



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date:29/10/2025

2025/1101 - Digital forensics

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

1. How many staff in your force/contractors are currently assigned to work on digital forensics (examining digital devices seized for evidence as part of investigations).

The DFU is made up of the following:

- 1 DFU Manager
- 2.5 Technical Manager (ISO Accreditation)
- 2 Operational Managers
- 11 DFU Investigators (Analysis and Reporting)
- 6 Mobile Devices Extraction Technicians (Data Capture)
- 3 CCTV Technicians
- 2 Technicians (Data Capture)
- 1 Administrator
- 1 DFU Intern

2. What is the current average time it takes to examine a device (from seizing to completion).

We deal with cases and not specifically individual devices; one case can have many devices. We also have different turnaround times for each level of risk, for instance we have a 7 day turn around for high-risk cases and these are currently submitted and turned around within 7 days with no backlog however we also have a 42 day low risk turn around which we have a backlog for.

3. What is the current backlog of digital devices which your force needs to examine. for question three, could I also have a breakdown of devices - ie phones, ipads etc

As of 20/10/2025

Mobile Devices 584
Computers 141
Peripheries 101

Unable to give a more precise breakdown on device types as pre-imaging hasn't taken place at this stage.

4. How many current investigations involve examining digital devices and what percentage of your total number of ongoing investigations is this?

In relation to devices that the Digital Forensic Unit (DFU) will analysis or need to analysis:

As of 20/10/2025

96 Cases Awaiting Analysis/Examination

301 Cases Awaiting Capture

Approx. 24% of the investigations waiting DFU not force wide.

5. What is the current waiting time for the device which has been waiting to be investigated the longest and what kind of allegation/investigation does this relate to?

Again, not device specific but case, oldest case is 12-Month-old and is a medium risk CSAM investigation.

6. If a contractor firm is used to carry out this work, could I please ask what it is and how much the firm is paid.

Currently we utilise two Digital Forensic Suppliers to support outsourcing this is the cost vary dependant on what they are supplied and requested, one firm undertakes mobile device extraction only and the other complete analysis and reporting. This is purely on an outsourcing basis as and when DFU have high demand and backlogs that we are unable to manage. Please see the outsourcing spend for the following years:

2021: £41,824.22

2022: £105,033.71

2023: £12,802.89

2024: £232,523.99

Most investigations now have an element of digital evidence. We are actively investing to continue to build our in-house team, as we have done in previous years, but because the training requirement can be long we are also using outsourcing options to ensure we give the best possible service to victims. We expect this will continue to be required as the demand continues to grow.

7. If the cost limit has not yet been reached, could I please ask what the answer was to question two in each of the most five recent calendar years. (IE) 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020.

Please see question 2

8. If the cost limit has still not been reached, could I please ask for the answer to question three for 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020. Please provide an average backlog figure.

As of 07/07/2021

Mobile Devices 281

Computers 28

Peripheries 26

As of 24/11/2022

Mobile Devices 363

Computers 4

Peripheries 28

As of 15/11/2023

Mobile Devices 427
Computers 122
Peripherals 101

As of 15/11/2024

Mobile Devices 310
Computers 92
Peripherals 39

Unable to give a more precise breakdown on device types as pre-imaging hasn't taken place at this stage.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 22/10/2025