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# Acting Ranks (Officers)

Procedure

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## Overview

### What is this about?

All non-permanent movement to a higher rank is either known as a temporary promotion or an acting rank. Temporary promotion applies if:

* an officer is undertaking the Accelerated Leadership Pathway; or
* an officer is undertaking the Police Leadership Development Programme; or
* there is a legislative requirement for a role to be undertaken as a temporary promotion rather than in an acting capacity. It is recognised that a temporary promotion, in law, holds the powers and privileges of a substantive rank, whereas as an acting rank does not. This is critical in a small number of police roles where the role is rank specific and must be filled by qualified officers, through a temporary promotion. Divisional Commanders/Heads of Department are responsible for identifying whether this is applicable to any roles within their business area.

This document sets out the process for all other non-permanent movement, known as acting ranks, for officers up to and including Chief Superintendents.

### Who is this for?

This is for all officers applying for, or being appointed to, an acting rank and for anyone supporting the acting rank process, across all divisions and business areas.

### Key information

* Timescales for acting ranks will be considered as:

Short Term (1 to 28 days) – deployments should be recorded locally.

Long Term (29 days to 18 months) – a business case is required.

* Constables being considered for an acting Sergeant rank do not require to be qualified for promotion in terms of the Police Service of Scotland (Promotion) Regulations 2013.
* Officers being considered for acting ranks from Inspector up to Chief Superintendent must be qualified for promotion in terms of the Police Service of Scotland (Promotion) Regulations 2013.
* Officers who would like to be considered for an acting rank should discuss this with their line manager through the MyCareer process before applying.
* Acting rank opportunities will only be considered where there is an organisational requirement and when there is no suitably qualified officer within the National Promotion Pool to fill a true vacancy.
* Vacancies for Acting Sergeant and Inspector ranks will be managed by divisions and departments.
* Vacancies for Acting Chief Inspector, Superintendent and Chief Superintendent ranks will be advertised nationally.
* Any officer considered for an acting rank must have been subject to a fair, transparent, and auditable selection process.
* Line managers are responsible for providing feedback to all officers applying for, or performing, an acting rank.
* Acting ranks should be regarded as a development opportunity. Time spent in an acting rank can only be counted towards the criteria for promotion if an officer has successfully passed the national promotion process and is in the pool awaiting substantive promotion, within that acting rank.
* All acting ranks should be reviewed after six months to assess if they are still required and whether the officer undertaking it should continue in that rank or revert to their substantive one.
* Acting ranks should not routinely exceed 12 months, unless specifically authorised by the Assistant Chief Constable responsible for that business area. The rationale for extending an acting rank beyond 12 months must be updated on the business case and resubmitted for governance and audit.
* Acting ranks cannot exceed 18 continuous months.
* Periods of duty performed in an acting rank are reckonable for pay and pension purposes. Further information relating to pay is outlined in the Police Officer Handbook which is available in the Resources section.
* The Chief Constable has the right to promote any officer outwith this process to ensure organisational efficiency.

## Staff/Officer

### What you need to do:

* Discuss your training and development goals with your line manager and record this through MyCareer.
* Read through the requirements outlined on the divisional/departmental invitation, or on the job advertisement, and conduct a self-assessment of your readiness to undertake an acting rank. A link to the CVF Self-Assessment form which provides helpful guidance on this is available in the Resources section.
* Submit your completed application as directed on the invitation or advertisement and notify your line manager.
* If you are invited to take part in a selection process by way of interview, you are encouraged to tell us if you have a disability, or a physical or mental impairment, so that we can support you in assessing your needs and put in place any reasonable adjustments which may be required. Further guidance on this is available in the Disability in Employment Procedure on the Policy Hub.
* Use the MyCareer process to evidence the development and experience gained from performing an acting rank and discuss this with your line manager.

### Criteria for acting ranks

To apply and qualify for an acting rank you must have been in your current substantive rank for a minimum of 12 months and possess the qualifications outlined below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **To act in the rank of:** | **Required police examinations** |
| Sergeant | No qualification required. |
| 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). |

You can submit an application for the acting rank process even if you are the subject of a Misconduct Allegation or Complaint about the Police.

### Acting in the rank of Sergeant or Inspector

* When invitations are invited from your division or department, complete the [Internal Police Officer Application Form (120-069)](https://spi.spnet.local/policescotland/guidance/Force%20Forms/Police-Scotland/Police%20Officer%20Internal%20Application%20Form-for%20use%2001%20February%202024%20onwards.docx) to self-nominate yourself as ready to undertake an acting rank and send this to your line manager (or other appropriate manager) for their comments.
* All applications will be submitted to the Superintendent (Support), or equivalent, for review by the Divisional Senior Management Team (SMT).
* Divisional SMT will review qualifications, recent MyCareer discussions and suitability of supported applicants to determine which candidates will be added to the divisional/departmental pool.
* If your submitted application is not supported at any stage you will be told why and given feedback regarding areas for future development.
* Acting ranks will be appointed by the Superintendent (Support), or equivalent, based on assessment of skillset, experience, development needs, geographical location, recent MyCareer discussions, organisational requirements, and any related Professional Standards Department considerations.
* The Superintendent (Support) will review the list of officers within the pool for acting ranks at least every 12 months against the current vacancies. Officers’ ongoing performance and MyCareer discussions will be reviewed to ensure they remain eligible.

### Acting in the rank of Chief Inspector, Superintendent and Chief Superintendent

* When acting rank opportunities become available, submit your completed application as directed on the advertisement and notify your line manager.
* The Divisional or Departmental SMT who own the vacancy will consider all applications and decide whether to interview or appoint applicants, subject to Executive approval from the relevant business area being granted.
* On every occasion the vacancy owner will provide you with verbal feedback regarding your application or written feedback following your interview.

## Manager

### What you need to do:

* Use the MyCareer process to talk honestly with your officers about their readiness to undertake an acting rank.
* Assess how consistently officers have evidenced the values and behaviours needed to perform at the next rank, through MyCareer.
* Complete the relevant section of the application and ensure your officer holds the necessary qualifications, as applicable.
* If you are not able to offer support you must provide feedback and arrange a development discussion/plan. In all cases, however, you should make Divisional/Departmental Senior Management aware of the application and submit it for their consideration.
* Let officers on your team who are not at work know about any available opportunities to apply for, or register their interest in, an acting rank.
* Use the MyCareer process to discuss and record the development and experience your officers gain while performing acting ranks.

### Role of Divisional/Departmental Senior Management for Acting Sergeant or Inspector ranks

* Identify and monitor succession planning requirements to highlight opportunities for acting ranks within your division/department.
* Maintain a divisional pool of officers who are ready to act in the ranks of Sergeant and Inspector. Invite all who are suitably experienced to submit an [Internal Police Officer Application Form (120-069)](https://spi.spnet.local/policescotland/guidance/Force%20Forms/Police-Scotland/Police%20Officer%20Internal%20Application%20Form-for%20use%2001%20February%202024%20onwards.docx). Officers being considered for the acting rank of Inspector must possess the required qualifications. The divisional/departmental pool must be reviewed on at least an annual basis.
* Allocate acting rank opportunities after assessment of candidates’ skillsets, experience, development needs, recent MyCareer discussions, geographical location, and organisational requirements, and only after related Professional Standards Department considerations have been made.
* In all cases, where you have identified an officer for a long-term acting rank, you must complete a [Business Case Form (102-008)](https://spi.spnet.local/commonservices/people-and-development/policy-hub/ToolsResources/Business%20Case%20-%20All%20Periods%20of%20Temporary%20Duty%20Performed%20at%20a%20Higher%20Rank%20(102-008).doc) and follow the necessary governance route as determined by the rank of the post.
* If there is a need to extend an acting period from short-term to long-term, you must complete a Business Case Form (102-008) prior to day 29 and follow the necessary governance route as determined by the rank of the post.
* If an acting rank has been in place for six months you should review it at that stage to assess if it is still organisationally required. If it is still necessary, you should determine if the same officer will continue in that post or if they will revert to their substantive role and a different officer be appointed to the acting rank. The rationale for your decision should be updated on the Business Case Form and submitted to the National Promotions team.
* You must obtain approval from the Assistant Chief Constable for your area of business to extend an acting rank beyond 12 months and update the initial Business Case Form with the rationale.
* Ensure succession planning and cessation of all acting ranks before 18 months.

### Role of Divisional/Departmental Senior Management for Acting Chief Inspector, Superintendent and Chief Superintendent ranks

* For Acting Chief Inspector, Superintendent and Chief Superintendent ranks, following Executive approval you should liaise with the National Recruitment Team to progress your opportunity to advert.
* As the vacancy owner you should identify criteria relevant to the role to fairly assess skillset and experience and to identify the most suitable officer for the acting rank. All decisions should be recorded and be auditable.
* If a further suitability assessment is required you should proceed to interview.
* Complete a Business Case Form (102-008) for all long-term acting periods, including the full criteria and rationale used and submit for Executive approval. Follow the necessary governance route outlined on the Business Case Form as determined by the rank of the post.

## Resources

### Forms

* [Internal Police Officer Application (120-069)](https://spi.spnet.local/policescotland/guidance/Force%20Forms/Police-Scotland/Police%20Officer%20Internal%20Application%20Form-for%20use%2001%20February%202024%20onwards.docx)
* Business Case – All Periods of Temporary Duty performed at a Higher Rank (29 consecutive days or more) (102-008)

### Reference Documents

* Acting Sergeant and Inspector Ranks Summary

### Related Procedures

* Accelerated Leadership Pathway
* Allowances and Expenses (Officers)
* Disability in Employment
* Equality, Diversity and Dignity
* Grievance
* MyCareer
* Police Leadership Development Programme
* Postings and Transfers
* Promotion
* Record Retention SOP

### Useful Links

* [Competency and Values Framework Self-Assessment](https://spi.spnet.local/policescotland/org-support/Pages/CVF---Police-Scotland.aspx)
* [Equality Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)
* [Police Officer Vacancies](https://spi.spnet.local/commonservices/people-and-development/vacancies/Pages/Police-Officer-Vacancies.aspx)
* [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)
* [The Police Service of Scotland Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/35/contents/made)
* [Police Officer Handbook – Agreed Guide to Police Officer Conditions in Scotland](https://pnb.scot/)

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**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 **[redacted].**

Appendix A

Acting Sergeant and Inspector Ranks Summary

STAGE 1

Based on a vacancy and succession planning projection an open invite sent to all officers in division/department to determine who may be interested in self-nominating for future acting ranks. Response to be sent to local identified SPOC.

STAGE 2

SPOC will coordinate nominations and ensure that line managers have provided comments.

STAGE 3

Candidates’ applications with line management comments collated by SPOC and presented to Senior Management Team (SMT) for consideration and Final Authorisation.

STAGE 4

Each candidate who applies will be given feedback by the most appropriate manager. A development discussion should take place and the officer can then be afforded any of the following outcomes:

* Added to acting rank pool or appointed an acting role.
* Consolidate for further development in rank.
* Informed they are unsuitable with rationale explained and recorded.
* ‘Ready Now’ for promotion, no further development required.

A record of the selection process should be kept by the Divisional Senior Management team to ensure decision making is recorded and available for governance and external audit. All information should be retained in line with the Record Retention SOP.