

PCSO Interview Guidance





This guidance document has been put together to help you prepare and enable you to give the best account of yourself on the day of your interview

What are competencies



Competencies are the knowledge, skills and abilities, and other requirements that are needed for someone to perform a **job** successfully. **Competencies** define not only what a person must know and do, but also how a person does it.

The interview will be based on the person specification (competencies) from the job description

Preparation



Ensure you have familiarised yourself with the job description.

Know yourself and know your values and this will be tested through the interview

Situations you have encountered in your work, home, studying or volunteering roles

Preparation continued



- Practice - You won't be told to stop mid sentence, however if the Chair of the interview believes you are not answering they may gently remind you. The Chair will assist you with the management of your time. The approximate length of your interview will be included within your invite. Ensure you are aware of the length of time you require to provide an answer.
- Practice your answer structure to underpin your response - Use a structure which you feel works for you there is many out there but here are some options [S.T.A.R](#) , [C.A.R.L](#)
- Be calm - Not always the easiest thing to achieve, there is a lot of help on internet/YouTube around calming techniques if you feel they would be useful for you.

Preparation continued



- Whilst it is important to prepare for your interview this should be done in time that is manageable for you so you can present your best self on the day of the interview.
- Don't listen to rumour and speculation. If something is not clear about the interview then contact the recruitment team
- Try not to guess what the interview board want and have answers that you try and make fit the questions
- Be careful with practise interviews – Whilst this is a good idea make sure you are speaking to people who understand competency based interviews

On the day



- Force interviews comprise of 2 panel members and can be a mixture of Police Officers, Special Constables and Police Staff.
- Interviews can be carried out either face to face or by Microsoft Teams video
- Full details of your interview will be contained within your invite

On the Day



- The chair of the interview will make introductions and take you through the format of the interview and check that all the equipment is working if applicable.
- The questions will be presented to you for you to refer to ahead of being asked the question.
- Reasonable adjustments – If you have not already done so we would encourage you to contact the recruitment team to discuss any potential reasonable adjustments. We want to support you by ensuring you have the best opportunity to demonstrate your skill, experience and values.

On the day cont'd



- You will be asked a series of questions about how you have or would deal with a specific situation. This is your opportunity to provide some examples of the key competencies and values that are important for Police community Support Officers. You can use examples from both your work and your personal life
- What to expect The interview will follow a structured format with a set list of questions. These questions are designed to make the process as fair and objective as possible.
- You will be presented with 6 questions in total. You will be asked each question in turn. Each question will have some supplementary points for you to consider when answering the questions.

On the day cont'd



- Express yourself clearly and concisely
- Be specific – remember that you only have a limited amount of time to respond
- Try to relax – we are only making an assessment based on what you tell us about how you have or would dealt with situations, nothing else
- Answer all of the questions
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you do not understand the question

Common mistakes



- **Didn't answer the question** – Stated has the competency and not given an example to the question.
- **Pre-empting the interview board** – Don't pre-empt what you think the panel want to hear. The Panel want to hear about you and your experience.

Myths



- There is a pre-agreed set number who will pass/fail - We do want you all to be successful there is no set pass or fail numbers.
- There are trick questions - There are no trick questions, there might be questions that make you think, but we do not put anything in there to trick you, we do want to get the best from you.

Next Steps



Unsuccessful at Force Interview

- The forces commitment to any candidate who is unsuccessful at the force interview is to provide verbal feedback within 3 weeks
- Feedback is constructive and is provided to ensure that you have the best opportunity to try again.
- Feedback is provided by a member of the interview panel
- Feedback is not mandatory but strongly encouraged as it is pivotal to learning.

Frequently asked questions



What do I need for a Teams interview? You just need a laptop, desktop computer or tablet. Mobiles can be used but your experience and performance could be impacted. You need to download the Microsoft Teams app.

Can I take breaks? No the interview is completed in one sitting.

How long is the interview? Please refer to your invite

GOOD LUCK!

