

A day in the life of an intelligence analyst

What is a typical day in the life of an intelligence analyst like?

I undertake varied analysis work. I may have to juggle a number of analytical requests, ranging from quick crime pattern analysis through to analytical support for lengthy and large complex investigations.

I liaise with customers to establish their needs, agree terms of reference for taskings and negotiate deadlines. This work might relate to things taking place at a strategic force level or at an operational level, so I need to make sure that I use the right analytical tools and techniques to make the most of interpreting the information and intelligence available.

I also attend briefings and meetings in relation to ongoing taskings and investigations, to provide an analytical perspective where needed.

I support investigations by analysing data from different sources, such as intelligence, witness statements or communications data, to provide an overview of a situation and to identify gaps in intelligence and investigative opportunities. This information can then be used to inform and support decision making in the investigation or operation.

I need to examine the risk and threat by analysing data from internal and external sources, to provide an assessment of a particular problem, identify intelligence gaps and give recommendations for addressing a problem by applying different analytical techniques.

I may need to present this information in a range of formats, depending on how it is needed, so it is important to be able to produce a clear verbal or written report. I am sometimes required to prepare or present these reports in court. As such, it is important that I follow all force, national and legal guidelines.

What are the typical working times for this role?

In my force, full-time analysts are contracted to office hours of around 37 working hours a week. We have flexible working, but there are core hours on Monday to Friday.

When supporting a major investigation, it is often necessary to work longer hours, although this is not mandatory. We are sometimes asked to work at the weekend, but this is on a voluntary basis, as we are not contracted to work at weekends or to be on call.

There are busy times and quiet times in all analyst roles. We often work more hours to meet a particular deadline during a live investigation, but we can take some time back during quieter periods.

Intelligence analysts in other forces might operate under different working hours and practices.

Where would I be based?

Analysts are all office-based, as we need to access computer systems and specialist software. We are based in various locations across the force, such as at the headquarters or in divisions and specialist departments.

We might be given work that means we can work in other locations, and on occasion we will work from other offices.

During a long or complex investigation, it can be beneficial to sit with and spend more time with the investigation team.

We are also required to attend meetings and briefings in different areas of the force.

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 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 in either 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.

The nature of the job means you deal with a lot of sensitive issues and data, so this is not the kind of role that you can discuss at home. Work-related conversation has to stop once you have left the office.