



INTO THE DIGITAL AGE: THE INCREASING USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CRIME

Evidence Based Policing Conference

Friday 26th June 2026, 9.00am – 4.30pm

University of Worcester Arena

hosted by the School of Law

in association with Worcester Business School



**UNIVERSITY *of*
WORCESTER**

Programme Contents

Programme Contents	2
Welcome from the Head of Law	3
Evidence Based Policing at The University of Worcester	4
About Professional Policing in the School of Law	4
Evidence Based Policing at the University of Worcester	4
About Cyber Security in the Worcester Business School	5
Conference Programme	6
University of Worcester Policing Team	7
Michelle Clarke, Senior Lecturer in Policing	7
Angi Hart, Lecturer in Policing	7
Phil Edwards, Lecturer in Policing	8
Conference Speakers	8
Visiting the University	11
Location	11
Travel	11
Refreshments	11
Photography and Social Media	11
Questions	11
Discover more about our courses:	12

Welcome from the Head of Law



Welcome to the University of Worcester's third annual Evidence Based Policing Conference! Thank you to our policing team and the University of Worcester Business School for convening this important conference. As technology continues to transform both criminal offending and investigation, it is vital that policing, academia and industry work together to understand emerging digital and cyber challenges and opportunities. I hope this conference inspires collaboration, innovation and evidence-informed practice as we all navigate an increasingly complex digital landscape where change and future-proofing poses unique issues for us all.

Michelle Clarke, Head of Law.

Worcester Cathedral and River Severn.



Evidence Based Policing at The University of Worcester

About Professional Policing in the School of Law

The Professional Policing degree is a professional requirement within the College of Policing's Policing Education Qualifications Framework and therefore covers the National Policing Curriculum set by the professional regulatory body for policing in England and Wales: The College of Policing. This degree helps our students develop their employability and graduate attributes during their studies, enhancing and strengthening their skills as a future graduate employee for roles within their chosen career. This is done via a combination of academic research and practical skills, such as crime scene attendance, investigative interviewing and developing risk management plans for a high-risk domestic abuse case, to name a few. We are in our fifth year of delivery; the degree course is going from strength to strength.

Evidence Based Policing at the University of Worcester

The need for evidence-based policing and quality research has never been more important. The current climate of public disorder and the use of social media to spread fake news, the pressures on policing and the Criminal Justice System to provide a quality service with less resources have rarely been more acute.

Here at the University of Worcester, we focus on the analysis of competing objectives and theories on professional policing practice, developing a knowledge of how research has contributed to the development of policing techniques and policy over time. We explore the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary policing structures and methods. This is embedded throughout our degree programme.

About Cyber Security in the Worcester Business School

Cyber Security at Worcester Business School stands out for its state-of-the-art cyber lab, expert academic staff, and strong industry alignment. Both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes blend theory with hands-on experience in ethical hacking, digital forensics, and defending modern systems, all taught in small, supportive groups. Students develop critical thinking, strategic planning, and technical expertise to tackle evolving cyber threats. This forward-looking approach prepares graduates to become highly skilled professionals ready to protect and enhance digital infrastructure across sectors.



City Campus, University of Worcester



Conference Programme

Friday 26th June, 2026

Time	Activity
09:00	Arrival and refreshments
09:15	Welcome - Michelle Clarke, Head of School of Law, University of Worcester
09:30	Keynote - Alex Murray OBE, Interim Director for PoliceAI – <i>‘Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Challenges for Policing’</i> .
10:15	Katy Wareham Morris, University of Worcester – <i>‘The future of the Manosphere: hyper-personalized content and deepfake companions’</i> .
11:00	Refreshments and Networking
11:15	DS Nathan Rutt and DS Leanne Harris, Counter Terrorism Command - “Operation Acyanopsia – The role of a chatbot in a police investigation”
12:00	Questions to Panel (speakers 1-3)
12:30	Lunch and Networking
13:15	Emma-Jane Scrase, West Mercia Police - <i>‘Making sense of complex digital evidence’</i>
14:00	Chris Bowers, University of Worcester – <i>‘Technology Driven Behaviour Change: The virtuous and the nefarious’</i>
14:45	Refreshments and Networking
15:00	Rida Hashmi, BSc Computer Science 3 rd Year student, University of Coventry – <i>‘Cybercrime Ransomware Groups and Modern Organised Crime’</i>
15:45	Questions to Panel (speakers 4-6)
16:15	Closing Remarks

University of Worcester Policing Team

Michelle Clarke, Senior Lecturer in Policing



Michelle is Head of the School of Law, University of Worcester and Senior Lecturer in Policing. Having achieved her LLB, Michelle embarked on a 17-year career with West Mercia Police, where she attained the rank of Detective Sergeant. In the latter stages of her policing career, Michelle taught College of Policing investigative skills training programmes nationally and internationally before moving into Higher Education. Michelle has led the on the development of

Professional Policing as a discipline within the School of Law and is Programme Lead for the BA (Hons) Degree in Professional Policing. A Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Michelle was shortlisted for the 2025 Oxford University Press Law Teacher of the Year Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to student learning and professional education.

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Angi Hart, Lecturer in Policing



Angi has been a Policing Lecturer at the University of Worcester since 2021. Angi's specialisms are policing vulnerability, criminal investigations, and investigative interviewing. She is the Deputy Course Lead for the Degree in Professional Policing. Prior to this role, Angi had a 17-year police career with Kent Police, where she was a Detective Sergeant. She also has been an Investigative Skills trainer for West Mercia Police, specialising in interviewing, the management of serious

investigations and domestic abuse. In her teaching, Angi has become increasingly aware of the boom in the use of AI in both policing and crime and so decided this was an opportune time to make this the focus of this year's conference.

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Phil Edwards, Lecturer in Policing



Phil retired as a Detective Inspector for policing after 30 years' service. During this time, he performed roles in Uniform and CID in the Metropolitan Police, Hertfordshire, and in West Mercia Police. During the latter part of his career, Phil worked in the Public Protection arena leading investigations into very serious offences against women and children. After leaving the police, Phil has worked in various police services up and down the country as a consultant and trainer, improving performance and developing officers through experiential learning. In 2018 he worked for Thames Valley Police on their Direct Entry Detective Training course and initial police training. Moving to the University of Gloucestershire in 2019 Phil lectured in Forensic Criminal and Professional Policing with a particular emphasis on investigative practices. Phil joined the University of Worcester in 2024 and is currently doing a Masters by Research in police legitimacy, focusing on those working within and alongside the criminal justice system. Phil is very passionate about the future of policing and continues his teaching of potential police officers of the future.

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Conference Speakers

Keynote Speaker



Alex Murray OBE, Interim Director for Police AI

Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Challenges for Policing

Katy Wareham Morris

Head of English, Media and Culture, Senior Lecturer in Media & Film Studies, University of Worcester

Katy Wareham Morris is the Head of Department for English, Media and Culture in the Institute of the Arts and Humanities at the University of Worcester. Broadly speaking, her research investigates the representation of marginalised identities in various media forms, but predominantly in digital spaces. More recently, her research has focussed on digital subcultures which utilise digital platforms to perpetuate historical cultural mythologies and

narratives, whilst making them appear new. This presentation will reference her most recent work to date, investigating the relationship between incel cultures and generative AI technologies such as deepfakes.

Detective Sergeant Nathan Rutt
Counter Terrorist Command, Metropolitan Police Service

Nathan Rutt is a Detective Sergeant currently working within Investigations in the Counter Terrorism Command of the Metropolitan Police. Nathan has over 26 years' experience in the Police working across a wide range of areas, including local CID, Extradition, organised immigration crime and human trafficking, as well as the last 10 years in Counter Terrorism.

Detective Sergeant Leanne Harris
Specialist Crime, Metropolitan Police Service

Leanne Harris is a Detective Sergeant within the Metropolitan Police Service, currently serving in the Specialist Crime command, where she focuses on tackling serious violence and firearm-enabled offending across South London. Leanne brings over 20 years of policing experience, having worked across a broad range of operational and investigative roles. Leanne's career includes extensive experience within local proactive crime teams and CID. In addition, Leanne spent seven years within both overt and covert units of SO15 Counter Terrorism, where she was involved in high-risk, intelligence-led operations addressing national security threats.

Emma-Jane Scrase
Digital Media Coordinator, West Mercia Police

Emma is the supervisor of a team of Digital Media Investigators within West Mercia Police and has over 13 years of experience across a variety of roles in policing. Emma has worked alongside investigation teams for a vast array of crime types and has developed a strong reputation for translating complex digital insights into clear and actionable information for senior officers. Currently completing her MSc level degree in police leadership, Emma is a strong advocate for integrating academic research into policing, ensuring that decisions are grounded in robust evidence and continuously evaluated for impact.

Dr Chris Bowers
Principal Lecturer in Computing, Worcester Business School

Chris is a Principal Lecturer in Computing and leads the Digital Innovation and Intelligent Systems research group. His research is focused on Interactive Intelligent Systems

encompassing a range of application areas including behaviour change technologies, energy demand management, health and well-being. His work bridges the two domains of Human-Computer Interaction and Computational Intelligence. This presentation will explore how technology can be used to intentionally influence human behaviour and modify habits and mindset with both good and bad intentions.

Dr Nader Sohrabi Safa

Senior Lecturer in Cyber Security, Worcester Business School

Dr Nader Sohrabi Safa is a Senior Lecturer in Cyber Security at Department of Computing, Worcester Business School. Nader has five years Postdoctoral experience in cyber security in Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa, and Cyber Security Centre, WMG, University of Warwick. He was a lecturer in Coventry University before joining University of Wolverhampton.

His academic experience and 15 years industry experience in the field of Computer Science and cyber security have provided a strong background for his work. He has participated in several large-scale projects such as PETRAS, Data Protection in Industry, Human Aspects of Information Security, and so on. He is member of editorial board and reviewer in several well-known journals in the domain of cyber security. He also is PC member and organizer of several international conferences every year.

Nader's current interests include malware analysis and detection, privacy-enhancing technologies (PETs), Security-as-a-Service, secure system design, information security and privacy for AI agents, human-centred cybersecurity and cybercrime. He serves on the editorial boards of several journals in the cybersecurity domain and regularly reviews for international venues.

Rida Hashmi

BSc Computer Science, 3rd Year student

Rida is a third-year BSc Computer Science student at Coventry University, currently completing an industrial placement with the Regional Organised Crime Unit West Midlands. Her work focuses on strengthening the cybersecurity posture of third sector organisations. She has experience supporting technical and cybersecurity projects, with a particular focus on secure system practices.

Visiting the University

Location

The conference will be held at The University of Worcester Arena, University of Worcester, Severn Campus, Hylton Road, Worcester, WR2 5JN

Travel

By train - The nearest station is Worcester Foregate Street, a 15-20 minute walk from the University of Worcester Arena, WR1 1DX.

By Car - Worcester is served by the M5 motorway and is accessible from Junctions 6 and 7. Under normal traffic conditions all University campuses can be reached in 15-20 minutes from Junction 7. The University is clearly signposted once you come off at Junction 7.

Car Parking - There are 186 regular parking spaces, 14 blue badge bays and 100 EV bays located at Severn Campus. ANPR is in use at the Arena car park. If you are travelling by car we can offer you free parking at the University of Worcester Arena, provided you send your car make and model and car registration to Clare Rhoden by Wednesday 24th June 12.00pm.

Refreshments

Refreshments will be available in the conference room throughout the day. A water refill station is located on the ground floor.

Photography and Social Media

Photography will be taking place throughout the Conference. Photos from the Conference may be shared on social media platforms and websites belonging to the University of Worcester. **If you do not wish your photo to be taken or included in digital and social media, please make yourself known to the conference organisers before the start of the conference.**

Questions

Any questions about the presentations, conference sessions and research, please contact Angi Hart (a.hart@worc.ac.uk).

Any questions about the conference organisation, travel and accommodation please contact the conference administrator, Dr Clare Rhoden, c.rhoden@worc.ac.uk.



100%

of students are in work
and/or further study 15
months of graduating

Graduate Outcomes Survey 2025



90%

of students were positive
about the teaching on the
course

National Student Survey 2025

Discover more about our courses:

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/campaigns/study-law-criminology-policing>



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