| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0789  Responded to: 17 April 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**I would be grateful if you can provide me with information around training provided to Police Officers around dealing with individuals with invisible disabilities as at 1 May 2023:**

**Are/were Police Scotland officers given training around dealing with invisible disabilities?**

**At May 2023, were Police Scotland officers given training around dealing with autism?**

Disability and vulnerability is discussed throughout the probationer training programme from classroom teaching through to practical exercises that are completed by students.

Diversity and Inclusion training covers disability, prejudice and bias, it’s impact and the laws set to protect individuals who may be adversely treated as a result. This does not directly point out a particular type of disability.

The staff associations present to students. The Disability and Carers Association specifically provide an input on the support and advice they can give relating to disability and caring.

Recognising and interacting with individuals including those with vulnerabilities such as autism, as an example, is discussed in Operational Safety Training, in both the theory and a practical setting. The theoretical aspect referring to factors affecting communications. A subsequent practical scenario will be conducted for some officers to take part in and the rest view.

Vulnerabilities during witness interviewing, statement taking, custody rights care and welfare along with mental health and suicide intervention are discussed.

As indicated previously, we do not make direct reference to a particular condition or disability in any of these inputs, but every effort is made to make the officer aware that some individuals may require additional care and support and may not behave or interact in a manner we recognise or consider the standard.

It is at these stages we would look to identify the specific needs of that individual by either involving appropriate adults or other services to assist. This also includes those who are visual, or hearing challenged.

**If so, how much training was given? Was this face to face training?**

Training is carried out face to face, online via a platform such as Microsoft Teams or completed through online training modules on Police Scotland’s learning management system.

In relation to how much training was given, the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. By way of explanation, time spent discussing hidden disabilities is not recorded, however, it is a common theme throughout the training courses.

**What were the learning outcomes of this training?**

There are no direct learning outcomes relating to the conditions you refer to, therefore, the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

**Is the training mandatory?**

All of training referred to is mandatory, as it forms part of the overall training.

**How much training is a probationer officer given? How long is an officer’s probationary period?**

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

[police-officer-training.pdf (scotland.police.uk)](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/tblf33gs/police-officer-training.pdf)

**Would an officer with 2 years service have had training relating to invisible disabilities?**

**Would an officer with 3 years service have had training relating to invisible disabilities?**

As per the above response, this training is delivered during probationer training.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.