

Welcome to our selection of frequently asked questions in relation to join the police as a new recruit.



## Section 1 – Helping to understand the role and recruitment process

### What is the difference between the roles of Police Constable and Detective Constable?

Detective Constables and Police Constables have the same rank. They have different operational roles, but there are also lots of similarities too, albeit detectives don't wear a uniform. Detective Constables ultimately deal with serious and complex investigations.

### Are there any essential educational criteria that needs to be met prior to applying for the PCDA?

To be eligible for this route you will have achieved:

- Level 2 qualifications in both English and Maths for example a GCSE or iGCSE at grade C (level 4) or above, Functional Skills Level 2, Key Skills Level 2 (Communication and / or Literacy) or Adult Numeracy / Literacy **PLUS**. The functional skills qualification has to be from a OFQUAL regulated provider. Please contact us at [HR.Recruitment@Cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:HR.Recruitment@Cleveland.pnn.police.uk) if you have any questions about the validity of your qualifications.
- Level 3 qualification(s) in any subject(s) that equate to **80 UCAS points** (or a full level 5 qualification can also be taken into consideration) – these points could be from your A Levels, Level 3 Diplomas, BTECs or International Baccalaureate to name a few. Please check your UCAS points [here](#) **OR**
- Be in the final year of your Level 3 qualification and be predicted to achieve a minimum of **80 UCAS points**, unfortunately if you do not achieve the 80 points required, we will be required to decline your interest.

If you meet the Level 2 requirements and have a Level 3 qualification but do not have the required 80 UCAS **but** have significant equivalent force experience such as working as a PCSO or have worked in the military police for example, please contact us at [HR.Recruitment@Cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:HR.Recruitment@Cleveland.pnn.police.uk) for more information.

### Are there any essential educational criteria that needs to be met prior to applying for the IPLDP?

To be eligible for this route you will have achieved:

One Level 3 Qualification in any subject or relevant quantifiable experience for the role of Police Constable.

We are only running a small number of IPLDP cohorts so should you be interested in this route you will need to have no pre-booked annual leave as it won't be possible to defer. You will be withdrawn from the process should you not be able to commit to the start date.

### **Are there any essential educational criteria that needs to be met prior to applying for the Pre-join?**

This is the route for you if you have degree in professional policing, which is a professional academic knowledge-based degree, based on the national curriculum for the police constable role. You need to complete the degree before applying to join us.

The application of education received during the degree is put into practice and assessed during probation. If you wish to use the degree in professional policing as your entry route to the police service, you must apply to join a police force **within five years of your graduation**.

Once you have successfully joined the force as a probationer, you will need to:

- undertake further practice-based learning and assessment in your force which will be done via the IPLDP route
- demonstrate competence in the police constable role
- complete the two-year probationary period, in line with police regulations

### **Are there any essential educational criteria that needs to be met prior to applying for the DHEP?**

To be considered for entry to the Degree Holder Entry Programme, applicants must provide certificates and transcripts of the following qualifications:

- UK undergraduate degree (360 credits) in any subject.
- Non-UK degrees can be considered if their degree is recognised as equivalent by ENIC. You will need to provide evidence of an acceptable English language qualification if your degree was not taught and assessed in English.

### **Can I apply for more than one route?**

Yes, you can apply for more than one route and however Cleveland Police will decide on which route is right for you. This will also depend on what routes are available at the time.

### **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 recruitment process within 3 months of being officially advised that they had failed a section of the process. If you have failed vetting previously you will be asked to wait 12 months before applying again.

### **Can I apply to become a Police Constable (PC), Detective Constable (DC) and a Special Constable (SC) at the same time?**

The process for PC, DC 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 PC and DC at the same time. You can only sit the National Sift and the Online Assessment Centre once in a 3 month period and twice in 12 months.

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

No, to apply for Cleveland you must apply directly however it may be possible to transfer your score from your National Sift and Online Assessment Centre.

**I have passed the SEARCH assessment centre or an Online Assessment with another Force - can I transfer my score to Cleveland?**

Yes, it may be possible to transfer your score to Cleveland.

**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. Should you pass the final interview stage, we would advise you link in with the recruitment team regarding any pre-booked holidays.

**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 someone.

All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not affect your job application.

## **Section 2 - Helping to understand current eligibility**

### **Do I need to live in the UK to apply?**

You are eligible to work in the UK if you are a British citizen, a person with settled status in Britain, such as ILR or EU settled status, or if you have valid immigration status which allows you to carry out the work in question, such as a Skilled Worker visa.

### **What if I have not yet passed my driving test?**

Candidates must have held a full, manual, UK, car driving license for at least six months prior to appointment to the force.

### **Are there any age limit restrictions?**

You need to be 18 at the point of starting, although there is no upper age limit however new recruits are required to undertake up to a 3 year probationary period.

### **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 Constables and Detective Constables are required to complete Officer Safety Training (OST) and must attain a level of 5:4 on the multi-stage fitness test.

### **I have dyslexia, should I tell you about it?**

Applicants are encouraged to tell us about any neurodiverse conditions, any other disabilities or special learning difficulties at the earliest opportunity. We are committed to supporting everyone and ensuring reasonable adjustments are in place prior to your commencement in force. Early disclosure of any condition would assist us in supporting you through your medical assessment.

### **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 and whether there may be implications for an officer's safety.

### What if I have a tattoo or multiple tattoos?

You must not have tattoos on your hands, neck, forearms that could be offensive. Tattoos will not be permitted on your face unless these are for medical or religious reasons.

### 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 your immediate family, you will be required to provide details to enable us to do so on the vetting 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. 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?**

References will be sought from previous employers for a period covering 5 years. If your current employment extends over 5 years, we will only need to obtain a reference from your current employer and if you have had several employers in the last 5 years, we will need to contact them all.

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

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.

### **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 institution 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 Constable or Detective Constable 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 join the force.

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?**

A three-year learning programme, which on successful completion will result in the award of the Degree. The programme will include learning in both classroom and workplace settings. Alongside this you will also have:

- A salary in line with national police pay guidelines
- Annual leave of 24 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 Blue light.

### **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 on a monthly basis - 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.