

# Promotion (Police Officers)

Procedure

Policy: Resourcing

Owning Department: People and Development

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## Overview

### What is this about?

This document sets out the process for promotion to all ranks up to and including Chief Superintendent.

### Who is this for?

This is for all officers.

### Key information

* The Police Service of Scotland (Promotion) Regulations 2013 sets out the qualification criteria for promotion. Promotion is open to all officers who meet this criteria.
* Promotion processes are advertised annually using the most appropriate method for the various audience. This may include but will not be limited to email, news bulletins, Intranet updates or briefings.
* We will support those who take personal responsibility for their career progression by:
  + Ensuring all officers have a fair, clear and consistent opportunity to access promotion.
  + Providing assessments that test job knowledge, leadership, behaviours and values, as well as the application of police policy, procedure and legislation.
  + Providing reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act (2010) and our disability in employment procedures.
* Supported candidates will be given advance notice of the date they are invited to attend the National Selection Assessment Centre (NSAC) to assist with any necessary domestic arrangements for caring responsibilities etc.
* The final decision to promote any officer will be made by the Chief Constable or in their absence, the Deputy Chief Constable (Designate).
* We will promote and deploy officers in a way that meets our organisational demands.
* We will consider personal preferences and personal circumstances after organisational requirements and reasonable adjustments are considered.
* The Chief Constable has the right to promote any officer outwith this process to ensure organisational efficiency.
* The number of successful candidates will depend on the number of projected vacancies for each rank over the next 12 months.
* All aspects of the promotion process will be based around the College of Policing Competency and Values Framework (CVF).
* Candidates unable to access promotion guidance internally can ask for copies from the National Promotions Team.
* A candidate should only enter the promotion process when they consider themselves ‘ready now’ for promotion.

## Staff/Officer

### What you need to do:

* You should be able to;
  + demonstrate and evidence Police Scotland values and behaviours;
  + evidence sound legal/professional knowledge and be conversant with current policies and procedures relevant to the rank being applied for; and
  + evidence your people skills and ability to lead, support and mentor.
* Submit your application for your line manager’s approval.

### Criteria for promotion

The promotion process is open to anyone who meets the qualifying criteria set within the Police Service of Scotland (Promotion) Regulations 2013. To be eligible to apply for promotion you must:

* have successfully completed your probation and hold either the diploma or exams set out below; or
* have successfully completed the Police Leadership Development Programme (PLDP); and
* have completed two years’ substantive service in your current rank on the date applications close. Periods of temporary promotion and acting ranks will not be considered relevant to the two years unless an officer has successfully passed the national promotion process and is in the pool awaiting substantive promotion, within that rank.

Before submitting an application, you must read all the documentation relating to the promotion process. You must be objective in your assessment and where you feel you have areas for development you should have a plan for addressing these and delay your application until these have been resolved.

| For promotion to the rank of | Required qualifications |
| --- | --- |
| Sergeant and Inspector | Elementary or  General Police Duties/Traffic/Crime or  Diploma in Police Service Leadership and Management or  Police Leadership Development Programme or  OSPRE 1 or OSPRE 2\*  (\*English, Welsh and Northern Ireland Qualification) |
| Chief Inspector to Chief Superintendent | Elementary and Advanced or  General Police Duties/Traffic/Crime or  Diploma in Police Service Leadership and Management or  Police Leadership Development Programme or  OSPRE 1 (Inspectors) or OSPRE 2 (Inspectors)\*  (\*English, Welsh and Northern Ireland Qualification) |

If you are subject to a Complaint about the Police or Misconduct Allegation, you can still participate in the promotion process if supported by your line management.

### Making an application

Applications will be invited during selection periods. These periods will be determined by the Head of Recruitment and Selection and advertised annually. These selection periods are subject to change depending on organisational demand.

You must discuss your readiness for promotion with your first line manager and inform them you intend to apply.

All the information that you need for the promotion process will be published on the Intranet. If you cannot access the Intranet this information can be provided on request by contacting the National Promotions team.

You are encouraged to tell us if you are disabled or have a physical or mental impairment that makes it hard for you to complete any part of the promotion process. You can do so via your Promotion SPOC (details available from the National Police Promotions Intranet page), directly with the promotion team, or through whatever other means you are most comfortable with. We will work with you to assess your needs and what adjustments need to be put in place.

You can use any relevant and recent evidence that demonstrates the qualities, skills and knowledge for promotion to the next rank.

It is your responsibility to provide the correct name and contact details of any supervisor or manager who can validate the statements provided by you on the application.

You must sign a declaration to confirm the information you have submitted is accurate. Your application may be subject to screening by the Professional Standards Department and checked for accuracy.

Once complete, the application should be sent to your first line manager, or other appropriate line manager for consideration. It will then be forwarded to your second line manager and, if supported, you will be invited to a National Selection Assessment Centre (NSAC), unless a sift is implemented.

If your application is not supported by your first or second line manager you will be told why, and a Personal Development Plan should be created to ensure the necessary development for you over the next 12 months.

If successful, you will be sent an email telling you when the selection assessments will be held after the closing date for applications.

The Head of Recruitment and Selection can implement a limit to the number of applications from each business area or implement an application sift to fairly manage demand through to assessment, if the number of applications is expected to far exceed organisational demand. This can be done at any time before or after the start of any promotion process.

### Withdrawing an application

If you want to withdraw from the process at any stage you must tell your Promotions SPOC, who will inform the National Police Promotion Process (NPPP) team.

If you withdraw from the process you must wait until the next process opens before you can reapply.

### Outcomes and conclusions of the promotion process

You will be told the outcome at each stage of the promotion process however feedback for each stage will only be provided at the very end of the process i.e. after the Moderation Panel has met and the merit line has been decided. Candidates should discuss their development needs with their line managers to assist with future applications. If an application sift is implemented, candidates will be provided with a scoring summary only.

### Deferrals

If your application has been supported by both your line managers you may have your assessment deferred until after the date of the Moderation Panel for reasons such as ill health, caring, bereavement or similar. Any request for deferral must be made through your Promotion SPOC for a decision by the Head of Recruitment and Selection.

If you defer, a case-by-case assessment of circumstances will be made, however you may be required to wait until the next promotion process to undertake assessment.

### Successful candidates

If successful you will be placed in the promotion pool and you will remain there until you are promoted. Wherever possible successful candidates will not be in the pool for more than 12 months.

The selection for promotion will be in merit line order, unless there is a need to fill a post within a particular geographical area or by someone with specific specialist training. If a number of successful candidates attain the same NSAC score the decision to promote a particular candidate will be based on the location of the vacancy, candidate’s skill set, experience and the candidate’s posting preferences.

Where "hard to fill" vacancies have been identified by virtue of geography or specialisms, the Chief Constable has the right to promote an officer, outwith a promotion process for that particular rank, to manage organisational requirements.

Should any situation arise which would cast doubt on your suitability for promotion, a report detailing the circumstances will be prepared by your Divisional Commander/Head of Department and forwarded to the Director of People and Development.

Eligibility for promotion can be removed by the Director of People and Development. If this happens, you will be told the reasons in writing and a meeting with the Director of People and Development or designate to explain the rationale will be offered.

If this sanction is applied, you may appeal in writing using National Police Promotion Process (NPPP) Appeal Form (021-016) within seven days of receiving notification to the Director of People and Development, clearly stating the reason for the appeal. This will be considered by the Deputy Chief Constable People and Professionalism, within 28 days of being notified of the appeal.

### Right of appeal

The right to appeal exists at three stages of the process:

* Following the National Selection Assessment.
* Following written receipt of the Moderation Panel’s decision. .
* Following formal notification that you are being removed from the promotion pool.

## Manager

### What you need to do:

* Talk honestly with officers about their readiness for promotion.
* Verify the statements you can on any applications for promotion.
* Complete the appropriate sections of any application for promotion given to you.
* Record a level of support for any promotion applications sent to you and let your officers know what support you have given and why.
* Let officers on your team who are not at work know about promotion adverts and updates.
* Disregard any form of conscious or unconscious bias.

### Line management review

You have an important role to play in the development, support and mentoring of those who would like to be promoted. You should take every appropriate opportunity to talk to them about their suitability and readiness for promotion.

When you get an application for promotion, it is essential that you discuss its contents with the candidate before completing your section. You must consider whether a candidate has consistently sustained a high level of performance in their current rank and is ready for promotion.

It is unfair and unhelpful to encourage the progression of anyone who has not demonstrated the qualities, skills or knowledge necessary for promotion to the next rank. You should discuss any doubts about an applicant's suitability openly with them in a supportive manner and detail these on the application. A Personal Development Plan should be created to ensure the necessary development for them over the next 12 months.

You must be able to verify all comments made by the candidate on the application. If you cannot do this then you should contact the previous line manager detailed by the candidate.

You must ensure that you have sufficient evidence to justify all comments and levels of support given about a candidate.

If you and a previous line manager disagree about the suitability of an applicant for promotion, you must both discuss the facts with a more senior officer (next line manager). If at this stage agreement cannot be reached, the more senior officer will make a decision on the application.

If a first and second line manager disagree about the progression of a candidate, further evidence must be sought from and provided by the first line manager before the senior officer makes their final decision.

If the application is unsupported at this stage, the second line manager must provide a reason for this and submit the unsupported application for noting. Candidates must be told why their application is not supported and be given details, by the first or second line manager, of any development that is needed, over the next 12 months.

Any candidate not supported will exit the process.

## Resources

### Forms

* National Police Promotion Process Appeal Form (021-016)

### Related Procedures

* Accelerated Leadership Pathway
* Diploma in Police Service Leadership and Management
* Disability in Employment
* Grievance
* MyCareer
* Police Leadership Development Programme
* Recruitment
* Temporary Promotion

### Useful Links

* [Competency and Values Framework](https://spi.spnet.local/commonservices/people-and-development/Documents/Competency%20and%20Values%20Framework%20-%20DPSLM%202020.pdf)
* [National Police Promotion Intranet Page](https://spi.spnet.local/commonservices/people-and-development/national-police-promtion-process/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Equality Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)
* [Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 49](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/8/contents)
* [The Police Service of Scotland Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/35/contents/made)
* [The Police Service of Scotland (Conduct) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/60/contents/made)
* [The Police Service of Scotland (Conduct) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2014/68/contents/made)
* [The Police Service of Scotland (Promotion) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/39/contents/made)
* [Core Rank Role Profiles](https://spi.spnet.local/policescotland/org-support/Pages/RPO---Core-Rank-Role-Profiles.aspx)

Compliance Record

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Version Control Table

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.00 | Initial Approved Version | 30/08/2013 |
| 2.00 | Minor Amendments | 08/08/2014 |
| 3.00 | Reflect Change in Process | 08/10/2014 |
| 4.00 | Reflect Change in Process | 19/06/2015 |
| 5.00 | Removal of duplication of words throughout document and appendices – no change to process | 26/11/2015 |
| 6.00 | Minor amendment with no change to process.  Removal of second text box under Appendix ‘D’ entitled “Promotion Process Map” as was present in error | 14/12/2015 |
| 7.00 | Section 6.11/Stage 3 Clarification of rank of officers/staff at First Review Panel. Appendix F removal of contact telephone no`s due to change of location of admin of PS and PI process. Appendix G clarification on responsibilities of 2nd LM  Note: for Senior Rank Process, please refer to the linked Senior Process Addendum until the SOP is fully reviewed and updated. | 29/02/2016 |
| 8.00 | Update as a result of external feedback. Update to exam and qualifications eligibility when transferring from other Forces. Addition of links to Adoption, Maternity and Paternity and Shared Parental Leave SOPs. | 15/12/2016 |
| 9.00 | Link to Senior Process Addendum for Senior Rank Process Added to Title Page | 04/07/2017 |
| 10.00 | Section 5.5 amended to provide clarity on consideration of a formal regulation warning/misconduct disposal in relation to promotion process. Sec 6 Change in Process. | 15/11/2018 |
| 11.00 | Policy Simplification Project. Procedure amended and written with customer focus to support new leadership strategy and 2026 objectives | 01/04/2019 |
| 12.00 | Change to guidance for applicants to align with application form. Panel make-up and appeals process clarified. | 24/07/2019 |
| 13.00 | New Leadership Pathway introduced assessing candidates for promotion against the College of Policing’s Competency Values Framework. Process now includes the use of Assessment Centres to determine suitability for promotion alongside a revised set of supporting appendices. | 22/09/2020 |
| 14.00 | Full review of procedure. Appendix C removed and some minor amendments. | 21/10/2021 |
| 15.00 | Inclusion of the Police Leadership Development Programme as an eligible qualification for promotion.  Minor changes to scoring criteria for progression to moderation panel under Appendix A.  Appendix C removed.  Appendix E removed (replaced with a direct link to Core Rank Profiles)  References to ‘application form’ revised to ‘application process’ to align promotion pathway with MyCareer. | 11/07/2023 |

**Feedback**

All Police Scotland People Policies and Procedures are subject to regular reviews. It is important that user feedback is taken into account when documents are reviewed.

If anyone wants to provide comment, or make suggestions for improvements to this or any associated document, please email:

*Exempted Section 30 (c) – Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs.*

Appendix A

Guidance on the merit line and moderation panel

#### Merit Line

The National Promotion Selection process is a merit line based promotion process which means the number of successful candidates is dependent on the number of projected vacancies for the rank being applied for over the next 12 months.

#### National Selection Assessment Centre (NSAC)

Scores from all elements of the NSAC will be considered in determining the outcome. If candidates attain scores of either 3, 4 or 5 across all categories they will be progressed to Moderation Panel. If candidates are awarded a score of 1 or 2 in any category they will exit the process and not progress to Moderation Panel.

Progressing to Moderation Panel does not mean you have successfully completed the promotion process, this is only decided when the merit line is drawn.

#### Moderation Panel

At the conclusion of all assessments for that rank, a Moderation Panel will meet and the ‘merit line’ will be decided.

The Moderation Panel is chaired by an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team within People and Development. Panel members can include DCCs, ACCs, Divisional Commanders, Head of Recruitment and Selection, Superintendent Recruitment and Selection, a member of the Promotions Team and a representative from the Scottish Police Federation or the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents depending on the rank being applied for.

The purpose of the Moderation Panel is to:

* Review and establish if there are any common trends or anomalies.
* Review scoring and feedback assessment sheets.
* Consider specialist and rural requirements.
* Consider learning for future processes.
* Decide on Merit Line score and the number of successful candidates.

When setting the Merit Line, the Moderation Panel aims to achieve the following objectives:

* To meet police promotion requirements for 12 months.
* To ensure that the majority of the pool will be promoted prior to the conclusion of the next promotion process for that rank.
* To create future opportunities by considering the frequency of promotion processes.

Appendix B

Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal at three stages of the process:

* Following the National Selection Assessment Centre (NSAC)
* After receiving a final written outcome after the Moderation Panel.
* Following being formally notified of being removed from the promotion pool.

Appeals will only be considered for the following two reasons:

* The appellant believes that the process has been incorrectly followed.
* The appellant believes they have been unlawfully discriminated against.

Every effort will be made to consider appeals as quickly as possible (normally within 28 days) so that the appellant if successful can continue within the promotion process.

Appeals have to be made in writing to the Director of People and Development by completing the National Promotion Selection Process Appeal Form (021–016).

This has to be done within seven calendar days of receipt of being notified, in writing, of the outcome of one of the above three stages.

The appeal will be considered and the appellant will be informed of the outcome in writing. The outcome of any appeal is final.

The following reasons are not considered to be grounds for appeal:

* Frustration at not being successful;
* Disagreement with any marks awarded;
* Disagreement with any feedback provided.

Appendix C

Resource Planning and Coordination

The Resource Planning and Coordination Unit (RP&CU) of People and Development (P&D) are responsible for promotion activity across Police Scotland. Where a police officer has appeared at a misconduct hearing and receives a disposal other than dismissal or requirement to resign, or where an officer receives any other warning in relation to misconduct, the RP&CU will consider the circumstances of the matter and discuss any live warnings with the Professional Standards Department.

Such warnings will be considered and risk assessed on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, promotion may still be possible whilst the warning remains live.

The following list is an example of factors which will be considered but is not exhaustive:

* Time which has elapsed since the date of the incident under consideration.
* An officer’s conduct and performance since the original incident or since receiving a warning.
* Nature of the promoted post or post applied for.
* Nature of incident under consideration.
* Reputational risk to Police Scotland when considering the circumstances and the public expectation around the conduct of officers.