

<b>SI Identification Number</b>	SI0119
<b>Policy Ownership</b>	Operational Support Department
<b>Issue Date</b>	14/02/2019
<b>Review Date</b>	5 years from issue date
<b>Last Updated</b>	28/01/2021
<b>Governing Service Policy</b>	Information Management
<b>Cancellation of</b>	17/2011 OFFICIAL ISSUE NOTEBOOKS AND JOURNALS – ISSUE AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES
<b>Classification</b>	<b>OFFICIAL [PUBLIC]</b>

## SI0119

# Official Issue Notebooks Journals and Daybooks

The purpose of this Service Instruction is to offer guidance to the Police Service of Northern Ireland with respect to the management of notebooks, journals and daybooks.



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## 1. Objective

This Service Instruction details the issue, accounting and retention procedures in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for official issue notebooks, journals, and day books.

The legal basis for entries made in notebooks is derived from the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Order 1989.

Records and their retention within the PSNI are governed by:

- The Public Records Act (NI) 1923;
- The Disposal of Documents Order 1925;
- The principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018; and
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Notebooks, journals and day books that are or have been used for business purposes remain in the charge of the Chief Constable, including when the police officer or police staff member has left the PSNI.

The Data Protection Act (DPA 2018) obligates all data controllers, such as the PSNI to protect the confidentiality and rights of data subjects whose personal information they process and to implement appropriate technical and organisational

measures in order to meet the requirements of the Regulation/Act and protect the rights of data subjects.

Prescribed records such as police notebooks or journals, which contain personal data and are being held outside the control of the data controller cannot be assured of being processed in a manner compliant with the regulation and act, and are therefore deemed to be held in breach of the controllers obligations to secure and protect.

Police officers are reminded of the obligation placed upon them by the Code of Ethics Article 1.9 (false, misleading or inaccurate written statements – see Code of Ethics for full explanation).

Notebooks issued to Student Officers are part of their training tools and are not considered 'notebooks' for the purpose of this Service Instruction. They are treated separately under the PSNI Review Retention & Disposal Schedule.

**In relation to all other officers/staff and in all circumstances notebooks/ journals/day books will be receipted, stored securely and retained for a**

period compliant with the PSNI Review, Retention and Disposal Schedule.

## 2. Control of Notebooks/Journals

District Commanders and Heads of Branch/Department shall be responsible and accountable for the procedures surrounding the issue and control of notebooks and journals. The responsibility for the issue, reissue and accounting of notebooks and journals may be designated to a suitable competent person (designated authority).

District Commanders/Heads of Branch/Department should examine on a quarterly basis:

- (i) Notebook registers; and
- (ii) Notebook reissue registers.

## 3. Issue of Notebooks/Journals

Official notebooks will be issued to all police officers of Constable and Sergeant Rank. In addition, police officers above the rank of Sergeant in investigative roles and police staff in investigative roles will be issued with notebooks for evidential purposes. Where there is a need outside of

these circumstances, notebooks may be issued to police staff and police officers of other ranks up to and including the Chief Constable.

Official journals will be issued to:

- Police Officers from ranks of Inspector to Chief Constable; and
- Police Staff from grades of Staff Officer to Grade 3.

From the date of receipt of a journal the practice of using unofficial daybooks will cease. Daybooks will remain in the personal possession of the officer or member of staff until they exit the organisation, at which point they will be surrendered (with notebooks/ journals where appropriate) to their respective designated authority.

The issue of notebooks and journals should be recorded electronically using the register at [Appendix A](#), and saved on the corporate Electronic Data Records Management System (EDRMS) (with appropriate security and access controls).

Officers/Staff requiring a replacement notebook must produce the completed old notebook for retention by the issuing officer. Only one notebook must be in use at any time. Officers must not maintain

more than one notebook. The issuing of a notebook will only be undertaken by the designated person. They must confirm that the previous book is the most recent and is complete before issuing a new book.

Under no circumstances are unauthorised or duplicate notebooks to be used.

All unused notebooks must be securely stored by the designated authority and subject to audit.

On completion of a journal the police officer or member of police staff must ensure that the person delegated to issue journals inserts an entry in to the journal register.

The Officer or member of Police Staff will retain all completed journals for the duration of their Service and upon leaving the Service return all journals following procedure as per Section 8.

#### 4. Maintenance of Notebooks

Subject to Section 3 above, police officers of all ranks in investigative roles and police staff in investigative roles shall maintain notebooks for evidential purposes. Police officers and staff should carry their notebooks at all times when on duty or on

call unless their duties preclude them from doing so. They must record all relevant matters in a contemporaneous form in their notebook at the time, or as soon as possible afterwards where safety concerns or practicality prevents this. The reason for any delay must be noted.

The entry must:

- Be recorded in pen;
- Be clearly legible;
- Include the details of all incidents they are evidentially involved in;
- Where appropriate, the entry should be complementary to existing scene examination, and sketch recording documentation;
- Show clear rationale for any decision making;
- Be in sufficient detail to recall the full facts during any subsequent court proceedings (Notebooks are subject to the scrutiny of the Court);
- Not be the subject of unauthorised or dishonest alteration(s);
- Only be made in the lines of the pages; and

Further to this:

- Entries should include the time entered in the margin;

- No additional notes must be made in the margins or between the lines after the initial entry has been made;
- There must be no gaps between entries;
- All dates should be recorded, including rest days, annual leave and course attendance;
- There should be no loose paper inserted within the notebook;
- When not in use, the notebook must be stored in a secure pocket, subject to uniform type, and
- A new notebook should be sought in a timely manner to avoid the risk of original notes not being made.

Where a notebook or journal contains an entry relating to serious crime (MOPI graded 1 or 2 offence, see [Appendix E](#)) the member must indicate this on the front cover of the notebook or journal and complete the case name, page number and date on the inside index sheet.

## 5. Maintenance of Journals

All Officers and Staff members required to maintain a journal (for non-evidential matters) will keep a record of:

- Work performed each day;

- Important occurrences or matters which arise or are brought to their notice; and
- Particulars of leave, sickness travel etc.

This is not an exhaustive list, but indicative of what would constitute an entry.

The Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable, Assistant Chief Constables or Heads of Departments may, at their discretion, direct any police officer or member of police staff, to maintain a journal. In addition, an individual may self-elect to keep a journal, but such will be issued as per [Section 3](#), and becomes an official record. The latter does not negate the responsibility of maintaining an official issue notebook if the individual concerned is obliged to maintain a notebook for evidential purposes.

When a journal contains an entry relating to a serious crime ([MOPI graded 1 or 2 offence](#)), the member should indicate this on the front cover of the journal and complete the case name, page no and date on the inside index sheet.

## 6. Lost Stolen or Damaged Notebooks/Journals/Day books

Immediately on becoming aware that a loss of a notebook/journal or daybook has occurred, the appropriate steps should be taken as laid out in the table below. This is necessary in order to minimise negative effects, protect the public and the Service, ensure that the PSNI does not breach any legal or regulatory requirements and identify areas of weakness in order that these can be addressed.

Notebooks, Journals and Daybooks			
Action to be taken	Lost	Stolen	Damaged
Inform Line Manager immediately	✓	✓	✓
Follow IS Standard 1.05 – Information Incident Identification and reporting  (Phone or email the Incident Coordination Centre ICC with relevant details)	✓	✓	

The Line Manager must immediately inform the locally designated authority. (For Journals the Line Manager will also notify the Departmental Head, Regional ACC or DCU commander). All such occurrences must be investigated and a report furnished to the District Commander or Head of Branch/ Department for consideration of disciplinary action. Loss of a notebook or journal may also involve a loss of personal data. There are specific legal obligations regarding external reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office and in some cases, to data subjects. External reporting is the responsibility of the PSNI Data Protection Officer.

## 7. Line Manager Notebook/Journal check

Each Officer/Staff member's notebook will be inspected on a monthly basis by their Line Manager, ensuring that the record has been completed and including a qualitative check on content. Journals will be inspected on a quarterly basis by a supervisory officer / line manager.



As part of the inspection process Line Managers must ensure that only official issue notebooks/journals are being used for the purposes of PSNI business.

The Line Manager will annotate this inspection with their service number/staff number, date and signature. This inspection should not only check and ensure that the record has been completed, but must also include a qualitative check of the content.

Countersigning Managers (those members' one rank or grade above the line manager) must undertake a regular, random dip sample inspection of notebooks/journals.

The check should ensure that:

- The record has been completed;
- The Line Manager has performed the inspection; and
- A qualitative check of the content has been carried out.

The Countersigning Manager's signature, service number/ staff number and date must be recorded at the top of the last page containing an entry.

Officers/staff members should ensure that their line manager examines their

notebook/journal as per the arrangements outlined above.

## 8. Return of Notebooks/ Journals/ Day books

Completed notebooks must be returned to the designated person and the return recorded using the register Appendix A.

Only where a notebook has been lost/stolen/damaged and the process at Section 5 has been completed, will a new notebook be issued without one being returned.

Completed journals/day books must be retained by the individual until termination of service. At this time all journals/day books must be returned to their line manager before being submitted to Records Management Unit (RMU).

Access to journals or day books which have been returned to the Records Management store must be approved by a District Commander/Head of Branch/ Department.

## 9. Arrangements on transfer

On transfer the officer/staff member will have personal responsibility for the transfer of their notebooks to their new location. The notebooks will be accompanied with the individual record of notebooks (Appendix C), which must be checked by the individual for accuracy. Notebooks must not be placed in the internal mail system.

On arrival at the new location the designated officer will receive and receipt the notebooks. While the current notebook will remain in the officer/staff member's possession, no other notebooks must be retained in personal lockers, desk drawers, or at home.

In respect of officers transferring from Professional Standards, Anti-Corruption and Vetting, all notebooks/journals/daybooks that were maintained in connection with these duties will be retained within that Department. All other notebooks/journals/daybooks shall transfer in the normal way.

Individuals on transfer should retain journals/day books.

## 10. Reissue of Notebooks

Where an individual is reissued with their notebook for the purposes of completing files, court attendance, or any other legitimate business purpose, this shall be for the minimum period required and should not exceed 1 month. The notebook reissue will be recorded in the register at Appendix B and the individual must ensure prompt return once the requirement has ended. If a copy notebook entry is required for submission to a file or for court purposes an electronic Form 38/67 should be completed, certified and signed by the person who makes the copy.

To monitor the reissue of notebooks the following guidelines will be employed:

- Reissued notebooks must be recalled on a monthly basis;
- A call-up system must be in place, which will identify dates when notebooks are due to be returned;
- Expedites for unreturned notebooks must be forwarded to the individual's line manager asking for the immediate return of the notebook and explanation for the delay;
- On returning the notebook the reissue register must be updated accordingly by the designated person (see Appendix B); and

- Failure to return notebooks after reasonable requests will be considered a disciplinary offence and reported by the Line Manager as such.

## 11. Suspension, Dismissal, Retirement or Resignation from duty

Action to be taken	On Suspension	On Dismissal	On Retirement or Resignation
<b>Supervisor</b> collects all notebooks/ journals or day books issued to that person	✓	✓	
<b>Supervisor</b> forwards items to <b>Designated Authority</b> for secure storage and retention	✓	✓	
<b>Individual</b> forwards items to <b>Designated Authority</b> for secure storage and retention <i>(Prior to end of service)</i>  <b>Designated Authority</b> forwards notebooks/journals/day books to Records Management Unit for transfer to Seapark			✓
<b>Designated Authority</b> forwards items to Records Management Unit for storage and retention (Insert entry in notebook/journal register)		✓	
<i>Failure to return notebooks, journals and/or day books shall be considered a disciplinary offence</i>			

## 12. Death of a Member

In the event of the death of an officer/staff member on or off duty, the District/Branch/Department shall make

arrangements with Records Management Unit for the collection of all notebooks/journals/day books and ensure records are perfected.

### **13. Access by Former Members to Notebooks/Journals/Day books**

Former members requiring access to notebooks/journals/day books for third party actions, including Judicial Reviews, will be directed to obtain a Judicial direction/Court Order via their legal representative and forward to PSNI Legal Services, where it will be assessed, taking cognisance of the PSNI's statutory and common law obligations (see [process flowchart](#)).

Where former members are acting as a witness on behalf of the Chief Constable who is a party to proceedings, or are requested by:

- the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI),
- Major Investigation Teams (MIT),
- Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB), or
- Legal Services;

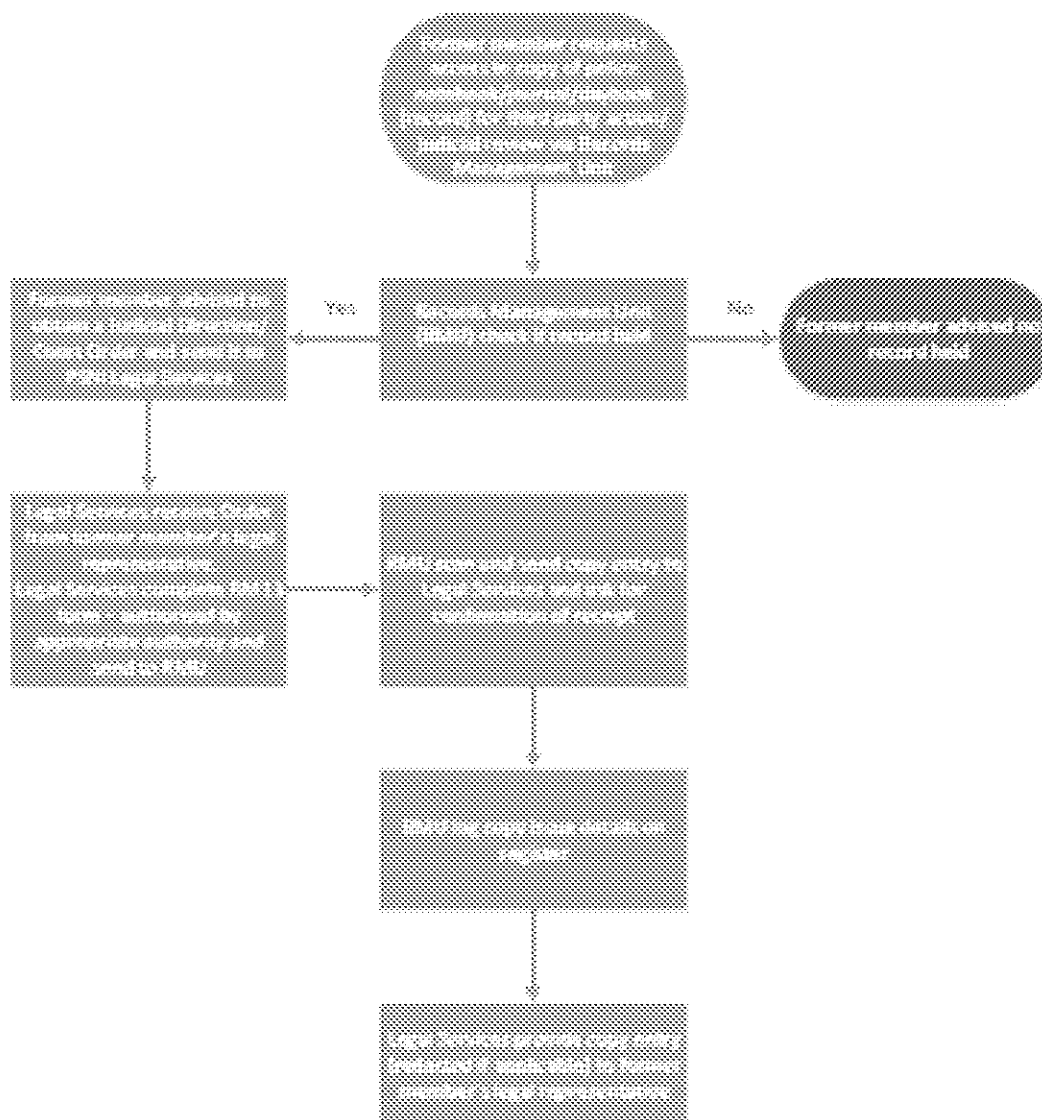
to act as a witness on their behalf for matters relevant to the former member's role in the police, then access to notebooks/journals/day books for such investigative purposes will continue to be serviced via the current process for each (see [process flowchart](#)).

Where former members are required to be interviewed as suspects in respect of their former role in the police, it will be for the investigative authority/unit, acting under their statutory/legal remit, to determine and document their rationale for the most appropriate level of access and disclosure to the notebooks/journals/day books (see [process flowchart](#)).

Police officers/staff must ensure when producing material from notebooks/journals/day books in court that it is relevant to the matter in question, and is appropriately risk assessed, securely transmitted and assessed against any [Human Rights Act 1998 Article 2](#) and [Article 8](#) considerations. Legal Services can advise in this regard.



Third Party Action on Judicial Review







**Appendix A Notebook/ Journal Register**

Notebook Journal Serial Number	Name of Officer/Staff Member	Service Number of Officer/Staff Member	Station Issuing Notebook	Date Notebook Issued	Signature of Officer/Staff Member Receiving Notebook	Signature of Officer/Staff Member Issuing Notebook	Date Notebook Returned/ Journal complete	Signature of Officer/Staff Member Returning Notebook	Signature of Officer/Staff Member Receiving Notebook



## Appendix C Individual Record of Notebooks/Journals

Notebooks/ Journals listed below have been issued to the following member during their service.

PRINT NAME                      RANK/GRADE,                      SERVICE/STAFF NUMBER    LOCATION

The police officer/police staff shall assume responsibility for the transfer of their notebooks/journals to their new location (It is incumbent upon the police officer/ police staff to check accuracy of list below).

Signature  
(Police officer/ police staff)

**Notebook/ Journal Number(s)** (This is the notebook's serial number as per Appendix 'A')

(1) _____	(11) _____
(2) _____	(12) _____
(3) _____	(13) _____
(4) _____	(14) _____
(5) _____	(15) _____
(6) _____	(16) _____
(7) _____	(17) _____
(8) _____	(18) _____
(9) _____	(19) _____
(10) _____	(20) _____

**LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please find \*attached/ enclosed (ie 1, 8, 20) \_\_\_\_\_ notebooks/ journals for the above named member forwarded on the time of their \*transfer/ \_\_\_\_\_ to your location.

Number(s) (ie 1, 6 and 15, 2-5) \_\_\_\_\_ are not \*attached/ enclosed as they have been reissued (give number of notebook/ journal and date of reissue for each) \_\_\_\_\_ to the member as per instructions.

You should request return or obtain information as to \*its/ their whereabouts.  
\*delete as necessary

**ISSUING POLICE OFFICER/ POLICE STAFF**

PRINT NAME                      RANK/ GRADE,                      SERVICE/STAFF NUMBER    LOCATION

**RECEIPTING POLICE OFFICER/ POLICE STAFF**

PRINT NAME                      RANK/ GRADE,                      SERVICE/STAFF NUMBER    LOCATION

## Appendix D Definitions

### Notebook

A Notebook is the book issued to officers/staff by the Service and used for the purposes of recording evidential material as derived by the Police and Criminal Evidence Order 1989.

### Journal

A Journal is a formal record of duty as used by Inspector or above and Police Staff from grades of Staff Officer to Grade 3, formerly known as a C7.

### Daybook

Is any book, other than a Notebook or Journal as defined above, used by an officer of staff member to record any details of official PSNI business.

## Appendix E Management of Police Information (MoPI) Gradings

Review Group	Offence/Record Type	Action	Rationale
<b>Group 1</b>			
'Certain Public Protection Matters'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) managed offenders</li> <li>▪ Serious specified offences - CJA 2003</li> <li>▪ Potentially dangerous people</li> </ul>	<p>Retain until subject has reached 100 years of age</p> <p>Review every 10 years to ensure adequacy and necessity</p>	This category poses the highest possible risk of harm to the public
<b>Group 2</b>			
Other Sexual and Violent offences	<p>Sexual offences listed in Schedule 3 Sexual Offences Act 2003</p> <p>Violent offences specified in the Home Office Counting Rules/ National Crime Recording Standard</p>	<p>Review after an initial 10-year clear period</p> <p>If subject is deemed to pose a high risk of harm retain and review after a further 10-year clear period</p>	National Retention Assessment Criteria
<b>Group 3</b>			
All Other Offences	Non-sexual, non-violent	Retain for initial 6-year clear period. Either review and risk assess every 5 years or carry out time-based disposal depending on Constabulary policy	Lower risk of harm. Must balance the risk posed by this group with the burden of reviewing.
<b>Group 4</b>			
Missing Persons	<p>Resolved</p> <p>Unresolved</p>	<p>Retain for a minimum of 6 years. Dispose of if this period has been 'clear' and there are no further indicators of risk</p> <p>Retain indefinitely</p>	Limitation Act 1980

## Appendix F Contact Us

Service Instruction Author	s.F40
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	s.F40(3)(A)(b)
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	s.F31(1)
	s.F31(1)(a)
	s.F31(1)(b)