

**People and Development Branch**

**Uniform Policy and Dress Standards**

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**GREATER MANCHESTER  
POLICE**



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## Introduction

How we appear and present ourselves can have a major positive or negative impact on our ability to influence others and thus carry out our work. All of us must simply ask the question, "Do I present a smart and reassuring image to the Public?" Local supervision is expected to take action where standards fall.

This document has been published for the benefit of all staff to provide details of the current policy and guidelines relating to uniform, equipment and dress standards

Ownership of this document rests with the Uniform Review Group, chaired by the Chief Constable.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) is a public service organisation with its own proud traditions and history. The police service exists to protect life and property, but also provides public reassurance. As we seek to reduce crime and disorder we must also seek to reduce the public's fear of crime and give them confidence in our service. Ensuring that we appear smart and well equipped generates part of that confidence. GMP rightly has the reputation for providing staff with the best uniform and equipment available, which needs to be kept clean and well maintained. The public rightly expects GMP staff to be well turned out as part of our response to their problems. Smart and efficient GMP staff will reassure the public that we intend to provide the best possible service to them. GMP is committed to improving corporacy in uniform for all police officers and police staff.

GMP is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, the diverse needs of all our staff are met in terms of religious and/or cultural observance, provided that they do not conflict with or compromise the delivery of our operational services and our obligations under Health and Safety Legislation. Wherever possible, we shall respond sensitively to any issues or problems relating to uniform and equipment whilst working together with individuals to establish the most positive and practical way to address their legitimate requirements. If any Division/Branch is unable to resolve any issues there is an opportunity to raise this at 'The Uniform Equipment Review Group'. You should put any issues or problems relating to uniform and equipment in writing to the Chair of the Uniform and Equipment Review Group along with a copy to the Director of People and Development Branch. This will act as a mechanism for recording and monitoring to ensure consistency of application and the opportunity to build up a central information resource.

# 1 Uniform Equipment Review Group Terms Of Reference

## 1.1 Authority

The Chief Constable will chair the group.

## 1.2 Membership

Chief Constable (Chair)

Director Business Services and nominated deputies from Procurement/Stores  
Superintendent/Staff Officer to the Chief Constable

Inspector Uniform Development

Health and Safety Manager

Representatives from:-

Unison

Superintendents' Association

Police Federation

Public Order Development Unit

Other specialists co-opted to deal with specific items only

## 1.3 Frequency Of Meetings

Quarterly.

## 1.4 Specialist Sub-Group

When needed to deal with specialists items of uniform and equipment the Chair may establish a Sub-Group to deal with the issue and report back to the Uniform and Equipment Review Group. A member of the Uniform and Equipment Review Group will be nominated and will co-opt other specialist as required.

## 1.5 Agenda Items

Agenda items including proposals for new uniform/equipment or changes to entitlement lists must be forwarded to the Uniform Development Inspector.

The Uniform Development Inspector will assess the proposal with a view to, requesting further work by the originator, consultation with internal/external stakeholders and/or bring the report to the Uniform Equipment Review Group.

When the proposal has been through the consultation stage the Uniform Development Inspector will formulate a business case for final submission to the Uniform Equipment Review Group.

The Uniform Development Inspector will provide feedback to any interested party if their submission has been unsuccessful at the Uniform Equipment Review Group.

## 1.6 Responsibilities

To comprehensively and continuously review all current and potential uniform, protective clothing and associated equipment required by on-duty police officers and police staff, making recommendations as to its suitability and fitness and updating the entitlement list as required.

To ensure that items of uniform and equipment comply with all relevant British and European standards, they are fit for purpose and that comprehensive risk/role assessments have been undertaken with regard to Health, Safety and Environmental Legislation.

To ensure that comfort, ergonomics and image have been considered.

To ensure that value for money has been proven including whole life cycle costing, minimum wastage, possible transfer and re-use along with anticipated obsolescence, prior to implementation.

To ensure that users of all items of uniform and equipment maximise the benefits of the products including adequate wear and care instructions.

To ensure a process is in place whereby all staff required to wear/use items of uniform and equipment are knowledgeable on the correct fit and any limitations on use.

To monitor and then act upon any developments/recommendations by the manufacturer, Home Office Scientific Development Branch (HOSDB), Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to ensure any item of clothing or equipment is fit for purpose.

1.7 Role Of The Uniform Development Inspector

The role of The Uniform Development Inspector acting on behalf of the committee will ensure effective coordination of the terms of reference as described above. The basic entitlement for police officers, special constables and police community support officers (PCSOs) can be [found here](#). There are many specialist units/roles throughout the force who qualify for additional items of uniform and equipment, these entitlements can be accessed via this link. Any request for changes to the entitlement should be made through The Uniform Equipment Review Group.

1.8 Ownership of The Uniform and Dress Standard Policy

The Uniform Equipment Review Group will integrate any changes to this policy.

The People and Development Branch will be responsible for updating the policy in accordance with any decision made by the Group.

The Uniform Development Inspector will coordinate the updates to the uniform entitlement list.

## 2 GMP Uniform Dress Code Police Officers, PCSOs, Special Constables and Police Staff in Public Facing Roles

### 2.1 Personal Appearance

Your uniform should be clean and neatly pressed. If your uniform shows any sign of wear or damage, you should request replacement garments. You should wear your uniform on duty, unless a supervisor has told you that you may wear plain clothes. A supervisor may relax this guide to meet an operational need. **Supervisors are responsible** for making sure that all staff comply with the uniform dress code. All officers and staff in uniform are required to wear epaulettes clearly showing their collar number on both shoulders at all times. If you require further shoulder slides for outer clothing as well as body armour etc., you should follow your divisional/branch procedures for ordering uniform.

We are committed to embracing diversity within our uniform and recognise some staff may require due to religious/cultural reasons adjustments to their uniform. Staff are directed to Section Four of this policy '[Diversity in dress](#)'. All managers should make themselves familiar with the diversity in dress section of this policy. It will ensure that they have an understanding of faith issues related to the wearing of uniform and equipment.



**Police Officer/PCSO Operational Uniform**



**Police Officer Non-Operational Uniform**



**Police Officers Ceremonial Uniform**

**2.2 Footwear**

When in uniform, shoes or boots should be black, flat heeled and have a plain front. Socks, stockings or tights should be black or dark blue.

**2.3 Jewellery And Make-up**

When you are in uniform, you can wear a maximum of 2 rings. Rings with prominent stones or settings should not be worn at any time on duty due to the risk of injury. If you wear rings on duty, GMP will not be responsible for loss, theft or damage. You should not wear any other visible jewellery, including earrings and studs.

Any necklaces or chains should be worn under shirts to ensure that they are not visible.

Uniformed female staff may wear discreet make-up including eye shadow and lipstick. Dark eye shadow or bright lipstick will not be permitted. Nails should be kept short and nail polish should be pale pink or transparent.

## 2.4 Tattoos.

All GMP staff that wear a uniform and have a public facing role must ensure all tattoos are covered.



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### 2.4.1 Existing Staff

Officers and police staff who have a tattoo must ensure that their tattoo is covered by uniform or clothing whilst on duty.

Officers and staff considering having a tattoo or further tattoos must consider this policy and initially discuss with their line manager, further advice should be sought from their local HR unit **prior** to having a tattoo. Police staff will need to consider the affect a new tattoo will have on future applications for uniform or public facing roles.

Should an officer or staff member choose to have a tattoo that contravenes this policy, then further action will be considered in-line with the Police Conduct and Misconduct Regulations or GMP Police Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

### 2.4.2 Candidates Applying To GMP (including transferees)

Candidates applying for all police officer roles and police staff public facing roles should note that GMP:-

- Will not accept candidates with tattoos that are visible on the hands, face or neck.
- Will not accept candidates with tattoos considered offensive by GMP, ie, rude, lewd, crude, racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic or violent, whether the tattoo(s) is visible or not. GMP may also seek further information on the meaning of tattoos where this is not clear, ie, a symbol.
- Will consider candidates with tattoos that are non-visible and considered to be non-offensive by GMP **providing** they can be covered by uniform or clothing whilst on duty (for example, a tattoo on the forearm should be covered by long sleeves).

Candidates applying to GMP for police staff roles that are not public facing and non-uniformed will be considered on their own merit.

Decisions regarding tattoos will be made by members of a panel as part of the overall appointment process.

## 2.5 Hairstyle, Hair Colour And Facial Hair

Hair should be neat, tidy and not touch your collar.

Staff **must not** wear long hair in a ponytail, this is for their own safety.

Long hair should be fastened securely and neatly with discreet hair fastenings.



You must not have patterns or motifs cut into your hair.

Hair should not be dyed conspicuously "unnatural" colours, which may cause ridicule and question the professionalism of the Force.

A clean-shaven appearance should be maintained. Beards and moustaches are permissible but must be kept neat and tidy and should only be grown whilst off duty or at a time, with management approval, when officers and staff are performing duties where there will be no contact with the public. Where facial hair is grown, its appearance should complement the wearer in a way that instils confidence, credibility and respect. "Pencil line" beards, for example, are unlikely to meet these criteria

Beards and moustaches should be neatly trimmed unless you are a practising member of a religion that specifically forbids this, in which case you must wear a beard net.

Significant physical changes to appearance, for example, a hairstyle change or physical change such as a moustache, will require the issue of a new warrant card.

## 2.6 GMP Name Badges

Name badges have been introduced for all GMP staff ([Link to policy](#)).

## 2.7 Charity Pins And Badges

Whilst you may wear a pin or badge on your shirt, you will take personal responsibility for any health or safety issues that may arise. Such pins must not be worn on body armour as they may puncture the panel and compromise its level of protection. Pins must not be worn on Epaulettes.

If you choose to wear a pin or badge, you are reminded of your duty to remain politically impartial.

## 2.8 Ownership Of Uniform And Equipment

You have a responsibility to act as the custodian for all items of uniform and equipment that have been issued to you throughout the period of your appointment. On leaving the force you must return all of your uniform and equipment to your divisional / departmental Administration unit who will record the items of uniform and equipment returned together with serial numbers where appropriate on force form 36B. The returned uniform and equipment will be secured in a bag tagged with a numbered property tag with a copy of the completed force form 36B placed inside the bag and forwarded to Business Services Stores Unit at Openshaw.

On receipt of the secured bags at Business Services Stores Unit staff will check that the bags are secure and on opening each bag cross reference the contents with the enclosed forms and recycle or dispose of the uniform and equipment as appropriate.

In the case of a career break, custodian responsibilities should remain with each member of staff. Following a career break and a return to the service you should continue to wear the uniform originally issued. If you do not return to the service following a career break, you have a responsibility to return all of your uniform and equipment to your divisional / departmental Administration Unit as detailed above at the point at which you leave the service.

Any requests for replacement uniform must be supported by an authorised requisition form 36C. Uniform that is to be replaced should be shown to the person authorising the requisition and then returned to your divisional / departmental Administration Unit as detailed above. If the uniform or equipment to be replaced is contaminated, it should be recorded on a form 36B, sealed in the appropriately marked yellow bags and disposed of safely on division.

## 2.9 Court

If you normally wear uniform, you should wear this uniform when you attend a Crown Court, Magistrates' Court, Coroners' Court, Civil Court or Industrial Tribunal to give evidence. This includes your utility belt, autolock baton, rigid handcuffs and CS spray. This will ensure you are able to deal with an incident at court, on your way to or from court.

## 2.10 Promotion Board, Inspections Interviews Training

You should wear your usual uniform for a promotion board, inspection interview or training.

### 2.11 Ceremonial Uniform

You should only wear your ceremonial uniform when an operational order for a specific event directs you to do so. Honours medal ribbons can be worn on the tunic. See section 2.14.

Chief Inspectors and above will continue to be issued with a tunic. Officers of the rank Inspector and below who require a tunic will be able to obtain one through the tunic hire service at Uniform and Equipment Services Team. The tunic hire service provides officers with a tunic on request from the stock available in various sizes. The cost of this is to be charged to the division/department of the requesting officer. The tunic must then be returned dry cleaned, within one month of the hire. On the return of the tunic, the division will be credited with the cost of the tunic hire. No alterations will be undertaken, so the officer needs to be fitted with the best fitting tunic available.

Should you wish to get married/undergo a civil partnership ceremony in your ceremonial uniform, you may do so provided that you only wear it for the official ceremony. It must not be worn in social surroundings where alcohol may be consumed. Authorisation should be sought from your Divisional/Branch Commander.

### 2.12 Plain Clothes

Plain clothes should only be worn when there is an operational requirement, which deems that uniform is inappropriate.

If you are working in plain clothes the type of work being undertaken should set the standard of dress and appearance.

### 2.13 Part Uniform And Plain Clothes

You should not wear a combination of uniform and plain clothes unless you are travelling to/from duty when you may wear your own outer garment.

Any member of staff who for medical reasons may be unable to wear a particular item of uniform should first raise this with their supervisor to look at the possibility of reasonable adjustments.

### 2.14 Medals And Ribbons

[Link](#) to order of wear.

### 2.15 Inland Revenue - Guidance

Police officers are currently entitled to a flat rate allowance granted through their tax code. This allowance covers all costs incurred in the upkeep of a police uniform. The allowance is granted for items that are not provided by the employer, for example:-

- Maintaining boots
- Dry cleaning and washing garments, including body armour
- Purchase of tights and socks

The amount has been agreed at the national level between the Police Federation and the Inland Revenue Head Office. No additional amounts of relief are available regardless of the circumstances.

Police staff should make a direct enquiry to the Inland Revenue for guidance on their allowance entitlement.

#### 2.16 Care Instructions For Uniform And Equipment

By following the washing and dry cleaning instructions for your individual garments you will prolong their life, keep them smart and tailored: -

- Remember to hang up all garments after wearing them
- Do not wash garments that are dry clean only
- All uniform garments should be neatly pressed
- Try to use a liquid washing detergent as this does not clog the fibres
- Wash dark colours separately

If you have been issued with items that are classed as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), it is essential that you know how to wash and take care of these items. If you don't follow the recommended care instructions your PPE may fail to protect you.

#### 2.17 Contamination Of Uniform

If any uniform or clothing is contaminated with blood or body fluid the following advice is provided. Ideally, contaminated clothing should be laundered by a specialist service. As an alternative, clothing should be treated in one of the following ways: -

- Washed with detergent using the hot wash cycle of a domestic washing machine to a temperature of at least 80°C
- Dry cleaned at elevated temperatures, or dry cleaned cold followed by steam pressing
- Incinerated as clinical waste if items cannot be effectively washed as described above

#### 2.18 Exchange Returns Loss

Should you need to return items of uniform or equipment for exchange you should return these to the Uniform and Equipment Services Team at Openshaw in a sealed package together with the reason for the return and the replacement items required. Should any uniform or equipment need to be returned for any reason other than exchange, it should be returned to your divisional/departmental Administration Unit as detailed above.

Personal radios, warrant cards, key fobs and any other means of identification or access to GMP property should be handed in to your divisional Administration Unit as detailed above and recorded on Force form 36B.

Any loss of uniform or equipment must be reported in writing immediately to your line manager outlining any serial numbers, a description of the lost article, circumstances and location of the loss. Loss or damage through negligence may result in the member of staff being charged for the cost of the replacement item.

#### 2.19 Helpline Information

If you have any queries with regard to ordering, returns, special measures or the care of your uniform etc, contact the Uniform Equipment Services Team at Openshaw, extension **60835**.



### 3 Police Staff and Police Officers Who Do Not Wear a Uniform Working Within an Office Environment.

Detailed below are the standards of dress and appearance expected of police officers and staff who do not wear a uniform.

#### 3.1 Responsibilities

Managers are expected to monitor and enforce the standards, and in doing so, have the discretion to challenge staff as necessary regarding unacceptable standards of appearance.

Managers must however adopt a sensitive and consistent approach in challenging staff and must fully document their decisions, ensuring that these are lawful, reasonable and proportionate. Decision making processes and outcomes should be retained on the individual's personal file for a period of twelve months.

Managers should always take account of factors such as, likely extremes of temperature, health and safety, hygiene, the nature of the work to be undertaken and any religious or cultural needs.

#### 3.2 General Considerations

These standards are designed to supplement, not replace, existing instructions to staff, e.g. those who have been issued with uniform/protective clothing for the performance of their duties. Where clothing is provided, the staff concerned must wear this when on duty.

Staff must follow any specific instructions relating to appearance that are applicable to their particular group of employees.

#### 3.3 Clothing

Where staff are representing the force, or have contact with members of the public, they should be dressed to create a professional image, e.g. business suits or formal jackets, and trousers/skirt/dresses. Male staff should wear a shirt and tie. We are committed to embracing diversity within our dress standards and we recognise some staff may require due to religious reasons adjustments to their dress. Staff are directed to Section Four of the policy Diversity in Dress.

In other circumstances, where contact with the public or personnel from other organisations is unlikely, a smart standard of dress appropriate to the nature of the work undertaken is acceptable.

Where the type of work involved makes a formal standard of dress impractical, (e.g. manual type work) all clothing/footwear must be presentable and appropriate to the nature of the work, taking into account any health and safety risks posed by the particular task.

The following items are not generally acceptable:-

- Jeans, or items made from denim
- Leggings
- Shorts
- Very short skirts
- T-shirts with large motifs, slogans or logos
- Eveningwear
- Sportswear, including football/rugby shirts and tracksuits

- Cropped tops

### 3.4 Footwear

Formal or business shoes appropriate to the type of work must be worn. Any specific risks associated with the type of work or the workplace should be considered in the choice of footwear.

### 3.5 Appearance

#### 3.5.1 Hair

Hairstyles and colour should be appropriate to the individual and their working environment, but extreme colours should be avoided.

#### 3.5.2 Facial Hair

Generally male staff should be cleanly shaven unless they have a beard, moustache, sideburns or a combination of these, which must be neatly trimmed at all times. If for religious reasons, a beard cannot be trimmed a beard net must be worn.

#### 3.5.3 Jewellery

A modest amount of jewellery is acceptable. However any jewellery worn should not create a risk to the individual in undertaking their role.

Except in the case of cultural/religious observance, visible body piercing, other than earrings are not generally acceptable in the workplace. Managers should consider the possibility of the piercing(s) adversely impacting on the individual's duties and/or the image of the force before exercising discretion on this issue.

If piercing is worn, consideration must always be given to the nature of work undertaken and any associated risks from the piercing.

Staff should be aware that all items of jewellery are worn at the owner's own risk and there is no facility to compensate individuals for damage to or loss of personal items.

#### 3.5.4 Tattoos

Where possible, tattoos should be kept covered. Any visible tattoo, which could be considered offensive, will not be acceptable.

### 3.6 Warrant And ID cards

You should always carry your warrant card on duty and if possible when off duty. Revised procedures for issue of warrant/ID cards are available on [CC Order 2009/27](#).

### 3.7 Disputes

Where staff fail to achieve the standards set out in the policy, it is envisaged that most instances will first be handled on an informal basis, although if matters are not resolved, the Police Staff Disciplinary Procedure or the Police Officer Misconduct Procedures may be used. Your Divisional/Branch HR Unit are available to advise or alternatively you can contact the Professional Standards Branch.

## 4 Diversity In Dress

We want to demonstrate our commitment to embracing diversity within our uniform and dress codes in terms of recognising individual needs arising out of religious beliefs. Not only will this allow staff the freedom to observe their faith at work, but the visible presence of diversity within our workforce will also demonstrate to the communities we serve that we are an inclusive and welcoming organisation.

We have a responsibility to always consider the health and safety implications for our staff, but are determined to positively support requests wherever possible.

Within the uniform entitlement list there is a variety of kit that constitutes PPE. The majority of PPE doesn't present any difficulties as alternative ways of wearing the item could be found or the risk controlled in a different way.

Two items of equipment namely protective headwear and full/half face respirators may conflict with the cultural beliefs for Sikh members of staff. Further information on respirators can be found by using this [link](#).

GMP actively welcomes and encourages diversity within the workforce. Accordingly, the standards are written from the positive perspective of there nearly always being a solution available that acknowledges and supports both the individual and the organisation's duties and responsibilities.

Key areas for consideration are identified in the guidelines below, but these will no doubt grow and evolve over time as we become aware of new areas for development. These guidelines will be updated as necessary to reflect this.

Although this policy is intended to provide guidance to managers and staff, it does not replace the need for discussion with the individuals concerned. This will ensure that each solution meets the specific personal needs identified.

Generally, all of the details below apply to religiously observant members in the application of their faith. It should also be remembered that there would be members of specific faiths who choose not to display their belief openly or through their appearance or dress.

### 4.1 Headwear

Headwear plays an important role in several religions and cultures, as follows:-

#### 4.1.1. Islam

The Muslim dress code is based on the principles of modesty and is applied to both males and females.

In terms of headwear, females may wear the **hijab**, which is a scarf that covers the head and neck, and which may be fastened with a pin. Operational staff must liaise with Stores to obtain a hijab that fastens with velcro, press-studs or is elasticated so that it does not require any fastening mechanism. To ensure that any health and safety risks are minimised, the hijab must be fastened in a way that allows quick release. The hijab can be worn under the police bowler hat, although it will be acceptable for no additional headwear to be worn on top of the hijab. If a high visibility jacket is being worn, the hijab must be tucked inside the collar.

Bonnet caps are also available from Stores, which some staff may prefer to use these rather than a hijab, this will be a matter of personal choice.

Males may wear a prayer hat – a **kufi or topi** – which should normally fit underneath the custodial helmet and which has no health and safety implications.

#### 4.1.2 Judaism

Jewish males may wish to wear a skullcap – a **kippah**– which would fit underneath the custodial helmet and which has no health and safety implications

Kippahs will be made available on request via Stores.

#### 4.1.3 Sikhism

Sikh men may wear a **turban** to cover their uncut hair. Sikh women may also choose to wear a turban.

Turbans can be worn instead of the custodial helmet for standard tours of duty. However, in the event of a public order incident, the NATO style helmet must be worn to protect the health and safety of the officer, his or her colleagues and members of the public. Additionally, other policing activities which, for the same reasons of health and safety, require the wearing of protective headwear e.g. motorcycle unit, pedal cycle patrol etc will not be permitted without the wearing of full PPE including headwear i.e. motorcycle or pedal cycle helmets for these example activities.

Those Sikh officers who feel they cannot remove their turban and wear protective headwear or helmets for reasons of their religion will not be trained or deployed in these or other capacities which may compromise the health and safety of themselves or others. Sikh officers will be fully supported by their managers in their choice.

This aspect of policy, i.e. exemption from selected training and deployment, will remain in place unless there is potential, in future, for force resilience or operational capacity to be undermined at which point it shall be reviewed.

Where an individual exemption has been granted, this will remain in place throughout the officers career within GMP or until such time that the officer's religious observance may allow them to wear the protective headwear. In such times of force resilience or threat to operational capacity, the officer may be required to be deployed to a different role other than their current role.

All headwear that is worn with a GMP uniform must be in the appropriate colour (black or navy blue), and can be provided by Stores or be purchased by the individual, who will be reimbursed for the cost of the material, if preferred.

Any material chosen must be of a matt finish and should be wool based to avoid potential fire risks of synthetic materials.

There is no requirement for the GMP crest or chequered banding to be worn on the item.

## 4.2 Clothing

Detailed below are some variations that should easily be accommodated within the workplace (unless otherwise stated). Please note that the details below will inevitably develop over time:-

- Observant Muslims and Jews are required to dress modestly. Where a uniform is worn, religiously observant staff may require garments of a larger size than expected to ensure that the outline of their body is not visible (i.e. longer jackets).
- Some observant male Muslim staff may require trousers that are shorter than usually worn – Stores can accommodate such requests.
- Some Muslim women may choose to wear the **jilbab** – a long garment that covers most of the body. Whilst this is not appropriate for a police officer or PCSO to wear, it should present no problems for most members of police staff, although it is recognised that it would not be acceptable in some roles. Guidance on this can be sought through your local HR team
- Some Jewish women may choose to wear a skirt rather than trousers, both skirts and trousers can be obtained from Stores.

## 4.3 Appearance

### 4.3.1 Hair

Where hair is worn longer on religious grounds, it must still be secured above the collar to avoid health and safety risks.

### 4.3.2 Facial Hair

Whilst a short-cropped beard may be acceptable to some faiths, others do not permit beards to be cut, in which case a beard net should be worn to avoid health and safety risks whilst on operational duty.

Staff should be aware that if their role requires them to wear a respirator, they will need to be clean-shaven.

## 4.4 Jewellery

No visible body piercing jewellery can be worn on duty, other than on religious grounds - and where it is considered that there is no significant risk to the individual's health and safety.

Uniformed officers and staff may only wear bracelets if they are of religious significance e.g. Sikh **Kara** (steel bracelet). Sikhism is given as an example of accessories worn for religious reasons.

## 4.4 Accessories

The Sikh religion observes the five K's. The extent to which this is observed is dependant on the individual. The Five K's are described below:-

- Kesh- uncut hair, observant Sikh's will not cut or trim their hair (this symbolises the uniqueness and identify of the faith)
- Kangha- a small wooden comb usually worn in the hair (worn for hygiene reasons).
- Karra- a steel bracelet worn on the wrist (a symbol of brotherhood and unity amongst Sikh's).

- Kachhahera- knee length shorts (traditionally worn at times of battle enabling ease of movement in combat).
- Kirpan- a short sword (a symbol of spirituality and defence of those in need).

#### 4.5 Wearing The Kirpan.

GMP supports the wearing of the symbolic Kirpan as it presents no significant risk to health and safety. It can be worn on a chain around the neck or in a small holster under their clothes. It must always be concealed from view.

Should a Sikh Officer/staff not feel able to wear a symbolic Kirpan for religious reasons, then an individual risk assessment will be carried out to determine any health and safety risks to self and others. A decision will be made based on this risk assessment if the wearing of that style of Kirpan is acceptable within GMP.

If the line manager has any concerns, they should first discuss the matter in a sensitive, supportive and discreet way with the individual involved. If there are still concerns after the discussion, the matter should be referred to the Health and Safety Unit, People and Development Branch.

## 5 The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

These regulations require GMP to provide suitable PPE to any member of staff who may be exposed to risks to their health and safety whilst at work. The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 are amended so that where there is an inevitable conflict between the exercise of police powers and GMP's duty to ensure that suitable PPE is provided to employees, the duty shall be complied with so far as is reasonably practicable.

PPE is a **last resort** and should only be provided when there is no other way of controlling the risk. There are a number of reasons for making PPE a last resort.

Firstly, PPE only protects the person wearing it.

Secondly, maximum levels of protection are seldom achieved with PPE. Effective protection is only achieved by suitable PPE that has been correctly fitted, maintained and properly used.

Examples of PPE in Operational Police Work:-

- Public Order Helmets
- Flame Retardant Coveralls
- Body armour
- High visibility jackets
- Disposable Respirators
- Ear defenders

### 5.1 Selection Of PPE

To decide whether PPE is required, and in what form, the key requirements to consider within the regulations include the following:-

#### 5.1.1 Risk Assessment

Before the use of PPE, which should be a last resort, you should consider first the principles of controlling risk.

In taking action and developing your risk assessment consider:-

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risk so that harm is unlikely?

In controlling the risk the following principles should be applied, if possible in the following order:-

- Try a less risky option
- Prevent access to the hazard
- Organise the work to reduce exposure to the hazard

If after the entire above there is still a residual risk, you will need to provide PPE. If you are provided with any item of PPE you should receive information and instruction on how to look after it. In particular it is important you replace it within its shelf life. If in any doubt raise the question with your supervisor.

- 5.1.2 Accommodation  
PPE will only protect you if it remains undamaged, the key to this is suitable storage.
- 5.1.3 Information  
GMP managers **must provide** all staff using PPE with relevant information, instruction and training. The information must include:-
- The risks which the PPE is designed to avoid or limit
  - The manner in which the PPE works and how it should be used
  - Any action that staff should take to keep the PPE in good repair
  - An appropriate system for replacement, in accordance with the shelf life
- 5.1.4 Use Of PPE - Duties Of Employees  
All GMP staff detailed in the Health and Safety Policy have a duty to:-
- Use PPE in accordance with training and instruction
  - Return it to the appropriate storage area after use
  - Report any loss or obvious defect with the PPE to their line manager
  - Monitor the shelf life and ensure appropriate replacement
- 5.1.5 Suitability  
To be suitable PPE needs to:-
- Be appropriate to the risks and workplace conditions
  - Take account of ergonomic considerations and the health of the person wearing PPE
  - Be capable of fitting the wearer correctly and comfortably if worn for long periods
  - Be effective in preventing or adequately controlling the risks involved without increasing the overall risks, so far as is practicable
  - Comply with the relevant British and European standards and carry the CE mark where eligible
- 5.1.6 Compatibility  
Where staff is required to wear more than one type of PPE, the items must be compatible and effective. For example, where respirators, goggles, and safety helmets are worn at the same time, the items must not interfere with the seal of the respirator face piece.
- 5.1.7 Review  
The risk assessment must be reviewed when there is a reason to suspect it is no longer valid or following significant changes to ensure that any appropriate changes required are made.
- 5.2 Equipment Excluded From The Regulations:-
- Ordinary working clothes and uniform that do not specifically protect the health and safety of the wearer. However, if staff are required to work in inclement weather the appropriate PPE is required.
  - Equipment used by the police for arrest, restraint, and self-defence or as deterrent equipment, these are items of work equipment.

- Portable devices for detecting and signalling risks and nuisances for example gas detectors and radiation dosimeters.
- PPE used for protection while travelling on the road, such as crash helmets and leathers.
- Equipment used during the playing of competitive sports, for example footballer's shin guards.
- Where existing regulations already apply and require PPE to be supplied, such as lead, ionising radiation, asbestos, hazardous substances subject to COSHH, noise and safety helmets on construction sites.

### 5.3 Further Guidance

Should you require any further details in relation to any aspect of PPE, or assistance with the preparation of a risk assessment please contact the Health and Safety Unit on extension **62386**.

## 6 Looking After Your Personal Protective Equipment

### 6.1 Looking After Your Personal Protective Equipment

Detailed below is a selection of some of the most frequently used PPE along with some guidance on how to look after them and any limitations on use.

### 6.2 Body Armour - Correct Fitting

You have been provided with dual-purpose armour that will give you some protection against ballistic and knife attack.

It will only protect you if it fits. You should ensure that you are personally measured for your armour at the Stores Unit. If your body size changes significantly you will need to be remeasured

## BODY ARMOUR – DOES IT FIT?



X



✓

To protect you against serious injury body armour **MUST** cover the five major organs in the torso, namely Heart, Lungs, Liver, Kidney, and Spleen. Body armour should be close fitting to the body and hard objects such as metal buttons, press-studs, badges and the like should never be placed beneath body armour. Female staff when wearing body armour should not wear bras that contain metallic/plastic wiring.

### 6.3 Protection Level Standard Patrol Armour

Currently within GMP, Highmark or more recently Mehler will have supplied body armour. The protection offered by the body armour is HG1A/KR2, more details can be found within the [Body Armour Policy](#).

#### 6.4 Looking After Your Body Armour

If you look after your body armour it will last indefinitely.



X



✓

You need to make sure that you check your body armour panels on a regular basis. If at any time you notice that the panel has been damaged or the covering to the panel has been punctured, you need to replace it immediately.

The body armour panels should never be immersed in water. When cleaning them, you should only ever wipe them down with a clean damp cloth; all the time looking for broken seams or perforations.

#### 6.5 Flame Retardant Overalls

##### **Limitations on use.**

Flame retardant overalls (FRO) are not fire proof and they are, by design, far different to the PPE worn by the Fire Service.

A FRO is designed to provide very short-term protection against direct heat (e.g.naked flame) and transferred heat (conducted).

The FRO will give you 4 seconds protection against the heat.

The FROs are designed to protect against heat from outside by acting as an insulator. But by acting as an insulator, heat will build up inside the FRO generated by the body during physical exertion.

The only known method to remove the heat build up is to open up the FRO and allow it to escape.

##### **Fitting.**

To give you any protection the FRO must be correctly sized.

A FRO needs to be loose (baggy) fitting as this looseness introduces an air gap between the inside of the FRO and the skin. This air gap helps to provide insulation, reducing the possibility of a burn injury.

Any police officer **must** attend stores for fitting and bring with them any other items of PPE that will be worn underneath the FRO.

The FRO should be worn over all other equipment. Placing any item over the FRO may cause a flammable liquid trap increasing the risk of a burn injury.

You should not attach anything to the FRO, the smallest pinhole could compromise its ability to protect you.

### **Inspection.**

You must carry out regular inspections of your FRO which should include: -

- Checking all stitching is intact
- Checking all the closers work correctly
- Checking that the fabric has no rips or tears
- Checking the label recording number of washes is attached
- Following attendance at petrol bomb reception training ensure you wash your suit as per the manufacture's instruction and check for any sign of damage

### **Washing**

It is essential that you follow the manufacture's instructions on how to wash the FRO.

You should **not use** fabric conditioner and wash in **non-biological powder**.

The same washing instructions will apply to the flashover hoods.

### **Undergarments**

Any undergarments should be 100% natural fibres.

Tight or close fitting undergarments will minimise any air gap between the wearer's skin surface and the first layer of clothing. This may increase the risk of a burn injury due to heat transfer.

Loose undergarments will provide an air gap but they may not be as comfortable. The undergarment could retain perspiration, which could increase the risk of scald burns. Unfortunately there is no ideal solution.

## 6.6 Pedal Cycles

The ['Pedal Cycle Policy'](#) lists the uniform and equipment required for pedal cycle duties.



6.7 Lightweight High Visibility Over jacket

When undertaking any activity that involves stepping out onto the carriageway, staff should always wear their high visibility over jacket to ensure appropriate levels of conspicuousness and safety. High visibility jackets should always be fastened with your equipment belt worn on the outside of it.

Wash in **non-biological powder** according to care instructions. Do not store or dry in places subject to direct, strong sunlight.



## 6.8 Limb Protectors

The protection provided by the limb protector is designed to reduce the risk of permanent and serious injury however, it cannot eliminate the possibility of an injury occurring.

The limb protectors are designed to be worn under your coverall.

Wipe clean with a damp cloth in warm water and liquid soap. Do not use detergents or fabric conditioner.

Ensure that all limb protectors are clean and dry before storage. Keep limb protectors away from direct sunlight when being stored.

Do not place heavy objects on the limb protectors, as this will compress the foam making it ineffective when next worn.

Any item, which has been contaminated by blood or bodily fluids, should be disposed of as clinical waste and incinerated.

The limb protectors have a lifespan of five years.

## 6.9 Polycarbonate Riot Shields

The riot shield is made of polycarbonate plastic which is exceptionally strong and resistant to blows, impact and penetration.

You must remember that petrol and similar hydrocarbon solvents will in time damage and weaken the plastic eventually cracking the shield.

You need to inspect your riot shield on a regular bases for signs of any damage.

To ensure your riot shield maintains its' level of protection you need to be aware of the following:-

- Avoid any exposure to petrol, diesel, solvents or chemicals
- Do not store the riot shield on oily floors or within range of vehicle exhaust emissions
- Handle the riot shield with care and ensure proper storage arrangements
- Riot shields should be stored upright, never in piles so as to avoid stress and distortion
- Store away from direct sunlight
- Store in a stable temperature
- When cleaning the riot shields never use an abrasive cleaner. Use clean water and cloth to wipe down
- If you notice damage to a shield it should be replaced immediately

## 6.10 Public Order Helmet

Your Public Order Helmet will offer you significant protection if it is the correct fit and has not been subjected to a severe impact. Prolonged exposure to solvents can also cause damage to the helmet.

The thermoplastic shell of the helmet will deform substantially if subjected to a severe impact. It can then return, almost instantly to its original shape and appear undamaged but it does still need to be replaced.

Protect your helmet by storing it correctly and always use a carrying bag or kit holdall.

The helmet and visor should be replaced approximately every four years if it has been in **regular** use.

Before use, ensure that there is no damage to the helmet shell, impact liner fabric or any other safety critical component such as a chinstrap. Look for surface cracks, grazing or areas of discolouration. If found, replace helmet and/or visor.

#### 6.11 Safe Use Of Respirators

Respirators are designed to remove or reduce the concentration of an airborne pollutant that would otherwise reach the respiratory system of the wearer. When leakage does occur this is generally around the critical mask-to-face seal contact point. Face Fit Testing (FFT) is intended to ensure that the seal fit is complete and that no pollutant could enter the face piece.

Legislation requires that all Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) such as full face, half face, filtering face pieces (usually termed 'disposable masks') are FFT against the user. This procedure is essential to ensure that the mask or respirator adequately performs the function of protecting the user from airborne pollutants.

Qualitative FFT is a method that tests the face piece against the users subjective assessment of the ingress of an aromatic agent. Qualitative testing may be used for tight fitting filtering (disposable) and reusable half-face respirators. Qualitative FFT must not be used for full-face masks.

Quantitative FFT is a method that tests the face piece against the ingress of an agent by precise measurement of particles entering the mask. This test method is used for full-face respirators.

A 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessment prior to selection of RPE and undertaking work is absolutely essential. The full guidance on '[Face Fit Testing](#)' can be found via this link.