Dear Tutor

The Peter West Police Station Scenario is a role-play exercise we have used and developed over the years with our LPC students. The exercise can be used in conjunction with the filmed version of the case study. It should be considered alongside our online chapter: Advising at the Police Station-Practical Steps. The documentation supporting the video case study and the role-play exercise is available to you on this site. Before we give an account of the role-play exercise, we list below the documentation that supports this particular case study:

**Early investigative stages**
1. Client instructions for Peter West (version 1 – Guilty - video version)
2. Client instructions for Peter West (version 2 – Not Guilty)
3. Instructions for investigating officers (including account of the investigation thus far)
4. Witness statement of Sandra Bailey (this would have been a videotaped interview undertaken by a specially trained officer)
5. Witness statement of Brenda Bailey
6. Sample custody record (contains account of the forensic medical examination of Peter West)
7. Instructions for solicitor
8. Forensic medical examiner’s report on the victim (accessible only to the investigating officers)
9. Initial disclosure provided by the ‘disclosure officer’ based on the filmed version (this is for illustration only as the investigating officers in your role-play must decide for themselves how much or how little of the evidence they wish to disclose)
10. Instructions for observer role
11. The strategy for interview as provided by the lead interviewing police officer pictured in the video version

**Later investigative stages**
12. Expedited version of forensic results supporting Version 1 (this was supplied to the solicitor in the video version)
13. Expedited version of forensic results supporting Version 2
14. Replete forensic reports and supporting witness statements supporting Version 1 (the filmed version) of this scenario

As you can see, we run two different versions of this role-play exercise, they being version 1 based on the assumption that the suspect, Peter West, did commit the offence, and version 2 based on the assumption that he did not. **This fact is known only to the suspect who should keep his client instructions confidential.**
When we run this exercise as a role-play we allocate roles some 7 to 10 days in advance. This is a logistical nightmare and it is better to allocate stand-by roles in case a key player fails to turn up! You can, and probably will, have two or three groups undertaking the exercise simultaneously. It is better to have separate rooms for each group because of the noise level. If you have students with experience of police station practice, cast them in the role of solicitor as the others in the group can learn from their experience.

A typical role-play group comprises two investigating officers, a solicitor and trainee solicitor, a suspect and two observers (who might also have a stand-by role). You could also have a role for a custody officer if you wish. You could also have a CPS lawyer on duty at the police station. Some of these roles could be undertaken by you as the tutor.

The instructions for the principal players are set out in documents 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10. The suspect needs to be able to carry off the role and to get in to character. The investigating officers need to be aware of how they should behave. The solicitor needs to prepare in advance of the exercise (research the elements of the offence under investigation/PACE/Code C, Chapter 12 of the Handbook etc....). The observer/s in each group should be fully cognisant of the various roles to be undertaken. We recommend you release the instructions of the ‘principal actors’ to the observers on a drip-feed basis as the exercise unfolds. The observers should have a set of instructions (see document 10) and a basis by which they can evaluate the performances of the participants, record critical incidents in the role-play and lead group feedback on the exercise at the end.

For the first part of the role-play, those students playing Peter West should be segregated from the rest of the group. Ideally, Peter West should be allocated a cell! Do check that those undertaking the client role are properly briefed for the role-play and deal with any queries or concerns they may have. This is the point where we normally tell Peter that he has been having an affair with a work colleague-however this is a fact that he must not disclose to his solicitor. The affair is an item of information that Peter might choose to disclose in the course of his interview with the police (it is entirely up to him....... whether the affair is disclosed during the police interview or not, Peter is not prepared to disclose the woman's identity as she is married. The purpose of this added piece of information is to show that clients often withhold information from their solicitor which can of course lead them to be exposed in interview. If the information is revealed by Peter West during the interview, the solicitor should stop the interview and take urgent instructions!
How the role-play should unfold

The role-play commences when the solicitor arrives at the police station. S/he will consult the custody officer (if you have one) and look through the custody record (this could in fact be undertaken outside the workshop). When reviewing the role-play exercise in due course, the solicitor should explain what s/he was looking for in the custody record. During the role-play the custody officer should continue compiling the custody record.

The next part of the role-play involves the solicitor speaking with one or both of the investigating officers – the so called ‘disclosure interview’. The investigating officers should have prepared in advance and should, therefore, have determined what, if any, evidence/information they are prepared to disclose. This section of the role-play is a good test of the solicitor’s assertiveness and negotiating skills. A written record should be kept of the disclosure. We refer you to document 9. This is a copy of the written disclosure provided to us by the real investigating officers in the filmed version of this scenario. You are referred to the checklist for interview at the police station at the end of Chapter 12 in the Handbook. Those undertaking the role of solicitor may wish to use it.

Following on from this, the solicitor will interview Peter West in private. This is a test of the solicitors interviewing skills. It is an opportunity for the client to put forward his version of the facts, based on his instructions and to ask pertinent questions of the solicitor and trainee. The role-play version differs slightly from the video version in that in the role-play version, you can assume that Peter West has consented to having samples taken prior to the arrival of his solicitor, as reflected in the custody record. Critical to the scenario is what advice the solicitor is to give to Peter and what the reasons for that advice might be. The observer should evaluate this. The solicitor should prepare his client for the interview experience.

Whilst the solicitor is speaking with his/her client, the interviewing officers should set up their interview room. This is a good time to speak with the officers to check that they are prepared. It is often useful to review what evidence they have at this early stage (consider documents 3, 4, 5 and 8). Note: the full forensic reports are not available at this early stage. Explore with the investigating officers the issues they need to cover during the interview and how they should react if the suspect refuses to answer questions or his solicitor intervenes. (This is the point when we usually inform the investigating officers that an opened packet of condoms has been retrieved from the glove compartment of Peter West’s car. It would appear that one condom is missing. This is information that could not have been disclosed by the investigating officers to the defence solicitor because it was not available at the time!)
The next stage will be the interview itself. This could easily last 45 minutes. The participants should go through the motions of setting up the tape etc...to make it appear real. The officers should have prepared a strategy for their interview. You are referred to the strategy for interview (document 11) prepared by the police officers who undertook the video version of this case scenario. Again, the observers should keep a record of what is said. A ‘no comment’ interview will not of course prevent the officers from putting their questions to Peter. The solicitor may well object to certain questions and ask to speak to his/her client in private. A critical evaluation of the performance of the solicitor and investigating officer should be made as part of the feedback on this exercise.

It is better if the exercise is brought to a conclusion. The options include charging Peter West (in which case he could be released on conditional bail or remanded into police custody); release on police bail pending further enquiries, release pre-charge conditional on s 37 (7) (c) PACE bail pending a decision by the CPS – the latter is the most likely outcome at this early stage. Conditions can be attached to s. 37 (7) (c) bail and these may be a matter of negotiation between the custody officer and solicitor.

Thereafter, everyone should remain in role and the observers in each group should take their group through a specific plenary feedback session, inviting comments from the participants and passing judgment on their performances. This should then be followed by a tutor lead plenary feedback session involving the entire group, exploring the dynamics of police station advice and the challenging nature of the role undertaken by the legal adviser.

At the conclusion of the plenary session you might want to give the students the forensic results pertaining to whichever version of the case study they have been working from - this will of course tell them whether Peter West was guilty or not guilty.

We customarily conclude this exercise with a ‘round’. A large piece of paper is pinned up. It contains 5 unfinished sentences. We go round the group asking each student to choose and complete one sentence only. They can give the same answer as someone else. You can devise your own sentences. Ours include:

The thing I have enjoyed most about this workshop is………

The thing that struck me about the role of the solicitor is…………

The most difficult thing from the suspect’s point of view is…………

A way of improving this workshop would be…………
What I have learned or had reinforced by this simulated role-play is…………….

The role play can last up to 3 or 4 hours. It can be run in a single session or across two sessions providing participants stick to their roles and do not discuss the workshop until it is complete.

At the conclusion of the proceedings your students can of course review the filmed version of the role-play scenario they have undertaken. We believe the filmed version provides a realistic, though by no means definitive, illustration of how the investigation into such an offence might have been conducted. It should be borne in mind that different police officers and a different police station adviser might have approached things differently!

If you do decide to run this case scenario as a workshop, we would like to hear how it went!

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