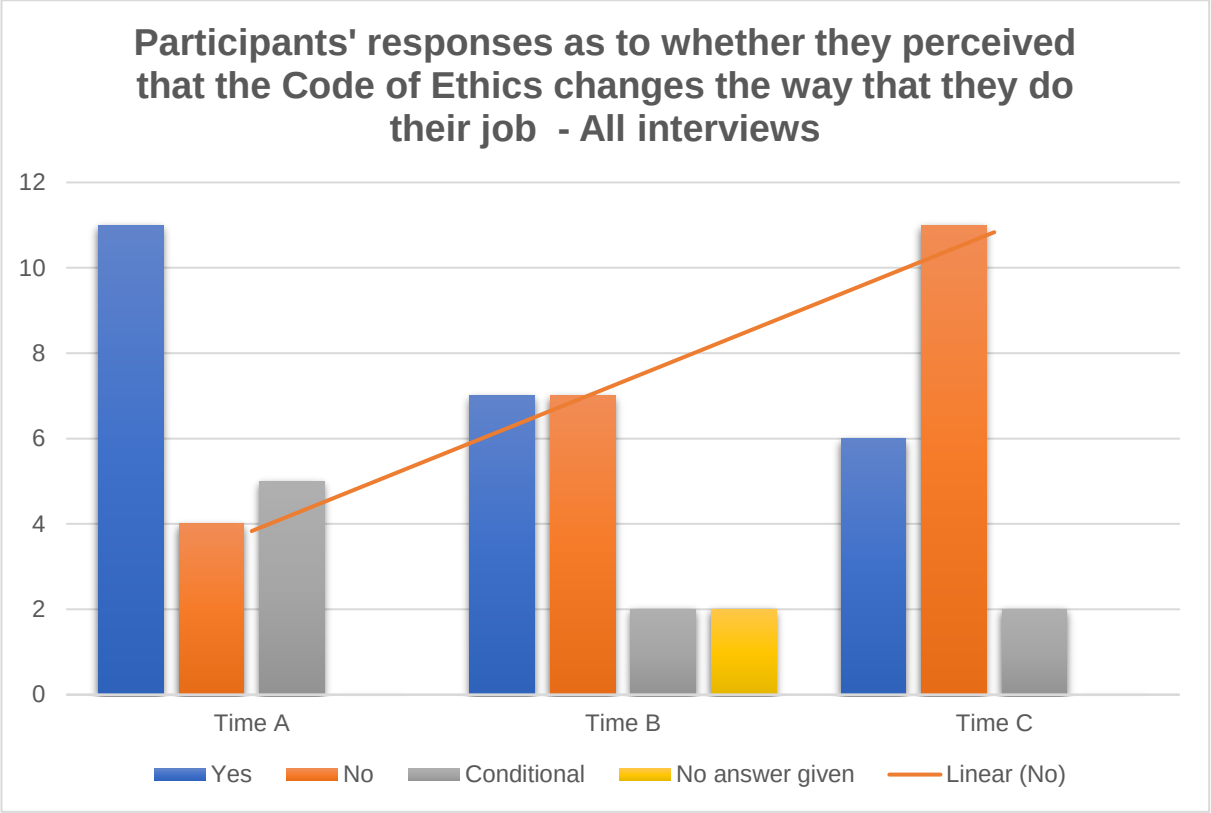
- As a result of [police] training: 17% (n3);
- As influenced by more experienced colleagues: 17% (n3);
- I've been told I must follow NDM: 11% (n2);
- Just natural, no reason for change: 11% (n2);
- No answer given: 11% (n2).

When analysing the responses that participants gave as to whether the Code of Ethics changes the way that they do their job, there was a stark different between interview times:

Table 8 – Showing participants' responses to whether they perceived that the Code of Ethics changes the way that they do their job or not. All interviews.

	Yes	**No**	**Conditional**	**No answer given**
Time A	11	4	5	0
Time B	7	7	2	2
Time C	6	11	2	0

Graph 5 – Showing participants' responses as to whether they perceived that the Code of Ethics changes the way that they do their job or not. All interviews.



There was an inverse correlation between the level of importance that participants placed on the Code and participants' length of police service by time B and C interviews. As shown by the orange trendline on Graph 5.

Many participants said that they felt that one should already be ethical when they join the police and that the Code was therefore not a factor in the way that they now behave. Some participants said that they believed that the recruitment process should identify and remove any unethical individuals, inferring that all police officers would be ethical regardless of the existence of the Code and thus negating any necessity for a Code. This was best illustrated by one participant who, when asked if he/she had changed said:

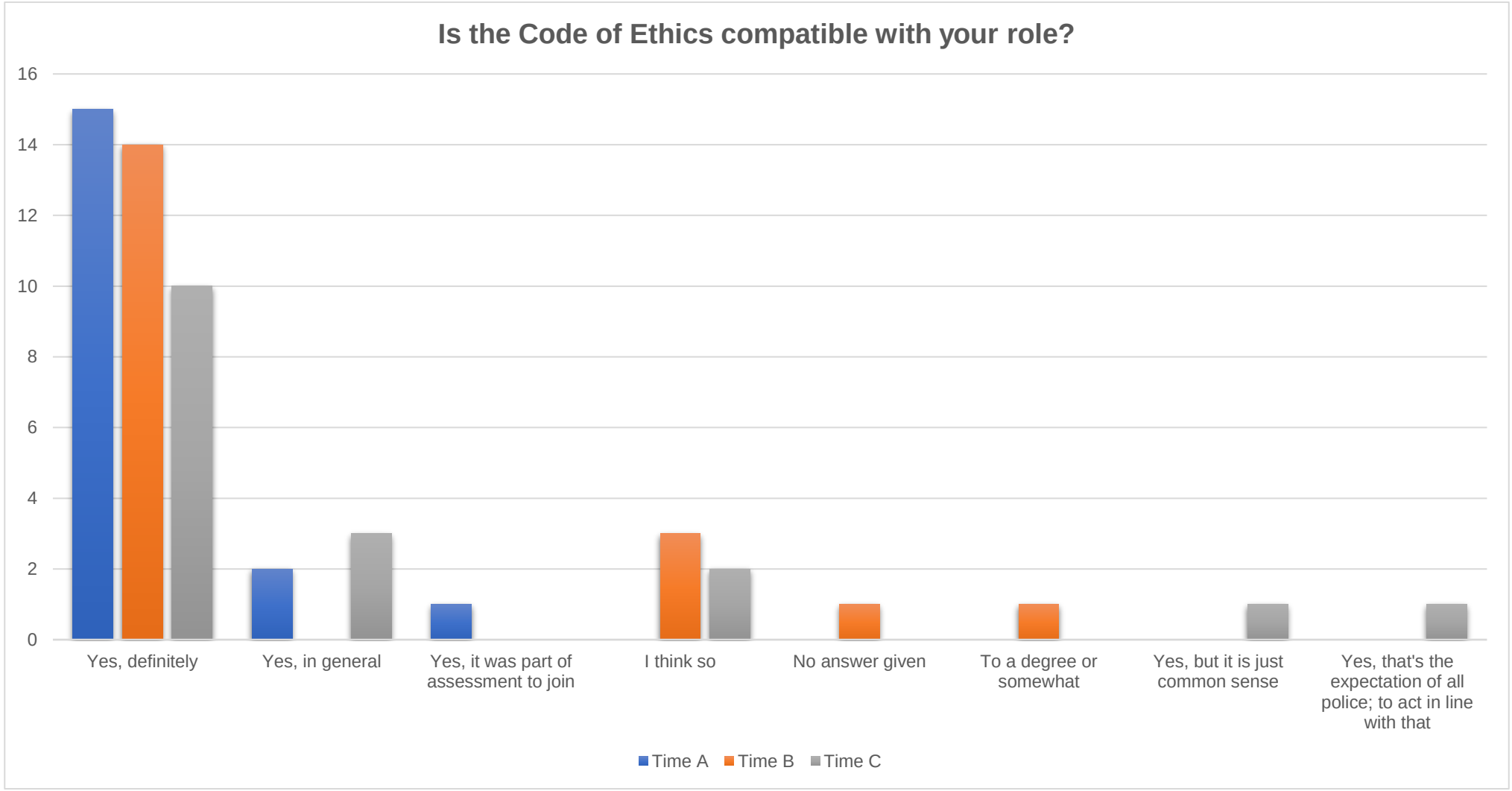
> *I adhere to those principles [the Code of Ethics] anyway, ummm, because like for me, going back to the subjectiveness of ethics, they are all, you know, for me, ethical sort of principles you should live your life in, regardless of being a police officer. It's one of those things where you want people who join the police to be upstanding people and already hit those sort of principles* (p. 12, time C)

This was further reinforced by only one participant referencing the Code throughout all interviews (as discussed in Theme 6A), and the others failing to do so in any way in their

decision-making[66]. Despite the Code of Ethics not featuring in the rationale given by any of the participants (save one, 94%; n17), almost everyone *continued* to insist that the Code was compatible with their role and important. This can be seen in Graph 6 below.

[66] Participants did reference the *NDM* more in time C interviews (which incorporates the Code of Ethics) but it was clear that the Code was not an integral part of this and their decision-making.

Graph 6 – Responses to the question 'Is the Code compatible with your role?' All interviews.



Graph 7 – Reason given by participants to explain why their decision-making had changed. All interviews.

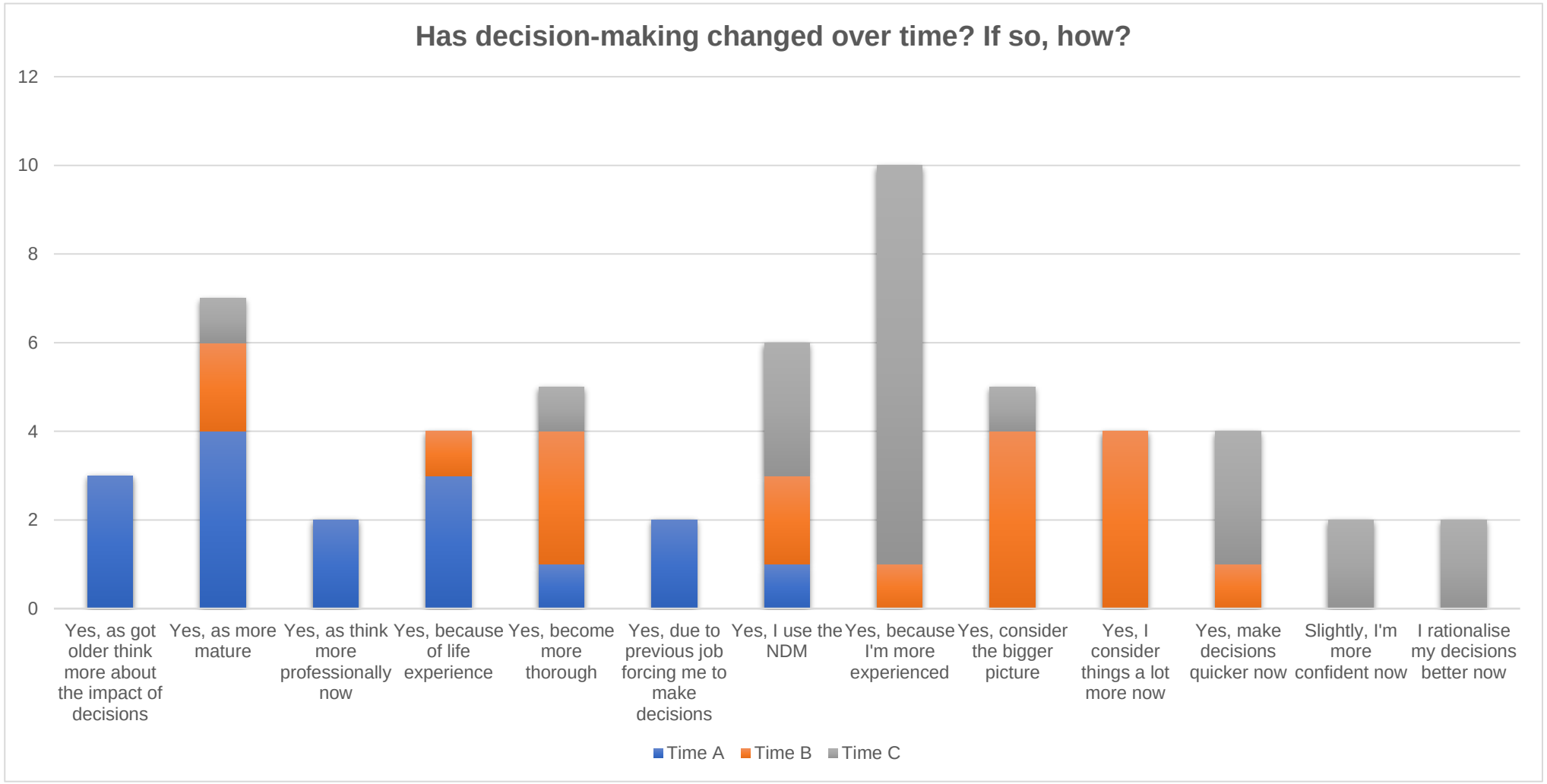


Figure 13 shows what participants consider as the basis for their decisions. Time C interviews.

By time C interviews, fewer than a third of participants (28%; n5) specifically mentioned the Code of Ethics when asked about what the term ethics meant to them. No-one was able to name the nine principles or were able to talk about every one of those nine principles when discussing what ethics meant to them (see Table 7 in Theme 6A above).

Whilst some elements in the Code of Ethics were talked about such as 'integrity', 'fairness' and 'honesty', not a single participant, in any of the interviews mentioned two of the nine principles namely 'leadership' or 'objectivity'. This correlates with a significant number of participants being unable to articulate what the Code of Ethics says in any meaningful way at every single interview-juncture. Participants said things such as:

And it's just about setting a good example to police officers; like, why should anyone else have to act in that way, if we don't. You know, we're supposed to keep the peace – be role models, I suppose – ummm, I'd say it definitely is important, 100% (p. 6, time A);

I know there are 9 principles. I could not name them all to be honest (p. 2, time B);

I can't remember them all now (p. 8, time B);

I'll be honest I can't recite them off the top of my head like all of them but yeah subconsciously it's the same as the NDM it's just about risk assessment I suppose – not the same as NDM but similar thought processes and stuff (p. 6, time C);

Is it ten principles? I think. I can't remember the headings but basically they're the core of why you make decisions but obviously a lot of out here now is NDM (p. 7, time C).

Notably, not a single person mentioned 'Code of Ethics' in their description of what 'ethics' meant to them in all time B interviews. By time C interviews, some participants openly said that they did not really remember much about the Code of Ethics (p.14; p. 17) and that they *do use the NDM* but that they just do not consider the middle bit (the Code of Ethics). When asked specifically about this, one participant said that he/she considers his/her own ethics as opposed to the force/nationally-set Code. This was however in stark contrast to another participant who said specifically that the Code of Ethics was very good as police officers become desensitised over time and it serves as a useful reminder to officers (p. 20, time B). He/she said:

> *I think yeah, sometimes I think you can become desensitised to certain situations so remembering the Code of ethics like fairness are really important – it helps to centre you on how you should be treating every person* (p. 20, time B).

A number of participants also said that they felt that the Code was a good reminder for them.

Across all interviews, no-one perceived the Code of Ethics to be incompatible with their role. Eight participants (44%) thought that the Code of Ethics changed the way that they do their role – with two (18% of total participants) of those saying that this was only the case for those who had joined before the Code, and that those individuals would now have changed. They did clarify that introducing the Code did not make any difference to those who had recently joined. One participant said: '*for people who were here before the introduction, yes, definitely. People talk about the good old days of policing, and I think it's definitely changed the way that people make decisions'* (p. 4, time C).

Eleven participants (58%) said that they felt that the Code of Ethics did not change the way that they do their job in time C interviews. This was an increase of 57% (total n7) from time B interviews with participants saying things similar to: *'yeah, so like I say it's something that the police have got to act in line with erm you know, it's like a… not so much a rule book but the public can see it and what's expected of us*' (p. 6, time C). One participant said that their own views prevail regardless of the Code saying:

> *No not really, as I said I think for a training perspective its more enforced that you need to follow the NDM, your write ups need to be following the NDM to prove you've rationalised things. The way you deal with things initially wouldn't be a massive change other than knowing that you've got to justify your decisions* (p. 10, time C).

He/she suggested that the Code is used as somewhat of an after-thought to justify decisions rather than being at the heart of the actual decision-making. On the flipside, several participants (33%; n6) said that it does not change you as these same ethics should be part of you anyway. One participant captured what a number of those participants articulated by stating:

> *…again, I would say 'no' purely because I think bringing it in as the 'Code' just puts a stamp on what it is. To do this role you need to have most – if not all – of*

> *that in you anyway so I think it makes you consciously think about it however if you're the right type of person you unconsciously do it…* (p. 17, time C).

There were some stand-out examples of where the Code of Ethics, its purpose and its use were clearly understood by officers. Notably in time C interviews, one participant (p. 5) gave a very comprehensive background about why he/she thought the code existed, and gave a mature, thoughtful and well-versed view of why it was important. That participant said:

> *I think for those officers perhaps who were here before 2014, I think [the Code] make[s] you consider more, 'is what I'm doing professional or do I want to be held to account for that decision' which I do consider when I go to something. So, for example when I mentioned earlier about not arresting and then going back and still not arresting, am I happy to be accountable for that? Do I think that was a professional decision? So I think it hasn't necessarily changed my behaviour because I wasn't here prior to it as that's being instilled into me from the beginning (p.* 5, time C).

It is impossible to say categorically as to whether this participant's view of the Code emanated from training or not, however it was clear that very few other participants had thought about it as much, nor had a clear understanding of the importance of the Code or its use within a work-setting. This strongly suggested that it was some other factor *other than training* that had led to this participant's view of the Code although this was not explored further.

4.19.3 Discussion

Participants generally believed that experience acted as the driver for becoming better at decisions rather than any other factor, for example having an in-depth knowledge of the Code of Ethics or utilising the NDM. And this was borne out by the findings. However, the question that could be asked is *what if you're getting better and better at doing it incorrectly*? That is, are those individuals becoming worse at decision-making or more regularly coming to the wrong decisions?

The fact that the importance participants placed on the Code of Ethics and their length of service inversely correlated is exceptionally concerning because this shows that the

effect of training diminishes/does not realise its intended outcomes. This suggests strongly that experience, or some other factor(s) is having a far greater effect and impact on decision-making and candidate behaviour than training or a candidate's own moral compass.

It appears that the main learning taken by participants from training was that the 'Code of Ethics is important', and that was the same line that was repeated regularly by participants despite them possessing little working knowledge of its content, and despite little to no overt use of the Code in any way by participants in their decision-making.

There are a number of possible explanations for this: participants could be considering the Code of Ethics but not talking about it (in their subconscious); this could be 'ethical drift' as Kleinman (IBID) evidenced in her studies; or could be just a matter of socialisation into the workplace as highlighted by Charman (2017, p. 127) and Caldero et al. (2018, p. 63).

It was striking that *leadership* and *objectivity* were not mentioned in any way when participants were asked to articulate what the Code of Ethics says. Of course, that does not mean that the participants are not *objective* or fail to show *leadership*, but it is notable that these are the principles by which these individuals are meant to make decisions every day as part of the Code of Ethics, yet none of them mentioned these in any way. Even more stark is that *objectivity* and *leadership* are two of the nine Nolan Principles of Public Life that apply to anyone who is a public office-holder.

Whilst only one participant (5% of overall sample) said that he/she uses his/her *own* ethics as opposed to the nationally-set Code of Ethics, this was of great concern to hear due to the potential for noble-cause corruption. This can happen where officers chose to do things which appear to be for the benefit of the greater good as discussed by Caldero et al. (2018). Further research should be carried out to ensure that this is not the case more widely.

It was positive that no-one saw the Code of Ethics as incompatible with their role. However, as highlighted by several participants, the Code of Ethics should serve as a timely reminder to all members of the police service of selflessness, objectivity, professionalism and the other six associated terms with the Code. But being a *reminder* is not enough. The Code needs to be at the heart of decision-making across the service to ensure that every single decision – small or large – is made for the ethically-right

reasons and to ensure openness, transparency, accountability, scrutiny and perhaps as importantly, consistency.

In conclusion, this sub-theme showed that the longer participants had been in the police service, the less importance they placed on the Code of Ethics. There appeared to be a general attitude that if one is not ethical, then that individual would not get through the recruitment process, and therefore one does not need to pay too much attention to the Code since all recruits are already ethical people.

Generally, all participants believed that the Code was important and relevant to their job, but were unable to explain the Code in any meaningful detail and did not appear to see it as a core part of their day-to-day work.

Participants often used their own ethics as a fallback, which can be problematic as it means there is a lack of consistency across the service, and a risk of ethical drift or desensitisation to wrongdoing.

If participants are not using the Code of Ethics, or fail to see it as fundamental to their role, then the training they received has clearly failed to have its desired effect.

4.20 Theme 6C – Off-duty conduct is considered less – officers are less aware of the Code of Ethics in terms of how this affects them off-duty as they become more experienced;

4.20.1 Background

During initial officer training, the Code of Ethics lesson in the initial weeks of training specifically includes a discussion about the impact of the Code of Ethics on officers when off-duty. One of the learning outcomes as detailed on the lesson plan states: '*you must, therefore, always think about how a member of the public may regard your behaviour, whether on or off duty*' (Learning & Development Department, 2018, p. 7).

There have also been a number of recent instances within the force in which the research was conducted (Davies, 2018) where the off-duty conduct of officers has led to the officers being sacked from the force. Some of these off-duty cases have also included officers of a senior rank (Moody, 2020) including an ongoing investigation which is high-profile and involves two of the most senior officers from the force and having allegedly occurred off-duty (BBC, 2020).

4.20.2 A diminished awareness and recognition by participants

By time C interviews, participants considered the *personal impact* of the Code of Ethics on them as individuals far less than in time A and B interviews. A small number of participants (17%; n3) mentioned that the Code of Ethics applied to both on and off-duty behaviour in time A and B interviews. One participant said:

> *…you are representing the police when, it doesn't matter if you're in the police or not, on or off duty or just finishing work at 5, you're still representing [XXX] police so the decisions you make have to be moral to [XXX] police* (p. 11, time A)

This response was given to the question 'how do you think that your decision-making process has changed over time?'. Another said: *'say you were to come across something off duty and you didn't say anything about it or didn't act at the time, then that will come into question'* (p. 18, time B).

These comments represented those made by the majority of participants. However, by time C interviews, recognition of the Code of Ethics extending to off-duty matters had all but diminished with only one participant (5% of sample) talking about off-duty conduct playing any part in the Code. That participant said: *'it's basically, the code of ethics is just basically nine points that the police sort of, how we should all behave and what we should all take into account when we're on… living you know, and on-duty'* (p. 13, time C). No-one else mentioned off-duty conduct in any way.

Of the three participants that talked about off-duty conduct in the time A interviews, two (11%) had previous police interaction in the form of being a cadet or a police staff member. However, by time B interviews, none of the three participants that mentioned off-duty conduct had any prior police employment paid or otherwise.

4.20.3 Discussion

In comparison to sub-theme 5C, officers became less aware of the potential personal impact of regulations and internal conduct legislation on them as individuals as their length of service increased, or at least did not feel this was important enough to raise during their interviews, despite several of them doing so in time A and B interviews (n3 in each interview).

The reason for this change was not explored and requires further research to fully explain. This is rather unexpected as anecdotally, one would have expected participants to have heard stories from existing officers, or by time C interview had been more aware of previous sanctions for officers for misconduct etc. Additionally, the cases that have been reported in local media are well-known; this is especially true for the ongoing case of the senior officers who are currently suspended from the force as this has featured across the BBC News network. Despite these cases, this was not mentioned in any way by time C interviews.

This could be explained by the participants now taking this for granted and becoming so ingrained in them that this was not felt as something that they needed to explain. Or potentially as described in theme 5B could also be explained by the work of Kleinman (2006, p. 73) and the 'ethical drift' analogy of deviating from ethical practice that goes unnoticed by not only others, but the individual themselves.

In conclusion, participants started off with some awareness of how the Code of Ethics should also apply to them when off-duty and not simply something that they should consider while at work. This awareness appeared to diminish as their time in the police service increased, or at least if they were aware of this, they did not think it important enough to mention in their later interviews (despite mentioning it during time A interviews).

4.21 Theme 6D – Latency of ethics committee – the force ethics' committee is known to officers in general terms, however because of the lack of understanding about what the committee does/its purpose, this does little to promote procedural justice to new officers.

4.21.1 Introduction

All student officers received an input from the lead for the Force Ethics Committee during their 26-week training programme. During that input, the purpose of the Committee, its composition, examples of previous deliberations by the Committee and how to submit an ethical dilemma to them were all discussed.

According to the College of Policing, the purpose of a force Ethics Committee should be '…*to promote the highest standards of ethical conduct, providing a focus for education into ethical issues, a source of support for others and ensuring compliance with organisational values'* (College of Policing, undated, p. 1).

Participants had not received any input on the force Ethics Committee by time A interviews but had received the aforementioned awareness session by time B and C interviews.

4.21.2 Increased awareness but lack of knowledge

Almost all of the participants (83%; n15) knew nothing about the force Ethics Committee, not even that it existed in their time A interviews. By time B interviews, there was a 50/50 split between those who had heard of, and those who had not heard of the Committee.

One participant mentioned that they remembered discussing the Committee during their time A interview for this study: *'I think you might have mentioned it during my first interview, but apart from that… no'* (p. 1, time B), but other than this standalone comment, no other participants had any knowledge of the role of the Committee.

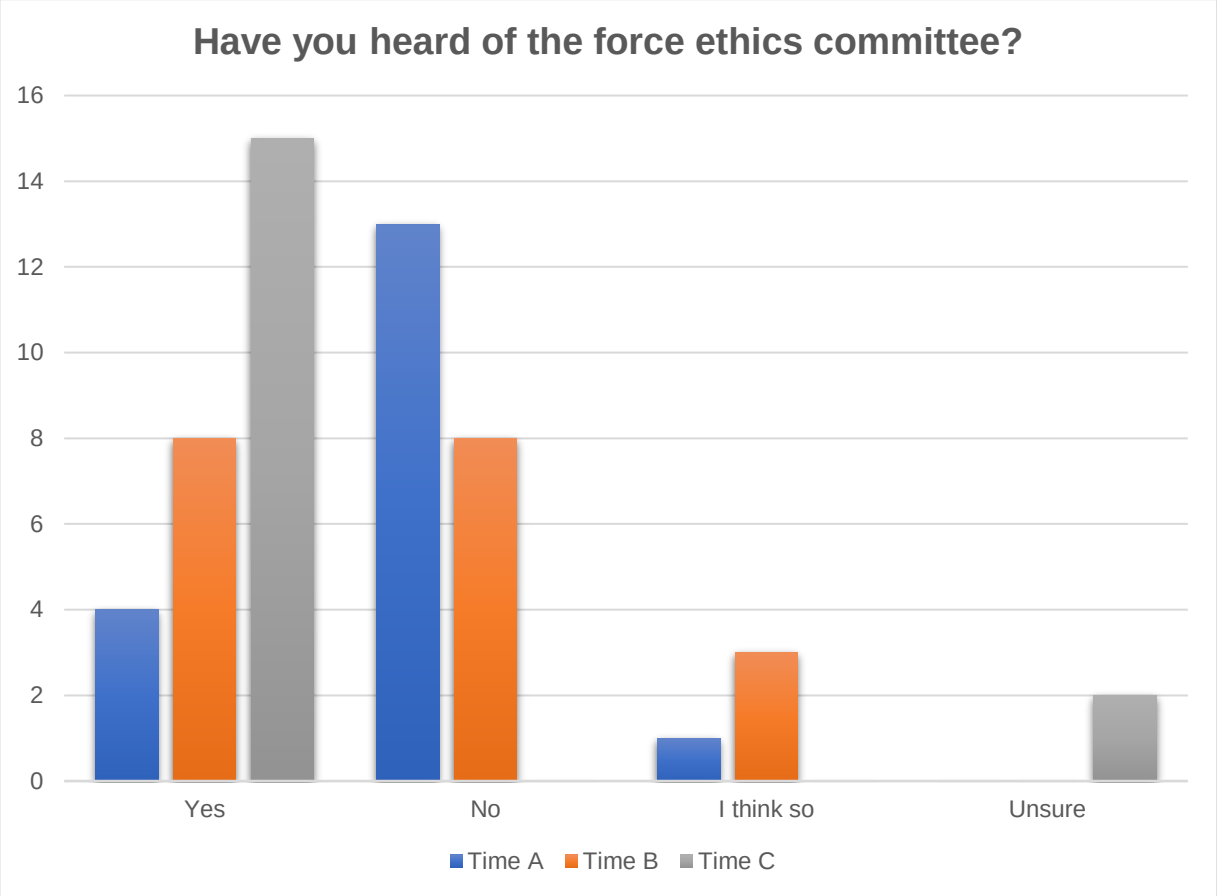
83% (n15) of participants had heard of the force Ethics Committee by time C interviews; only two (11%) said that they were *unsure* as to whether they had heard of it or not. This contrasts with 42% (n8) of participants saying that they had not heard of the Committee by time B interviews[67] and 72% (n13) having not heard of it in time A interviews.

One participant did state: *'I've seen – I think – about them on the BEAT[68]'* (p. 20, time C); and at least two participants (11%) mentioned that they only knew about the Ethics Committee because they remembered the interviewer asking about it during their previous interview and were therefore unable to elaborate as to what that Committee did, or the make-up of it as mentioned above.

[67] Participants had *not* received any additional training between time B and time C interviews.

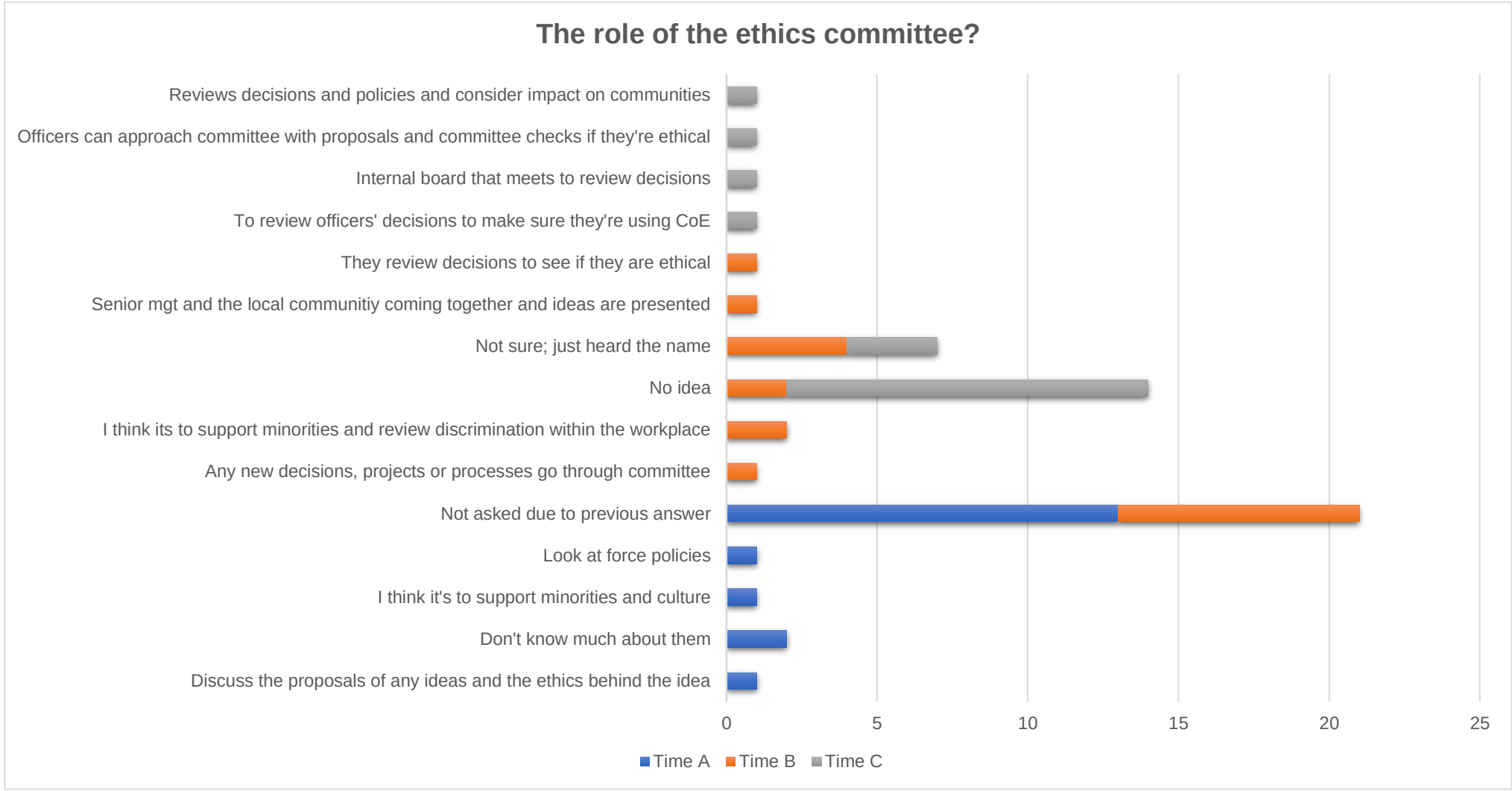
[68] The *BEAT* is the force internal intranet system.

Graph 8 – The number of participants that knew that an ethics committee existed. All interviews.

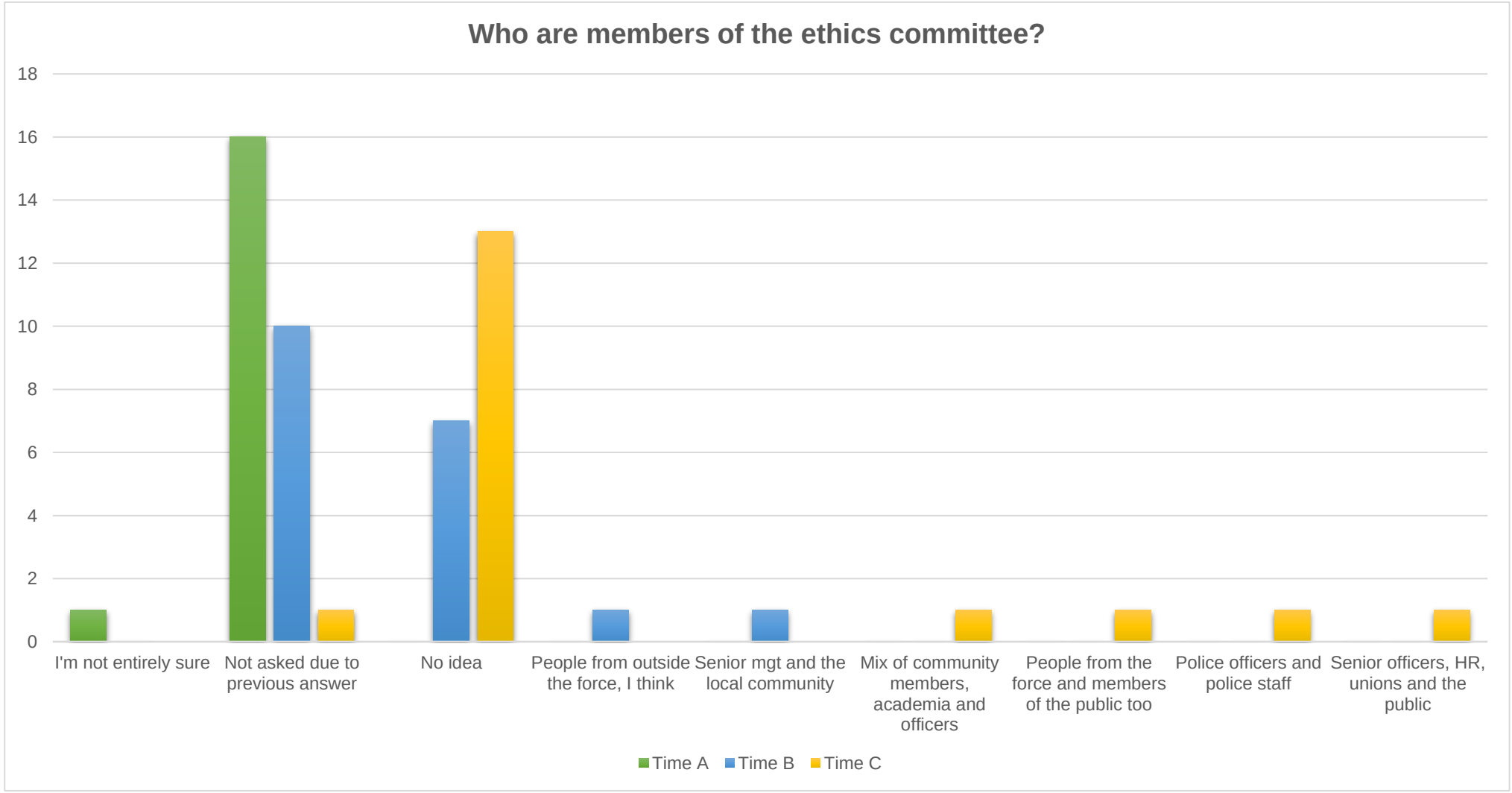


Despite almost every participant knowing that the Committee existed by time C interviews, the majority of participants 83% (n15) did not know the role of the force ethics committee, with the remaining participants guessing; some correctly, some incorrectly. Additionally, 78% (n14) of participants were unable to state who sits on the Committee (two participants successfully detailed the Committee membership). This can be seen clearly in the two graphs shown below

Graph 9 – Responses to question what is the role of the ethics committee? All interviews.



Graph 10 – Participants' knowledge about make-up of the ethics committee. All interviews.



4.21.3 Discussion

It is unsurprising that participants did not know of the existence of the Ethics Committee by the time A interviews, although it is notable that a significant number of the sample were members of the local community[69], and in any case, all participants should have researched the force beforehand prior to their entrance interview as part of their preparation. Whilst in no way representative of the wider community, it is significant that only 22% (n4) of participants said that they knew that a force Ethics Committee even existed.

The perfect split between participants who knew of the existence of the Committee (n8) and those who did not (n8) in time B interviews perhaps illustrates the efficacy of the training that was received. A few participants noted that they had received an input during their time in training about the force committee and their role, whilst others – from the same class – stated that they had never heard of it. As mentioned in the background section, an input from the force lead for the Ethics Committee is timetabled as a session for all new officers, and everyone in this sample received that input. This is not an assessment of the legitimacy of the Committee nor its success or failure in promoting ethical conduct in the force overall, and there could be a number of reasons for this lack of knowledge and understanding amongst participants. However, it is clear that the role of the Committee needs to come alive and penetrate training, and the force as a whole far more.

Greater numbers of the sample knew about the Committee's existence by time C interviews (83%; n15) than in time B interviews (42%; n8). This was despite no further training having taken place. It is therefore inferred that the knowledge about the Committee had either derived from having seen information on the force intranet (as evidenced by participant 20 in the findings above), the participants knowing about some change as a result of Committee recommendations, or by other officers talking about it, or potentially all three which is a positive thing.

Whilst this might not seem significant as a standalone finding, it does have a potential bearing on the wider culture within the force and synergy with the findings in Theme 3B around procedural justice. As highlighted in a study by Wimbush and Shepard (1994) in the world of business, the behaviour of employees is greatly influenced by those employees' perception of how ethical the policies and practices are within the

[69] 'Local community' is taken to mean living anywhere within the force area.

organisation (p. 645). It is therefore contended that knowing of the existence of the Ethics Committee, of the Committee membership, the types of things discussed and the referral mechanism into that Committee is critical in influencing the behaviour of those employees and the wider perception of procedural justice within the force.

In conclusion, participants were generally aware of the force Ethics Committee by their final interview but had minimal understanding of the Committee or its role. The Committee needs to find a way to increase awareness of their existence and purpose, and for their importance to resonate more with new recruits.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 General discussion

The basis of policing in England & Wales has always been considered as 'policing with consent' – with Peelian principle number 7 being at the heart of the police's work; '…the police are the public and the public are the police', Peel (1829), as cited by UK Government (2012). In order to enable the police to exercise their powers, the principal requirement is legitimacy, and first and foremost to becoming legitimate is public trust and confidence. This has perhaps never been so important with events of June 2020 around the world following the death of George Floyd in Minnesota and the subsequent worldwide *Black Lives Matter* movement. The United Kingdom also experienced an unprecedented response by the public to Floyd's death and subsequent UK-wide protests, urging police restraint, transparency and accountability. The public need to be satisfied and reassured that the police are undertaking their work with diligence, impartiality, fairness and above all in an ethical way. MacVean, Spindler and Solf (2012) cited this exact point that 'given the nature of policing to enforce the law fairly and justly, almost every decision made by police officers and staff has to be ethically accountably [sic]' (p. 181). As highlighted by Charman (2017, p. 28), '…if there is a gap in the prescribed police training and the necessary skills, then the normative and cultural practices which are passed down from one generation of the police to another will, in the absence of anything more useful and relevant, be allowed to flourish'.

One thing that is certain is that policing has changed and continues to change; both from the way that police officers are recruited and the way in which training is delivered to those new recruits. Despite significant consultation and some research in specific areas, neither the College of Policing or any force across England & Wales has conducted research in this critical field of how the training delivered to those new recruits, affects the way in which they make ethical decisions in their everyday work. The purpose of this study, as highlighted in the introduction and methodology, has been to produce a well-evidenced piece of research to act as a catalyst for further discussion amongst chief officers of police throughout the United Kingdom and beyond. As highlighted by Chan (2013), 'police reforms are complex…researchers must take seriously their responsibility to produce knowledge that is credible and defensible' (p. 511): to the best of the researcher's ability, he has ensured throughout this thesis that the knowledge and evidence obtained within the study is strong, credible and defensible and therefore of significant use to senior leadership teams throughout policing and potentially the wider world of business.

There are so many potential variables at play when reviewing and analysing the way in which an individual or collective group make decisions. As presented in the methodology section within this study, as many of these variables as possible were removed by initially seeking participants' views on ethics, and discussing ethical dilemmas at the earliest stage in their careers within the police service. Identical questions were then asked of those participants at different stages throughout their service in order to ascertain whether these views had changed; the principal variable being length of service. One critical question that remained at the forefront of the researcher's mind during this study was *'so what?'.* The ultimate aim was to ensure that the researcher provided chief officers and learning and development departments with a strong empirical basis for decisions around how training is delivered to their new and existing frontline officers. As highlighted by Richards (2003) 'without training and professionalism… [police officers] are in danger of doing more public damage through their interventions than would have resulted without such interventions, which is contrary to the police mission' (p. 73). My clear hope is that this study will ultimately serve to positively affect the service that is delivered to the public.

5.2 Key findings (major themes)

This study had three major aims that it sought to achieve:

iv. To examine the efficacy of initial police training on the way in which student officers subsequently make decisions;
v. To examine whether there is alignment between policy intent and practice around usage of the College of Policing Code of Ethics as part of student officer decision-making; and
vi. To examine whether the decision-making of student police officers' changes between three specific time-points (participants first joining the police service; immediately after initial police training, and six months later after becoming independent patrol officers).

In each respect, these aims have been achieved, and further qualitative findings were also discovered within six major themes and fourteen sub-themes. The major themes can be summarised as:

Theme 1 **The Process of training that leads to decision-making**

The training of ethics in initial police training did not affect how ethical subsequent decision-making was.

Theme 2 **Culture & Decision-making**

Non-supervisory, experienced officers were more influential on student officer decision-making than any other factor; officers grew in their feelings towards 'public-duty' as they became more experienced, and new officers felt able to change their decisions without fear of peers perceiving this as a weakness.

Theme 3 **The ethics of decision-making**

The use of the National Decision Model (NDM) diminishes as officers grow in their experience; and the force does not explain the rationale for their decision-making in the same way that they expect their officers to do so.

Theme 4 **Top down and bottom-up accountability – re. Discussions with managers/feedback etc.**

Supervisors rarely discuss decision-making with their new officers, and that this potentially leads to new officers seeking greater reassurance/ratification of their decisions more regularly.

Theme 5 **The tension between personal morality, politics and force policy**

New officers became more police-centric in their views as their experience in the police service increased; new officers were confused about the divergence of the terms 'ethics/morals' and 'the Law' and how they can co-exist; and some new officers felt hamstrung over the personal

effect of their decisions on them personally, leading to them making decisions for the wrong reasons.

Theme 6 **Where are the ethics?**

Ethical decision-making was not overt in new officers' decision-making as training had intended; the Code of Ethics featured less in new officers' decision as their experience increased; new officers were less aware of the Code of Ethics and how this affects their off-duty conduct as they became more experienced; and there was a lack of understanding of the purpose of force Ethics Committee and what that Committee does in the force.

The themes and sub-themes show that the findings are wide-ranging. These findings met the research aims. As well as providing a strong evidence base for recommendations to the service, it creates a new theoretical basis not only for police training but also broader analysis of the efficacy of police training in ethical decision-making and is a strong foundation for further research.

5.3 Limitations

This study examined new, student police officers' decision-making and the efficacy of the training that they received on how they make their decisions, at three key junctures in their early policing careers. The study did not seek to examine the efficacy of training in terms of the pedagogy deployed within the training setting, nor the standard of that training. Moreover, it focussed on understanding how effective the training was at ensuring that the National Decision Model (NDM) was used ubiquitously amongst those student officers. Additionally, the study did not seek to judge the effectiveness of the NDM as a decision-making model.

Whilst the findings inevitably gave a broader overview of organisational decision-making and how more experienced officers make decisions, its focus was not to determine how the organisation or other officers go about making decisions. However, one of the sub-themes (sub-theme 3B) did identify that organisational decision-making needs to be better-explained, and sub-theme 2A did show that student officers tended to follow their experienced colleagues more than the training that they received. One could therefore

infer how more experienced officers make decisions by looking at the data in sub-theme 2A; the purpose of this finding however was the basis of student officers' decision-making, not that of their experienced colleagues.

Finally, this study does not profess to give clear solutions of how to improve new officers' decision-making for every individual force, rather it identified that the problems exist and that further research to understand what works elsewhere is needed in order to form robust recommendations for improvements that are tailored for the needs of each individual force.

5.4 Recommendations

There are many practical implications that police forces, the College of Policing, Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should consider from this study. The most pertinent are:

1. All forces across England & Wales should adopt the College of Policing Code of Ethics and National Decision Model. This should be the sole basis for ethics and values for every force. This would create unanimity across forces in terms of training and recruitment, ensuring all forces maintain and work to the same standards.

2. Recruitment departments dealing with new officers' recruitment should consider how to specifically focus on attracting, recruiting and retaining those who have ethics that are in line with the College of Policing Code of Ethics, as this is not something that can generally be taught or imparted onto new officers in a training environment;

3. A comprehensive review of what training is currently given to student officers around ethics and ethical decision-making should be undertaken by the College of Policing. This would assist forces in understanding their current provision and importantly, the efficacy of that training in meeting policy intent. It would also create harmony across policing.

4. Ethics and specifically the Code of Ethics, need to play a more significant role in *ongoing* training within forces. The training should focus on the reasons *why*

behind decisions and how one comes to those decisions rather than discussing what is the correct or incorrect answer. This should be something that happens on at least a biennial basis. Vignettes/ethical dilemmas should be considered as well as practical-based training;

5. Practical-based training should specifically examine *why* the student officer came to their chosen outcome, and not just look at whether they came to the correct outcome. This will ensure that knowledge from within a classroom-based setting is applied to practical activities and that this application is done in the correct way and for the correct reasons. There should be a specific focus on ethics, morality and how these juxtapose with applying the Law. This could be achieved thorough a debrief of the practical activity, and taking a collective view of participants' decisions across practical scenarios to ensure consistency and triangulate findings;

6. Supervisors at all levels need to proactivity discuss decision-making with their staff and give their staff regular feedback on decision-making, as opposed to solely doing this reactively post-incident. Reference should be made regularly to the National Decision Model and Code of Ethics, and should be given when the outcome is both good and bad and not just focus on ‘learning’ when there has been a perceived negative outcome;

7. Forces should be upfront with new recruits about what the job is about and the expectations on them, for example whether or not they will give references. This is particularly important for millennials who may not see a role in the police as a career for life. This is of great importance because three participants mentioned that they saw the force not providing a reference as a breach of mutual respect/trust between the force and the individual. This problem could be mitigated easily by managing expectations from the outset.

8. All forces need to consider how well they explain forcewide decisions, as this could have an impact on how procedural justice is perceived by their officers/staff. Forces should explain the rationale for forcewide decisions using the NDM-format. By explaining decisions in this way, the force would set the standard for all staff by 'practising what they preach' and utilising the NDM in an identical way as to how they expect their own officers/staff to make decisions as individuals;

9. Forces need to consider how best to communicate with their own staff internally. It is worth forces and other people-based services noting that posters that are placed in the workplace are noticed by staff (this was mentioned by almost 30% of participants). Different mediums, including these more traditional methods – as oppose to digital channels – still remain relevant as a visual rhetoric to emphasise the importance of principal organisational messages.

5.5 Theoretical implications

The review of literature showed that there was a lack of academic research, even in the most general terms, about the efficacy of training on ethical decision-making. If one narrowed the parameters to include only criminal justice or policing, the amount of literature contracted further. Where research existed, it was US-based and often incomplete or only a sub-topic of a larger piece of research. Within UK policing, the literature was non-existent.

This study therefore adds an important evidence base, showing how effective the current training provision within internal UK policing is. It also indirectly provides further evidence of how supervisors manage their staff within a policing-setting. Furthermore, the study adds to the already substantial evidence-base that exists within academic research on 'culture' within the police service, but specifically from the angle of how that culture affects the decision-making of new, student police officers in UK policing.

This thesis adds further evidence to the existing methodological, theoretical basis around the use of vignettes within policing-based research (as mentioned in the methodology chapter). The vignettes in this study (presented as ethical dilemmas) added significant value to the research, triangulating and enriching the responses that participants gave to the regular, semi-structured interview questions. Vignettes are worthy of consideration in future police-based, qualitative research.

Finally, this research also provides the police service with a definition of 'ethical drift' and illustrates that this could be happening completely unbeknown to the service, to the public and even the individuals who themselves are 'drifting'. Ethical drift has not been previously researched to such an extent in a UK-based police setting.

5.6 Further research

5.6.1 Using the data from this study in a different way

The content of these interviews could be especially useful for several different types of analysis, not just thematic. Whilst exceptionally interesting from a thematic perspective – whether or not considering training – they also show a lot about the style, personality, thoughts and feelings of officers after just joining the service. Whilst socialisation within the workplace has been considered in this study, more in-depth analysis would be a crucial area on which one could conduct further research using this raw interview data. This would be particularly worthy of further examination due to the longitudinal nature of the study which would enable a researcher to identify any changes in officers as a result of socialisation at two key junctures after initial police training.

5.6.2 The effect of frontline police supervisors on their staff

This study (specifically sub-theme 4A) identified that supervisors did not discuss decision-making in any meaningful way with their staff. More research is needed in general on the effect of supervisors on their staff within a policing context. This was highlighted by Engel & Peterson (2013), but the body of research in this area is still limited. More research is required to understand how to enhance supervision in order to have the greatest positive impact on frontline staff, especially those with less experience (p. 400).

5.6.3 Triangulating the findings with the views of experienced officers

A mixed methods approach was initially considered for this study. This approach would have incorporated a forcewide survey to also seek the views of more experienced officers within the same force and compare those views with the views of the student officers that participated in this study. Time constraints meant that this was not possible. However, it would be useful for this to be undertaken to compare the views of these participants with the wider workforce and understand whether the findings from student officers were similar or different from those of their more experienced colleagues.

5.6.4 Further research on the same topic utilising the same participants in the future

It would be very interesting and theoretically useful if this study were to be repeated using the same questions and same participants at different junctures throughout their service,

for example five years; ten years and so forth. This would create a truly longitudinal evidence-base in order to ascertain what other factors, if any, affect those participants' decision-making over an increased length of time.

5.7 Final Conclusions

This thesis does not profess to be the bearer of all answers. Moreover, it provides a solid evidence-base for police forces throughout England & Wales and beyond. It is important for those forces to note the research findings and ensure that the way in which they train their staff – both in initial police training and subsequent continued professional development – puts ethics and ethical decision-making at the very heart of the syllabuses. But equally important, that they consider their own evidence-base and what this is telling them about the efficacy of training within their own forces. As cited by Delattre et al. (2011) 'ethics learned in an academy will be forgotten if field training officers tell new police officers that it is irrelevant to the streets and to real police work' (p. 160). Without placing ethics at the very heart of *all* types of training, forces risk losing the legitimacy that has been the very foundation of policing since the early ninetieth century during the establishment of the Metropolitan police service.

Junior, frontline officers regularly make life-changing or at least, life-defining decisions for members of the public, but these are made in what Engel & Peterson (2013) described as low visibility situations where there is no supervision and the officers themselves make the ultimate decision on what should happen to an individual. It is an exceptionally worrying fact that those most junior, as cited by Charman (2017), are those with whom the largest amount of discretion lies on a day-to-day basis within policing and remarkably, that the training they receive does not equip them to be able to effectively rationalise in a sustained way due to cultural influence.

If ethics is seen as 'just another part of training', as one would teach for example the Theft Act 1968 or some other legalistic aspect (notwithstanding these being important), then ethics will be seen by those receiving the training as a standalone, tick box for policing, rather than a critical piece of policing knowledge and understanding that underpins everything that they do throughout their careers. As Caldero et al. (2018) stated 'ethics cannot exist as a vaporous, universal set of beliefs taught at training and subsequently abandoned'. The work of Neyroud (2019) highlighted that simply publishing a Code of Ethics or putting staff on a training course is insufficient, and

concurs with the findings of this research. It is impossible to expect homogeneity in terms of officers' ethics and moral standards solely by delivering a course on ethics or sessions on the Code of Ethics at initial training: it is critical for forces to embed ethics into every part of their work – from recruitment, to promotion, to discipline standards and in management decision-making. When ethics is at the heart of all of these key areas of business, officers throughout the force will 'socialise' into an organisation which places ethical decision-making as its very core.

Integrating the Code of Ethics into regular top-up, or continuous professional development days is critical to ensuring that ethics become more of an everyday part of a police officer's life. As Johnson & Cox (2014) stated 'quick thinking and good judgment are at the forefront of ethical practice'. This is of equal importance within the UK, as despite UK police officers using force far less than their American counterparts and unequivocally less lethal force, public confidence in policing is critical – and the public need to know that force is only used when absolutely necessary and in a justified, open and transparent way.

Almost twenty years ago, Oakley (1994) talked about training not being able to achieve high status within police force (p. 46), and this is despite that training '…often [being] cited as both the problem of, and the solution to, a variety of policing crises', Charman (2017, p. 65). Perhaps the service therefore needs to move from thinking of this acquisition of skills and education that their new officers gain as 'training', and more to considering it as 'education' – equipping their officers and staff to make the right decision based on strong ethics, values and education instilled into them throughout their in-house course and their educational background prior to formally joining the force.

5.7.1 Getting the right people through the door in the first place

Whilst training is always important and an arguably critical factor in ethical decision-making, as suggested by Cole & Smith (1996), 'in recruitment and hiring, the focus should be on choosing employees with high ethical standards' (p. 896). Delattre et al. (2011) also concurred that recruitment is very important to ethics albeit not something that is easy to achieve. These authors suggest psychological and personality tests potentially help to achieve this.

Over twenty years ago, the world of business identified that training is not enough; the individuals that you recruit must have a strong degree of morality and ethics from the outset, which will be strengthened by training, in order to create a workforce which makes ethical decisions throughout the organisation. Fritzsche & Oz's (2007) work showed how one's existing values have a significant impact on those individuals' behaviour.

In the case of police training, Delattre (2011) found that 'officers can be properly trained and culturally sensitive but go wrong because they are poorly supervised and subjected to corrupting peer pressure or because they have weak or bad character… mere sensitivity is no substitute for [good character]…'. Goff & Rau (2020) as cited by Sherman (2020) also specifically talked about recruitment being fundamental. They took this further by saying that people who would make bad decisions in American policing can be identified by testing even before they are appointed (p. 3), emphasising the critical importance of hiring *people who are already good* rather than trying to train people to be/think this way.

5.7.2 The teaching of ethics and the question of whether ethics can be learnt

Geary & Sims (1994) posed the simple question 'can ethics be learned' in their 1994 paper. Despite this looking specifically at pedagogy, their results were very clear – '…affirmative…if the task of ethics education is to achieve mastery of factual knowledge related to codes of ethics. The answer is more controversial if the task is defined as the ability to make careful and well-considered ethical judgements' (p. 15). The results of this study compare positively to that of Geary & Sims (1994) and with the findings of Bowen (2004) who conducted research at a top pharmaceutical company in the United States. However, as for shaping one's ethics and making someone *more* ethical, both this study and Bowen's (2004) study seems to suggest that this is not possible if someone is already unethical.

This research has in some ways shown that the words of Aristotle as cited by Thomson & Tredennick (1976) perhaps still ring true that 'it is a regrettable fact that discussion and instruction are not effective in all cases [when trying to teach ethics]; just as a piece of land has to be prepared beforehand if it is to nourish the seed, so the mind of the pupil has to be prepared in its habits if it is to enjoy and dislike the right things…' (p. 336).

5.7.3 The call to action for senior police leaders

The training of ethics, whether standalone or ongoing, will not suffice. As Bacon (2013) discussed in his chapter on 'culture' in the book *The Future of Policing*, cultural attitudes within the service do not change just because of improved recruitment processes, or because of perfectly designed training programmes, or due to sanctions for those who step outside of the rules. Culture, and the way in which individuals in the organisation become and remain ethical in their decision-making, change positively because of all of these things combined. Strong, ethical supervision; regular refresher training on ethics and diversity; the use of ethical dilemmas in the workplace; and consistent policies and procedures with ethical safeguards (such as ethics committees) all have an effect. And this is important, not just because a positive culture within an organisation creates a good workplace and positive outcomes for communities, but because of the more sinister potential that can gain traction when negative cultures pervade the service. This study has shown how powerful non-supervisory, experienced officers can be in changing the mindsets of junior colleagues: this can be a positive thing when that culture is untainted and welcomes open criticism, but as evidenced throughout business, finance and social sciences in general, this can lead to negative outcomes such as deviations from ethical codes and at worst noble cause corruption. As evidenced by Costa (1988), for the most part ethical and legal lapses are the stuff of average people who know better, not truly sinister people with sinister intentions.

In many respects, this study creates more questions than it answers; and that is its intention. But one of the central drivers behind this research is creating a solid evidence base for UK policing. In a recent podcast entitled *Rogue Cops*, Professor Robin Engle (2021) conducted a study on implicit bias training within the police service and found that the training – despite being heralded as important for all police – had little impact on behaviour. However crucially, she further found that decisions senior managers made about how to influence police behaviour are often done on what she described as '…hunch, and often devoid of evidence'. This illustrates how important it is to have a body of evidence on which forces can draw when making decisions about the way in which their staff are trained.

It is therefore incumbent upon chief officers and police and crime commissioners to ensure that ethics form a part of everyday business. And this research creates a firm evidence base that shows that solely adding an ethics module to initial police training or giving an input at a training day for non-supervisory, experienced officers, falls

insurmountably short of that requirement. It is only with this truly all-encompassing approach to ethics, that one will be able to draw strong causal links between desired and actual outcomes in terms of embedding ethics and ethical decision-making throughout policing in England and Wales.

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Figure 14 – List of themes & subthemes

6.1 Theme 1: The Process of training that leads to decision-making	
Subtheme 1A: Classroom ethics	**Summary:** The teaching of ethics in the classroom leads only to knowing about ethics and not making individuals more ethical.
6.2 Theme 2: Culture & Decision-making	
Subtheme 2A: Experienced colleagues trump training	**Summary:** The most significant driver behind decision-making by new police officers is their experienced colleagues alongside whom they work rather than training, their own ethics or any other factors.
Subtheme 2B: Officers become public servants	**Summary:** Officers grow organically through experience, training and regular dealing with the public in terms of their feeling of 'duty' as a public servant with this featuring more greatly as they become more experienced.
Subtheme 2C: Changed your mind? No problem!	**Summary:** There is a general forcewide acceptance of a changed decision/opinion; officers are confident that if they do change their mind, their peers will not perceive this to be a weakness.
6.3 Theme 3: The ethics of decision-making	
Subtheme 3A: NDM use diminishes	**Summary:** The basis for decision-making has diminishing returns (NDM is not used more than 33%) - similar to 'drift' (training drift).
Subtheme 3B: The *why* needs explaining	**Summary:** Forcewide decisions are communicated well with staff, but the reasons behind those decisions less-so which may affect individuals' decision-making detrimentally and/or affect their view of procedural justice within the force.
6.4 Theme 4: Top down and bottom-up accountability - re. Discussions with managers/feedback etc.	
Subtheme 4A: Reality is trumping the process	**Summary:** Supervisors rarely discuss decision-making with officers, resulting in those officers being more dependent on seeking advice or ratification of their decisions.

6.5 Theme 5: The tension between personal morality, politics and force policy	
Subtheme 5A: Police versus the public	**Summary:** Overall participants start very clear in their decision making but move to a more 'police-strong' view - culture trumping their initial views perhaps (see 'should police apologise' and 'considerations for ED3').
Subtheme 5B: Ethics versus the law	**Summary:** There is confusion over ethics/morality versus the law and how these two things co-exist and work together.
Subtheme 5C: The personal impact of decisions	**Summary:** Some officers feel hamstrung by concerns about the effect of their decisions on them as individuals, which can have an overriding bearing on the decision to which they come.
6.6 Theme 6: Where are the ethics?	
Subtheme 6A: A hidden ethical basis?	**Summary:** Ethical decision-making is not overt in participants' decision-making rationale; that is not to say they are unethical moreover ethics is not the 'golden thread' that was envisaged in training.
Subtheme 6B: Use of the Code of Ethics	**Summary:** The Code features less in participants' decisions as they get more experienced; whilst the term is mentioned, knowledge of the Code in any meaningful detail is limited.
Subtheme 6C: Off-duty conduct is considered less	**Summary:** Officers are less aware of the Code of Ethics in terms of how this affects them off-duty as they become more experienced.
Subtheme 6D: Latency of ethics committee	**Summary:** The force ethics' committee is known to officers in general terms, however because of the lack of understanding about what the committee does/its purpose, this does little to promote procedural justice to new officers.

Figure 15 – Code of Ethics

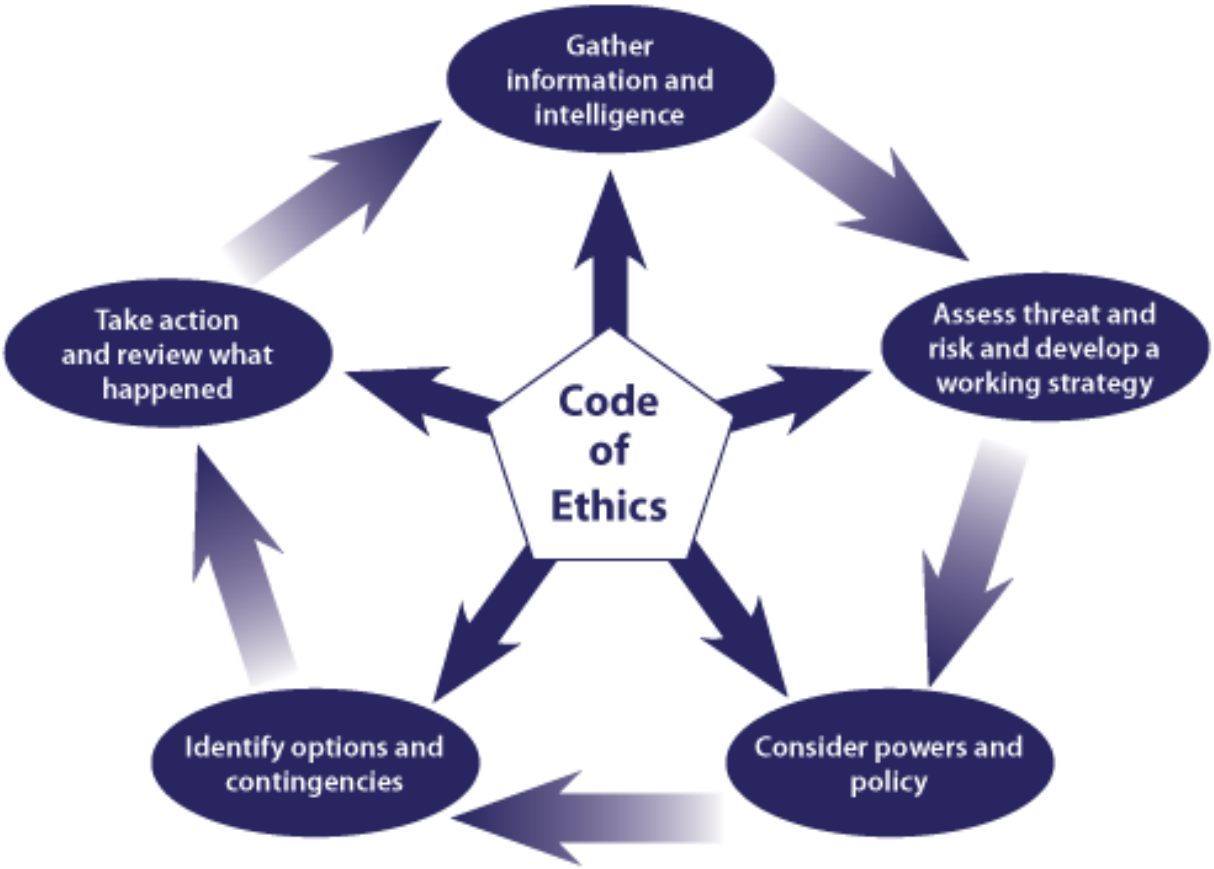

Table 9 – Breakdown of participants' age, gender and previous policing experience

Identifier	Age	Previous police experience?	Sex	Number of interviews participated?
Participant 1	31	No	Male	3
Participant 2	26	No	Male	3
Participant 3	20	No	Male	3
Participant 4	20	No	Male	3
Participant 5	21	Yes - Special Constable	Female	3
Participant 6	21	No	Male	3
Participant 7	24	Yes - PCSO	Male	3
Participant 8	29	No	Female	3
Participant 9	30	No	Male	3
Participant 10	21	No	Female	3
Participant 11	23	Yes - Police Cadet	Female	3
Participant 12	23	Yes - Special Constable	Male	3
Participant 13	29	No	Female	3
Participant 14	23	No	Male	3
Participant 15	19	Yes - PCSO	Female	2
Participant 16	22	No	Male	3
Participant 17	23	No	Male	3
Participant 18	23	Yes - Police Staff	Male	3
Participant 19	25	No	Female	2

Table 10 – Number of participants that took part at each interview juncture

Interview	Number of participants
Time A	18
Time B	19
Time C	18

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Project: Examining how internal training affects ethical decision-making for police officers.

The purpose of the initiative

XXX Police are working with the University of Central Lancashire to conduct research surrounding police officer decision-making. Specifically, whether the internal police training officers receive in relation to ethics, affects the way in which decisions are made.

This stage of the research is to interview police officers who have recently joined XXX Police. The interviews will take place on a one to one basis. It will explore your opinion as to how people make decisions and the role of ethics in that process. In this way, XXX Police will understand the wider context around officer decision-making and how initial police training affects this process.

Why have I been invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a recently recruited member of the XXX Police force.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is important you understand your participation is entirely voluntary *and it is a personal decision whether you take part. Taking part, or conversely not taking part in this interview (either as an individual or as part of a focus group), will have no bearing in relation to your role in the future. As it is* planned to conduct three interviews with new recruits as they progress through the early stages of his / her career, you may be asked to take part in other interviews. Explicit consent must be given separately for each interview. Also for each interview the same standards apply i.e. it is voluntary and there are no ramifications to you if you decide to take part or not take part.

Can I withdraw my data after my participation?

Yes you can. If you take part you will be given a participant number as we record all data anonymously. If you want to withdraw your data at a future date you will need to provide us with that number so we can identify it is your information. Your data will then be destroyed

confidentially if you make this decision. As your data will be merged with other interview data when the project is written up, it is important you let us know before the 31st May 2019. Please contact Prof. Kirby on the contact details provided below.

Are there any risks or costs associated with the activity?

There are no risks or out of pocket costs associated with this activity.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to initially read and sign the consent form to confirm you are providing informed consent to take part. At this time you will be provided with a participant number to identify you anonymously. You will be given a copy of this consent form. You will then be asked a number of questions in relation to the decision-making process and about the role of ethics in this process. We ask that you answer these as honestly as you can. The questions are phrased in such a way that you can also include points that you feel are important, even though you may not be explicitly asked about them. The process should take no longer than an hour to complete.

If you choose to take part and later agree to take part in a further interview you will be asked to use the same participant number.

What are the possible benefits of participating?

Your participation and personal experiences will contribute valuable information to be used in the evaluation and improvement of police training and ultimately to police services.

Will other people know what I have said – what is the procedure in relation to confidentiality?

All information collected during the interview will be stored anonymously in line with the University of Central Lancashire Data Protection Code of Practice and GDPR. All data collected, as part of this study, will be kept securely in electronic form for 5 years, and then be destroyed. The hard copy of your consent form will be kept securely by the University of Central Lancashire and destroyed after 5 years.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this research will be available to any participant should you wish to view them, by e-mailing XXX . Results will also be published on XXX Police website.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The funding for this initiative has been provided by XXX Police although the data will be analysed under the supervision of the University of Central Lancashire.

Who has reviewed the study?

Prof. Stuart Kirby

Professor of Policing and Criminal Investigation

School of Forensic and Applied Sciences

Maudland Building, MB62

+44 (0) 1772 89 4176

skirby1@uclan.ac.uk

What do I do if I have any issues or complaints?

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact University Officer for Ethics (OfficerforEthics@uclan.ac.uk) or Prof. Stuart Kirby (+44 (0) 1772 89 4176; skirby1@uclan.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking time to read this participant information sheet.

7.2 Appendix B – Interview Consent Form

Title: Examining how internal training affects ethical decision-making for police officers.

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

By taking part in the study, you are agreeing that you understand the information provided and agree to the following:

☐ I confirm that I have read and have understood the Participant Information Sheet dated for the above study. I have been given the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and (if asked) have had these answered to my satisfaction.

☐ I understand that my involvement in the study will remain anonymous. Once my responses have been submitted, my data can only be withdrawn if I supply my identification number prior to my information being analysed and written up for the dissertation (31st May 2019). Should I ask to withdraw my data it will be destroyed securely. Any detail that might identify me will not be included in any reports or publications produced from the study.

☐ I understand that I can decline to answer any question and may stop and leave the interview at any point, without giving a reason.

☐ I agree to the interview being audio recorded.

☐ I agree to anonymised quotes being used within reports/other publications produced from the study.

☐ I understand there are limits to confidentiality. If I disclose information that highlights significant risk to myself or others this may be passed to relevant agencies to prevent that harm taking place.

Participant:

Signed: …….. **Date: ……..**

Researcher:

Signed: …….. **Date: ……..**

7.3 Appendix C – Ethical Consent from University of Central Lancashire Ethics Committee

8 June 2018

Stuart Kirby/Carl Williams
School of Forensic and Applied Sciences
University of Central Lancashire

Dear Stuart and Carl

Re: STEMH Ethics Committee Application
Unique Reference Number: STEMH 875

The STEMH ethics committee has granted approval of your proposal application 'Examining how internal training affects ethical decision-making for police officers'. Approval is granted up to the end of project date*.

It is your responsibility to ensure that

- the project is carried out in line with the information provided in the forms you have submitted
- you regularly re-consider the ethical issues that may be raised in generating and analysing your data
- any proposed amendments/changes to the project are raised with, and approved, by Committee
- you notify EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk if the end date changes or the project does not start
- serious adverse events that occur from the project are reported to Committee
- a closure report is submitted to complete the ethics governance procedures (Existing paperwork can be used for this purposes e.g. funder's end of grant report; abstract for student award or NRES final report. If none of these are available use e-Ethics Closure Report Proforma).

Yours sincerely

Julie Cook
Deputy Vice Chair
STEMH Ethics Committee

* for research degree students this will be the final lapse date

NB - Ethical approval is contingent on any health and safety checklists having been completed, and necessary approvals as a result of gained.

7.4 Appendix D – Semi-structured interview questions and probes

EXAMINING HOW INTERNAL TRAINING AFFECTS ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING FOR POLICE OFFICERS: *SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OR FOCUS GROUP.*

The questions are in five sections:

SECTION 1: Some information about the participant

Introduction to the study. Check they have read the Participant Information Sheet and their engagement is voluntary. Invite questions for clarification.

Obtain demographic information from participant i.e. police role, age, service, full or part time employee.

Record any previous training on decision-making.

Further probes – when was the training, where, how delivered? Who delivered the training? Can you remember the content of the training?

SECTION 2: Some questions about individual decision-making practice in the *workplace*.

When making decisions, what do you base your decisions on?

Further probes – what types of things do you consider?

Prompts – *experience, training, National decision model, values, religion, ethics, other*

Overall do you think the training made any difference to the way in which you now make decisions? Did the training help or hinder your current decision-making or make no difference at all? What was good about the training?

Thinking generally about decision-making, once you have made your decision, do you ever review your decision-making?

Note that this doesn't have to be a formal process, and could relate to internal processing.

Further probes – if not, why? If so, how often do you do this? Do you do it formally or informally? In writing, orally or just in your head? Do you ever review another person's decision-making? If so, how do you do this?

Do you ever change your decision at a later date?

Further probes – What makes you change your decision? Is this just a 'tweak' or a fundamental change of direction? How do you think this is viewed by others – a weakness or a strength? What do you think senior leaders would think – indecisive or a strong leader?

Has the way in which you make decisions changed over time?

Further probes – in what way? For the better or for the worse? Why have you changed? Have you been made to change? Do you think that you make decisions in a better way now than the way you used to? Do time constraints come into the way in which you make decisions? Is this a good or a bad thing?

Do you regularly work alongside someone, for example another officer/member of staff? If so, do you make joint decisions with that person?

Further probes – in the situation where others are involved, is this more difficult or easier? Do you make decisions in a different way when someone else is with you? If so, how? Why? Do you ever come to opposing views? If so, what happens then?

Is there anything else that you consider in personal decision-making that hasn't been covered in the previous questions?

SECTION 3: Some questions about decision-making by leaders

Do you think that the 'force' as an organisation makes decisions in the same way as you? If not why?

Further probes – think about the force as an overall body. How are decisions made? Are the reasons behind the decisions communicated? If so, how?

How do you know? Have they always made decisions in the same way? Does this change over time?

Does your supervisor make decisions in the same way as you?

Further probes – how do you know? Do they discuss decision-making with you? Do they give you feedback about your decision-making? Do you 'decide between you' or do they make the decision as your supervisor?

SECTION 4: Specific questions relating to ethics

What does the term 'ethics' mean to you?

Further probes – in layman's terms, how would you describe ethics to someone who had never heard of the term? Do this mean that you do anything differently? Is there a difference between something being 'legal' and 'ethical'? Could something be illegal but still ethical? Could something be ethical, but illegal?

Have you heard of the Code of Ethics?

Further probes – what do you know about the Code? What does it say? Do you think it's compatible with your role?

The Code of Ethics was introduced in 2014 by the College of Policing. Does it change the way you do your job?

Further probes – is it a good thing or a bad thing? What is different, if anything, since the code of ethics was introduced?

Have you heard of XXX police ethics' committee. If so, what is your understanding of what it does?

Further probes – what do you know about the committee? What's it purpose? Is it a good or bad thing? What does the committee do? What types of things does the committee discuss? Who sits on the committee?

SECTION 5: Ethical dilemmas

Consider the following scenarios:

ED1 – A complaint was received from a member of the public to the constabulary. It regarded an incident where a female had been assaulted in the street outside a house where a party was taking place.

Upon arrival, the police believed that the woman had gone back into the house and as they were concerned for her welfare they insisted on being admitted to the premises. The officers were then assaulted by party-goers who refused them permission to enter.

Arrests were made but the case did not progress as it was believed that the officers could not have formed reasonable suspicion that someone inside had been seriously hurt (power of entry for S17 PACE).

Consider the ethical concerns of upholding the complaint and issuing an apology. What are your thoughts? What things are you considering?

Can something be ethical but illegal? Can something be legal but unethical? How would you rationalise this on the night in question? Where would you document this?

ED2 – The constabulary refuses to give references for employees, regardless of length of service.

Is this a fair and reasonable way to treat an employee? What are your thoughts? What things are you considering? Do you agree or disagree with the statement? If so, why?

Should the force <u>have</u> to give references? If so, why? If not, why not? Is there a way around this? Is it unethical not to do so?

ED3 – Police were called to an elderly resident's home to assist staff with a resident who was threatening and being violent to staff and others. On arrival officers were shown to where he was last seen and they found him collapsed in his chair. He was apparently unconscious; his lips were blue and he was not breathing. The subject was 90 years of age. On finding this, both officers administered CPR and emergency medical assistance was summonsed. The man responded to this treatment was resuscitated and admitted to hospital. The ambulance staff were informed that there was a *Do Not Resuscitate* order on the resident and became slightly unhappy with the attending officers for not complying with it. They were completely unaware, so this was resolved quickly.

What should staff have done had they been made aware by health staff or others about the DNR order when they found the male unconscious? Should they comply with the order? Why do you think this? What are your thoughts? What things are you considering? What about the oath a constable swears to protect life above all else? Do the individual's feelings count? What would the public think?