Behavioural Analysis Training Course for Investigators: Linkage, Memory and Interviews

5 – 9 April 2027
Rome

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Programme Summary

Behavioural analysis for investigators, drawn from investigative psychology and covering offender linkage, witness memory and interview planning, is the subject of this one-week training course for investigation heads, senior investigators and prosecution advisers, ending in a behavioural analysis brief for one case file. Case decisions are often shaped by first impressions, fragile accounts and untested assumptions about offenders. The programme moves from behaviour to linkage, memory, interviews and bias control, using one prepared case file. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on behavioural analysis to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Investigation units, prosecution offices and security departments depend on decisions made while evidence is thin. Leaders who can test what offender behaviour does and does not show, judge how far a witness account can be relied on, and recognise bias in their own team make sounder case decisions and can explain them to a court or oversight body.

- Case Decision Quality: Improves when conclusions are tied to observed behaviour and stated assumptions.
- Wasted Investigative Effort: Falls when weak linkage claims and unreliable accounts are challenged early.
- Challenge Exposure: Reduces when interview plans and decision records show how bias was controlled.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Investigative Psychology: The field that studies offender behaviour for investigation, applied in Sessions 1 and 2 to read behavioural consistency and test linkage.
- Cognitive Interview Method: A memory retrieval method for witness interviews, applied in Session 3 to plan questioning that protects accuracy.
- Mendez Principles: The Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering, applied in Session 4 to check interview plans against rights-respecting practice.
- Confirmation Bias and Tunnel Vision: Named decision errors in investigations, applied in Session 4 to build safeguards into case reviews.

Intended Participants

- Heads of investigation units who direct case strategy and review key decisions.
- Senior investigators who plan interviews and weigh witness accounts.
- Prosecution and legal advisers who test the reliability of behavioural claims.
- Intelligence and risk analysts who compare offences and assess future risk.

Typical settings include police and security services, prosecution offices, inspectorates and corporate investigation teams.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to analyse offender behaviour at a scene and across a series for consistency and difference.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate a linkage claim and state what it can and cannot support.
3. Participants will be able to assess the reliability of a witness account using what is known about memory.
4. Participants will be able to construct an interview plan that protects accuracy and respects rights.
5. Participants will be able to diagnose cognitive bias in a case review and select safeguards.
6. Participants will be able to justify a behavioural analysis brief, including a risk assessment, for a case file.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Behavioural Analysis Foundations

What can behaviour at a scene tell an investigator, and what can it not?

- Investigative Psychology Map
- Scene Behaviour Coding Sheet
- Behavioural Consistency Matrix
- Limits of Profiling Evidence Note
- Case File Fact Register

Day 2: Offender Linkage and Risk

When do behaviours justify linking offences, and what do they say about risk?

- Offence Comparison Grid
- Linkage Strength Scale
- Alternative Explanation Test
- Series Pattern Timeline
- Offender Risk Assessment Sheet

Day 3: Witness Memory and Reliability

How far can an account be relied on, and how is memory protected?

- Memory Formation Model
- Account Reliability Checklist
- Contamination Source Log
- Cognitive Interview Stage Guide
- Corroboration Map

Day 4: Interview Planning and Bias Control

How are interviews planned, and how is bias caught before it shapes the case?

- Interview Objectives Plan
- Rights and Rapport Checklist
- Mendez Principles Review Table
- Confirmation Bias Audit
- Case Review Safeguard Protocol

Day 5: Behavioural Analysis Brief for One Case File

Do the findings join into a brief that a senior decision-maker can rely on?

- Applying the Session 1 Consistency Matrix
- Testing the Session 2 Linkage Strength Scale
- Weighing Accounts with the Session 3 Reliability Checklist
- Checking the Plan Against the Session 4 Safeguard Protocol
- Completing the Behavioural Analysis Brief

Methodology

The programme is a case analysis built on one prepared case file, with an offence series, witness statements and interview records, anonymised for teaching. Participants code behaviour, test linkage, weigh accounts, plan interviews and audit bias, then defend their brief to peers acting as a case review panel.

- Suggested activity: Comparing three offences and arguing for or against linkage.
- Suggested activity: Rating the reliability of two conflicting witness accounts.
- Suggested activity: Auditing a case review record for confirmation bias.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a behavioural analysis brief for one case file. It holds a behaviour summary, a linkage assessment, an account reliability note, an interview plan, a bias safeguard record and a risk assessment. At work it goes to the case leader or prosecutor and sets the standard for later case reviews.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is behavioural analysis suitable for investigators who have no psychology background?

Yes. Behavioural analysis is taught through a prepared case file and templates. You need responsibility for directing, conducting or reviewing investigations, but no degree in psychology or earlier work on offender profiling.

Which methods and principles does behavioural analysis rest on in this training?

Behavioural analysis here rests on investigative psychology, the cognitive interview method, the Mendez Principles on effective interviewing, and the study of confirmation bias and tunnel vision.

How is the brief from behavioural analysis used at work?

You give the behavioural analysis brief to your case leader or prosecutor, use its linkage and reliability notes to guide decisions, and keep its safeguard record for later case reviews.

How does behavioural analysis differ from a programme on forensic science?

Behavioural analysis concentrates on offender behaviour, witness memory and decision bias, while a programme on forensic science concentrates on recovering and examining physical and digital traces.