



Guidance Notes for the completion of this Application Form

A police officer holds a responsible position within society. One of the primary roles of the position is ensuring law and order is maintained. Applicants therefore need to be able to demonstrate their respect for the law. They need to show that they can maintain the standards expected of police officers and are not vulnerable to corrupting influences. In order to assess this, specific personal details are sought on this form.

Your application will determine whether or not you go through to the next stage of our selection procedure.

Please read these notes carefully before completing the form. You may find it helpful to do a rough draft first – particularly with section 2 (Your Personal Skills and Experience).

You must complete all sections of this form in your own words and based on your own personal experiences. Please either type or write in ink. Make use of the additional information sheet at page 11 if required. If there is any reason why you are unable to do this please contact the Force Recruitment Department.

You should retain a copy of your completed application form to refer to throughout the application process. The completed application form and all enclosures should be sent to the Recruitment Department of your Force of choice.

Note 1: About You

Age Requirements

To be appointed as a Police Constable or Special Constable you must be at least 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit, although the normal retirement age for constables is 60 years and there is a two-year probationary training period.

Driving Licences

Please check with your chosen Force regarding their current driving licence requirements. If you have a driving licence issued by a country that is not a member of the European Union, it must be fully exchangeable in line with UK driving licence requirements.

You will be asked to provide full driving licence details in the vetting section of the application form

Medical and Fitness Standards

As part of the recruitment process you will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire. This will be dealt with confidentially by the Force Occupational Health Unit. The Force Recruitment Department does not require to be made aware of your medical status.

All applicants undertake a medical examination and will have their eyesight examined prior to appointment. This allows the Unit to determine whether you are able to satisfy the health and eyesight standards as laid down by the Scottish Government.

Information about the fitness assessment and fitness training are available from your Force website. Police Officers are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and reasonable adjustments will be considered. Having a disability does not automatically exclude you from becoming a Police Officer.

Please ensure you have understood all elements of the selection process for your particular Force. This will allow you to ask for any adjustments you require under the (DDA) at an early stage.

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Note 2: Your Personal Skills and Experience

We are looking for evidence of the qualities you already have to enable you to carry out the role of a police officer. It is important therefore that you think carefully about your answers

Each question asks you to provide detailed examples of real situations from your recent past experience—work, social, voluntary, educational, leisure, or family life.

You must give specific examples of what you did or said on a given occasion. It is important that we can see in as much detail as possible, exactly how you behaved.

Generalisations about what you usually do, what you did on a number of previous occasions, or what your group/team have done will normally not be sufficient.

We need to know what part you played on that occasion.

- Each question has a number of prompts to help you shape your answer. Make sure you cover all of the prompts.
- Try to use examples from situations you found challenging or difficult. Such examples tend to be better assessed than situations which are easy to deal with.
- You should read the question thoroughly and choose your examples carefully. Take time to think about the examples you will use before you start writing.
- Wherever possible, use examples from a work setting. If you have never been employed, or can't think of examples from work, use examples from your social, voluntary, educational, leisure or family life. Settings other than work can be just as valid as work examples. The examples can be from everyday situations. They don't have to be from serious or critical situations.
- If possible, you should use a different example for each question.
- Write clearly and concisely.

- It is very important that the form is all your own work. At any point you may be questioned on any examples given, and asked to provide the contact details of people to confirm what happened. Keep to the space provided as far as possible.

We have developed an example of the style of answer we would like. This should give you an idea of the kind of detail that we need from you.

Example reply

Police officers need to be able to take responsibility for, and be prepared to defend their decisions. Think of a situation when you have had to make a difficult decision and explain it to other people.

What was the situation and the decision you had to make?

I had to make a decision as to whether I took up an offer on a course. The course had been very difficult to gain a place on, and it was likely that I would not be offered another place if I declined. However, I had also been offered the opportunity to take an extended holiday with a group of friends in Australia which had been planned for some time.

What kind of things did you take into account when making the decision?

I thought about the long term advantages the course would bring and about how I didn't want to let my friends down. Ultimately, the opportunity to go on the holiday was going to be available again in the future, but the course wasn't.

What were the consequences of getting the decision wrong or avoiding making the decision?

I had to reply by a set date to accept my place on the course. If I decided not to take up the place it would damage my career, as the course was a pre-requisite for further courses which I needed in order to get the job I wanted. I also stood a chance of alienating some good friends as they had paid a deposit and were depending on me to share the cost of accommodation and car hire.

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Tell us exactly how you explained your decision to others?

I called one of the people I was intending to travel with and asked them if I could see them. I explained the situation, and asked them how they felt the others would react and how I should handle that. I then met with the others and broke the news. I just came out and told them rather than trying to break it gently and them not understanding. I pointed out that the course offered long term career and financial advantages.

Note 3: About Your Employment

You are asked to provide details of employment covering at least the last five years. Include any paid employment, including self-employment. You should also add any current or previous business interests.

References:

Give the names and addresses of two employers who will give a reference for you and include the position they hold and telephone number.

These should be two employers and must include your current employer (or most recent employer, if you are currently unemployed). Applicants applying direct from full time education may include a referee from the relevant institution. Personal references should only be given if you have not been employed or are self-employed. Current serving and former police officers should not be asked to provide references.

We will not make enquiries with your current employer until you are recommended for appointment or you have agreed to let us approach them.

References will always be taken from HM Forces and from other Police Forces, covering performance, conduct and absence. (We reserve the right to contact previous employers not specifically given by you at the appropriate section of the application form. We will contact you in advance of doing this).

HM Forces:

Applications from HM Forces personnel will be accepted only if you have 12 months or less to serve before discharge. Please enclose confirmation of your projected date of discharge (e.g. a letter from your Commanding Officer).

Due to the nature of employment with the HM Forces it must be emphasised that security checks will be made with the appropriate military authority at an early stage in the selection process. This is in addition to your current employer's reference, if different.

It is at the discretion of the Chief Constable as to whether successful applicants are permitted to remain on the Reserve List.

Note 4: Nationality

To be eligible for appointment you must be a British citizen or a member of the EU or other states in the EEA (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein). Commonwealth citizens and foreign nationals are also eligible but only if they are resident in the UK free of restrictions.

If you are a Commonwealth citizen or a foreign national you must provide proof that you have no restrictions on your stay in the UK. As it is currently impossible in some cases to gain vetting/security checks for foreign nationals, a period of 3 years UK residency applies. In certain circumstances, it is possible for the minimum residency period for Force Vetting levels to be removed (for further information see the Vetting Form Guidance Notes).

You may be required to provide proof of this residence in the UK. You should therefore send a copy of your passport, which shows that your stay is free of restrictions. Do NOT send your actual passport with this application. Other documentary evidence of your status may be required later in the process.

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Note 5: Tattoos

Tattoos are not necessarily a bar to appointment. However, some tattoos could potentially offend members of the public or colleagues, or could bring discredit to the police service. It depends on their size, nature and location, and sometimes on the extent.

If you have tattoos, you should describe their nature, words, extent, size and location.

Tattoos, regardless of language or symbolic format, are not acceptable if they:—

- Undermine the dignity and authority of the office of constable;
- Could cause offence to members of the public or colleagues and/or invite provocation;
- Are garish, extensive or particularly prominent;
- Indicate unacceptable attitudes towards any individual or section of the community
- Indicate alignment with a particular group which could give offence to members of the public or colleagues;
- Are considered to be rude, lewd, crude, racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic, violent or intimidating.

Note 6: ACDP

The Accelerated Careers Development Programme (ACDP) comprises a phased developmental structure aimed at preparing and equipping police officers for senior posts within the Scottish police service.

Those seeking to join the service via this pathway must meet the standard police entrance criteria and successfully complete all standard selection requirements.

The programme is open to graduates and undergraduates within the final year of a degree course. Undergraduates appointed to the Programme must successfully complete their degree within the applicable timeframe remaining.

Any degree awarded by a university or college which is recognised by the Scottish Government, or other equivalent United Kingdom Authority, is acceptable. Professional qualifications equivalent to a degree are also acceptable.

For further information on the ACDP and how to apply to join the Force of your choice via this Programme please visit www.tulliallan.police.uk

A Final Word

What can hold up the process?

Your application and assessment will be processed as quickly as possible. However, these are some of the more common reasons for delays in the process:

- Failure to complete all parts of the application form
- Failure to include copies of all documents requested
- Failure to sign the declaration.

Your co-operation can help avoid delays