



**NPIA**

National Policing  
Improvement Agency

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

# Briefing **Paper**



# National Investigative Interviewing Strategy

2009

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### **National Investigative Interviewing Strategy 2009**

This document has been produced by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). It will be updated according to legislative and policy changes and re-released as required.

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# Contents



Section 1: The Strategy 3

Appendix 1: Summary of  
National Occupational Standards  
for Investigative Interviewing 15

References 23



# The Strategy



1

This document revises and replaces *ACPO (2004) National Investigative Interviewing Strategy (NIIS)*. The 2004 strategy has been revised to take account of changes in operational practice and developments in implementation.

# Contents

---

- 1.1 Summary** 5
- 1.2 Recommendations** 5
- 1.3 The Role of Investigative Interviewing** 5
- 1.4 The Principles of Investigative Interviewing** 6
- 1.5 The PEACE Interview Framework** 7
- 1.6 A Competency Framework** 8
- 1.7 The National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative Interviewing** 10
- 1.8 Service-Wide Support Structure for Investigative Interviewing** 11
- 1.9 National Training Products** 11
- 1.10 Workplace Assessment** 12
- 1.11 Implementing the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy** 13

**Figures**

- Figure 1 Comparison of Achieving Best Evidence and PEACE Frameworks** 7
- Figure 2 National Investigative Interviewing Strategy and PIP** 8

## 1.1 Summary

This document provides details of:

- The role of investigative interviewing;
- The principles of investigative interviewing;
- The PEACE interview framework;
- A competency framework;
- The National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative Interviewing;
- Service-wide support for investigative interviewing;
- National training products;
- Workplace assessment;
- Implementing the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy.

## 1.2 Recommendations

The revised National Investigative Interviewing Strategy (NIIS) has been endorsed by ACPO as practice advice.

## 1.3 The Role of Investigative Interviewing

Investigation is a core duty of policing. Given that the interviewing of victims, witnesses and suspects is central to the success of an investigation, the highest standards need to be upheld. In order to do this, forces need to develop and maintain the valuable resource that the skills of their interviewers represent.

Interviews that are professionally undertaken and quality assured can realise several business benefits. In particular, they can:

- Direct an investigation, which in turn can lead to a prosecution or early release of an innocent person;
- Support the prosecution case, thereby saving time, money and resources;
- Increase public confidence in the Police Service, particularly with witnesses and victims of crimes who come into direct contact with the police.

Conversely, failure to professionally undertake and quality assure interviews can have adverse consequences in terms of failure to adhere to legislation, loss of critical material, unsolved crime, lack of credibility and loss of confidence.

The gathering of information from a well-prepared victim and witness interview will contribute significantly to the investigation. An effective interview of a suspect will commit them to an account of events that may include an admission. In the admission, the suspect may detail how the offence was committed and thus the investigation can be more focused. The value of a properly obtained admission can prove the *mens rea* of the offence, beyond doubt.

## 1.4 The Principles of Investigative Interviewing

The principles of investigative interviewing, which have generally stood the test of time, have been revised. The Principles of Investigative Interviewing 2007 are:

- i. The aim of investigative interviewing is to obtain accurate and reliable accounts from victims, witnesses or suspects about matters under police investigation.
- ii. Investigators must act fairly when questioning victims, witnesses or suspects. Vulnerable people must be treated with particular consideration at all times.
- iii. Investigative interviewing should be approached with an investigative mindset. Accounts obtained from the person who is being interviewed should always be tested against what the interviewer already knows or what can reasonably be established.
- iv. When conducting an interview, investigators are free to ask a wide range of questions in order to obtain material which may assist an investigation.
- v. Investigators should recognise the positive impact of an early admission in the context of the criminal justice system.
- vi. Investigators are not bound to accept the first answer given. Questioning is not unfair merely because it is persistent.
- vii. Even when the right of silence is exercised by a suspect, investigators have a responsibility to put questions to them.

## 1.5 The PEACE Interview Framework

PEACE continues to be the Police Service framework for interviewing. There are five phases to the PEACE framework.

### Planning and Preparation

This includes what to consider when planning for an interview.

### Engage and Explain

This describes how to cope with the special features of getting an interview started and establishing the ground rules.

### Account, Clarification and Challenge

This deals with the central issue of obtaining the interviewee's account, clarifying this and, where necessary, challenging it.

### Closure

This describes the considerations before closing an interview.

### Evaluation

This consists of asking questions about what was achieved during the interview and how it fits into the whole investigation. Evaluation also includes the development of an interviewer's skill level, through assessment (self, peer and manager) and feedback.

The PEACE interview framework is entirely compatible with the framework for interviewing witnesses that is described in *Home Office (2007) Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance on Interviewing Victims and Witnesses, and using Special Measures*. Consistency between the phases of each framework is set out in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 Comparison of Achieving Best Evidence and PEACE Frameworks**

Achieving Best Evidence	PEACE
Planning and preparation	Planning and preparation
Establishing rapport	Engage and explain
Initiating and supporting a free narrative account	Account, clarification and challenge
Questioning	
Closing the interview	Closure
Evaluation	Evaluation

Specific interview techniques from the Cognitive Interview (see, for example, *Achieving Best Evidence*) and Conversation Management (see, for example, *ACPO 2004 Practical Guide to Investigative Interviewing*) can be used where appropriate within the PEACE and Achieving Best Evidence frameworks.

## 1.6 A Competency Framework

The National Investigative Interviewing Strategy has now been incorporated into the Professionalising Investigation Programme (PIP) as summarised in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2 National Investigative Interviewing Strategy and PIP**

PIP Level	NOS	Notes	Former NIIS tier
1	<p><b>CJ101</b> Interview victims and witnesses in relation to priority and volume investigations.</p> <p><b>CJ201</b> Interview suspects in relation to priority and volume investigations.</p>	<p>Expected standard for volume investigators (for example, patrol officers).</p> <p>Does not preclude Level 1 investigators achieving a higher level of interviewing skill where their role requires it.</p>	1
2 (core functions)	<p><b>CJ102</b> Interview victims and witnesses in relation to serious and complex investigations.</p> <p><b>CJ202</b> Interview suspects in relation to serious and complex investigations.</p>	<p>Must have demonstrated competence in CJ101 and CJ201 as a prerequisite.</p> <p>Expected standard for those conducting serious investigations (for example, CID officers and others in specific investigative roles).</p>	2
2 (specialist roles)	<p><b>CJ103</b> Carry out specialist interviews with victims and witnesses.</p>	<p>Must have demonstrated competence in CJ102 as a prerequisite.</p> <p>Expected standard for those conducting specialist interviews with victims and witnesses (for example, interviewers of witnesses with severe learning disabilities).</p>	3

PIP Level	NOS	Notes	Former NIS tier
2 (specialist roles continued)	<b>CJ203</b> Carry out specialist interviews with suspects.	<p>Must have demonstrated competence in CJ202 as a prerequisite.</p> <p>Expected standard for those conducting specialist interviews with suspects (for example, interviewers of suspected category A murderers).</p>	3
	<b>CJ301</b> Manage and coordinate interviews for serious, complex or major investigations.	<p>As a minimum prerequisite must either be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competent in CJ103 and knowledgeable about CJ203; or</li> <li>2. Knowledgeable about CJ103 and competent in CJ203.</li> </ol> <p>Expected standard for interview advisers.</p>	5

It is accepted that the role of specialist interviewers on some dedicated investigative teams will be such that they will not be in a position to demonstrate competency at PIP Level 2. In these circumstances evidence of competence in NOS units CJ102 or CJ202 (as appropriate) and competency at PIP Level 1 is an adequate prerequisite for the development of specialist interviewer skills.

The development of competence for any given National Occupational Standard of interviewing relies on interviewers being deployed in a role in which they can regularly practice their skills. It is, therefore, important to ensure that interviewers are selected, trained and developed according to their skills and the requirements of their role. The operational deployment of interviewers should be managed in accordance with the force investigation policy.

## 1.7 The National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative Interviewing

The National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative Interviewing exists to ensure the development and delivery of the most effective interview strategy. Its role is to ensure that a consistent and professional approach is adopted by the Police Service, which is able to withstand judicial and academic scrutiny and has the ability to instil public confidence.

The overall aim of the National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative interviewing is:

To provide direction on the development of policy, practices and procedures to ensure that the interviewing of victims, witnesses and suspects supports professional investigation.

The terms of reference of the National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative interviewing are:

- To maintain an effective dialogue with key stakeholders to ensure high standards of professionalism and service delivery.
- To monitor the potential impact of any changes in law and procedure on interviewing practices and make recommendations on further changes as necessary.
- To provide advice to ACPO and other key stakeholders on technical and procedural issues that impact on the professional practice of investigative interviewing.
- To ensure that the National Occupational Standards applicable to investigative interviewing are fit for purpose.
- To inform the design and development of effective learning and development products that support the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy.
- To establish an effective partnership with the NPIA to develop professional practice and maintain operational support.

The National Strategic Steering Group on Investigative Interviewing is chaired by a chief officer from the Crime Business Area and consists of the following representatives:

- The National Interview Coordinator;
- Regional Coordinators for investigative interviewing;
- ACPO Approved Interview Advisers;
- Senior Investigating Officers;
- Academics with expertise in investigative interviewing;
- Training providers;

- The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA);
- The Criminal Justice Issues Group;
- The Home Office.

## 1.8 Service-Wide Support Structure for Investigative Interviewing

A service-wide structure has been developed to support Investigative Interviewing. To achieve this, the NPIA has appointed a National Interview Coordinator. The National Interview Coordinator is able to provide a wide range of advice in relation to operational, training and policy issues. The National Interview Coordinator is assisted by a number of ACPO Approved Interview Advisers.

Each force should have nominated a champion for investigative interviewing. A force interviewing champion is part of a national network that promotes interviewing as a core Police Service competency and is responsible for:

- Overseeing the ongoing implementation and maintenance of the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy in their force;
- Identifying innovations;
- Supporting best practice; and
- Disseminating information.

Each ACPO region has appointed a coordinator for investigative interviewing. The regional coordinator for investigative interviewing supports the force interviewing champions within their region by promoting the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy and disseminating good practice. A similar approach has been adopted in Scotland.

## 1.9 National Training Products

A number of national learning and development products are being produced to assist forces in delivering the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy. While these products are an important step forward, it should be noted that performance is only likely to be maximised when they are delivered as part of a programme that involves an appropriate selection process and effective workplace assessment.

The importance of delivering high-quality training to a consistent national standard cannot be overemphasised. The National Strategic Steering Group for Investigative Interviewing will, therefore, specify the skills that trainers must have. These skills are described in the NPIA curriculum material for training in investigative interviewing.

Training for interviewers in priority and volume investigations (former NIIS tier 1) has been incorporated into the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP). Modular training material has also been produced to help develop the skills of officers of between two and twenty-nine years' service to Level 1 PIP, where necessary.

Training for interviewers in serious and complex investigations (former NIIS tier 2) is to be included in the Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme (ICIDP). The modular training material from the ICIDP can also be used to help develop the skills of established interviewers in serious and complex investigations.

The NPIA is currently in the process of developing learning descriptors for specialist interviewers (former NIIS tier 3).

The NPIA has already developed training for interview advisers (former NIIS tier 5).

## 1.10 Workplace Assessment

A key element in ensuring that the National Occupational Standards (NOS) are met in the workplace is the assessment of interviewing officers. These NOS are contained in units CJ101 to CJ103, CJ201 to CJ203 and CJ301, and have already been agreed and endorsed by the Police Service. These NOS are summarised in Appendix 1.

A full copy of the NOS is available on the Skills for Justice website

**<http://www.skillsforjustice.com/nos/with-ple.htm>**

Although many officers currently operating as interviewers are competent, others do not meet the required standard yet. It is, therefore, important that forces properly assess the performance of their interviewers in the workplace to establish their training and development requirements.

The Sector Skills Council for the Justice Sector has developed a Unified Assessment Protocol (UAP). The UAP describes the processing involved in workplace assessment. Forces should take note of the UAP in developing their assessment strategy for interviewers.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary is aware of the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy and support the view that forces should implement the principles of improving and sustaining a quality approach to all types of investigations.

## 1.11 Implementing the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy

Some forces have already carried out a great deal of work in respect of specialist interviewers (former NIIS tier 3) and interview advisers (former NIIS tier 5). While this work has proved to be very productive, it has highlighted the need for an increased emphasis on the development of interviewers in serious and complex investigations (former NIIS tier 2).

The implementation of the National Investigative Interviewing Strategy is an intrinsic aspect of PIP. The implementation of PIP should be in accordance with the guidance set out in *ACPO (2006) Implementation Support Plan for the Professionalising Investigation Programme*.



# Appendix 1



## Summary of National Occupational Standards for Investigative Interviewing



## Unit Title

**CJ101** Interview victims and witnesses in relation to priority and volume investigations.

## Summary

This unit focuses on the role of interviewing victims and witnesses as part of priority and volume investigations. Related NOS units are CI101 and CJ201.

The unit covers interviews conducted at police premises or elsewhere.

You must plan and prepare for the interview, whether formal or informal, by developing an interview strategy, assessing the interviewee's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct the interview in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are expected to evaluate the interview (including your own performance) and take any necessary further action in relation to the investigation, including dealing with any suspects in the case.

There are three elements:

- CJ101.1** Plan and prepare interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ101.2** Conduct interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ101.3** Evaluate interviews with victims and witnesses and carry out post-interview processes.

## Target Group

This unit is aimed at those who undertake interviews with victims and witnesses in relation to priority and volume investigations.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ201** Interview suspects in relation to priority and volume investigations.

## Summary

This unit focuses on interviewing suspects in priority and volume investigations.

Linked NOS units are CJ101 and CI101.

This unit covers interviews with suspects who are under arrest and those who are not under arrest, whether the interview is conducted at police premises or elsewhere. Whilst in many cases interviews are conducted by two officers, you will need to be able to carry out all of the activities described in this unit.

You must plan and prepare for the interview by developing an interview plan, assessing the suspect's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct the interview in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are expected to evaluate the interview (including your own performance) and take any necessary further action.

There are three elements:

- CJ201.1** Plan and prepare interviews with suspects;
- CJ201.2** Conduct interviews with suspects;
- CJ201.3** Evaluate interviews with suspects and carry out post-interview processes.

## Target Group

This unit is aimed at those who undertake interviews with suspects in relation to priority and volume investigations.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ102** Interview victims and witnesses in relation to serious and complex investigations.

## Summary

This unit is about conducting interviews as part of serious and complex investigations. Related NOS units are CI102 and CJ202.

The unit covers interviews at various locations.

You must plan and prepare for the interview by developing an interview strategy and written plan, assessing the interviewee's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct the interview in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are expected to evaluate the interview (including your own performance) and take or recommend any necessary further investigative action.

There are three elements:

- CJ102.1** Plan and prepare interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ102.2** Conduct interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ102.3** Evaluate interviews with victims and witnesses and carry out post-interview processes.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ202** Interview suspects in relation to serious and complex investigations.

## Summary

This unit is about interviewing suspects as part of a serious or complex investigation. Linked NOS units are CI102 and CJ102. The unit covers interviews at various locations and with suspects who are under arrest or not. Whilst in many cases interviews are conducted with two officers present, you will need to be able to meet all of the requirements contained within this unit.

You must plan and prepare for the interview by using appropriate resources to develop an interview strategy, assessing the suspect's fitness for interview, and setting up an appropriate location. You must conduct the interview in accordance with legislation, policy and other guidelines using appropriate interviewing techniques and communication skills. Finally, you are expected to evaluate the interview (including your own performance) and take, or recommend, any necessary further action eg, charge, release or bail the suspect, or make further investigation/interviews.

There are three elements:

- CJ202.1** Plan and prepare interviews with suspects;
- CJ202.2** Conduct interviews with suspects;
- CJ202.3** Evaluate interviews with suspects and carry out post-interview processes.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ103** Carry out specialist interviews with victims and witnesses.

## Summary

This unit is about conducting specialist interviews with victims and witnesses as part of serious, complex or major investigations. Related NOS units are CI102 and CJ203.

The unit is applicable to those personnel who will be conducting interviews of this type, wherever the interview is conducted. Whilst in many cases interviews are conducted by two officers, you will need to be able to carry out all of the activities described in this unit.

You must be able to plan an interview within your specialist area of work and set up the necessary resources. You must be able to formulate an interview strategy in consultation with relevant others, ensure that the interviewee is fit to be interviewed, and that the relevant people are present. You must also be able to conduct the interview correctly using approved and recognised interviewing techniques and models, introducing material and exhibits where this is necessary. At the conclusion of the interview you must be able to evaluate the interview to determine what further action is required, fully briefing and updating any relevant others, summarising interview records and ensuring the integrity and security of records is maintained.

This unit applies in the context of your specialist area of work, eg, public protection, rape, complex investigations, financial investigations, homicide, terrorism, fatal road traffic collisions.

There are three elements:

- CJ103.1** Plan and prepare specialist interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ103.2** Conduct specialist interviews with victims and witnesses;
- CJ103.3** Evaluate specialist interviews with victims and witnesses and carry out post-interview processes.

## Target Group

This unit is applicable to those personnel who will be conducting specialist interviews with victims and witnesses.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ203** Carry out specialist interviews with suspects.

## Summary

This unit is about interviewing suspects as part of serious, complex or major investigations. Linked NOS units are CI102 and CJ103. The unit applies to specialist interviews for various offences, and with suspects who are in police detention or elsewhere, as well as those who are not under arrest. While, in many cases, interviews are conducted by two officers, you will need to be able to carry out all of the activities described in this unit.

You must be able to plan an interview within your specialist area of work and set up the necessary resources. You must be able to formulate an interview strategy in consultation with relevant others, ensure that the suspect is fit to be interviewed, and that the relevant people are present. You must also be able to conduct the interview correctly using approved and recognised interviewing techniques and models, introducing evidence and exhibits where this is necessary. At the conclusion of the interview you must be able to evaluate the interview to determine what further action is required, fully briefing and updating any relevant others, summarising interview records and ensuring the integrity and security of records is maintained.

This unit applies in the context of your specialist area of work, eg, public protection, rape, complex investigations, financial investigations, homicide, terrorism, fatal road traffic collisions.

There are three elements:

- CJ203.1** Plan and prepare specialist interviews with suspects;
- CJ203.2** Conduct specialist interviews with suspects;
- CJ203.3** Evaluate specialist interviews with suspects and carry out post-interview processes.

## Target Group

This unit is aimed at all persons undertaking interviews of this type, regardless of their rank.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

## Unit Title

**CJ301** Manage and co-ordinate interviews for serious, complex or major investigations.

## Summary

This unit is about managing, advising and co-ordinating interviews for serious, complex or major investigations. It focuses on the work of the interview advisor/manager, whose role is to assist an Investigating Officer (IO) or Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) by managing the interview process.

You must be able to provide accurate and timely advice to the IO/SIO on interview-related matters. You will need to co-ordinate the interviewing of several categories of witnesses. You must also be able to evaluate information from material, statements and interviews, and determine location and resource requirements for interviews.

You will need to liaise and negotiate with custody officers and medical practitioners in relation to disclosure issues, and ensure that interviewees are treated ethically. You will need to be able to co-ordinate the use of experts and specialists, and co-ordinate multi-site and multi-suspect interviews.

You must also be able to conduct remote monitoring of interviews and ensure that issues and problems are resolved and facts are corroborated so that the progress of interviews is maintained. Finally, you must be able to debrief the interview process, providing accurate feedback to interview teams and results of analysis and evaluations to the IO/SIO, documenting your decisions with identification of objectives and opportunities for further interventions.

There are four elements:

- CJ301.1** Provide strategic advice on interview processes;
- CJ301.2** Co-ordinate interview processes;
- CJ301.3** Monitor interview processes;
- CJ301.4** Evaluate interview processes.

## Target Group

This unit focuses on the work of the interview advisor/manager, whose role is to assist an Investigating Officer (IO) or Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) by managing the interview process.

This unit was developed by the Skills for Justice.

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PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Produced on behalf of  
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