



College of
Policing

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Direct Entry 2020

Application form and eligibility criteria

Candidate overview

Version 1.0

College of Policing Limited
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Direct Entry programme overview

The Direct Entry programme offers an opportunity for exceptional individuals to join the police service from other sectors. The robust selection process is designed to ensure that successful candidates possess a high level of transferable skills and have experience of working at a senior level. Direct entrants will undertake 24 months of training for the inspector programme. The programme is tough and delivers comprehensive training through exposure to an extensive range of policing activities. This ensures that, upon successful completion, members are able to fulfil the role safely and with a high level of competence that inspires confidence in officers, staff and, most importantly, the public. This will create a cohort that has the potential to develop further, acquiring the skills and experience to progress to more senior ranks.

The programme supports the [Policing Vision 2025](#) in helping to bring talented, senior leaders into the police service to make an immediate impact on culture, efficiency and effectiveness. This is achieved by opening entry to the service to proven and highly successful leaders, who will be joining policing directly at the rank of inspector.

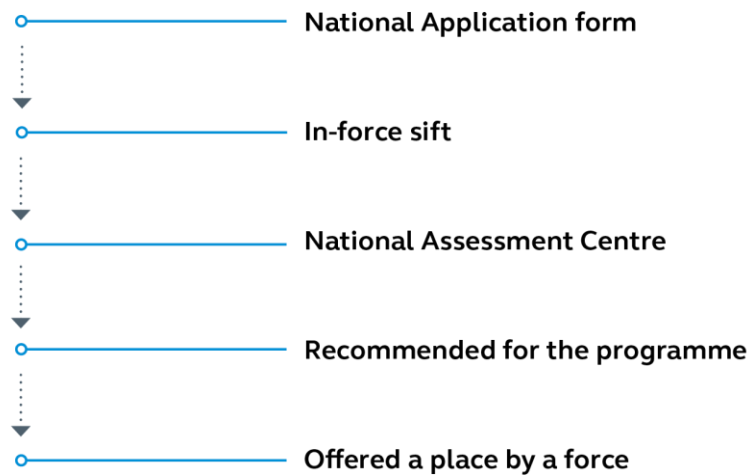
Please consider carefully whether you have the right level of skills and experience before applying. The application process is lengthy and challenging.

Direct Entry programme aims

The aim of the Direct Entry 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
- support individuals' continuing development to reach at least the level of superintendent during their careers.

Overview of the selection process



To be considered for the Direct Entry programme, candidates will complete the online national application form. This form includes questions concerning the national eligibility criteria and other personal details.

Candidates must first meet the national eligibility criteria before completing the application form itself; this is conducted through a series of online questions. It is essential that candidates refer to the guidance contained in this document before, and when answering, the eligibility questions. Alongside national eligibility criteria, forces may have their own specific eligibility criteria which can be found on their websites. Following submission of an application, each force will carry out an in-force sifting process which can vary from force to force and may contain more than one stage. Those successful at the in-force sift will then be invited to attend the Direct Entry National Assessment Centre, hosted by the College of Policing.

Those candidates successfully recommended at the National Assessment Centre will then be considered by their chosen force against available vacancies.

Candidates can only apply to one force and must select which they are applying to in the application form. The 2020 Direct Entry national application form and [Lead Beyond website](#) contain details of the participating forces **at the time of the application window going live**.

Eligibility criteria

Consider your eligibility when filling in the application form.

Your eligibility to be a police officer is a core part of the initial application process.

When answering the questions in 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 includes 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 you are honest in your answers, as they will be checked again during the vetting processes throughout the selection process.

While an application may progress through the initial stages of the process, each force will apply its own full vetting standards at the time of final appointment. Passing the initial vetting process is no guarantee of passing force vetting.

There are three stages of eligibility:

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 Police National Computer (PNC) check, where security checks are carried out to ensure that there is no risk to the College of Policing from your attendance at 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. Nationality

You need to be a British citizen or a citizen of a country that is a member of the European Economic Area or Switzerland, or a Commonwealth citizen or foreign national who is resident in the UK and free from restrictions to remain for an indefinite period.

2. Residency

The police service needs to carry out recruitment vetting procedures on all applicants to determine suitability. Forces will decide on a case-by-case basis whether an applicant is able to provide satisfactory vetting information and therefore, residency criteria can vary between forces.

Some forces will require three years' residency in the UK immediately prior to application; others may accept the required information from certain countries, provided in good time and to an acceptable level. What is common to all forces is the requirement to have a three-year 'checkable history'. Candidates are advised to check the local criteria with their preferred force.

If you have been living abroad and the force is prepared to consider your application, you can expect to be asked to provide the following information as a minimum:

- How long you have resided abroad.
- Circumstances of residency abroad.
- Where you lived during the rest of your life.
- A certificate of good behaviour that is acceptable to the force and obtained at your own expense.
- A full explanation of your activities while abroad.

If working for the British military or government, a deployment overseas is regarded as UK residency for the purpose of vetting.

3. 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 cautions and 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 while 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 1

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 aged 17 years or 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 criminal offences listed below:
 - treason
 - murder
 - manslaughter/culpable homicide
 - rape
 - offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - kidnapping/abduction
 - incest
 - sexual activity with a child
 - hostage taking, hijacking 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 organisation advocating such activities
 - any driving offences involving 'causing death by'
 - firearms offences

- offences with a hate aggravation (eg, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender or disability)
- domestic abuse offences.

b. Mandatory rejection part 2

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 five 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).
- (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 and driving offences

- Serious involvement in drugs including possession of a Class A drug (eg, heroin, morphine) or more than one Class B drug (eg, amphetamines) and/or supplying drugs of any kind.
- Reckless or dangerous driving within the last 10 years.
- One offence of drink driving or drunk in charge, or drugs driving within the preceding 10 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 while 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 tax 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 sentences and sentences served at a young offenders' institution or community home).
- Cautions (including 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 programme 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, eg, 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.

4. Tattoos

Many forces will consider visible tattoos on a case-by-case basis.

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.

5. Membership of the 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) and this 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 among members of the public that it may so interfere. If an applicant is a member of the BNP, Combat 18 or the National Front, the application will result in automatic rejection. Similarly, if an applicant is a member of a group whose ideology or activities is considered to conflict with the legitimate aims of the police service, their application may be rejected.

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 among members of the public that it may so interfere. The role of a police officer is, among other factors, about integrity, impartiality and putting the safety of the public first. To ensure officers are able to discharge their duties impartially, applicants who are members of political parties may be expected to resign membership before appointment. Police officers are not allowed to take an active part in politics.

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 financial 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. 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 three 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.

8. Current or previous service as a police officer

The core aim of Direct Entry is to bring new experiences and fresh perspectives into policing. Therefore, both serving and recently serving officers are not eligible for this process as there are more appropriate processes available. Current serving officers seeking promotion are advised to seek out local or other in-force promotion processes.

The Police Regulations 2003, which used to mean that former officers rejoining the police must do so within five years, no longer applies. You can rejoin no matter how long ago you left – your skills and experience will be highly valued. You can now rejoin at a higher rank, based on experience gained outside policing, in addition to coming back in at the same or lower rank. So, if you are a previous serving officer and completed your probation, you may be able to come back into policing through the rejoinder route instead of applying for a Direct Entry programme. Please check with the force you are interested in to see if they have vacancies for rejoinders. This is a more appropriate route as it will build upon previous skills rather than repeating previous learning.

9. Academic qualifications and local-eligibility criteria

There is no longer a national requirement to hold a degree prior to application for Direct Entry. However, please be aware that the Direct Entry programme requires you to complete and pass a level 7 qualification as a core element of the programme and, as such, the teaching is at a level that assumes an ability to cope with the demands of level 7.

While the national requirement does not require a degree, applicants must hold the local minimum education levels for police entry (in line with police regulations) and can demonstrate that they have work experience at a suitable level for the rank applied for, as this will be tested throughout the application process using the Competency and Values Framework.

The local academic level requirements can be found on the relevant force's website, as they vary from force to force. Please check with local force websites.

All educational certificates will need to be provided to appointing forces 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.

Forces can also vary with other local-eligibility requirements that go above and beyond the national requirements and can include things such as residency and educational attainment. Please check with the force that you are applying to. Where there are no specific Direct Entry details shown, the core eligibility to be a police officer will be found within their constable recruitment section.

The National Application Form

This section will provide you with an overview of the Direct Entry National Application Form. Please note, this is designed to be generic guidance to support the completion of the National Application Form. Each individual force holds responsibility for how they choose to sift the applications and for any other sifting methods prior to the National Assessment Centre.

When does the Direct Entry national application window open?

The national application window opens at **10am** on **13 December 2019** and closes at **10pm** on **3 March 2020**. You can access the national application form through the online application system, Oleeo. The link for the application form will be posted on your chosen force website.

What is the 'online application system'?

The national online application system (hosted by Oleeo) enables you to submit your application online. Subsequently, the system allows your chosen force and the College of Policing to manage the applications and communicate with candidates directly via the system throughout the selection process.

The application form is a structured way to gather information about candidates against requirements for a role. Please note, some forces will not be using the application form to gather assessment information and will only require you to submit your personal details and eligibility questions.

Filling in the online national application form on Oleeo

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

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 for your intended programme. 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 make a note of your login details as you will need them throughout the application process.** After registration, you

will be taken to a pre-screen page where you will be required to read the College of Policing's privacy notice.

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 you can use the page links at the left of the screen to navigate through the sections. Each page has a status symbol next to it showing your progress on 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 have not been completed.

Please note, depending on the browser 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 in completing the form.

As you proceed through each page of the application form, make sure you use the 'continue' button to save your details.

To save your text, you must select **continue** to go to the next page and the system will store your responses. You can 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 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).

We will acknowledge receipt of your application via email. You can revisit the application site to obtain a status update on the progress of your application at any time, but more detailed information will come from the force you are applying to.

The 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 provide information about

yourself and your suitability for the programme. Please read the following 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' when completing your application:

Do

- Make a note of your username and password so you can log in at a later date.
- Be open and honest in your answers.
- 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 the pasted elements appear correctly in 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's 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.

When completing your application, you will have access to Oleeo's technical online help centre, which provides assistance for common queries. If your query is still unanswered, you can fill in a 'contact tech' support form and the team will respond within two working days. If you have any technical problems that cannot be resolved in this way, you will be directed to contact the Direct Entry team for assistance.

Common Oleeo troubleshooting

We have included some common issues, that candidates may face, to provide guidance in how to solve an issue in the first instance.

- To use the application form you must have cookies enabled, otherwise you may not be able to see the login section of the application form.
- Mandatory fields must be completed before you can submit the application form.

- If you have already registered with another application form, you will have an account with Oleeo. Your username will usually be the email address that you used to register with. You can retrieve your password by clicking on the 'Change Password'. If this does not work, please contact the Direct Entry team.
- 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

The College of Policing is committed to equality and diversity. If you have a disability and require a reasonable adjustment to be able to complete your application form, please email seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk

Biographical data

At the end of the application form you will be asked to provide some biographical data.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, it is good practice to know the composition of people applying to attend the Direct Entry programme so that policing can build an accurate workforce picture.

The College of Policing wants to meet the aims and commitments set out in its Equality Strategy. We want to understand the make-up of our workforce so that we can address discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and access to services.

We ask for your help to develop an understanding of workforce diversity so we can monitor any potential barriers faced and direct positive action initiatives, working towards creating an environment that is free from discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity; however, providing this information is **voluntary**.

The information you provide will be held by the College of Policing for the purposes outlined above and in accordance with data protection legislation (General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018) and our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We process this information in line with Article 9 (2) (g) for reasons of substantial public interest.

In this form we ask for your name so we can match your biographical data to your performance outcomes for statistical purposes. Other than the force that you have applied to, your personal identifiable information will not be shared with any other organisation and will not be used for any other purpose.

Your information may be used to form anonymised statistics and reports that are high level and will not identify you or any other individual. We will use the information collected from you to report on the composition of candidates applying and their progression through the process. Your personal identifiable information will not be shared with any other organisation other than the force that you have applied to, however, from time to time and where there is a substantial public interest to do so, anonymised statistical information may be shared. This may include categories of low numbers.

Your information will only be held in an identifiable form for as long as is necessary by the College of Policing and in accordance with our retention schedule. For more information about how we handle your data, please see the [Fast Track and Direct Entry Privacy Policy](#) on our website. You also have a number of rights under GDPR, including being able to contact our Data Protection Officer, details of which are listed in our full privacy notice.

Please note, your biographical information will not be used to assess your application in any way.

Assessment questions

The aim of the assessment questions, in the national application form, are to measure your suitability for the programme, including your potential to progress further within your policing career. They are also an opportunity for you to self-reflect and consider if the role is suitable for you, and whether you have the level of experience required for the programme. There are five questions in the application form, based on the requirements of the role and the competencies and values from the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) for Policing; more details are in the relevant links below. It is important that you read the Competency and Values Framework Overview document and are familiar with the competencies and values, and their descriptions and levels.

The Competency and Value Framework document can be found here:

http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Documents/Competency-and-Values-Framework-for-Policing_4.11.16.pdf

Further information can be read here:

<https://profdev.college.police.uk/competency-values>

How should I complete the assessment questions section?

Application forms are a structured way to gather information about people against requirements for a role. The aim is to provide the most convincing evidence of how you meet those requirements.

The answers given to the assessment questions will be assessed against the requirements of the role and the competencies and values in the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) at level 3, to ascertain your ability to perform in the target role as well as your potential to progress further.

A key difference between competency-based questions and values-based questions is that the values within the CVF are not divided into levels. Therefore, the same behaviours we would expect to demonstrate these values are applied to all roles. Please refer to the Competency and Values Framework Overview document when completing this section of the application form and for more information on the competencies and values.

Role requirements

In order to provide evidence of how you meet the requirements of the programme and role, make sure you are clear about what they are. You should therefore ensure that you are familiar with the aims of the programme, the role (outlined in the Direct Entry programme overview section and on the [Lead Beyond website](#)), and the CVF.

For the Direct Entry programme, we are looking for evidence of the leadership experience, skills and qualities you already have to enable you to be successful on the programme. It is important, therefore, that you think carefully about your answers and apply them to the right level for the role.

	Inspector
Role	Inspectors are managers, leading on the front line. They are decision-makers at the scenes of major and critical incidents and crime initiatives. It is an operational role with a strategic outlook. Inspectors are often in charge of a duty shift consisting of constables, sergeants and police staff; supervising, assessing dynamic risk, attending management and coordination meetings and making sure that decisions taken are implemented practically.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling, planning, organising and authorising the work of police officers and civilian staff, assessing risk, making dynamic decisions, allocating work and monitoring performance. • Providing strong frontline leadership. • Taking responsibility for managing major and critical incidents. • Reviewing systems, procedures and practices, in order to introduce improvements. • Making best use of resources. • Working in partnership.
Skills and experience required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal integrity and commitment to public transparency. • Flexible leadership skills. • Resilience and positivity. • Internal business and financial skills.

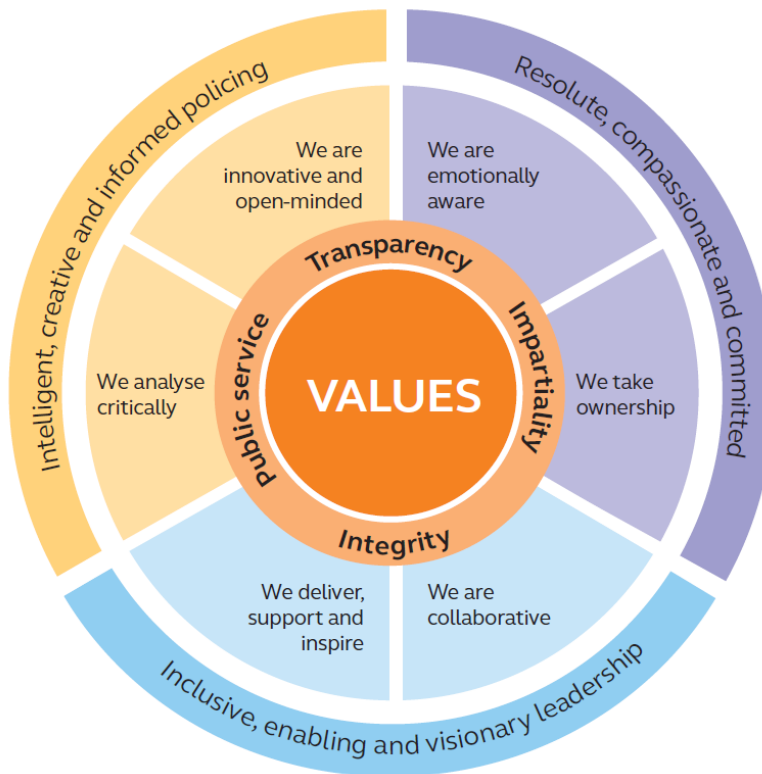
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building partnerships.• Able to lead effective organisational change.• Creativity and innovation.• Open-minded and willing to challenge existing culture and practice.• Applying relevant regulations and procedures in complex, unpredictable and diverse situations.
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In terms of the level of experience looked for, the following paragraph gives an overview of the type of management experience that would be expected at this level. This is to help you ensure you are applying your evidence at the appropriate level.

For the inspector role, it is expected that you will have had management experience. You will have proven leadership skills and have been responsible for controlling and running an area of business. You will have been in charge of implementing and supervising plans and strategies formulated by more senior management. You will have been responsible for other members of staff and for ensuring that work is achieved through those you are responsible for. You will have also had to relay, to more senior management, how you have met your responsibilities, while also being a voice to those you manage and develop. You will also have the skills, potential and ambition to progress to more senior roles and the superintendent rank in policing.

The Competency and Values Framework for Policing (CVF)

The competencies and values assessed are as follows:



The CVF, created by the College of Policing, aims to support all policing professionals, now and in the future. It sets out nationally-recognised behaviours and values, which provide a consistent foundation for national processes. The framework provides clear expectations of everyone working in policing, which in turn leads to standards being raised for the benefit and safety of the public. The framework has six competencies and four values, as shown in the above image.

Competencies

Competencies are characteristics such as behaviours, skills, attributes or knowledge that result in successful performance. Behavioural competencies are looking at the approaches you use when you work. They are less about ‘what’ and more about ‘how’. The CVF is a document that helps users understand how to demonstrate behaviours that lead to successful performance. It is not a finite list, and is never used as a tick box approach, however, it provides guidance on the types of behaviours that may be demonstrated overall and at each level.

Each competency has three levels associated with it and each level is incremental. You will be assessed at level 3 (senior manager/executive) of CVF competencies. Therefore, you must demonstrate behaviours at this level in your application form. Use the CVF to highlight effective behaviours you used but ensure they are tailored to what you did or your considerations. Merely repeating the behaviours or wording will not score well, so try and focus on 'how' you demonstrated the behaviours.

Values

Values are moral principles and standards of behaviour that everyone in the police service should display, regardless of their role or level. Values are about the underpinning drivers for our behaviour. These are 'why' we do things.

The values within the CVF do not have levels. This is because the behaviours demonstrated within the values are expected of all roles and levels.

Evidencing the requirements

The application form clearly explains what is being assessed, eg, competency or values area and asks a specific question in order to elicit evidence around that. You **must** answer the questions posed.

Those receiving your information do not know you personally, so you need to show them who you are, what you can do and why you would be right for the role. This is about you and what you have done, so use 'I' and not 'we'. Those reviewing your application can only assess you on what you have actually written and will not be able to infer anything that is not included.

When answering the question, choose examples that are most similar to, or above, the level of responsibility in the role. Providing evidence at the wrong level is one of the most common errors applicants can make.

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. Ensure you explain what part **you** played on that occasion.

You must be able to evidence the appropriate level of experience for the role and in line with level 3 from the CVF behaviours, to demonstrate your ability to perform at the rank applied

for, your potential to reach more senior levels and therefore your suitability for the programme.

Methods for answering competency and values-based questions

There are multiple approaches to writing answers to competency and values-based questions; a common approach is the STAR methodology. The acronym STAR stands for **Situation**, **Task**, **Action**, and **Result**. The STAR methodology is a widely-recognised communication technique that allows you to structure your answer to ensure you cover the relevant points.

Situation – Briefly describe the specific event or situation. This should be a short description to set the context.

Task – Briefly explain what it is you had to do. What were you trying to achieve from the event or situation? What was the success criteria?

Action(s) – Here is where you can really explain how you displayed the relevant behaviours and understanding. What did you do? How did you do it? Why did you do it that way? What skills did you use?

Results – Summarise the results of your actions. What was the outcome?

When writing your response, do not provide anything you do not need to. Say briefly what the situation was and why it was your responsibility to manage it. Explain what **you** did, making sure it is clear how this links to the role, values or competency criteria. Finally, describe the outcome and, if possible, explain how you reviewed what you did.

Make sure you check and refine your responses. Think about whether it is compelling and at the right level. Do you answer the question? Is it clear what you did and does all this relate to the values, competencies and role requirements you are trying to show? Make sure you meet any word count limits.

Checklist

Useful points to consider when completing your application form:

- You should read the questions fully and choose your examples very carefully to ensure they answer the question posed.
- Give yourself plenty of time.
- Refer back to the CVF and information on the role you are applying for.
- Show evidence at the relevant level required.
- Avoid using jargon or slang terms.
- Challenge yourself on whether you are demonstrating how you evidenced the competency/value. Explain what you did and why.
- You must adhere to the word limits for each question, therefore, avoid storytelling and unnecessarily explaining situations.
- The application must be all your own work. Applications that contain any material which is not original and accurate may be discontinued.

How will I be assessed?

Once the national application window closes, each force will begin their sifting processes. This will vary from force to force to take into account their own local needs, so you should liaise with your point of contact in-force to understand more about this process.

When will I know whether I am successful?

Forces should communicate with you as to how you are progressing and any further stages of the sifting process. They will also confirm whether they are supporting you to attend the National Assessment Centre.

Gaining a place on the Direct Entry programme

In order to be successful and gain a place on the programme, you must be 'recommended' at the National Assessment Centre **and** be selected by your force into a vacancy.

How will I receive feedback on my performance?

Each force will manage their own feedback process for the sifting stages so you should ask the point of contact in-force about how to receive feedback on your performance. Although it may not be possible to give detailed feedback, an overview of your performance should be available. Regardless of the outcome, any feedback you receive will be useful for your personal development in your current role and/or on the Direct Entry programme.

Enquiries and further information

General enquiries and requests related to the National Application Form and Direct Entry programme should be directed to the Direct Entry team.

Email: directentry.selection@college.pnn.police.uk

Enquiries related to the National Assessment Centre should be directed to the Senior Selection team.

Email: seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk