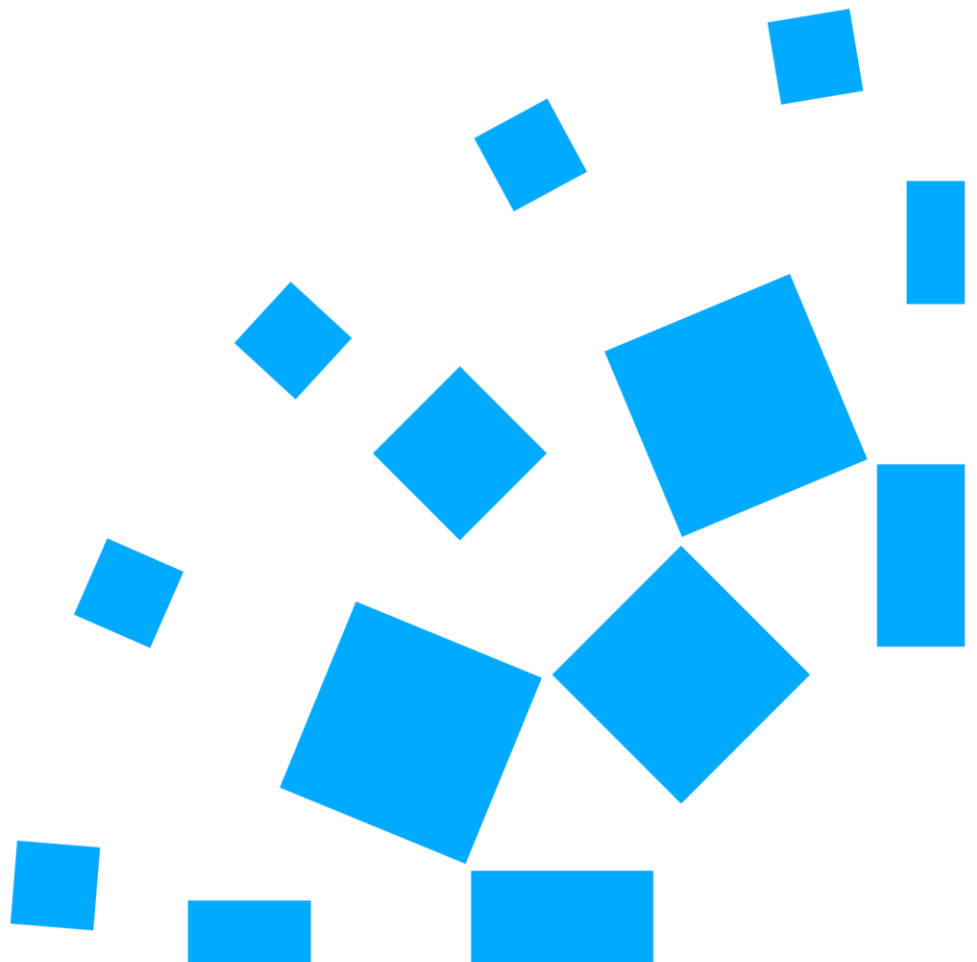


# Fast Track National Application Form

Candidate overview document

2021



College of Policing Limited  
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## Fast Track Programme for Serving Constables

The Fast Track Programme for Serving Constables is a development programme and promotion mechanism to enable the most talented serving police constables to advance to the rank of inspector within two years.

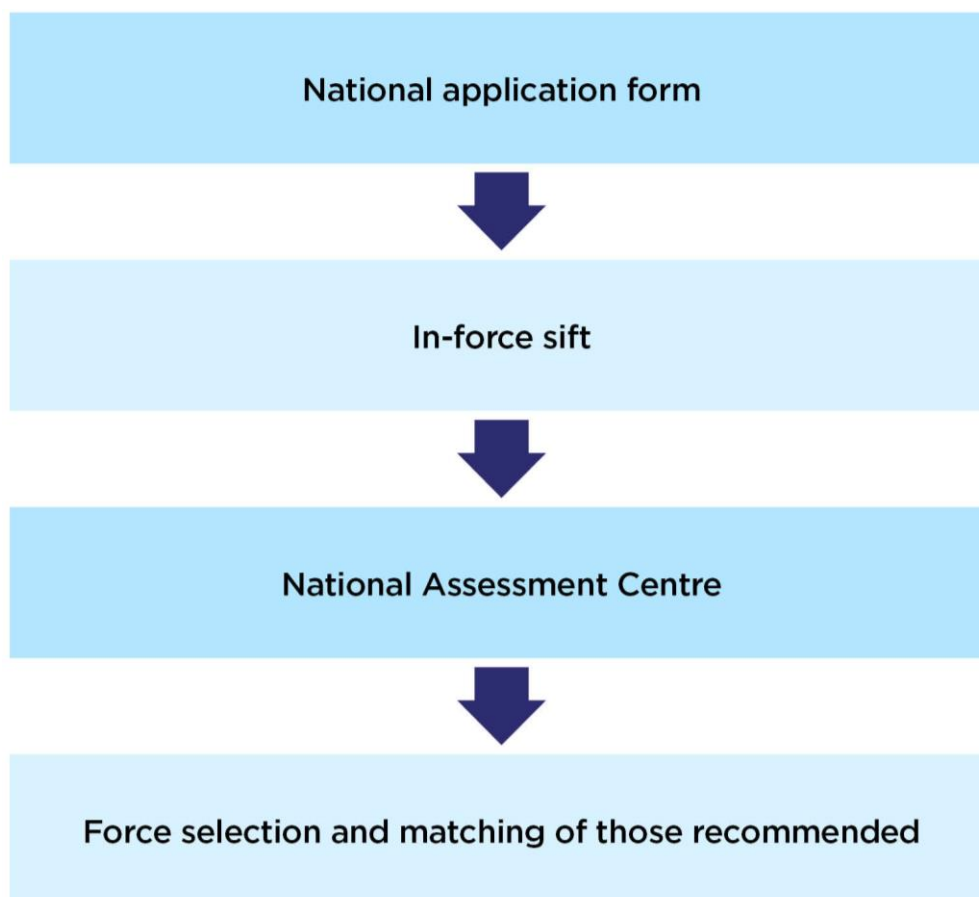
The aim of the programme is to:

- attract, identify and develop talented individuals who will bring new perspectives and diverse backgrounds, support the continuous development of policing, and impact the management and culture of the service
- support individuals' development to advance to the role of inspector within two years
- support individuals' continuing development to provide a cadre of officers with the skills, experience and capacity to reach senior ranks of the service (at least superintendent)

The programme focuses on the development of leadership, management and operational competencies to equip individuals with the skills, knowledge and experience required to be promoted to the level of inspector on successful completion of the programme. Individuals will be supported by their force and will undergo regular assessments, where they will need to meet set standards to remain on the programme.

Appendix A contains a list of abilities, skills and characteristics needed by future leaders to deal with the challenges the police service will face and a list of desirable abilities, skills and characteristics for candidates on the Fast Track programme.

## Overview of the Selection Process



To be considered for the Fast Track Programme, candidates will complete the online National Application Form where candidates are required to demonstrate the relevant competencies and values for the programme. Candidates should consider the national eligibility criteria before completing the application form. Further information on national eligibility can be found in the **Fast Track Programme handbook**. Candidates should note that alongside national eligibility, forces may have their own specific eligibility criteria which can be found on force websites. Some candidates may then sit a further selection process within their force, such as an interview. Those successful at the in-force sift will then be invited to attend the Fast Track National Assessment Centre, hosted by the College of Policing.

Those candidates who are recommended at the National Assessment Centre will then be considered for a place on the programme by their force. They will undertake the two-year programme at sergeant level subject to a satisfactory pass at the NPPF Step Two Legal Examination.

## The Fast Track National Application Form

This section will provide you with an overview of the Fast Track National Application Form. Please note, this is designed to be generic guidance to support the completion of the form. Each individual force holds responsibility for sifting the application form and for any other sifting methods prior to the assessment centre.

### When does the Fast Track National Assessment Centre window open?

The application window will be open from **00:00 on Wednesday, 6 January 2021 until 23:55 on Friday, 29 January 2021**. You can access the application form through our online application system, Oleeo. Your force will be provided with this link to share with you ahead of the application opening.

### What is the online application system?

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

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

### Filling in the online national application form on Oleeo

This information is also available on the candidate application page via 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. 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.**

**Once you have registered with Oleeo, you will be able to access the College of Policing online application form.** When completing your application form you can

use the page links on 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 stage 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 non-applicable.
- **Red cross:** There are still mandatory questions which haven't been completed

Please note, depending on the version of web 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 to complete the form and key information around eligibility and selection criteria. 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 to ensure the system stores your responses. You can then review them 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 the information you have inputted into the form.**

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. 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.

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 form.
- 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 Oleeo'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 the College's Senior Selection team for assistance.

## Common Oleeo troubleshooting

As mentioned above, you will have access to Oleeo'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 when completing the Fast Track National Application Form 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 login section of 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 'Change Password'. If this doesn't work, please contact the College's Senior Selection team.
- Mandatory fields must be completed before you can submit the application form.

## Reasonable adjustments

The College of Policing is committed to equality and diversity. If you have particular requirements (eg, a disability) and require a reasonable adjustment to be able to complete your application form, please email [seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk)

## Biographical data

At the end of the application form you will be asked to provide some biographical data. This is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and allows us to develop an understanding of programme and workforce diversity. The information will help us monitor any potential barriers faced and direct positive action initiatives. Providing this information is voluntary, however we ask for your help in collecting this information to help us strengthen our understanding and promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Please note your biographical information will not be used to assess your application in any way. Your data will be processed lawfully and securely. For further guidance on how your personal data will be processed, please refer to the [Fast Track Privacy Policy](#).

## Assessment questions

The aim of the national application form is to measure your suitability for the programme, including your potential to progress further within your policing career. You will be assessed on four questions within the application form. These are based on the requirements of the role and the competencies and values from the [Competency and Values Framework \(CVF\) for policing](#). 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.

## 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 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 indicators apply to each value when applied to any role. 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.

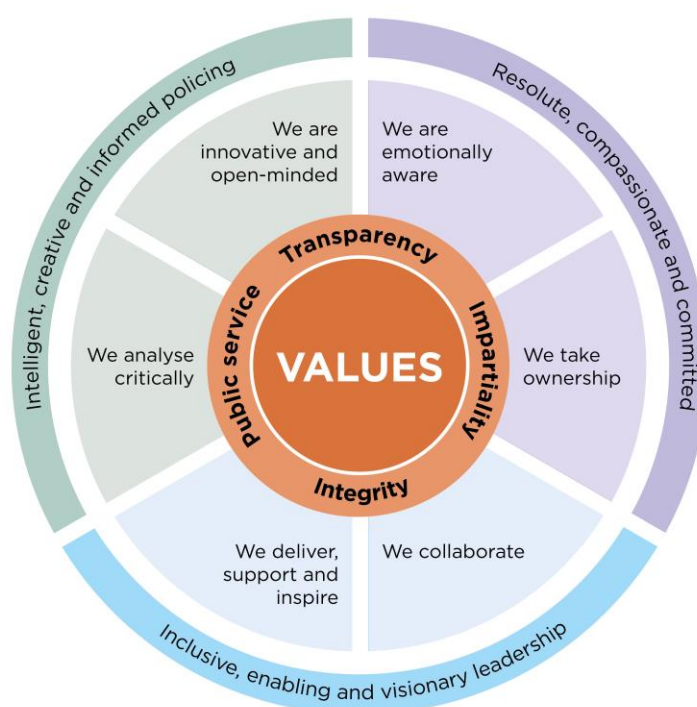
## Role requirements

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 Fast Track Programme handbook) and the CVF.

It is important that you think carefully about your answers and apply them at the right level for the role.

## The Competency and Values Framework (CVF) for policing

The competencies and values assessed are as follows:



The CVF, created by the College of Policing, aims to support all policing professionals, both 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 CVF has six competencies and four values.

You are advised to use the CVF to prepare, to ensure you can perform at your best in the Fast Track National Application Form and more broadly in your policing career.

### Competencies

Competencies are characteristics such as behaviours, skills, attributes or knowledge that result in successful performance. Behavioural competencies focus on 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 part of a tick-box approach. However, it provides guidance on the types of behaviours that may be demonstrated overall and at each level. The description and “why it is important” section for each competency should be used to understand the competency itself and the behaviours it includes. The levels then give examples of these behaviours but these should only be used to help you understand where your own examples might be applied.

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

**Note:** 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 within the assessment questions

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

Within your answers, you need to show 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 won’t be able to infer anything that’s 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 you can show, in as much detail as possible, exactly how you behaved. Generalisations about what you do, what you did on a number of previous occasions, or what your group/team have done will not score well. You need to explain what part **you** played on that occasion.

You are not expected to have experience of operating at a senior level but, in line with level 3 from the CVF behaviours, you must be able to demonstrate your potential to succeed on the programme and reach more senior ranks in your career.

- 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 or from 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 that is not original and accurate may be discontinued.
- You must ensure that the examples you provide answer the question fully.

## 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 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, don't provide anything you don't 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, what was the outcome and, if possible, did you review what you did?

Make sure you check and refine your responses. Sometimes a fresh pair of eyes can be useful – ask a trusted colleague or friend to check them. Make sure, however, they are someone who will tell it like it is. Tell them you need them to 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 and avoid waiting until the week of the deadline.
- 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. Remember that this is a formal application for an important and responsible role.
- Challenge yourself on whether you are demonstrating “how” you evidenced that 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.

## How do I determine whether I am successful?

Once forces have completed sifting the application form, it is likely you will be informed whether you have been successful at this stage. They should also then communicate with you regarding the next stages of the sifting process or confirm whether they are supporting you to attend the National Assessment Centre.

### **Note: Gaining a place on the Fast Track Programme**

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.

## 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. Regardless of outcome, any feedback you receive will be useful to aid your personal development in your current role and on the Fast Track Programme.

## How do I request a reasonable adjustment?

The College of Policing is committed to equality and diversity. If you have particular requirements (eg, a disability) and require a reasonable adjustment or accommodation please email [seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk)

## Enquiries and further information

Enquiries and requests for further information should be directed to:

Senior Selection Team

College of Policing

Central House

Beckwith Knowle

Otley Road

Harrogate, HG3 1UF

**Email: [seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:seniorselection@college.pnn.police.uk)**



## Appendix A

### The abilities, skills and characteristics needed by future leaders to deal with the challenges the police service will face

1. Personal integrity and commitment to public transparency (eg, exemplary personal integrity and actions, able to communicate and set standards for others, greater demonstration of transparency).
2. Flexible transformational leadership skills (eg, move beyond command and control, trust staff to get on with their jobs and applying discretion, empower and engage staff, lead a corporate organisation over operational management, able to create effective senior teams and manage greater accountability).
3. Resilience and positivity (eg, a positive attitude to making things work, able to work under pressure and amid uncertainty, stay calm under pressure and stick by decisions).
4. Internal business and financial skills (eg, business acumen, deal with the challenge of ongoing budget reductions, able to hold deliverables to account, understand commissioning and procurement).
5. Building integrated strategic partnerships (eg, develop partnership working on a strategic level outside policing, more radical and integrated collaboration, share power and autonomy with others, utilise a collective leadership style to build alliances, engage partners in solving problems).
6. Able to lead effective organisational change (eg, positive to create momentum for change, able to pitch new ideas convincingly and sell the benefits, comfortable with facilitating organisational change, lead and motivate staff through change, using continuous improvement).
7. Holding a long-term strategic vision (eg, think about the longer-term benefits for the organisation/service beyond personal tenure, a strong vision with the ability to translate this, consider alternative strategic visions and how they may be achieved).
8. Creativity and innovation (eg, demonstrate agility and flexible thinking to identify new ways of doing things, create new opportunities).

9. Open-minded and willing to challenge existing culture and practice (eg, look beyond what has always been done, creating opportunity rather than waiting for it, open to new perspectives and diversity of thoughts, adapt quickly to new circumstances, challenge the status quo, learning from mistakes rather than seeking to apportion blame, a willingness to challenge authority).
10. Humility and self-professional development (eg, reflective of own practice and influence from others, learn from mistakes rather than seek to apportion blame, a willingness to compromise).
11. Political astuteness (eg, greater political awareness at local and national level, a more outward-facing approach politically, how to influence and persuade political leaders, work together with political leaders to build relationships, understand and engage with the relationship between policing and politics).

## The abilities, skills and characteristics that are desirable for candidates on the Fast Track programme

1. Challenging existing culture and practices (eg, prepared to think independently, ask why things are done this way, less deferential to rank).
2. Taking learning from other organisations (eg, an outward focus to learn from other organisations, experience of how things can work differently, sharing best practice).
3. Greater creativity and innovation (eg, able to think of new ways of solving problems, radically innovative, willing to take risks, support the ideas of others).
4. Leading effective organisation change (eg, positive about change and able to persuade others of its value, able to implement transformational change, deliver rapid change).
5. Financial confidence and commerciality (eg, commercial awareness and confidence, entrepreneurial skills).
6. Able to lead staff through challenging times (eg, able to adapt leadership style, make bold decisions, inspire others to achieve goals, have a greater influence).
7. Supportive staff management (eg, effective general management skills such as performance management, welfare and development, able to engage staff).

8. Political astuteness (eg, understanding the political dynamics, able to operate in a more political environment).
9. A focus on customer service and victim support (eg, understand victim experience, listen to the public, ingrained customer service ethos).
10. Comfortable with accountability and transparency (eg, comfortable with public scrutiny, understand public perception of what is acceptable, honesty when mistakes are made).
11. Effective internal and external communication skills (eg, use language the public understand).

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## About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

**[college.police.uk](https://college.police.uk)**