

At a Gross Misconduct Hearing held on the 12th and 13th August 2026 the following breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour were alleged:

PC Rickard, whilst an officer serving with the Greater Manchester Police, your conduct is alleged to have fallen below the standard expected of a serving police officer in such a way that you have contravened the Standards of Professional Behaviour and amounted to gross misconduct.

Background facts

Allegation 1

1. It is alleged that in September 2021, whilst you were on duty as **Officer A** Tutor, you have acted towards her in a manner which was derogatory, discriminatory, misogynistic and/or amounted to sexual harassment.

Particulars

- a. On 15 September 2021, you said to a male detained under s.136 of the Mental Health Act 1983, "AT LEAST YOU'VE HAD A PRETTY OFFICER ARREST YOU" referring to **Officer A** appearance.
- b. On 17 September 2021, whilst in the Tutor Office, you said to **Officer A** "YOU JUST SIT THERE AND LOOK PRETTY".
- c. On 17 September 2021, you were talking about spelling of **Officer A** name and you said "I HAVE BEEN PRACTISING WRITING YOUR NAME IN MY LOVE LETTERS TO YOU".
- d. On 17 September 2021, when **Officer A** was seeking your guidance on incidents to attend, she said "you tell me what to do" and you replied "LETS GET NAKED THEN."
- e. On 20 September 2021, you took a photograph of **Officer A** without her knowledge or permission.
- f. Later, in reference to that photograph, you said to **Officer A** "THIS IS GOING IN THE WANK BANK" and started laughing.
- g. Your conduct towards **Officer A** was unwanted, shocking and made her very nervous having to work with you. As a junior trainee officer who was new to the team, your conduct made her feel vulnerable and isolated.

Allegation 2

2. It is alleged that from February to April 2022 whilst you were on duty as ^{Former Officer B} 's designated Tutor, you have acted towards her in a manner

which was derogatory, discriminatory, misogynistic and/or amounted to sexual harassment.

Particulars

- a. On one of ^{Former Officer B} first shifts, during a conversation about workplace facilities and ^{Former Officer B} cycling to work, you looked her up and down, looked at her bottom and said 'MMM WELL YOU DO HAVE A CYCLIST'S ARSE'.
- b. ^{Former Officer B} sought your help whilst she was working at a computer. Rather than sit by her side, you leaned over her from behind and put your arms around her.
- c. On several occasions, you touched ^{Former Officer B}'s leg when you were alone with her in a police vehicle.
- d. Upon attendance at a house search, ^{Former Officer B} saw you slap a female colleague on the bottom.
- e. You frequently made inappropriate, derogatory and degrading comments about the appearance and weight of female members of the public and colleagues.
- f. You repeatedly made grossly inappropriate and sexualised comments, including:
 - i. You told ^{Former Officer B} that your son used the dating app 'Tinder' "TO FIND A SHAG, JUST TO GET HIS END AWAY AND SHOOT HIS LOAD'.
 - ii. You told ^{Former Officer B} about other women you had 'SHAGGED'
 - iii. You commented on a member of the public and stated that you would 'GIVE HER ONE', understood to mean you would have sex with her.
 - iv. You said to ^{Former Officer B} 'IF YOU WEREN'T WITH [YOUR PARTNER] I'D HAVE TRIED IT' suggesting you would have tried to instigate a sexual relationship with your tutee.
 - v. When ^{Former Officer B} stated that her jaw was sore following a scooter accident, you replied 'OH EY I BET IT IS', implying that her injury had been caused during a sexual act.
- g. Your conduct towards ^{Former Officer B} made her feel extremely uncomfortable and uneasy, such that she feared being alone with you and took steps to be separated from you. ^{Former Officer B} became so anxious about going to work with you that she would shake. Ultimately, your conduct contributed to ^{Former Officer B}'s decision to leave the Force.

It is alleged that the above conduct, taken individually or cumulatively, breached the following Standards of Professional Behaviour:

- Authority, respect & courtesy

- Equality and diversity
- Discreditable conduct
- Honesty & integrity (integrity only)

It is further alleged that your conduct, taken individually or cumulatively, was a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour so serious that your dismissal could be justified, and therefore amounts to gross misconduct.

Findings

1. The allegations in this matter are contained within the amended Regulation 31.
2. The panel are asked by the AA to find that the officer breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour, in particular in relation to:
 - i. Authority, respect & courtesy
 - ii. Equality and diversity
 - iii. Discreditable conduct
 - iv. Honesty & integrity (integrity only)
3. In making their decision, the panel was acutely aware that the burden of proving that the officer had breached the Standards was on the presenting (the AA's) side. The onus of proof sat with the AA, who were required to prove the case on the balance of probabilities.

The Evidence

4. A number of statements had been obtained from witnesses in relation to the 2 allegations. They were contained in a bundle containing 199 pages. The panel confirm that they considered the whole of the bundle, including the character references within the bundle.
5. The panel were made aware that the former officer, Mr Rickard had attended the hearing venue but had decided not to take part in the proceedings. An application to proceed in absence was made by Mr Jones on behalf of the AA.
6. The officer was represented by Mr Reed of Counsel, who explained the former officer's position (he had retired on the day prior to the hearing) to the panel.

7. The panel were satisfied that the officer was fully aware of the proceedings and had voluntarily chosen not to take part.
8. **Officer A** gave oral evidence to the panel. She confirmed the contents of her statement dated 5th July 2024 (p36 of the bundle).
9. Under cross examination, **Officer A** confirmed that she had not taken issue with Former PC Rickard's conduct at the time that they had occurred but had raised the issues after they had been raised by a colleague. She confirmed that she had discussed the issues with **Former Officer B** prior to **Former Officer B** leaving the police force. She stated that **Former Officer B** had socialised with her once and that the conversation had been about things that former PC Rickard had done and said to **Former Officer B**. During this conversation **Officer A** had told **Former Officer B** what he had said to her. **Officer A** stated that she had not been influenced by **Former Officer B**.
10. The allegations were put to **Officer A**.
11. In relation to allegation 1a, **Officer A** confirmed that former PC Rickard had made the comment to the detained male and not to her and that the former Officer stated that the comment had been made for the purposes of calming the male down. **Officer A** stated that she did not consider that the comment was made for this purpose as he had not been arrested. She stated that the comment may have confused the detained male. She said that the comment had been made in an "objectifying way" and was a comment on her physical appearance.
12. In relation to allegations 1b-1d it was put to **Officer A** that those comments had not been made by former PC Rickard. **Officer A** stated that they had.
13. **Officer A** was asked whether former PC Rickard had taken the picture and then discussed her uniform trousers, which he claimed were too big for her. **Officer A** stated that she did not remember when that was and did not recall going to get new trousers because they were too big for her. It was put to **Officer A** that former PC Rickard had not made the "wank bank" comment after taking the photograph. **Officer A** stated that he had.
14. She stated that she perceived some of the comments to be sexualised. She did not consider them to be "just a joke" or an attempt at humour. She stated that former PC Rickard had been in a position of power, was older than her and his comments were inappropriate in the workplace and not just an attempt at humour.
15. **Former Officer B** also confirmed her statement dated 21st September 2023 (p22), and confirmed the email sent by her upon her resignation.
16. Under cross examination it was put to **Former Officer B** that she had struggled with the workload on the accelerated detective scheme and had become overwhelmed by the work, especially towards the end of her diploma in August 2023.

17. ^{Former Officer B} outlined the units that she had served in and did not accept that she had struggled with the workload but felt that she had not been given the right opportunities or support. She stated that she had left the force because she felt unsupported by the organisation. She did not accept that there had been a clash of personalities with former PC Rickard. She did not accept that she had rolled her eyes at times when he had spoken to her.
18. It was put to her that the alleged statement contained in allegation 2a had never been said by former PC Rickard. ^{Former Officer B} said that it had.
19. She was asked to explain what had happened in relation to allegation 2b and ^{Former Officer B} had demonstrated to the panel how former PC Rickard had placed his arms around her to access the keyboard. She was asked why she had not said anything at the time. She replied that former PC Rickard's actions had been inappropriate to her and had not said anything because she had felt uncomfortable and did not feel that she could have that conversation with former PC Rickard as he was responsible for signing her off on her work requirements and had been in a position of authority.
20. It was put to ^{Former Officer B} that former PC Rickard did not remember the incident but had stated that if it happened it would have been to assist her and that there would have been nothing sexual about it. ^{Former Officer B} replied that she felt that it was sexual and unnecessary.
21. In relation to allegation 2c, regarding the alleged touching of her knee, ^{Former Officer B} again physically demonstrated how former PC Rickard hand touched her leg whilst he was using the gear stick in the car. It was put to her that any touching of her leg could have been inadvertent and she replied that it could have been.
22. It was put to ^{Former Officer B} that the circumstances alleged in allegation 2d had not occurred. It was put to her that there would have been a record of that happening on body worn camera footage and that enquiries had been made to discover who the female officer was but the female had not been identified. She was asked if she had made notes at the time or told anybody of the specifics of the incident. ^{Former Officer B} said that she had not made notes, but that the incident had occurred and the female officer had laughed after former PC Rickard had slapped her bottom. She stated that she had discussed former PC Rickard's conduct with Sgt Rollinson, although not in detail.
23. The statements, contained in the bundle, of officers who had indicated that they had never seen former PC Rickard display any inappropriate behaviour were put to ^{Former Officer B} and in addition, it was put to her that she had made the allegations up. In particular, Counsel on behalf of the officer put to her that the comments contained in allegations 2f (i)-(iv) had never occurred and

- that she had made allegations up. She said that she had not, and that former officer Rickard had made all of the comments to her.
24. She stated that when she had injured her jaw, and indicated at court that it was sore, former PC Rickard's comment (contained in allegation 2f (v) had been said in a "sleazy way". She felt that his comment had been rude and sexual.
25. ^{Former Officer B} denied that her evidence was fabricated and that she had made the allegations up.
26. The panel considered the officer's Regulation 31 Response (page 143 of the bundle dated, 5 September 2025), together with his interview, which had taken place on 7 March 2024, in detail.
27. The panel noted that in relation to the taking of the photograph of **Officer A** former PC Rickard had initially stated that he had taken the photograph of ^{Officer A} because her trousers were far too big for her. However, **Officer A** had told the panel, that she had challenged him about the taking of the photograph shortly after it was taken and he had said that it was because officers didn't have photographs of themselves in uniform when they retired.
28. The panel noted that former PC Rickard had denied any inappropriate behaviour, although it accepted that he had made the comment, as alleged in allegation 1a.
29. The panel considered the numerous statements of officers who had stated that they had never seen former PC Rickard behave in an inappropriate way or say anything inappropriate in their presence.

Findings

30. The panel found **Officer A** to be a credible witness. She had been very clear and consistent about former PC Rickard's behaviour and conduct, and the panel found that she gave her evidence without exaggeration or embellishment.
31. Significantly, **Officer A** had made notes of former PC Rickard's comments on her phone, before these proceedings were commenced.
32. The panel found that it could rely upon **Officer A** evidence.
33. The panel also found ^{Former Officer B} to be a credible witness. The panel did not accept that her evidence had been exaggerated or embellished. The panel accepted her explanation that she had not raised former PC Rickard's behaviour or conduct prior to her resignation email because she had felt that she relied upon former PC Rickard to sign off elements of her work experience for the purposes of her diploma, and that he was her tutor and more senior than her.

34. The panel found that the allegations made by **Officer A** and ^{Former Officer B} were detailed and consistent, and the panel could find no reason why either witness would fabricate, exaggerate or embellish any evidence against former PC Rickard.
35. The panel found that it could not rely upon the regulation 31 response of former PC Rickard. The panel found former PC Rickard's explanation in relation to allegation 1a to be unconvincing.
36. The panel considered the evidence of other officers who had not witnessed former PC Rickard display such behaviour. However, the panel found that this did not mean that **Officer A** or ^{Former Officer B} were making the allegations up.
37. In relation to the allegations. Therefore, the panel found as follows:
38. **Allegation 1**

- a. *On 15 September 2021, you said to a male detained under s.136 of the Mental Health Act 1983, "AT LEAST YOU'VE HAD A PRETTY OFFICER ARREST YOU" referring to **Officer A** appearance.*

The panel accepted **Officer A** evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment to be unnecessary and inappropriate and that it had related to **Officer A** appearance. The panel accepted her evidence that she had been described in a sexualised and in an objectifying way.

- b. *On 17 September 2021, whilst in the Tutor Office, you said to **Officer A** "YOU JUST SIT THERE AND LOOK PRETTY".*

The panel accepted **Officer A** 's evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment to be derogatory and demeaning.

- c. *On 17 September 2021, you were talking about spelling of **Officer A** 's name and you said "I HAVE BEEN PRACTISING WRITING YOUR NAME IN MY LOVE LETTERS TO YOU".*

The panel accepted **Officer A** 's evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment to be unnecessary, sexual and intimidating. The panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that such comments would make **Officer A** feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

- d. *On 17 September 2021, when **Officer A** was seeking your guidance on incidents to attend, she said "you tell me what to do" and you replied "LETS GET NAKED THEN."*

The panel accepted **Officer A** evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment to be unnecessary, sexual and intimidating. Again, the panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that such comments would make **Officer A** feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

*e. On 20 September 2021, you took a photograph of **Officer A** without her knowledge or permission.*

This allegation was accepted by former PC Rickard. The panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that taking a photograph of **Officer A** while she was on duty, without her consent would make **Officer A** feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

*f. Later, in reference to that photograph, you said to **Officer A** "THIS IS GOING IN THE WANK BANK" and started laughing.*

The panel accepted **Officer A** evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment to be highly offensive, sexual and intimidating. Again, the panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that such comments would make **Officer A** feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

*g. Your conduct towards **Officer A** was unwanted, shocking and made her very nervous having to work with you. As a junior trainee officer who was new to the team, your conduct made her feel vulnerable and isolated.*

The panel found that this allegation had been proved for the reasons outlined above.

39. Allegation 2

a. On one of ^{Former Officer B}'s first shifts, during a conversation about workplace facilities and ^{Former Officer B} cycling to work, you looked her up and down, looked at her bottom and said 'MMM WELL YOU DO HAVE A CYCLIST'S ARSE'.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found former PC Rickard's comment about her appearance to be unnecessary, derogatory and demeaning.

b. ^{Former Officer B} sought your help whilst she was working at a computer. Rather than sit by her side, you leaned over her from behind and put your arms around her.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found that former PC Rickard had put both of his arms around ^{Former Officer B} while she was at the computer in a way which represented an invasion of ^{Former Officer B} personal space. The panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that behaving in such a way towards ^{Former Officer B} without her consent would make her feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

c. On several occasions, you touched ^{Former Officer B}'s leg when you were alone with her in a police vehicle.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence that former PC Rickard had, whilst driving his vehicle, touched her leg. However, the panel was not satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that former PC Rickard's conduct was intentional. ^{Former Officer B} had accepted in evidence that the touching may have been inadvertent.

d. Upon attendance at a house search, ^{Former Officer B} saw you slap a female colleague on the bottom.

The panel were not satisfied on the balance of probabilities that this allegation had been proven. The panel found that the evidence in relation to this allegation lacked detail, context and specificity.

e. You frequently made inappropriate, derogatory and degrading comments about the appearance and weight of female members of the public and colleagues.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence (made in her statement) in relation to this allegation. The panel found in light of its findings in relation to these allegations, it was likely, on the balance of probabilities, that ^{Former Officer B} had witnessed former PC Rickard frequently making inappropriate, derogatory and degrading comments about the appearance and weight of female members of the public and colleagues.

f. You repeatedly made grossly inappropriate and sexualised comments, including:

- i. You told ^{Former Officer B} that your son used the dating app 'Tinder' "TO FIND A SHAG, JUST TO GET HIS END AWAY AND SHOOT HIS LOAD"*
- ii. You told ^{Former Officer B} about other women you had 'SHAGGED'*
- iii. You commented on a member of the public and stated that you would 'GIVE HER ONE', understood to mean you would have sex with her.*

iv. You said to ^{Former Officer B} 'IF YOU WEREN'T WITH [YOUR PARTNER] I'D HAVE TRIED IT on?' suggesting you would have tried to instigate a sexual relationship with your tutee.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence in relation to these allegations. The panel found former PC Rickard's comments to be highly offensive, unnecessary, sexual and intimidating. Again, the panel found that that it would have been obvious to former PC Rickard that such comments would make ^{Former Officer B} feel uncomfortable and vulnerable.

v. When ^{Former Officer B} stated that her jaw was sore following a scooter accident, you replied 'OH EY I BET IT IS', implying that her injury had been caused during a sexual act.

The panel were not satisfied on the balance of probabilities that this allegation had been proven. The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence that former PC Rickard had said these words, but the panel were not satisfied that the words were said with any offensive or sexualised intent.

f. Your conduct towards ^{Former Officer B} made her feel extremely uncomfortable and uneasy, such that she feared being alone with you and took steps to be separated from you. ^{Former Officer B} became so anxious about going to work with you that she would shake. Ultimately, your conduct contributed to ^{Former Officer B} decision to leave the Force.

The panel accepted ^{Former Officer B} evidence in relation to this allegation. The panel found this allegation to be proved.

40. The panel considered whether former PC Rickard's conduct in relation to both **Officer A** and ^{Former Officer B} as a former officer, represented sexual discrimination and or harassment.
41. The panel found that former PC Rickard had engaged in unwanted conduct through his numerous inappropriate, sexualised and offensive comments, and that his conduct had the effect of violating **Officer A** and ^{Former Officer B} s dignity and created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and offensive environment for them both. The panel found that former PC Rickard's unwanted conduct was sexual in nature.
42. The panel took into account the perception of both **Officer A** and ^{Former Officer B} and found that it was reasonable that they had perceived former PC Rickard's conduct in the way that they had, which was to make them feel demeaned, humiliated and vulnerable.
43. In particular, in relation to ^{Former Officer B}, and in relation to the allegations proved and not proved, the panel found that it was reasonable for ^{Former Officer B} to have

- perceived former PC Rickard conduct, as creating for her, an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and offensive working environment.
44. Accordingly, the panel found that the former officer's course of conduct represented sexual discrimination and sexual harassment.
 45. The panel considered whether former PC Rickard's conduct represented misconduct or gross misconduct.
 46. The panel found that former PC Rickard conduct, as found, represented a course of conduct which, taken cumulatively, was so serious such that it represented gross misconduct. It found that the individual allegations 1f and 2fi, if taken in isolation, would also have represented gross misconduct.
 47. The panel found that the former officer's conduct taken individually or cumulatively, breached the following Standards of Professional Behaviour:
 - Authority, respect & courtesy
 - Equality and diversity
 - Discreditable conduct
 - Honesty & integrity (integrity only)
 48. For the sake of clarity, the panel found that the former officer was in a position of trust and authority as the tutor of the two officers. The panel found that the officer took advantage of his position in conducting himself as he did and showed a lack of integrity for the reasons outlined above such that the Standard of Professional Behaviour of honesty and integrity was breached.

Outcome

49. In determining the outcome the panel have adopted the structured 3 stage approach outlined in the Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings.

The Seriousness of the Misconduct

50. When considering outcome the panel must remember that the most important purpose of imposing disciplinary sanctions is to maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the policing profession as a whole.

Culpability

51. The panel found that the former officer's conduct was intentional and deliberate.
52. The panel found that the former officer had been in a position of authority and trust as the tutor of both officers, and he had abused that position.
53. The panel found that the officer's conduct was motivated by a desire to establish a sexual relationship with the officers and his behaviour was therefore predatory in nature.

54. The panel found that the officer was entirely culpable for his actions. The misconduct as found was repeated and continued over a period of a number of months.

Harm

55. The panel heard evidence from **Officer A** that she had felt objectified and **Former Officer B** found his behaviour rude and sexual in nature. It was clear to the panel that both officers had been upset by the former officer's conduct and had been made to feel uncomfortable and vulnerable. Both officers had suffered emotional harm as a result of the former officer's behaviour.
56. **Former Officer B** had stated that the former officer's conduct had contributed to her decision to leave the police force.
57. The panel found that the public trust in police force will have been damaged by the former officer's actions and that there will have been reputational damage, particularly in the current climate.
58. Accordingly, the panel found that the misconduct was very serious.

Aggravating Features

59. The panel found that the former officer had been in a position of authority and trust as the tutor of both officers, and he had abused that position. Both **Officer A** and **Former Officer B** were probationary officers at the time of his misconduct and were reliant upon the former officer for help, guidance and training.
60. The panel find that there is large scale concern about police officer sexual misconduct and violence against women and girls.

Mitigating Features

61. The panel took account of the officer's character evidence and previous good record.

Personal Mitigation

62. The panel were not presented with any personal mitigation.

Seriousness

63. The panel found, after considering the officer's culpability, the harm caused, the aggravating and mitigating features, that the officer's misconduct was very serious.

The Purposes of Imposing Disciplinary Action

64. The panel reminds itself that the primary purpose of imposing disciplinary action is to protect the public confidence in the reputation of policing.
65. The panel understands its duty when imposing disciplinary action in police misconduct proceedings, to maintain high professional standards by demonstrating to other officers that misconduct of a certain kind and /or of certain seriousness will be dealt with by disciplinary action.
66. The panel must consider the appropriate sanction in the particular circumstances of this case.

Appropriate Disciplinary Action in this Case

67. The Panel considered all of the evidence put forward and weighed it against its findings in relation to the misconduct as found, bearing in mind the purposes of imposing an Outcome in police misconduct proceedings.
68. The panel considered the sanctions that would have been available to it, had Mr Rickard remained as a Police Officer. As it is required to do, the panel considered whether it would have taken a step back from the ultimate sanction not to dismiss in this case. The panel found that it would not.
69. It found that the most appropriate sanction in this case, and that which reflected the evidence, the former officer's culpability and the serious nature of these findings, would have been dismissal without notice.