

A day in the life of a researcher

What is a typical day in the life of a researcher like?

Broadly speaking, I spend my typical day processing intelligence, reviewing the mailbox and/or processing crimestoppers intelligence.

Processing is essentially assessing and spell-checking intelligence reports that have come in. This is administration work that means that the intelligence information that goes onto the system only contains the relevant information.

I also check that the assessment of intelligence is correct, and that the details have been inputted correctly. I conduct a degree of research about what's in the report, with the goal of linking the correct people, locations and vehicles.

The mailbox is where other forces, agencies and internal departments send their intelligence-related enquiries, notifications and bulletins.

I send these out to the relevant division or department where required. We act as the single point of contact. We occasionally deal with an enquiry directly, which involves researching and then updating the enquiring force or officer with the details requested, such as arrest dates or case updates.

All crimestoppers come through to the force's Force Intelligence Bureau. It's our job to input these onto the system and, as with processing, to link the correct records. We make an assessment whether to ring it through to the relevant division or force intelligence manager, to make them aware that this report has been received. They can then develop the intelligence and safeguard any persons or property that may be at risk.

What are the typical working times for this role?

In my force, we work on a flexible working pattern, clocking in between 7am and 9.45am. We take lunch at some point between 11.45am and 2.15pm, and we finish between 3pm and 8pm.

There is a requirement for two researchers to stay in the office until 5pm, so they can monitor urgent crimestoppers intelligence, enquiries, recalls and processing.

However, other forces might have different working patterns or hours for the research role.

Where would I be based?

For me, this is office-based, so there's no requirement to travel to division or out on location. Other forces might have different requirements for travel or where researchers work.

What training is available for this role?

When you take up a post within intelligence, either in policing or in one of our law enforcement Intelligence Professionalisation Programme (IPP) partner agencies, the emphasis is on developing your existing skills and abilities. This will help ensure you become a professional, fully competent intelligence support officer with transferable skills.

Training is varied according to individual and organisational needs. It may include classroom-based learning, e-learning, shadowing, on-the-job learning, practical experience, self-study and self-reflection.

You will have the opportunity to undertake the IPP, which will give you professional recognition of your competence.

All individuals are required to commit to continuing professional development to ensure that they remain up to date in their role.

What is the Intelligence Professionalisation Programme?

The IPP is a specialised development programme for those working specifically within intelligence, either in policing or in one of our law enforcement IPP partner agencies.

The IPP is a development programme that is between 12 and 18 months long. The IPP consists of a national learning curriculum and a set of minimum standards of competence (assessment criteria). Individuals are assessed against these criteria by an appointed IPP assessor. Once the individual's IPP assessor has agreed that the individual has met all of the relevant standards, they will be awarded a certificate of competence. This certificate is transferable to another IPP organisation and is valid for three years.

At present, you cannot undertake the IPP unless you are employed in an intelligence function, either in policing or in a partner IPP organisation.

However, this is not a barrier to employment. If you do not already hold the IPP certificate, you will be given the opportunity to complete the programme upon employment. The IPP is the nationally recognised certificate of competence across all of the IPP partner agencies. Completing the IPP is a mandatory requirement for some organisations.

What advice would you give for someone interested in a career in intelligence policing?

Think about your motives for wanting to do the job. It is a really enjoyable and varied role, but it is very demanding at times.

You should also be aware that the nature of the job is that you deal with a lot of sensitive issues and data. This is not the kind of role that you can discuss at home, so work-related conversation has to stop once you have left the office.