



Welcome to our selection of frequently asked questions in relation to the role of **Police Officer**. Click on the below questions to view the relevant answers within the document:

Full details on all national eligibility criteria can be found at the College of Policing website via the attached:

https://recruit.college.police.uk/Officer/Documents/CoP_Circular_Eligibility_Criteria_for_the_role_of_%20police_constable.pdf

Please note that some elements of the national criteria can be varied at a local force level. These variances are covered in the questions below.

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Section 1 – Helping to understand the role and recruitment process

Is there any essential criterion that needs to be met prior to applying for the role?

- Yes there are, you need to be able to demonstrate one of the below four elements:
 1. Served as a Special Constable for a minimum period of 2 years at the point of application
 2. Served as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for a minimum of 18 months at the point of application
 3. Demonstrate you have achieved 5 years military service
 4. Demonstrate you have achieved a level 2 or level 3 qualification (or above) within the meaning of Section 3 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (see section 2, question 13 for further details)

What are the timelines of applying if I have failed part of a previous recruitment process in the past?

- Applications will not be accepted from anyone who has failed any part of the Police Officer recruitment process within 6 months of being officially advised that they had failed a section of the process.

Can I apply to become a Police Officer (PO) and a Special Constable (SC) at the same time?

- The process for PO and SC are different forms of assessment. A candidate is permitted to have 1 application to a Force for SC and 1 application to a Force for PO at the same time however once you have been advised you have been successful for 1 application you must withdraw from the other

Can I apply to different forces at the same time?

- You are not able to apply to another Force, who conducts the SEARCH assessment centre at the same time

If I have applied to become a PO with another Force and passed the shortlisting, can I transfer my application to Cleveland?

- No, to apply for Cleveland you must withdraw from the other Force and would need to start the competitive process from the beginning

I have passed the SEARCH assessment centre with another Force - can I transfer my score to Cleveland?

- Cleveland Police is not accepting transfer of scores for its 2019 Campaign

If I have pre-booked holidays within the training period will they be honoured?

- As training is specialised and specifically planned in it can be difficult to honour so this would happen only for exceptional circumstances

What is the Code of Ethics and how does it fit into the recruitment process?

- The Code of Ethics is the written guide from the College of Policing (CoP) to the principles that every member of the policing profession of England and Wales is expected to uphold and the standards of behaviour they are expected to meet
- The Code of Ethics is intended to be used on a day-to-day basis to guide behaviour and decision-making and has been written "by" policing "for" policing
- The Code of Ethics will play a practical role in guiding the behaviour of everyone in policing, rather than being something that is only turned to later when unprofessional behaviour crosses the threshold into misconduct
- The emphasis is on what good policing looks like and how ethical police officers and staff behave, rather than on managing misconduct
- Everyone in policing is expected to take ownership of the Code of Ethics. Individual chief constables will decide how they will embed the Code of Ethics in their forces

Please note that an element of Police recruitment processes may be around the Code of Ethics

Do you allow for any reasonable adjustments linked to the recruitment process?

- The police service is an equal opportunities employer and ensures that no applicant or employee is treated more or less favourably on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, creed, religion or disability

- It is important to be truthful within your application form particularly around disabilities where we can agree to reasonable adjustments so as not to unreasonably disadvantage disabled people
- All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not affect your job application

Section 2 - Helping to understand current eligibility

What if I have not yet passed my driving test?

- You may still be eligible to apply. However, prior to any formal offer of appointment being made you must pass your driving test and hold a full manual licence

Are there any other driving requirements I need to take into consideration?

- You may be required through your career to drive a vehicle with more than 8 passengers for which you would need a D1 entitlement. You should have this if you passed your driving test prior to 1st January 1997. If you do not have a D1 on your licence this can be arranged through the Force medical at a later date

Are there any age limit restrictions?

- You need to be 18 at the point of application, although there is no upper age limit the compulsory retirement age for a Police Constable is 60 years and new recruits are required to undertake a 2 year probationary period

What do the level 2 or 3 qualifications consist of as mentioned in answer 1?

- GCSE or equivalent Level 2 qualification
- AS/A levels
- Advanced Extension Awards
- International Baccalaureate
- Key Skills Level 3
- NVQs Level 3
- Cambridge International Awards
- Advanced and Progression Diploma
- Level 3 Vocational Qualifications are:
 - BTEC awards/Certificates and diplomas at level 3/BTEC Nationals/OCR Nationals

What are the countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) from which applicants may apply?

- You can still apply to become a Police Officer as long as you are an EEA National or Swiss National. Commonwealth citizens and Foreign Nationals are required to have leave to enter or leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period
- Please also note that although Bulgaria and Romania are members of the EEA, their citizens are not automatically entitled to remain in the United Kingdom. Therefore citizens from Bulgaria and Romania are also required to have leave to enter and leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period

Countries of the European Economic Area include:

Austria	Czech Republic	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovakia
Belgium	Denmark	Hungary	Malta	Slovenia
Bulgaria	Estonia	Ireland	Netherlands	Spain
Croatia	Finland	Italy	Poland	Sweden
Cyprus	France	Latvia	Portugal	United Kingdom
	Germany	Lithuania	Romania	

What medical assessments are undertaken in relation to the role?

- A medical assessment will generally be carried out by our Occupational Health team. Checks will consist of:
 - BMI
 - Eye sight test
 - Colour vision
 - Lung function
 - Hearing
- You will be asked to complete a confidential medical history questionnaire, which needs to be validated by your GP. If a cost is incurred for this service this will be at your own expense
- Once you have been declared medically fit we will then progress your application to the next stage

How physically fit do I need to be to undertake the role?

- Applicants will be asked to undertake a fitness test. Police Officers who are required to complete Officer Safety Training (OST) must attain a level of 5:4 on the multi-stage fitness test

What fitness levels are necessary to fulfil the role?

- We test endurance through a fitness shuttle run, commonly known as the Bleep test. A good indicator of the fitness level needed for this test is to be able to run at a good pace for around four minutes over a distance of about 700 metres

Bleep Test (Shuttle Run) Explained

Required Level is 5:4 = 5 Levels and 4 Shuttles

Total Time	Distance Covered	Shuttles Completed
3 min 35 seconds	525 metres	35
Levels	Shuttles per level	Seconds per shuttle
1	7	7
2	8	7
3	8	6
4	8	6
5	4	6

What are the eyesight/vision requirements for the role?

- Eyesight standards can be found by using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-0032017-amendment-to-eyesight-standards-police-recruitment>

What if I have any facial piercings?

- Facial piercings are not an automatic bar from application. However the prominence and location of facial piercings will be considered as to whether they undermine the dignity and authority of the Police Officer and whether there may be implications for an officer's safety. As part of your application you will be asked if you have any facial piercings and if the answer is yes, you will be required to upload a photograph. The photograph should not be more than 1MB in size.
- If not acceptable you will not be able to continue with your application

What if I have a tattoo or multiple tattoos?

- Tattoos are not acceptable if they are particularly prominent, garish, and offensive, or if they undermine the dignity and authority of the role
- You will be asked as part of your application if you have a tattoo on your face, neck, forearms or hands and if you answer yes, you will be asked to provide a brief description and attach two digital photographs of each visible tattoo:
 1. A distance photograph to clearly identify where on the body the tattoo is
 2. A close up photograph to clearly identify the image(s)
- Each photograph should not be more than 1MB in size
- If not acceptable you will not be able to continue with your application

How do you check if applicants have substance misuse issues?

- We will collect a sample of hair approximately 50 to 100 strands from the crown of the applicants head to test for substance misuse

What other vetting checks will be made when applying for the role?

- We will carry out security checks on you and you will be required to provide details to enable us to do so on the application form
- We will need to take your fingerprints and DNA samples to carry out some final vetting checks against our databases

Are the vetting checks just about the applicant?

- No. Following the shortlisting process we will be asking questions about your wider family members and what their relationship is to the applicant along with their addresses. This could include spouse or partner, parents, step parents and partners, children and siblings. The details will be viewed by the Force Vetting Officer

What references do I need to give and when do you request them?

- At the point of success, references will be sought from previous employers for a period covering 3 years or 2 employers and 1 character reference, unless deemed necessary to ask for further information

I have been living abroad within the last 3 years, can I still apply?

- Yes, though you may not be eligible to join. Police forces would ensure they obtain adequate and satisfactory vetting information on all applicants. Therefore if an applicant has recently resided abroad, forces will ensure they have obtained a 3 year checkable history. This applies to all applicants including UK nationals who have been living abroad

What if I was a member of the British National Party, could I still apply?

- No, as Police Regulations 2003 prohibit any officers or staff from becoming members of organisations whose aims and objectives may contradict the duty to promote race equality

If I was a School Governor, could I continue to be so?

- You may serve as a member of the schools main Governing Body, in your official or private capacity, however you must advise the Force via a Business Interest Form for this to be recorded and approved
- You could not continue in the role of Treasurer or be responsible for the dismissal of staff

What if I have a relative who is a magistrate?

- You need to report the circumstances to the Force

What if I have a general conviction?

- Any offences committed as an adult or juvenile which resulted in a prison sentence (including custodial, suspended or deferred sentence and sentences served at a Young Offenders institutional or community home) would impact on the recruitment process
- Cautions including reprimands and final warning, for recordable offences or Juvenile convictions within the last 5 years may also impact
- Please view the further information below as a guide regarding Criminal Convictions:
 - Applications will not be accepted if an applicant of any age has been convicted or cautioned for an offence such as murder, manslaughter, rape, kidnapping/abduction, treason, involvement in espionage, terrorism or sabotage, hostage taking, hi-jacking or torture, any offence involving 'causing death by', firearms offences, incest, sexual activity with a child or domestic violence offences and monitored hate crime
 - In general, applications will also be rejected if an applicant has committed any offence (as an adult or juvenile) which resulted in a prison sentence, including custodial, suspended or deferred sentence and sentences served at a young offender's institution or community home
 - Your application is likely to be rejected if you have been involved in any of the following (unless there are exceptional and compelling circumstances):
 - Offences involving serious violence or injury (including Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) and Actual Bodily Harm (ABH))
 - Offences involving unsolicited violence towards others
 - Unlawful possession of weapons, firearms or going equipped to steal
 - Gross indecency and acts of indecency
 - Abuse or neglect of children
 - Public Order offences such as involvement in riot, violent disorder, affray, causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress
 - Racially motivated or homophobic offences
 - Burglary and offences which involve elements or acts of dishonesty, corruption, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone including theft, fraud and deception

- Serious involvement in drugs including possession of a Class A drug (heroin, morphine) or more than one Class B drug (amphetamines) and/or supplying drugs of any kind
- Reckless or dangerous driving or one offence of drink driving, drunk in charge, or drugs driving, within the last ten years
- Other serious motoring offences such as convictions within the last five years, driving without insurance, failing to stop after an accident or driving whilst disqualified
- More than three endorseable traffic convictions (including fixed penalties) and/or two or more convictions for regulatory offences such as failure to renew vehicle excise licence within the last five years
- Criminal damage

What if I have a charge I am not yet convicted of?

- When an outstanding charge or summons is disclosed the application will be placed on hold until the outcome is known, at which point it may be considered

Can I still continue through the recruitment process if I hold political office or take an active part in politics?

The position regarding a Police Officer is that they should not take an active part in politics

How can my application be rejected because of my occupation/business interests?

- You must declare any other employment for hire or gain or any other business interests that you intend to maintain, when you apply to become a Police Officer
- A decision on whether you meet the eligibility criteria will be made on the basis of the full information provided during the recruitment and selection process
- If you, your spouse or a relative holds or has a financial interest in any licence or permit relating to liquor licensing, refreshment houses or betting and gaming or regulating places of entertainment in the area of the police force in question, you may not be eligible for appointment

What if I am a member of the HM Forces?

- Applicants from members of the services who have 12 months or more before discharge may still be accepted, at the discretion of the Chief Constable
- You should enclose confirmation of your projected date of discharge
- Due to the nature of employment with HM Forces, it must be emphasised that security checks will be made with the appropriate military authority at an early stage in the recruitment process
- It is at the discretion of the Chief Constable as to whether successful applicants are allowed to remain on the Reserve List

What financial circumstances could affect my application?

- Applicants will have their financial status checked. These checks are carried out because police officers/staff have access to privileged information, which may make them vulnerable to corruption. Applicants with outstanding County Court Judgements (CCJs) or who have been registered bankrupt with outstanding debts

will be rejected

- Applicants who have discharged County Court Judgements may be considered
- Applicants who have been registered as bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have been discharged will only be considered three years from the discharge of the debt and will need to provide a Certificate of Satisfaction
- Applicants who have an IVA will be considered on a case by case basis.

Section 3 - Successful Candidates

What security checks would be undertaken if I was successful at interview?

- Security checks will be undertaken to enable an assessment to be made as to the suitability of the applicant to gain access to police assets, premises, and information. Checks will be conducted on applicants and close family members, and any other individuals identified as appropriate during the course of police enquiries. Checks will be undertaken by accessing national and local police systems, and financial information (For Police Officers, Special Constables and those Police Staff with access to operational/confidential police systems). Information supplied will be managed confidentially, securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data will be retained in accordance with retention periods established through the National Guidance of Management of Police Information, where after it will be disposed of securely
- Appointment to the Force will not be confirmed until all checks have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Chief Constable

What happens if the security checks find something?

- The Data Protection Manager will be advised immediately and the details forwarded to the Force. This information will be assessed by the Force and a summary of circumstances forwarded to the Data Protection Manager to enable a decision on vetting to be made

What can I look forward to receiving if I am successful?

- Depending upon WHICH training programme you select you will receive EITHER
- A two-year learning programme, which on successful completion will result in the award of the Diploma in Policing, a mandatory award for Police Officers. The programme will include learning in both classroom and workplace settings. This is the IPLDP (Initial Police Learning and Development Programme). OR
- A three year programme aligned to a Higher Education Institution (HEI) that will lead to an undergraduate degree in policing. You will be paid and student tuition fees paid as part of the PCDA (Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship)
- A salary in line with national police pay guidelines
- Annual leave of 22 days, increasing with length of service
- Police pension
- Training and development opportunities
- Employee Assistance, covering a range of health, wellbeing and lifestyle issues
- Support and advice from Wellbeing and a range of staff associations, as well as access to a range of services such as Charitable Trust and Police Mutual.

What is included in the initial training for successful candidates?

- Student Officers WHO UNDERTAKE THE IPLDP will be required to undertake a period of learning that will enable them to develop the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and qualities to perform the role of Police Officer effectively and efficiently. The initial learning programme is underpinned by the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the National Police Curriculum owned by the College of Policing. Learning will be both classroom and workplace based and will last 2 years, comprising of 10 units of assessments formed from National Occupational Standards
- Student Officers WHO UNDERTAKE THE PCDA will be required to undertake a period of learning that will enable them to develop the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and qualities to perform the role of Police Officer effectively and efficiently. The learning programme is underpinned by the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the National Police Curriculum owned by the College of Policing in addition to academic learning to level 6 through a University. Learning will be both classroom and workplace based and will last 3 years.

Will I be issued with a Statement of Written particulars/ Contract of Employment?

- No, Police Officers and Special Constables are issued with Conditions of Service in accordance with Regulation 10 (2) of the Police Regulations 2003 (as amended)

How and when will I be paid?

- You will be paid by Bank Credit every 28 days - two weeks in advance and two weeks in arrears

What shifts would I be working?

- Your initial training will be Monday to Friday - normal office hours in the first instance. However, duty rosters for at least 12 months exist and set out your rest days, public holidays, daily hours of duties and proposed annual leave once it has been approved

What would my annual leave be?

- Annual leave is accrued with service with the annual leave period running from 1st April to 31st March. A full year's annual leave entitlement on commencement of duties is 22 days but does increase with service; however leave is recorded in hours. During your initial training your annual leave will be allocated in accordance with your training programme. Exceptions to this leave must be discussed with the training departments and a decision will be achieved as to whether these periods can be authorised

Once successful, if there is a need can I transfer to another force?

- Officers wishing to transfer to another Force should advise the Chief Constable of this intention; however Forces will not accept transferees who are still in their probationary period. Officers must be confirmed in rank prior to any application to transfer being considered

Do I need to sign the Official Secrets Act?

- Yes, you are subject to the Official Secrets Act for life and any infringement may make you liable for prosecution