



## **Police Officer - Application Advice**

The link <http://www.ncalt.com/pre-join/index.html> from the College of Policing has been designed to help potential applicants explore their suitability for the role of Police Officer and to make a reasonably informed decision about whether or not to undertake the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing or submit an application for the role of a Police Officer.

We do not require service as a Special Constable or Police Community Support Officer to apply for a Police Officer vacancy via the standard application process (entry criteria can be found below).

If you have any problems completing your application, please call 0845 2 66 66 77 (Option 2) or e-mail [RecruitmentPoliceOff@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:RecruitmentPoliceOff@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

### **What happens after you apply to be a Police Officer?**

The recruitment process takes about eight to twelve months. It is a lengthy process, with various stages to complete which include:

- Eligibility Checking
- Police SEARCH® National Recruit Assessment Centre – currently includes two written exercises, four interactive exercises, a numerical ability test, a verbal ability test, and a timed interview.
- Thames Valley Police Interview
- Provisional offer of appointment
- Vetting Checks
- Medical assessment
- Fitness test
- Reference checks.
- Pre-Learning weekend (First Aid)

### **Entry criteria for Police Officers:**

- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age to apply and join.
- There is no upper age limit for applying to the police service. However please bear in mind that the normal retirement age for police officers is 60 years and that new recruits are required to undertake a two year probationary period.
- Two A Levels (grade A to E) or equivalent or higher qualification/s. All candidates must have been awarded these qualifications at the time of application.
- A Certificate in Knowledge of Policing from a College of Policing Approved Provider. If not already obtained this can be successfully completed by a date relevant for the vacancy. A list of Approved Providers can be found via:

- Applicants must have a full manual UK/EEA driving licence.
- Only applications from British citizens, European Union/European Economic Area nationals and Commonwealth citizens, or foreign nationals with indefinite leave to remain in the UK will be accepted.
- If you have a criminal record/conviction, it may lead to your application being rejected. National Police Improvement Agency circular 02/2011 sets out the criteria for all convictions/cautions that will be considered.
- All convictions/cautions (including any person known to the applicant) will be considered on individual merit, taking into account circumstances of the offence, the age of the individual, when the offence was committed, the lapse of time since the offence, and evidence of good character since the offence. Undisclosed convictions/cautions will lead to rejection.
- Applicants who have served any period of imprisonment or youth detention will **not** be considered for appointment.
- Applicants who have existing County Court Judgements outstanding against them or who are registered bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have not been discharged for at least three years will **not** be considered for appointment. Applicants with Individual Voluntary Agreements (IVA) will also not be considered.
- Some tattoos (whether visible or not) and facial piercings might be unacceptable depending on their size, nature and location. Tattoos must not be potentially offensive to members of the public or colleagues or bring discredit to the police service.
- Applicants must be in good health, of sound constitution and able to both physically and mentally perform the duties of a Police Officer once appointed. All medical criteria will be checked – including eyesight, hearing and Body Mass Index (BMI must be at least 18 and less than 30). This part of the process will be managed by the Occupational Health Unit.
- Applicants are only able to apply to one Home Office police force at a time.
- Applications will not be accepted if individuals have previously applied unsuccessfully, in the last six months (between date of failure and closing date for TVP applications), to another police force in England and Wales that requires candidates to undertake the College of Policing Police SEARCH® or PCSO Recruit Assessment Centre.
- Applicants must live within twenty crow miles of two main Thames Valley police stations by the time of appointment.

For further information please visit the Thames Valley Police website and 'Create a new Job Alert (via the 'Join Us' and then 'Current Vacancies' pages) so you receive automated messages when we next open for recruitment.





## Police Officer Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Considering the important role and nature of work you are applying for, it is essential Thames Valley Police (TVP) ensures specific entry criteria are met. This form has been designed to assist you to understand our requirements and answer any concerns you may have.

It is important that you disclose all information, as failure to disclose information can result in applicants failing vetting checks.

### Am I eligible?

There are four sections to this self-assessment questionnaire. Any red answers (in Sections 1 and 4) will stop your application from proceeding. Amber answers (in Sections 2 and 3) may stop your application from proceeding or may delay your application whilst further investigation takes place. This questionnaire is for your personal use only. However if any issues are identified you should contact the Recruitment Team for advice.

### Section 1

If you tick a red box answer to any of the following questions you are unfortunately ineligible to apply for the role of police officer:

Question	Yes	No
<b>Vetting Questions: In answering these questions, please include 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and traffic convictions (other than parking fines).</b>		
Do you have an existing County Court/Tribunal Judgment (CCJ) made against you and / or have you entered into an Individual Voluntary Agreement (IVA)?		
Have you been registered bankrupt and your bankruptcy debts discharged within the last three years or your bankruptcy debts have not been discharged?		
Have you ever committed an offence that has resulted in a prison sentence?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: treason, murder, manslaughter, rape, kidnapping?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: incest / intercourse with a girl under 13, buggery with a person under 16 or a person who has not consented, gross indecency?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for: espionage, terrorism, sabotage or any actions to overthrow/undermine parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means or association with any organisation advocating such activities?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: hostage taking, hijacking or torture or associated with any organisation advocating such activities?		
Have you been convicted or cautioned for reckless or dangerous driving within the past ten years?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any driving offences causing "death by" reckless / dangerous driving?		
Have you been convicted, cautioned or received a Fixed Penalty Notice for driving without insurance within the past five years?		
Have you been convicted or cautioned for drink/drug driving within the past ten years?		



Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for more than one offence of drink / drunk driving or drunk in charge?		
Have you been convicted or cautioned for failing to stop at an accident within the past five years?		
Have you been convicted, cautioned and/or received Fixed Penalty Notices for more than three endorsable traffic offences within the past five years?		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have you been convicted or cautioned for driving whilst being disqualified within the past five years?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned - excluding Penalty Notice Disorder (PND) notices over two years old - for any public order offence such as involvement in riot, violent disorder or affray?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for grievous bodily harm (GBH)?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: Firearms offences and/or unlawful possession of weapons?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for a hate aggravated offence (Race, Religion, Belief, Sexual Orientation, Transgender, Disability)?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for abuse or neglect of children?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: Offences which involve elements of dishonesty, corruption, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone including theft, fraud and deception?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for interference with the administration of justice or the investigation of offences?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for burglary and/or going equipped to steal?		
Have you ever been convicted or cautioned for any of the following: Serious involvement in drugs including possession of a Class A drug or more than one Class B drug and/or supplying drugs of any kind?		
<b>Other Questions:</b>		
Are you a member of the British National Party (BNP), Combat 18, National Front or any similar organisations?		
Do you take an active part in politics and intend to continue these activities if successful with your application to become a police officer?		
Are you 18 years old or over? You must be at least 18 in order to apply for the role of police officer. There is no upper age limit for applying to the police service. But please bear in mind that the normal retirement age for police officers is 60 years and that new recruits are required to undertake a two-year probationary period.		
Do you have a full manual UK/EEA driving licence?		
Have you previously submitted an application, either with Thames Valley Police or any other police force in England and Wales for the role of police officer, and been rejected within the last 6 months?		
Are you either a British citizen or residing in the UK free of restrictions? To be eligible for appointment you must be a British citizen or member of the European Community or other states in the European Economic Area (EEA). 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 will be required to provide proof that you have no restrictions on your stay in the UK.		
Do you hold two A Levels, or an equivalent or higher qualification? (Please refer to the 'Join Us' pages on the Thames Valley Police website for a table of equivalent qualifications).		



Do you have a Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) or are you willing to gain this by the date specified in the advert?		
Do you meet the <a href="http://www.college.police.uk/en/docs/Eyesight_standards_police_recruitment.pdf">Eyesight Standards</a> for police officers? <a href="http://www.college.police.uk/en/docs/Eyesight_standards_police_recruitment.pdf">http://www.college.police.uk/en/docs/Eyesight_standards_police_recruitment.pdf</a>		
<b>THIS QUESTION IS ONLY FOR THOSE APPLYING FOR AN INTERNAL VACANCY THAT IS OPEN TO TVP SPECIAL CONSTABULARY ONLY</b> - Are you a current TVP Special Officer and will you have achieved Fit for Independent Patrol status by the date specified in the advert? (All Fit for Independent Patrol status declarations will have their accreditation assessed by the Learning and Development team as part of the recruitment process.)		

## Section 2

If you tick an amber answer to any of the following questions you are not automatically ruled out from becoming a Police Officer, but your application may need to be checked by the recruitment department before proceeding. As such you are advised to seek advice from the recruitment team at the earliest opportunity.

Question	Yes	No
<b>Vetting Questions: In answering these questions, please include 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and traffic convictions (other than parking fines).</b>		
Have you ever been cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence <b>not</b> listed in Section 1?		
Have you ever been involved in any other criminal investigation?		
Have you been charged or summonsed for an offence that has not yet been dealt with?		
Do you have any relative or associate (including co-resident) who you know or have reason to believe has criminal convictions (excluding traffic convictions), OR is engaged in criminal activities, OR is a person who associates regularly with such persons?		
<b>Other Questions:</b>		
In the last three years, have you spent any continuous period of over one month outside of the UK? Time spent abroad is unlikely to be a bar to recruitment however you may be asked to supply certificates of good conduct from the local police authorities of the countries you have visited. From experience this may take some time and involve some cost to you.		
Do you intend on continuing with any other employment for hire or gain or any other business interest when you apply to become a police officer?		
Do you or your spouse (unless separated) or close relative living with you have a financial interest in any license or permit relating to liquor, betting or gaming or the regulation of places of entertainment?		
Do you have any tattoos or piercings? Tattoos (or piercings) are not a bar to appointment, however, some tattoos (or piercings) could potentially offend members of the public or colleagues, or could bring discredit to the Police Service - it depends on their size, nature, location and sometimes on the extent.		
Is your Body Mass Index (BMI) between 18 and 30? This can be determined if you know your weight and your height. The actual calculation is your weight (in kilograms) divided by your height (in metres squared). Guidance and easy to use charts on how to calculate your BMI can be found on the NHS website. <b>You cannot be appointed to the role if your BMI (or body fat percentage) is outside the acceptable range.</b>		

## Section 3 – Role Considerations

Before committing to the application process, and a career as a Police Officer, here are some aspects of



the role that you are strongly advised to consider:

Question	Yes	No
<b>Where you will serve and your accommodation</b> Do you live within 20 miles of the station to which you wish to be posted? Are you ready to be very flexible regarding your work location to fulfil your obligations as a police officer? The accommodation in which you live has to be approved by Thames Valley Police. Generally speaking it must be within 20 miles (as the crow flies) of your place of duty. If you wish to change your address from that which was approved at the time of your appointment or subsequently, you must also seek permission. Only after permission has been granted should officers proceed to contractual stages. Remember, if this is not done you could be committing an offence under the Misconduct Code.		
<b>Effect on private life</b> Being a police officer means that sometimes, in your day-to-day private life, you have to put yourself on duty and take appropriate actions even when you are off duty. Are you prepared for this?		
Question	Yes	No
<b>24 hour, 365 days a year role</b> Being a police officer will often involve you being out and about on foot patrol, in all weathers and at all hours of the day (shifts cover 24 hours a day, 365 days a year). You will be required to work shifts including night work, weekends and bank holidays. As a police officer, are you prepared to work shifts and unpredictable hours?		
<b>Standards of dress</b> Would you be able to put aside your own sense of style and dress and comply with the police uniform and dress code? Please note: The police uniform and dress code makes allowances for items of religious dress.		
<b>Following rules</b> Could you follow strict rules and authority to carry out the needs of the service?		
<b>Fitness</b> The job can involve strenuous physical activity and it is important to maintain high fitness levels to ensure you can effectively protect yourself and others. Police officers are expected to take part in annual fitness tests. Do you feel confident about continually maintaining a high level of fitness throughout your career as a police officer?		
<b>Prepared to give evidence in court</b> Are you prepared to stand up and provide evidence in court?		
<b>Using initiative</b> Are you happy about working in a team, but also confident about taking the initiative when needed?		
<b>Impartiality</b> Are you sure that no aspect of your life would impact on you being able to act with impartiality as a police officer?		
<b>Paperwork</b> Are you able to complete paperwork and meticulously keep detailed records?		
<b>Dealing with difficult situations</b> You will have to deal with circumstances or scenes of a difficult or distressing nature e.g. road traffic collisions, child cruelty, sudden deaths. Could you deal with traumatic and distressing situations with sensitivity and a level head?		

If any of your answers in the third and final section fall into the amber column, you may want to take some



time to consider whether the role of police officer is right for you before proceeding to the application stage.

## Section 4 – Code of Ethics – Policing Principles

A Code of Ethics has been published by the College of Policing.

(<http://www.college.police.uk/en/20972.htm>) This code sets out the principles and standards of behaviour we expect to see from police professionals. It applies to every individual who works in policing, whether a warranted officer (including Special Constable), police staff, volunteer or someone contracted to work in a police force.

If you tick any red answers or have any questions or doubts over whether you can comply with the principles and standards set out below then you should not submit an application.

Question	Yes	Maybe	No
<b>Accountability</b> Are you prepared to take ownership and full responsibility for your decisions, actions and omissions?			
<b>Fairness and respect</b> Can you act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect (including respect the rights of all individuals) and courtesy?			
<b>Honesty and integrity</b> Can you act with honesty and integrity at all times? This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being sincere and truthful</li> <li>• Showing courage in doing what you believe to be right</li> <li>• Ensuring your decisions are not influenced by improper considerations of personal gain</li> <li>• Not knowingly making false, misleading or inaccurate oral or written statement in any professional context</li> <li>• Neither soliciting nor accepting the offer of any gift, gratuity or hospitality that could compromise your impartiality</li> <li>• Not using your position to inappropriately coerce any person or to settle personal grievances</li> </ul>			
<b>Leadership</b> Can you take personal responsibility for promoting and reinforcing the principles and standards set out in the College of Policing Code of Ethics?			
<b>Objectivity</b> Can you use your training and experience to make objective decisions and use your best professional judgement?			
<b>Openness</b> Can you be open and transparent in all your actions and decisions?			
<b>Selflessness</b> Can you act in the public interest at all times?			

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Recruitment Team on 0845 2 666677 (Option 2) or email [RecruitmentPoliceOff@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:RecruitmentPoliceOff@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).