

Accelerated Misconduct Hearing – Finding

Officer: PC 3699 Robert Masson

Case Reference: CM/9/26

Date of Hearing: 12th June 2026

Chair: Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman

Background

This is an Accelerated Misconduct Hearing concerning PC Robert Masson. I have considered the full evidential bundle, the written material, the oral submissions made on behalf of the Appropriate Authority and the Officer, and the admissions made by PC Masson.

The matter arises from an audit of the Officer's computer activity which identified repeated instances of "key-jamming" between 19th November 2023 and 14th September 2025. The evidence represents a dip sample and is not exhaustive. The activity identified shows a pattern of repeated conduct across multiple dates, in some instances lasting several hours and, on occasion, the majority of a working day.

PC Masson accepts that he engaged in key-jamming during this period. The issue for determination is the nature of that conduct, whether it amounts to breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour, and the seriousness of those breaches.

Allegation

It is alleged that PC Masson breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour, namely:

- Honesty and Integrity, in that he acted dishonestly by engaging in key-jamming to create the impression that he was actively working when he was not;
- Duties and Responsibilities, in that he failed to act diligently in the performance of his role;
- Confidentiality, in that he left his computer active and at times unattended, creating a risk of unauthorised access to police systems;
- Discreditable Conduct, in that his actions were capable of undermining public confidence in the police service.

Legal Advice

On this matter I have not required any specific legal advice.

Findings

On the balance of probabilities, I find that the conduct is proven.

I place significant weight on the admission by PC Masson that he engaged in key-jamming. I also rely on the audit evidence which demonstrates that this conduct occurred on multiple occasions over an extended period, and often for prolonged durations.

I have carefully considered the Officer's explanation that the purpose of the conduct was to prevent his computer from entering sleep mode and to ensure that he remained responsive to incoming work. However, I do not find that explanation sufficient when viewed against the totality of the evidence.

There are substantial and repeated periods, most notably on dates such as 2nd June 2025, where the evidence does not demonstrate that the Officer was actively seeking or undertaking work during the periods in which key-jamming was occurring. I also note that this is an officer who was aware of the need to request further work and had done so on other occasions. The absence of such requests at relevant times is significant.

I am satisfied that the repeated and deliberate use of key-jamming created and maintained a misleading impression that the Officer was actively working when he was not. This was not an isolated lapse, but a pattern of behaviour carried out over a sustained period.

Accordingly, I find that PC Masson breached the Standards as follows:

- Honesty and Integrity: By deliberately ensuring his system appeared active, he created a false impression of productivity. This amounted to a lack of honesty in so much as he participated in an activity he knew was wrong and admitted doing so, on multiple occasions.
- Duties and Responsibilities: By failing to undertake work during periods of apparent activity, he did not act diligently in the execution of his duties.
- Confidentiality: No evidence has been provided that confidentiality has been breached and therefore I do not find this specific allegation as proven.
- Discreditable Conduct: His behaviour falls below the standard expected of a police officer and is capable of undermining public confidence.

Assessment of Seriousness

In assessing seriousness, I have had regard to the Home Office Statutory Guidance.

Police officers are required at all times to maintain the highest standards of behaviour and to consider how their actions would be perceived by members of the public. Behaviour which risks undermining public confidence, even if not publicly known, may amount to discreditable conduct when all the circumstances are considered.

In this case, I find the following factors to be particularly significant:

- The conduct was deliberate and repeated, occurring over a prolonged period;
- It was sustained, with some instances lasting many hours;
- It involved the maintenance of a misleading impression that the Officer was actively working;

- There were significant periods where no evidence supports active engagement in duties, and no clear attempts to obtain further work;
- It represents a failure to meet the expectations placed upon police officers to act with integrity and diligence.

While I have taken into account the Officer's previous good character and the positive evidence regarding his work ethic in other respects, I find that these matters do not outweigh the seriousness of the proven conduct.

I am satisfied that the behaviour would, if known to a reasonable and informed member of the public, undermine trust and confidence in the police service, particularly given the expectation that officers act with honesty and transparency at all times.

Determination

Drawing all of these matters together, I find that PC Masson's conduct represents a clear and sustained breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour.

The conduct involved repeated, deliberate actions which created a misleading impression of work being undertaken, failed to meet required standards of diligence, and exposed police systems to unnecessary risk. It falls well below the standards expected of a police officer.

On the balance of probabilities, I find that the conduct amounts to Gross Misconduct.

Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman KPM
12th June 2026