

Buried justice – a critical review into the cross-matching of unidentified bodies and missing persons reports in England and Wales

This project aims to critically review the cross-matching process of unidentified bodies and missing persons reports in England and Wales.

Key details

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Police region	West Midlands
Level of research	PhD
Project start date	January 2021
Date due for completion	January 2025

Research context

This research project aims to:

- critically review the cross-matching process of unidentified bodies and missing persons reports in England and Wales
- produce a basis for the development of a Code of Practice for the treatment of unidentified bodies in England and Wales
- examine the epidemiology of unidentified bodies in England and Wales
- identify how information about unidentified bodies is obtained, recorded, stored, reviewed, cross-matched, deleted and shared on a local, national, and international level
- understand the obstacles and opportunities concerning the cross-matching process

- produce a basis for the development of a Code of Practice for the treatment of unidentified bodies in England and Wales

Research methodology

A mixed methods approach including:

- analysis of data from the UK Missing Persons Unit
- Freedom of Information requests to police forces, coroners, and local authorities in England and Wales
- semi-structured interviews with practitioners and families of missing persons