



Devon & Cornwall Police
Building safer communities together

Police Officer Recruitment Pre-Application Document



Introduction ...

...Chief Constable

Thank you for considering a career with Devon and Cornwall Police. I am looking for individuals with the drive and dedication to deliver the highest possible standards of public service to our communities. Our Police Officers must be able to engage with both local people and partner agencies to be able to carry out our mission of 'building safer communities together'. Our communities want a visible, accessible and accountable police service that tackles crime and disorder at a local level, as well as dealing effectively with the threat of terrorism and serious and organised crime. The demands on policing are more varied and challenging than ever, which means we need to deliver the best and most innovative service we can. I am looking for individuals that share our values of fairness and respect, objectivity, trust, courage, professionalism. This is the key to our future success and to achieving our vision of being the best rural, coastal and urban police service. I wish you every success with your application.

...Police and Crime Commissioner

I am pleased to be able to open the recruitment window for Police Constables in Devon and Cornwall. I know the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly value their police force very highly and that they want to see more visible policing in the areas in which they live and work. Residents need to feel confident that they have a police force that they can trust to act with integrity and impartiality, that responds effectively when required, that treats them fairly, professionally and according to their needs. It is with this in mind that I have agreed for Officers to be recruited this year. This will help us to achieve the Police & Crime Plan objectives of safer communities, increased public confidence and a greater focus on victims; these are the things that residents have told me matter to them. The people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly deserve the very best police force and I am confident that we will attract high calibre candidates who will serve the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly well. If you feel that you have what it takes and want to play your part we look forward to receiving your application.

About Devon and Cornwall Police

We cover the largest geographical police area in England, extending 180 miles from the Dorset and Somerset borders in the east to the Isles of Scilly in the west.

Our policing area includes the cities of Exeter and Plymouth, popular seaside resorts such as Torquay and Newquay, and a large rural population, each of which present very different policing challenges.

The area's population is around 1.5 million, rising to eight million with the influx of visitors in the summer months.

The Force is split into three geographical areas Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth and Devon, each with its own commander. These areas are further broken down into sectors and neighbourhood beats.

To find out more about your local police please visit our [local policing team pages](#).

Our history dates back to 1836 when 24 borough police forces were formed across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Parish Constables were elected once a year by the vestry meeting in each parish, and the office was often unpopular, as they received no wages.

However, in the 1850s the Devon County Constabulary and Cornwall County Constabulary were formed, bringing a new professionalism to the policing of the peninsula. These constabularies, plus the Exeter City Police and the Plymouth Borough Police, finally came together in a series of mergers resulting in the formation of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary in 1967.

Devon and Cornwall Police is committed to fairness towards all members of the community. We value diversity in our workforce and need people from diverse backgrounds with skills and experiences to help us deliver excellence in local policing across Devon and Cornwall.

Introduction to Application Process

This document sets out to provide you with an understanding of the recruitment process to become a Student Police Officer with Devon and Cornwall Police and about working for the Force.

If you have a query, before contacting us, please ensure that you have read this document carefully and you have followed all of the online instructions.

There are different stages of the recruitment process and therefore it is important you understand what this entails, how long you have to complete each stage and when you will be informed if you have been successful to progress to the next stage. The first part of the recruitment process is an online registration and assessment. Our initial communications with you will be via email. If you do not find the answer to your question within this document, then you can email our dedicated recruitment team on:

PeopleServiceCentre-Policeofficerrecruiting@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

There are set times that the online assessment will be open for you to complete each stage. Devon and Cornwall Police will open access to each element of the online assessment for five consecutive days.

Access to the online assessment can be made at any time during the day or night during each period and from any location that has internet access. This document will remain available to access on the ['Joining Devon and Cornwall Police as a Student Officer'](#) section of our Internet pages

Devon and Cornwall Police is committed to fairness towards all members of the community. We need people from diverse backgrounds with skills and experiences to help us deliver excellence in local policing across Devon and Cornwall. We would particularly welcome applicants from women, people under 25 years of age, Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds and individuals that identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender as well as individuals from any variety of religions and beliefs.

Please read this document carefully and in full, in readiness should you wish to make an application to become a Police Officer within the Devon and Cornwall Police.

Becoming a Police Officer with Devon and Cornwall Police

What we offer

- ◆◆ On appointment, your starting salary will be £19,000 or £22,000 for serving PCSOs or Specials (see FAQs)
- ◆◆ Annual Leave of 22 days increasing with length of service
- ◆◆ Police pension
- ◆◆ Training and development opportunities
- ◆◆ Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) covering a range of health, wellbeing and lifestyle issues
- ◆◆ Support and advice from our Occupational Health Support Unit and a range of staff associations and access to a range of services including Charitable Trust and Police Mutual
- ◆◆ Childcare Vouchers. You can use the vouchers to pay for registered or approved childcare, this includes nurseries, childminders, breakfast and after school clubs, and can be used for children up to the age of 16
- ◆◆ Access to established [staff support groups for all members of the policing family](#) (click link for details)

Candidates who are successful through the Application Stage of the process will fill Assessment Centres in anticipation of predicted vacancies.

Recruitment Process

At the end of each stage of the recruitment process you will be notified whether or not you have been successful and therefore eligible to proceed to the next stage. For the online application process this will be by email.

Stage 1 Online assessment

- ◆◆ Registration
- ◆◆ Realistic Job Preview Questionnaire
- ◆◆ Eligibility Assessment
- ◆◆ Behavioural Styles Questionnaire
- ◆◆ Situational Judgement Test

Stage 2 Application Form

Stage 3 Assessment Centre

Stage 4 Pre-employment checks

Application

Stage 1 – Online Assessment

The start of the recruitment process will be completing the online assessment. It is important that you are open and honest with your responses so that you gain the most benefit from the questions. The online assessment will be divided into three elements.

The first element comprises applicant registration, a realistic job preview and eligibility assessment. The second element is a Behavioural Styles Questionnaire and the third element a Situational Judgement Test.

Devon and Cornwall Police will open access to each element of the online assessment for five days. Access to the online assessment can be made at any time during the day or night for each element and from any location that has internet access.

The system is designed to enable you to complete each element of the online process without timing you out. We recommend that you complete each element in one sitting. Whilst the online tool remains open you can take the assessment at any time during that period.

If however, you do not allow yourself enough time before the closing deadline, you will not be able to complete your application.

The online assessment tool consists of:

1. Registration (TBA)

This is where you enter your personal details such as your full name, full residential address, driving licence details and your National Insurance number. You will also be required to provide proof of these details later on in the application process.

2. Realistic Job Preview Questionnaire (TBA)

The purpose of this section is to give you a real view of what it is like to undertake the work of a Police Officer and decide whether or not it is right for you. You will be asked to give your open and honest responses to different situations. There is no right or wrong answer. At the end of the questionnaire, you will be given an overall rating of your suitability for the role of Police Officer based on your responses. You can then make a decision if you would like to continue with the application.

3. Eligibility Screen (TBA)

This screen checks your eligibility in line with the national recruitment standards. You will be advised at the end of the questionnaire if you have met all the eligibility criteria and then able to progress to the Behavioural Styles Questionnaire. If you are referred as a result of any of your answers, a member of the recruitment team will

contact you to let you know the outcome. The eligibility criteria are set out in the Appendices of this document.

4. Behavioural Styles Questionnaire (TBA)

This questionnaire invites you to review a number of statements and indicate which statement you completely agree with or completely disagree with on a sliding scale. In order to progress to the next stage, you must pass the Behavioural Styles Questionnaire. When this stage closes you will be advised of the result and emailed a link to your feedback report.

5. Situational Judgement Test (TBA)

If you have passed the Behavioural Styles Questionnaire you will be asked to complete the Situational Judgement Test. This is the final stage of the online process. You will be presented with a number of different situations that you might face as a Police Officer with a choice of different actions that might be taken. You will be asked to identify which action will result in an effective or counterproductive outcome. When this stage closes you will be advised of the result and emailed a link to your feedback report and if you are successful, you will then be invited to complete an application form.

Stage 2 – Application Form (TBA)

The Devon and Cornwall Police application form will be pre-populated with the personal information you included in the registration section of the online assessment such as your name address and contact details. To complete the application form, you will be asked to provide your education and full work history. It is very important that you follow the instructions as incomplete forms will not be accepted. A member of the recruitment team will advise you if you have passed the application form stage and if successful; you will be in a pool of individuals who will be invited to attend an Assessment Centres anticipated to take place during 2013-2014. **Applications forms must be printed and then handwritten. Typed or electronically completed forms will not be accepted.**

Stage 3 – Assessment Centre

We run the Assessment Centres over a weekend and you will be required to attend on only one of the days. Candidates will be giving 6 weeks notice of an Assessment Centre date. Successful candidates will be invited to our Force Headquarters to undertake the Assessment Centre.

The Assessment Centre consists of:

- ◆◆ 20 minute competency based interview
- ◆◆ Two written exercises
- ◆◆ Four role play exercises
- ◆◆ Numeric Ability Test and a Verbal Ability Test

These exercises are designed to test your ability to think on your feet, make quick decisions based on sound judgement and also measure your basic numeracy and literacy standards.

Stage 4 – Pre-employment checks

The role of a Police Officer is demanding. During the application and selection process we will be assessing your mental and physical fitness to undertake the role.

Fitness Test

We test endurance through a fitness shuttle run commonly known as the Bleep test. Details information about the content of the fitness test will be provided to you at a later date.

Swim Test

Devon and Cornwall Police have over 500 miles of coastline and as such Police Officers serving in the two counties must be able to swim. Prior to appointment as a Police Constable you will be required to demonstrate your ability to swim by completing a 50 metre continuous swim in a recognised stroke in 1m and 30 seconds. During your training you will also be required to pass the Police Lifesaving Certificate.

Medical Assessment

A medical assessment will generally be carried out by our Occupational Health Support Unit. They will check the following:

- ◆◆ BMI
- ◆◆ Eye sight test – see Appendices
- ◆◆ Colour vision – see Appendices
- ◆◆ Lung function
- ◆◆ Hearing

You will be asked to complete a confidential medical history questionnaire. Depending upon your medical history, we may have to contact your GP/ specialist for further information. Once you have been declared medically fit we will then progress your application to the next stage.

References

We send reference requests to all your previous employers in the last 5 years. If you haven't been employed for 5 years, we will ask for a character reference or an educational reference.

Vetting Checks

The vetting process is entirely confidential and the outcomes (other than pass/fail) are not shared with anyone else in the organisation (including trainers, future line managers or fellow trainees) or outside the organisation (including family).

We will carry out security checks on you and your:

- ◆◆ **Spouse/Partner**
- ◆◆ **Father**
- ◆◆ **Step father/mother's partner**
- ◆◆ **Mother**
- ◆◆ **Stepmother/father's partner**
- ◆◆ **Brothers/sisters (full/half/step)**
- ◆◆ **Children/children of your partner (only those age 10 years and over)**
- ◆◆ **Any other adult living at your address**
- ◆◆ **Financial circumstances** – applicants will have their financial status checked.

These checks are carried out because Police Officers have access to privileged information, which may make them vulnerable to corruption. Applicants with outstanding County Court Judgements (CCJs), Individual Voluntary Agreements (IVAs) or who have been registered bankrupt with outstanding debts, will be rejected. If you have discharged bankruptcy debts then you will need to provide a Certificate of Satisfaction with your application. At least three years will need to have passed since the date of discharge. Applicants with cautions/convictions/reprimands, other than some motoring offences, may not be accepted.

Drugs Testing

As part of the Vetting process you will be required to undergo drugs testing. All drug testing processes are entirely confidential and only the presence of illegal substances will be disclosed to the Force Vetting Unit (by the third party drug testing laboratory). Prescribed medication, including that for individuals with certain disabilities or individuals that may be transitioning, is not tested for in the process.

Biometric Vetting

We will need to take your fingerprints and DNA samples to carry out some final vetting checks against the national police database.

Student Officer

After being offered a start date, you will begin on an 18 week initial course as probationary Police Officer, developing the practical aspects of policing. This is followed by 12 weeks within a local policing area on a Professional Development Unit to attain Independent Patrol Status.

The Professional Development Unit is staffed with experienced tutor constables who oversee and guide newly appointed officers through their introduction into neighbourhood response policing.

During this phase of training you will complete a range of tasks using all the skills and knowledge built up so far. Having reached Independent Patrol the initial training is over and you will be posted to one of the Local Teams for the remainder of your two year probation.

During this time there is the opportunity to evidence your skills in all the elements of the Diploma in Policing, achieving a recognised qualification and confirmation in the rank of constable.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants

- ◆◆ **must be aged 18 years or over**
- ◆◆ **must have achieved a standard of education equivalent to A Level** (see Qualifications below)
- ◆◆ **cannot be a member of the British National Party (BNP), National Front or Combat 18**
- ◆◆ **You can apply to become a Police Officer as long as you are an EEA National or a Swiss National. Commonwealth citizens and Foreign Nationals are required to have leave to enter or leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period. Applicants must have resided in the UK for three continuous years immediately prior to application. See appendix**
- ◆◆ **must not have tattoos which could cause offence**
- ◆◆ **Police Officers must hold a full manual UK driving licence**

For full details of Police eligibility criteria please [click here](#).

Qualifications – Examples for England, Wales and Northern Ireland

During your training you will be required to undertake study towards a Diploma in Policing. Based on this requirement, applicants must be able to demonstrate their ability to perform at the required academic level and therefore a prior level of learning must be evidenced.

You must have achieved one of the following qualifications or currently be, or have in the last two years, been a Special Constable who has been signed off for independent patrol status or a PCSO (full-time or part-time) who has been in post for at least 18 months at the time of application and been assessed by your line manager as fully competent in the role.

Equivalent qualifications are listed below -

A Level
AS Level
Advanced Diploma
National Diploma
National Certificate
National Award
Level 3 Diploma
Level 3 Certificate
Level 3 Award
Level 3 International Certificate in Computer Studies
(ICCS) NCC Education UK
Level 3 NVQ
City & Guilds, Level 3
NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety
Access to Higher Education Diploma

For additional clarification in relation to qualifications or international equivalents, please contact your examining body for confirmation.

Tattoos

Tattoos are not acceptable if they are particularly prominent, garish, and offensive or undermine the dignity and authority of the role. At the application stage you will be asked if you have a tattoo and if you answer yes, you will be asked to provide a brief description.

If successful through the application stage a member of our recruitment team will contact you to request photographs of the tattoo. You will be required to supply two digital photographs of each visible tattoo:

1. A distance photograph to clearly identify where on the body the tattoo is.
2. A close up photograph to clearly identify the images.

If the tattoo is deemed unacceptable, you will not be able to continue with your application.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I contact Devon and Cornwall Police about my application?

All the answers that you need to know about your stage of the recruitment process are contained within this booklet.

2. I have a problem using the online assessment tool. Who shall I contact?

As this is a web-based assessment if you are experiencing difficulties, it may be associated with your own web browser capability. The minimum internet browser requirement to use the assessment will be:

- ◆◆ Internet Explorer 7
- ◆◆ Firefox 3.6
- ◆◆ Google Chrome 8
- ◆◆ Safari 5 (Mac and PC)

Your browser should also have Javascript and Cookies enabled. You can also access a Help Menu within the assessment. Please note, the tool is not currently compatible for use on mobile devices or tablets, therefore please only attempt to access the system via a PC.

3. I will be 18 on the date the Assessment Centres start. Can I still apply to join Devon and Cornwall Police?

No. To be eligible to apply, you must be age 18 years or over by Friday 26 July 2013.

4. When does the online application process start?

To be announced

5. When does the online process finish?

This will vary according to the stage of the online assessment that you are at. You should refer to the table of key dates on page 5 of this document.

6. I have not received an email confirming if I have passed or failed?

At the end of each element of the online process you will receive an email from the Apollo system. If you have not received an email you should check your junk mail / filter settings in case the email/s get filtered by your spam software.

7. I have a medical condition but does that prevent me from joining Devon and Cornwall Police?

It will depend upon the nature of the medical condition. We require that all our new officers undergo a medical assessment with our Occupational Health Support Unit. You will need to pass the medical assessment to be eligible to join Devon and Cornwall Police.

8. I have tattoos. Will this stop me becoming a Police Officer?

Not necessarily. If you have tattoos you will need to make a declaration at the time of application. We will ask you to send in two digital pictures of each tattoo (One distance photograph clearly showing where on the above body area the tattoo is located and a second close up photograph that we can use to assess this against our standards).

9. I am not a British citizen. Can I still apply to join Devon and Cornwall Police as an officer?

Yes. If you are a Foreign National or Commonwealth Citizen you must have leave to enter or leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period. Most EEA and Swiss Nationals have the right to reside in the UK and so will not need to demonstrate this, however Bulgarian and Romanian Citizens are not automatically entitled to remain in the United Kingdom and will require leave to enter and leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period.

10. Do I need a driving licence to apply?

Whilst you can still apply, a full manual driving licence will be required prior to appointment.

11. I have a motoring offence(s). Can I still apply to become an officer?

Devon and Cornwall Police will need to assess the motoring offences. However, if you have more than 6 penalty points on your driving licence and / or two or more motoring offences within the three years prior to the application date you may not be eligible to apply to join Devon and Cornwall Police as a Student Officer.

12. I have a criminal record. Can I still apply to become an officer?

Eligibility will depend on the nature and circumstances of the offence. It is not possible to set out a full list of convictions that will preclude a person from becoming a Police Officer. Each case will be considered on its own merits, and if the offence is deemed sufficiently serious a person will be rejected irrespective of age at time of offending. There may be circumstances where an individual does not fall within the criteria, but whose suspected involvement in crime, or criminal associations make an offer of employment inappropriate.

Click here for [National Conviction Guidelines](#)

13. If I am successful in my application to become a PCSO or Special Constable, can I transfer to become a Police Officer?

No, you would have to go through the official recruitment process like all other applicants in order to qualify as a Police Officer.

14. I am a serving PCSO or Special Constable, can I transfer to become a Police Officer?

No, you would have to go through the official recruitment process like all other applicants in order to qualify as a Police Officer.

15. I would like to become a Firearms Officer/Dog Handler/Detective/Air Observer etc – if my application is successful can I join the unit straight away?

No. All newly recruited Police Officers must undergo a two year probationary period, so you could not apply for any specialist posts within Devon and Cornwall Police until you have completed at least two years' service.

16. Can you become a Police Officer if you wear glasses or contact lenses?

As part of the recruitment process you will need to undergo an eye test. New recruits must have at least 6/12 vision in the right or left eye, or at least 6/6 vision in both eyes.

Those who wear glasses or contact lenses must have at least 6/36 unaided vision in both eyes. For further information please refer to the eligibility criteria.

17. Can you become a Police Officer if you are colour blind?

Those with colour blindness are eligible to become Police Officers, but would be restricted from fulfilling certain posts, such as Traffic Officer or Firearms Officer. If your colour blindness is monochrome, you would be unable to apply.

18. If I have a disability can I apply to become a Police Officer?

Devon and Cornwall Police welcomes applications from people with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010 i.e. a person is disabled under this Act if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term (over 12 months) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day tasks.

If you consider yourself to have a disability, please inform us of the type of reasonable adjustments you might need to assist you in participating in the recruitment and selection process. Devon and Cornwall Police will try to make reasonable adjustments required where practicable.

19. I have epilepsy. Can I still apply?

You can still apply to become a Police Officer. We will look at each case on its merits and take guidance from our Occupational Health Support Unit.

20. I have diabetes. Can I still apply?

You can still apply to become a Police Officer. We will look at each case on its merits and take guidance from our Occupational Health Support Unit.

21. Is there a height restriction for Police Officers?

No. There is no minimum or maximum height restriction.

22. How much will I be paid?

Our starting pay for Student Officers is detailed below.

On appointment with no previous experience - **£19,000**

Those who are a current serving Special Constables, or have previously served in the last two years, who have been signed off for independent patrol status or a PCSO (full-time or part-time) who has been in post for at least 18 months at the time of application and been assessed by your line manager as fully competent in the role- **£22,000**

The new pay scales for Police Constables is laid out below -

<u>Pay Point</u>	<u>PAT Award</u>
0	£19,000
1	£22,000
2	£23,000
3	£24,000
4	£25,000
5	£27,000
6	£31,032
7	£36,519

Thank you for your interest in joining Devon and Cornwall Police and we wish you every success in your future career choices.

***The Resourcing Team
Devon and Cornwall Police***

Appendices

Countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) from which applicants may apply:

Austria
Belgium
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
United Kingdom

You can still apply to become a Police Officer as long as you are a Swiss National. Commonwealth Citizens and Foreign Nationals are required to have leave to enter or leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period. Applicants must have resided in the UK for three continuous years immediately prior to application.

Although Bulgaria and Romania are members of the EEA, their citizens are not automatically entitled to remain in the United Kingdom. Therefore citizens from Bulgaria and Romania are also required to have leave to enter and leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period.

Eyesight Requirements

You may have seen a chart like the diagram below at your opticians. The actual chart is much larger and is read from a distance of six metres. Each line equates to a standard.

The standard you need to meet either with or without spectacles or contact lenses is:

A
BC
DEFG
HIJKLM
NOPQRSTU
VWXYZABCD
EFGHIJKLMNOPQ
RSTUVWXYZABCDEF

6/60

6/36

6/24

6/18

6/12

6/9

6/6

6/5

Distance vision

6/12 or better with either your right or left eye or 6/6 with both eyes together. If you wear spectacles or contact lenses you also need to reach 6/36 unaided.

Near vision

6/9 with both eyes together (aided).

Colour vision

The use of colour-correcting lenses is not acceptable. Severe colour vision deficiencies (monochromacy) are not acceptable. Mild anomalous trichromacy is acceptable. Severe anomalous dichromacy or trichromacy is also acceptable but you will need to be aware of the deficiency and make appropriate adjustments.

Eye surgery

Radial keratotomy, arcuate keratotomy or corneal grafts are not acceptable. Other forms of refractive surgery such as LASIK, LASEK, PRK, ICRS and epiflap are all acceptable provided that six weeks have elapsed since surgery, there are no residual side effects and the other eyesight standards are met.

Published
July 2013