

Drafting Effective Officer Witness Statements for Criminal Proceedings

COURSE INFORMATION:

An officer's witness statement is crucial in criminal investigations and subsequent legal proceedings. It will help to establish the sequence of events, corroborate evidence and the chain of custody, and provide evidence of the offence(s) under investigation. Therefore, it is vital that officers involved in criminal investigations are able to effectively produce their witness statements.



COURSE DURATION:

In this half-day course, we will consider how to draft officer witness statements for criminal proceedings, ensure exhibits are referenced correctly and provide an understanding as to what needs to be included within the statement.

AUDIENCE

This course has been designed for any individual who may need to produce their own officer witness statement as part of criminal legal proceedings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the importance and benefits of drafting effective officer witness statements, including protection against cross-examination.
- Identify how the use of language can positively and negatively impact a witness statement.
- How to deal with unavoidable weaknesses.
- Know how to draft effective and admissible officer witness statements, taking into consideration requirements under the Criminal Procedure Rules, the use of pocket notebook entries and other records, and best practice.
- Understand the importance of referencing exhibits correctly including detailing the management and continuity of exhibits.
- Know the meaning and importance of the perjury declaration.
- Explain what can be included in officer witness statements for criminal proceedings, including how to deal with hearsay, bad character, ECHR and admissibility.