

Guidance Notes

Welcome to the application form for Special Constable and thank you for your interest in joining our organisation. Please take the time to complete the form carefully and accurately. If you think any parts of the form do not apply to you then please enter N/A (not applicable) in the relevant boxes. Your completed form is very important to us because:-

- It gives you the opportunity to tell us why you are the best person for the role.
- It also allows us to ensure that you meet our high standards of behaviour, conduct and performance.

Your application will tell us what we need to know to determine whether you go through to the next stage of our selection process.

Note 1 Personal Details

Applicants for the police service must undergo thorough screening. Please list all names by which you have been known, including your name at birth. Your application will not be processed without a National Insurance number.

At present, you do not require to have a driving licence to apply to become a Special Constable. If you hold a driving licence, full or provisional, please include your driving licence number and category. To be appointed as a Special Constable you must be at least 18 years of age at the time of applying. There is no upper age limit for Specials, but you must be in good health and able to satisfy forces' fitness, medical and eyesight standards.

Note 2 Nationality

To be eligible for appointment you must be a British citizen or a citizen of a country that is a member of the European Economic Area, or Switzerland or have the right to live and work within the UK. Commonwealth citizens and other foreign nationals are also eligible but only if they are resident in the UK free of restrictions.

If you are a Commonwealth citizen or other foreign national, you must provide proof that you have no restrictions on your stay in the UK.

You are required to bring documentary evidence of your status to the Assessment Centre should you be successful.

Note 3 Residency

Have you lived outside of the UK for any reason and if so have you now been resident in the UK for the last three years?

All applicants must have been resident in the UK for the last three years without break to meet the residency criteria.

If your residency abroad involved work with The British Armed Forces or on UK Government Service then you would still be considered to have been resident in the UK.

Note 4 Membership of British National Party or similar

The Police Service has a policy of prohibiting any of their officers, staff or volunteers from becoming members of the British National Party (BNP), Combat 18 or the National Front, whose aims, objectives or pronouncements may if you are a member of the BNP or similar, your application will be rejected.

Note 5 Criminal Histories

Whilst most of the information required is quite standard for applicants to most organisations, for the police, there is an additional process which is called vetting. Vetting is a process which seeks to understand you and your close family within the context of integrity. Vetting helps us maintain a healthy organisation.

Convictions or cautions will not necessarily preclude you from appointment. It will depend on their nature and the circumstances of the offence. Failure to disclose convictions or cautions will, however, result in your application being refused.

Note 6 Tattoos

Tattoos are not a bar to appointment. 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.

If you have tattoos on your face, neck, forearms or hands, you must indicate their location and provide at least two photographs of each tattoo. The first must be a close-up of the tattoo and the second must clearly show the location of the tattoo on your body. If you have tattoos located on other areas of your body then please contact your local force.

Please ensure that you describe the tattoo and the wording, giving a translation if applicable. Describe any personal significance or meaning that you attribute to the tattoo.

Note 7 Employment & Business Interests

People with certain occupations are excluded, such as: - Armed forces, Fire service, Security officers, Legal profession, Politics, Private detectives. In short, any occupation in which the powers of a special constable could be used to some advantage, or where there is conflict with professional duties, may mean you are ineligible to join.

Certain occupations may require prior authorisation in becoming a Special Constable. These occupations are likely to include activities whereby there is an element of profit and gain in the activity, which could include money or barter.

The following are examples of activity which may fall within the definition:

- The renting of private property
- Voluntary work conducted on behalf of a commercial organisation
- Caring responsibilities for which allowances are paid
- Coaching or the delivery of training

Certain occupations are likely to conflict with holding of a position with the police:

- The holding of any licence in relation to alcohol, betting or entertainment
- Working in licensed premises
- Work within the administration of justice
- Private security or investigation work
- Money lending, debt recovery or pressure selling

You are required to make a declaration should any spouse, civil partner or other person living you hold a licence or have a financial interest in a business related to liquor licensing, refreshment houses, betting, gaming or other any other such regulated place of entertainment within the force area.

You are responsible for declaring any activity which may fall within this policy. You may then be required to provide additional information to allow an informed decision to be made in respect of your particular circumstances. The final decision concerning eligibility is a matter for the Chief Officer.

If you are a serving police staff member with the Derbyshire Constabulary, you will need to sign and submit a Police Staff/Special Constable Declaration with your application form. The form can be downloaded from the organisation's intranet.

Note 8 Financial Position

Special Constables are in a privileged position with regard to access to information and could be considered potentially vulnerable to corruption. Applicants to the Police Service should not therefore

be under pressure from undischarged debts or liabilities and should be able to manage loans and debts sensibly. Police Regulations also state that a member of a police force shall not wilfully refuse or neglect to discharge any lawful debt. Your application will therefore be checked to determine and verify your financial position.

Most applicants have debts, such as mortgages, undischarged student or other loans, and credit/store card debts. Debts which are within your means and are manageable are not a bar to appointment.

- Applicants who have existing County Court judgments outstanding against them or who have been registered as bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have not been discharged will not be considered.
- Applicants who have discharged County Court judgments may be considered.
- Applicants who have been registered as bankrupt and their bankruptcy debts have been discharged will only be considered after three years from discharge of the debt.
- Applicants who are the subject of a current Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA), Debt Referral Order (DRO), Debt Management Programme or a Voluntary agreement registered with the County Court may not be considered.

Note 9 Health, Fitness, Eyesight and Disability

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination, victimisation or harassment in employment, including recruitment. If you have a disability, we will make adjustments where it is reasonable to do so. Please provide any additional information about your disability and details of any reasonable adjustments that you think you may need to undertake the assessment process and the role of a Special Constable.

If you have a learning difficulty and require reasonable adjustments in completing this form, please contact the Special's Recruitment team on recruitment@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk. Disability is defined as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

Note 10 Competency Based Questions

We are looking for evidence of the qualities you already have or may develop to enable you to carry out the role of a Special Constable. Your answers here will be used to decide whether your application progresses to the next stage. It is important therefore that you think carefully about your answers.

There are two questions, each of which asks you to provide an example of a specific occasion from your recent past experience either work or personal life. Use real examples of situations you have

been involved in, it is important that we can see, in as much detail as possible, exactly how you behaved. If necessary, quote exactly what was said.

Generalisations about what you usually do, what you did on a number of occasions, or what your group/team have done previously will not score well. We need to know what part you played on that occasion that is over and above what you would normally do.

Question 1 Professionalism

Please describe a specific occasion when you have intervened to take control of a situation. Why was it necessary to intervene in the situation?

Try to use an example that you found difficult or challenging to deal with, which is not normally your role or responsibility to take control of. The strongest applicants will be able to provide an account whereby he or she has encountered a challenging scenario, in their workplace, in their club or society or on the streets. A situation should then be described where there are differing options. For instance, a weak candidate would describe walking away and leaving somebody else to deal with the situation (clearly this is not the actions of a potential officer!)

However, the strong candidate will listen; observe and come to understand the conflicting points of view or issues. He or she will then make fair and balanced input. He or she will support those involved. A conclusion will be reached which was appropriate. In essence, the scenario comes to a better conclusion through the candidate's intervention than if he or she had not been involved.

- Start by outlining the situation you were in.
- Talk about the task at hand. What was required of you?
- Explain what did you said.
- What actions did you take and why?
- Summarise the results of your actions.

Question 2 Working with Others

Please describe a specific occasion when you have encouraged a person to view an issue more positively. Why was it necessary to encourage the person to view the issue more positively?"

Try to use an example that describes a situation whereby a colleague, friend or relative has a dilemma, where he or she is at a cross-road in their personal or professional life. The strong candidate will describe becoming actively involved, sharing the problem, seeing and hearing the issues, then providing measured and appropriate advice; practical support or counsel. In doing so, the third party is able to work through their difficulty and come to a better place. The response should have emphasis upon listening, understanding, supporting and working as a team to resolve the issues

- Start by outlining the situation you were in.
- How did you try to persuade him/her?
- How successful were you?

- What would you do differently next time?

Hints & Tips

- Answer both of the competency based questions. If you leave a question blank or tell us that you cannot think of an answer, it is very unlikely that you will pass.
- Avoid using jargon, slang terms or acronyms.
- In all parts of the form, please write clearly and concisely. If we cannot read it or understand it, we cannot score it.
- You must not add extra sheets, write outside the space provided or write between the lines.
- The application must be all your own work. Be honest and expect to be questioned on any answers that you give. Applications that contain any material which is not original and accurate may be discontinued.

Seize the day; get writing we are ready and waiting to receive your application!

Good luck!