



College of  
Policing

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# Direct Entry Application Form and Eligibility Criteria Candidate Overview

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The College of Policing Selection and Assessment business unit comply with the international standard ISO 10667 2011 - Assessment service delivery - procedures and methods to assess people in work and organisational settings - Part 2: Requirements for Service providers. Clients may wish to consider ISO 10667 2011 - Part 1: Requirements for the Client - as it may apply in their own organisation.

# Contents

<b>Direct Entry Programme Overview .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Direct Entry Programme Aims.....	4
<b>Overview of the Selection Process.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Eligibility Criteria .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Considering your eligibility when filling in the application form. ....	6
1. Criminal Convictions and Cautions.....	7
a. Mandatory Rejection Part I .....	7
b. Mandatory Rejection Part II .....	8
c. Outstanding charges and summonses .....	10
d. Minor Motoring offences .....	10
2. Tattoos.....	10
3. Membership of British National Party (BNP) or similar organisations.....	10
4. Other political involvement .....	11
5. Financial Considerations .....	11
6. Business Interests.....	12
7. Academic qualifications.....	12
Vetting Following Successful Paper Sift and Telephone Interview .....	13
<b>Application Form .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Filling in the online application form .....	15
Competency and Values Questions .....	17
<b>Telephone Interview.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Queries and Questions.....</b>	<b>19</b>

# Direct Entry Programme Overview

The Direct Entry programme offers an opportunity for exceptional individuals to join the police. The programme is designed to deliver robust, comprehensive training and exposure to policing to ensure that, upon completion, members are able to completely fulfil the role.

The Direct Entry programme supports the National Policing Vision in helping to bring existing exceptional leaders into the police service to make an immediate impact on culture, efficiency and effectiveness. This will be achieved by opening up entry to the service to proven leaders who will join policing directly at the rank of superintendent and inspector rather than having to work their way up from the rank of constable.

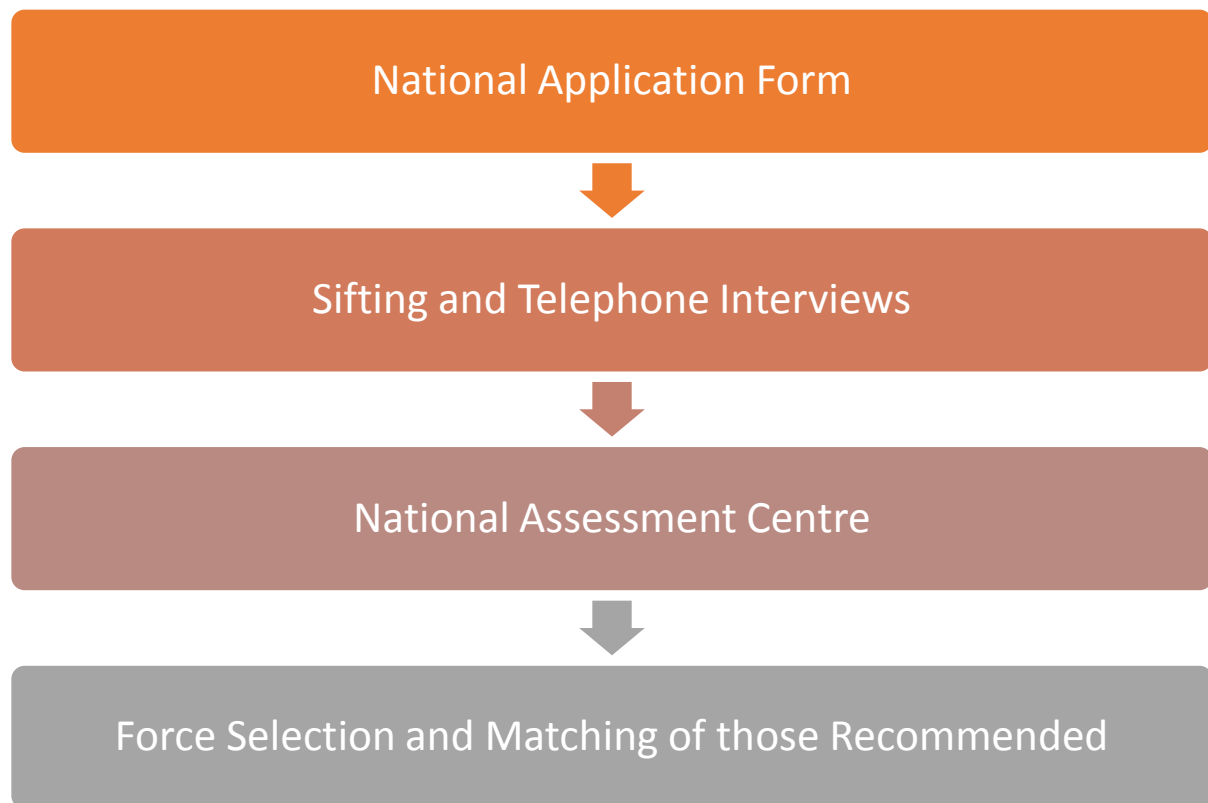
Programme members will be trained over 18 months for the Superintendent programme and 24 months for the Inspector programme months and given coaching and mentoring, to equip them with the skills required inspiring confidence in officers, staff and the public. This will create a cohort that has the potential to further develop and acquire the skills and experience to progress to the chief officer ranks.

## Direct Entry Programme Aims

The aim of the programme is to:

- Identify talented individuals who will bring new perspectives and diverse backgrounds to support the continuous development of policing, and impact on the management and culture of the service
- Support individuals' development to perform effectively at the role of inspector/superintendent
- Support individuals' continuing development to reach at least the level of superintendent/chief officer ranks during their careers.

## Overview of the Selection Process



Candidates will complete the online National Application Form where they must first meet the eligibility criteria before completing the application form itself. Those successful in the application form will then be asked to attend a telephone interview and if successful at the interview they will then be invited to attend the Direct Entry National Assessment Centre.

Those candidates who are recommended at the National Assessment Centre will then be considered by their chosen force.

Candidates are asked to select the forces they are interested in working with in the application form. The 2018 Direct Entry application form contains details of the participating forces **at the time of the application window going live**. It has happened in the past that additional forces have come on board late. Should this happen applicants will be advised and given the opportunity to amend their preferences.

# Eligibility Criteria

## Considering your eligibility when filling in the application form.

When answering the questions within the application form and subsequent vetting documents do not attempt to hide or withhold any information however irrelevant you may feel it is. Concealing the truth or deliberately withholding information is a very serious matter and an indication of a lack of integrity which will lead to automatic rejection. If in any doubt, declare the incident and do not be persuaded by any other party to do otherwise.

The Direct Entry application process enables an initial screening process to ensure applicants meet the basic eligibility criteria as detailed in this document. Where applicants do not meet this criteria they will not be able to progress with the application process. Therefore it is important that you read and understand the criteria and are honest in your answers as they will be checked again during the vetting processes involved throughout the selection process.

**Whilst an application may progress through the initial stages of the application process (conducted by the College of Policing) each force will apply its own vetting standards at the time of final appointment. Passing the initial vetting is no guarantee of passing force vetting.**

The stages of eligibility are checked at three stages.

1. The first stage is through the application process to ensure applicants meet the basic criteria in order to progress.
2. The second stage is a non-police personnel vetting (NPPV) check which is a formal vetting process which is undertaken before being able to attend the National Assessment Centre.
3. The final vetting stage is at a minimum of Recruitment Level vetting (RV) which is a further, and more in depth, formal process undertaken locally after being offered a conditional position by a force.

# 1. Criminal Convictions and Cautions

Convictions, cautions and fixed penalty notices (road traffic and recordable offences, such as theft, disorder and alcohol related offences) will not necessarily preclude anyone from appointment as a Police Officer. It will depend on the nature and circumstances of the offence.

All convictions (including spent convictions) must be included on any application to be a police officer under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Please note that convictions whilst serving in HM Forces will be treated like any other centrally recorded information and similar weight given to any finding of guilt. Serving members of the armed forces who are convicted of any criminal offence by a military tribunal will have any such offence recorded on the Police National Computer.

## a. Mandatory Rejection Part I

There are some offences that will lead to the **mandatory** rejection of your application.

If an applicant declares any of the following convictions or security-vetting checks reveal them, the application will be rejected.

- Any offence committed as an adult, (i.e. aged 17 years and over), which involves elements of dishonesty, corruption, serious violence or injury, serious involvement with drugs or abuse of children, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone.
- Any offence that has resulted in a prison sentence (including suspended or deferred sentence)
- Any of the offences listed below :

### Criminal Offences

- Treason;
- Murder;
- Manslaughter/culpable homicide;
- Rape;
- Offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 punishable by life or more than ten years imprisonment;
- Kidnapping/abduction;
- Incest;

- Sexual activity with a child;
- Hostage taking, hi-jacking or torture;
- Involvement in espionage, terrorism, sabotage or any actions to overthrow/undermine parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means or association (past or present) with any organization advocating such activities;
- Any driving offences involving “causing death by”;
- Firearms offences;
- Offences with a hate aggravation (race, religion or belief, sexual Orientation, transgender or disability);
- Domestic violence offences.

## b. Mandatory Rejection Part II

Your application will also be rejected (unless there are exceptionally compelling circumstances) if you have been convicted of the offences listed below. Factors that will be taken into consideration before a decision is made include:

- The age of the applicant at the time of the offence
- The number of years that have elapsed since the offence was committed (a minimum of 5 years must have normally elapsed for recordable offences)
- The nature of the offence
- Public trust and confidence in policing

### Violence

- 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;
- Acts of indecency;
- Abuse or neglect of children;
- Public order offences – involvement in riot, violent disorder, affray, causing fear or provocation of violence, causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress.

\* Previously the infliction of a minor injury would lead to a charge of ABH. The charging criteria have changed, so that the same minor injury would now attract a charge of common

assault, and would not necessarily lead to the rejection of the candidate. Convictions for ABH will be examined to see if they would now be classed as common assault. If so, they will be considered under the common assault criteria.

### Dishonesty

- Interference with the Administration of Justice or the investigation of Offences;
- Burglary;
- Offences which involve elements or acts of dishonesty, corruption, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone including theft, fraud and deception.

### Drugs/driving offences

- Serious involvement in drugs including possession of a class A drug (e.g. heroin, morphine) or more than one Class B drug (e.g. amphetamines) and/or supplying drugs of any kind;
- Reckless or dangerous driving within the last ten years;
- One offence of drink driving or drunk in charge or drugs driving within the preceding ten years;
- More than one offence of drink driving or drunk in charge or drugs driving;
- Other serious motoring offences such as convictions within the last five years of driving without insurance, failing to stop after an accident or driving whilst disqualified;
- More than three endorsable traffic convictions (including fixed penalties, excluding parking) within the last five years (for offences on different dates);
- Two or more convictions for regulatory offences such as failure to renew vehicle excise license within the last five years.

### General

- Any offence 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' institution or community home);
- Cautions (includes reprimands and final warnings) for recordable offences within the last five years;
- Juvenile convictions within the last five years for any recordable offence;
- Any recordable offence other than listed above within the last five years.

## c. Outstanding charges and summonses

It will not be possible to progress an application for the Direct Entry programmes while an applicant has an outstanding charge or summons that could result in a conviction for a recordable offence as outlined in the offences above. The candidate is advised to wait until the case is resolved and to then consider the criteria laid out above before applying.

## d. Minor Motoring offences

Convictions or offences dealt with by way of fixed penalties for minor motoring offences are not, in themselves a barrier to applying for these programmes. However as detailed above, forces will apply their own vetting and may consider such actions differently e.g. if the applicant is a persistent offender. Each case will be considered on its merits and the nature of the applicant's role will be taken into account.

## 2. Tattoos

Tattoos are not a bar to appointment as a police officer. 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. The applicant will be asked to describe the nature, words used, extent, size and location of all tattoos if they are thought to be unacceptable. You may also be asked to supply a photograph.

Tattoos are unacceptable if they:

- Are considered to be crude, lewd, nude, rude, racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic, violent or intimidating
- Are garish or particularly prominent
- Indicate unacceptable attitudes towards any section of the community
- Indicate alignment with a particular group which could give offence to members of the public or colleagues

## 3. Membership of British National Party (BNP) or similar organisations

The Police (Amendment) Regulations 2004 amended paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the Police Regulations 2003 (restrictions on the private lives of members of police forces) came

into force on 1 January 2005. The Home Secretary also issued a determination setting out the specific organisations of which membership is banned. These are:

- British National Party (BNP);
- Combat 18;
- National Front.

Police officers should abstain from any activity which is likely to interfere with the impartial discharge of their duties or which is likely to give rise to the impression amongst members of the public that it may so interfere. If an applicant is a member of the BNP or similar, the application will result in automatic rejection.

## 4. Other political involvement

Police officers should abstain from any activity which is likely to interfere with the impartial discharge of their duties or which is likely to give rise to the impression amongst members of the public that it may so interfere. Police officers are therefore not allowed to be a member, active or otherwise, of any political party. Should applicants be a member of a political party they will be expected to resign membership and cease political activity before appointment.

## 5. Financial Considerations

All applicants for appointment as a Police Officer will be subject to a financial credit reference check prior to appointment.

Applicants will not be considered for appointment where:

- they have existing County Court Judgements or an Individual Voluntary Arrangement outstanding against them
- they have been registered bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have not been discharged.

Applicants who have been registered as bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have been discharged may only be considered 3 years after the date of the discharge of the debt.

Applicants who have discharged (satisfied) County Court Judgements may be considered.

Applicants who have default accounts recorded against them and who have not taken any action to either satisfy the default account or have not made recorded arrangements to

resolve the default account will not be considered. However, where applicants can demonstrate that they have or are taking action to resolve the default accounts, they may be considered. Therefore should your application be successful the appointing force will require full details of the satisfaction in order to make a final decision as to whether this meets local eligibility requirements.

## 6. Business Interests

Unless the Chief Officer of the force that you are to be appointed to decides otherwise you would not normally be eligible for appointment if:

- you have a business interest which is to be retained after appointment, or
- you or one of your relatives (spouse, civil partner, person living with you as if they were your spouse or civil partner, parent, son, daughter, brother or sister) holds or possesses a pecuniary interest in a licence or permit relating to alcohol licensing, refreshment houses or betting and gaming or regulating places of entertainment in the area of the police force in question;

A business interest is defined as: **‘holding any office or employment for hire or gain.’**

This is detailed further in Section 9A of Police Regulations 2003.

Any business interests will require local Chief Officer authorisation upon conditional offer of appointment. You will be supplied with the appropriate documentation to request this during the final vetting process.

## 7. Academic qualifications

To be eligible to apply for the Direct Entry Programme you must hold either a level 6 undergraduate degree, any subject and any classification, an Ofqual or CCEA approved professional qualification (award, certificate, diploma or NVQ) at level 7 or above, or a university accredited qualification at level 7 or above, such as a post-graduate certificate, post graduate diploma, masters or doctoral degrees (PhD) from a university in the UK or an equivalent from a non-UK university.

If relying on a level 7 qualification it must be on the Register of Regulated Qualifications. You will need to supply details of the qualification including the full title and qualification number which is searchable via the Register, <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>

All educational certificates will need to be provided in due course. A full translation must be provided for certificates that are not in English.

It is for each applicant to establish if their qualifications are equivalent to the requirements set out above and to provide the evidence.

## Vetting Following Successful Paper Sift and Telephone Interview

If successful at the initial stages of the Direct Entry application process and prior to attending the Assessment Centre and being offered a position by a force there will be further and more thorough vetting, initially at non police personnel (NPPV) level and then at the recruitment vetting (RV) process to the vetting level required by the force.

You will be required to answer more comprehensive vetting questions. These will include:

- Your previous names and any alias names that you have used
- Your address history for the last 5 years
- Your partner and their address history for the last 5 years
- Your parents and your partner's parents
- Your full, half & step siblings
- Your children
- All co-residents at your current address (lodgers, other family etc.)
- If you have ever been involved in a police investigation, arrested or have cautions or convictions
- If you have any criminal associates and if so, their details
- Your financial position

As part of this they will also ask whether any of your close family or associates are involved in criminal activity and the force Vetting Unit will therefore search for any criminal convictions or cautions recorded against you, your family and associates.

Where relatives or the associates of an applicant, are found to have convictions or cautions for recordable offences, or if they are reasonably suspected of being actively involved in criminal activity, the following will be considered:

- The nature of the relationship, e.g. whether the applicant resides with or has regular contact with the offender

- The likelihood that the applicant's role will be adversely affected, e.g. through adverse pressure or a conflict of interests
- The number and seriousness of the offences or involvement in criminal activity
- Whether embarrassment will be caused to the police service
- Whether the credibility of the applicant will be affected
- Whether the credibility of police service will be affected
- The potential for information leakage.

Do not attempt to hide or withhold any information. Concealing the truth or deliberately withholding information is a very serious matter and people are rejected at the vetting stage for this reason. If in any doubt, **declare** the incident and do not be persuaded by any other party to do otherwise.

All convictions (including spent convictions) must be included on any application under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

# Application Form

The application form is a structured way to gather information about the candidates against requirements for a role.

The national online application system (WCN) enables you to submit your application online. The College of Policing will manage the applications and communicate with applicants directly from the system throughout the process.

## Filling in the online application form

This information is also available on the candidate application page on the 'instructions' tab.

You will initially be directed to the job advert page where you will need to click 'apply' on the left hand side of the advert. Please ensure you are applying to your intended process; Inspectors or Superintendents. This will then lead you to a registration page where you will be required to create a login account. Registration allows you to create a username and password that will enable you to log in and out of the system as often as you wish. Please take a note of your login details as you will need them throughout the application process. Following this you will be taken to pre-screen page where you will be required to read and accept the College of Policing's Fair Processing Notice and Research Privacy Notice.

**In order to progress to the application form all questions within this section will need to be ticked as 'Yes'. Selecting 'No' will stop you from moving past the pre-screen page.**

**The next part of the application is the Eligibility Checklist – Please see the section on Eligibility Criteria for more information.**

**The final part is the College of Policing Direct Entry online application form itself.**

When completing your application form you are able to use the page links at the left of the screen to navigate through the sections. Each page has a status symbol next to it, so that you can see at a glance how far you have completed each page of the application:

- **Green tick:** You have completed all questions.
- **Blue tick:** You have completed all mandatory questions, but not every question. This could be due to some questions being not-applicable.
- **Red cross:** There are still mandatory questions which haven't been completed

Please note, depending on the version of internet explorer you are using, these status symbols may not appear.

The application itself contains fields to capture all the necessary information. Help icons alongside the questions throughout the application form provide guidance notes to assist you to complete the form.

As you proceed through each page of the application form use the 'continue' button to ensure you have saved your details.

**To save your text you must select 'continue' to the next page and the system will store your responses. You can then review this later if you log out of the system and return later. If you just log out or get timed out this will not automatically save your information.**

When you are satisfied with your application, click on the 'submit' button to send us your form. **Once you have submitted, you cannot modify your application** (apart from your contact details which you can amend by clicking on 'Edit Contact Details' on the left-hand menu in the Communication Centre).

Once you submit your application form we will acknowledge its receipt by sending you an email with a link to your personal account in our application centre. You will then be able to revisit this site to obtain a status update on the progress of your application at any time.

Our online application form has been designed to be convenient and easy to use. Please take great care with your application; it is your opportunity to tell us about yourself. Please read our "Do's" and "Don'ts" for completing your application:

#### **Do**

- Make a note of your username and password so you can return at a later date.
- Be open and honest in the answers that you give.
- Take time to browse through the application form so that you can prepare. You may wish to prepare offline and copy/paste answers onto the form, but please ensure this copies correctly into the application.
- **Save your information as you complete each page** - you can always go back and change your information before submitting your form.
- Work in a full-size window, this will make the application form easier to read.

## Don't

- Leave your uncompleted registration without saving it by pressing 'continue'.
- Submit your application unless you are completely satisfied with it and have answered all the relevant questions.
- Submit more than one application per vacancy.
- Use the browser 'back/forward' buttons to navigate between pages as this will log you out and may not save your application. Please use the links in the left-hand menu.

In completing your application, you will have access to WCN's technical online help centre who will reply within two working days. If you have any technical problems that cannot be resolved this way you will be directed to contact College of Policing Direct Entry team for assistance.

## Common Troubleshooting

As mentioned above you will have access to WCN's technical online help centre whilst completing your application, which provides assistance for some common queries. If this does not answer your query you can fill in a contact tech support form and they will respond to you in two working days. We have included common issues candidates face to provide guidance in how to solve the issue in the first instance.

- To use the application form you must have cookies 'enabled' otherwise you may not be able to see the log in section of the application form.
- Mandatory fields must be completed before you can submit the application form.
- In order to progress to the application form all questions in the pre-screen will need to be ticked as 'Yes'. Selecting 'No' will stop you from moving past the Pre Screen page.

## Reasonable Adjustments

If you have a disability and require a reasonable adjustment to be able to complete your application form, please email [directentry.selection@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:directentry.selection@college.pnn.police.uk), so we can look to make an adjustment or accommodation for you.

## Competency and Values Questions

You will be assessed on five questions within the application form which are based on the competencies and values from the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) for Policing

which you can find more detail on from the following links to the an overview of the framework. It is important that you read this and are familiar with the competencies and values and their descriptions and levels.

[http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Documents/Competency-and-Values-Framework-for-Policing\\_4.11.16.pdf](http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Documents/Competency-and-Values-Framework-for-Policing_4.11.16.pdf)

<http://skillsforjustice-ppf.com/competency-values/>

We are looking for evidence of the qualities you already have or may develop to enable you to be successful on the programme. Your answers here will be used to decide whether your application will proceed to the next stage. It is important therefore that you think carefully about your answers.

You must give specific examples of what you did or said where the questions ask for this. 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 not score well. We need to know what part you played on that occasion.

You must be able to evidence level 3 behaviours to demonstrate your ability to perform at the rank applied for and your potential to reach more senior levels and therefore your suitability for the programme.

- You should read the questions fully and choose your examples very carefully.
- Avoid using jargon or slang terms. Remember that this is a formal application for an important and responsible role.
- You can use examples from a work setting, your social, domestic or educational life.
- You must adhere to the word limits for each question.
- The application must be all your own work.
- Applications that contain any material which is not original and accurate may be discontinued.
- Ensure you fully answer the question posed.

## Telephone Interview

If you are successful in the application form you will then be invited to attend a telephone interview.

The aim of the telephone interview is to further measure candidates' suitability for the programme, including their potential to reach senior levels in the police service.

Further information will be provided on this interview if you are confirmed as successful in the application.

## Queries and Questions

If you have any questions that have not been answered in this guidance please contact the Direct Entry team via [directentry.selection@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:directentry.selection@college.pnn.police.uk) and we will be happy to assist.