

## Guidance Notes for National Special Constable Application

### General

Thank you for considering the role of Special Constable with Police Scotland.

These guidance notes are designed to help you with the completion of your application form. Please read through carefully before completing and submitting your application form. You may find it helpful to do a rough draft version first, particularly within section 2.

You must complete all sections of this form in your own words as you may be asked about your answers at a later stage of the selection process. You can complete the form electronically or manually. If required it is important that you use the additional information sections at the back of the application form.

To assist us in processing your application form, please select the geographical area that you live in on the front page of the application form.

You should retain a copy of your completed application form to refer to throughout the selection process.

Full details on how to apply can be found on our website. Completed application forms and all related queries should be sent to [policeofficerrecruitment@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:policeofficerrecruitment@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

You will receive a confirmation email from the recruitment team. This is normally within 5 working days of submission.

Police Scotland is committed to diversifying its workforce and the Positive Action Team encourages engagement with ethnic minority applicants. To seek further advice or assistance please contact the team at [recruitmentpositiveaction@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:recruitmentpositiveaction@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

### Note 1: Essential Criteria

#### Age Requirements

You can apply if you are 17.5 years of age, however you will not be appointed as a Special Constable until you are 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit, although the normal retirement age for special constables is 60 years old.

#### Fitness Standards

As a Special Constable you will be expected to undertake the same duties as a police officer. The role is both physically and mentally challenging. The national job related fitness standard will require you to undertake a Multi Stage Fitness Test (MSFT). All candidates are required to reach level 5.4 to achieve a pass.

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### Medical

After you receive a provisional offer of appointment you will be invited to attend a medical appointment. Prior to your appointment you will be issued with a medical questionnaire. This will be dealt with confidentially by the medical representatives of our Occupational Health and Wellbeing providers. All medical criteria will be checked to determine whether you satisfy the health and eyesight standards as laid down by the Scottish Government.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination, victimisation or harassment in employment, including recruitment. Therefore having a disability does not automatically exclude you from becoming a Special Constable and all reasonable adjustments recommended by the Force Medical Advisor will be fully considered.



If you require reasonable adjustments for **any** stage of the selection process please contact us at [policeofficerrecruitment@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:policeofficerrecruitment@scotland.pnn.police.uk) or alternatively phone us on 01355 566510 and we will discuss your needs on a personal basis.

### Nationality and Residency

To be eligible for appointment you must be a British citizen or a citizen of the European Economic Area or Switzerland or have the right to live and work within the UK.

Commonwealth citizens and foreign nationals are also eligible but only if they are resident in the UK and free of restrictions.

If you are a Commonwealth citizen or a foreign national you must provide proof that you have no restrictions on your stay in the UK. As it is currently impossible in some cases to gain vetting / security checks for foreign nationals, a period of 3 years UK residency applies. In certain circumstances, it is possible for the minimum residency period for Force Vetting levels to be removed (for further information see the Vetting Form Guidance Notes).

You will be required to provide proof of this residence in the UK. You should therefore send a copy of your passport, which shows that your stay is free of restrictions. Do not send your actual passport with this application. Other documentary evidence of your status may be required later in the process.

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### Note 2: Questions 1 - 7

There are 7 questions. You should answer these based on your own perspective and/or understanding of the role.

It is likely that you will need to undertake some research in order to help you answer the job related questions, so you will need to be prepared to spend time doing some research to ensure you are able to complete your application form to a good standard.

We want to know: What drives and motivates you to want to become a Special Constable; What are your expectations about the type of duties that Special Constables undertake; What impact do you expect being a Special Constable will have on your social / domestic life; What preparation have you done before applying; and what relevant experience and skills do you possess.

- It is important that your answers are relevant and concise. You can use up to a maximum of 200 words for each question. As a guide, we would recommend that you use between 100 and 200 words to answer each question. Single, short sentences or unanswered questions are not acceptable and it is likely that we will reject an application where the answers are insufficient in length for us to assess. Please take your time and think carefully about what you write. Each question has a word count to allow you to assess the sufficiency of your answers.
- Your responses to each question will be assessed.
- Your application should be fully completed, well presented, clear and concise.
- If we cannot read what you have written or cannot understand the meaning, we will not be able to assess it. Pay particular attention to your spelling, punctuation, grammar and overall structure.
- You must only use appropriate language and avoid using jargon or slang terms.
- Doing some role related research is important as this will help you answer the job knowledge related questions.
- You must answer all of the questions. If you leave a question blank or tell us that you cannot think of an answer it is unlikely that your application will progress.

**Note:** Only complete question 5 if you have previously applied but were unsuccessful.

- All additional information must be included in the appropriate section of the application form. Any additional information not included in the section will not be assessed.
- The application must be all your own work. Be honest and expect to be questioned further on any of the answers that you provide.

**Note 3: About Your Employment**

Please provide details of your current occupation. Some occupations and business interests may be incompatible with the role of Special Constable. To enable us to determine compatibility please fully explain the nature of your current employment and any business interests that you currently have.

You are required to provide **all** current and previous periods of both paid employment and / or periods of self-employment. Employment references will be requested for the 5 year period prior to application. However we reserve the right to contact any or all previous employers.

You will be asked to provide referee details later in the selection process if you successfully pass the interview stage.

**Employer Supported Policing Programme**

The Employer Supported Policing (ESP) Programme provides a structured and measurable way for employers to formally support their staff in a policing environment through operational training and duties. This is through the provision of paid special leave for Special Constabulary training and duties, with special constables providing any remaining duty to meet the minimum required number of hours per year, in their own time. The number of days that employers across the country commit to Employer Supported Policing is varied.

Please consult with your own employer to ascertain if they support Employer Supported Policing and if so complete the relevant section on the application form if you are applying through this scheme.

**HM Forces and Other Police Forces**

If you have previously served with HM Forces please provide full details.

**Please note if you are currently serving with HM Forces you will not be eligible to apply for the role of special constable.**

References will always be taken from HM Forces and from other Police Forces, covering performance, conduct and absence.

Due to the nature of employment with the HM Forces it must be emphasised that security checks will be made with the appropriate military authority at an early stage in the selection process. This is in addition to your current employer's reference.

Applicants who are on the reserve list will require the permission of the Chief Constable if they wish to continue with this whilst undertaking the role of a Special Constable.

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### Working Time Regulations

As Special Constables typically undertake the role whilst being in full / part time employment information will be required in relation to the average working hours that you complete if successfully appointed. This is a legal duty which Police Scotland are committed to under the Working Time Regulations 1998.

### Note 4: Tattoos

Tattoos are not necessarily 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.

Tattoos on the face are not permitted.

If you have tattoos, you are required to describe their nature, words, extent, size and location.

Tattoos, whether visible or otherwise, should not:

- undermine the dignity and authority of the office of constable;
- cause offence to members of the public or colleagues and / or invite provocation;
- indicate unacceptable attitudes towards any individual or section of the community;
- indicate alignment with a particular group which could give offence to members of the public or colleagues; and
- be considered inflammatory, rude, lewd, crude, racist, sexist, sectarian or homophobic.

### Note 5: Declaration

It is very important for you to take a few minutes to carefully read the Declaration statement at the end of the application form.

Then you should type or sign your name, repeat your name in block capitals and insert the date of signing.