

GUIDANCE NOTES

POLICE STAFF

INTRODUCTION

These guidance notes are designed to help you through the application and selection process for a role in the Metropolitan police staff. In addition to the information and advice provided here, we are committed to doing all we can to support you in your application.

Specifically, we endeavour:

- To give 24-hour access to the information on our website www.metpolicecareers.co.uk
- To respond to any question you submit via our website within two working days
- To respond to written enquiries within 10 working days of receipt
- To aim to answer 80% of all calls to Police Staff Recruitment within five rings
- To dispatch application packs within 1-5 working days of your request
- To dispatch written acknowledgement of completed applications within 1-5 days of receipt and to send a subsequent letter providing details of your allocated recruitment officer

THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The precise details of the process you go through will depend on the specific role you are applying for. However, all applicants for police staff roles – regardless of their seniority – can expect to go through the following broad stages.

Stage 1: Complete the application form

You should have received this form as part of your application pack or downloaded it from our website. For advice on how to go about completing your form, please refer to page 5 of these notes.

Stage 2: Initial paper sift

Once we receive your completed form, we will check it against our standard recruitment criteria – e.g. convictions and nationality. If you are eligible to work for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), your application will move on to the next stage.

Stage 3: Role-specific paper sift

Following the initial sift your application will be assessed by the department to which you are applying. They will check it against the role-specific criteria presented in the advertisement and the information provided in your application pack. If your application is unsuccessful at this stage, we will write to you to let you know.

Stage 4: Interview

If your application passes both paper sifts, we will contact you to arrange an interview. The interview questions will be based around the same role-specific criteria and will seek to find out how you would perform in the job in question. Depending on the position, you may also be expected to give a short presentation or undertake another assessment – e.g. psychometric testing, typing tests etc.

Stage 5: Health Declaration form

If you are successful at interview, we will send you a provisional offer of employment together with details of the next steps. This offer will be subject to security, health and reference checks (not current job reference at this stage). If you are unsuccessful, we will contact you by letter, however we will be unable to offer feedback.

A Health Declaration form will be sent to you for completion which our medical team will screen. In some cases they may need further information (for example from GPs or specialists) and you will be placed on 'medical hold' while this is being obtained. The Disability Discrimination Act covers all positions in the Metropolitan Police Service. If you have a disability, adjustments will be made if it is reasonable to do so.

At some point during this process you may also be required to undertake a Substance Misuse Test.

Should you have any queries during your selection process, we suggest that you contact our Recruitment Call Centre on 0845 727 2212, Mon - Fri, 9am - 4pm, or your designated recruitment officer via email or on their direct line.

For more information, please visit www.metpolicecareers.co.uk/policestaff



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WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

Before applying, please double check that you meet our basic eligibility criteria, as well as the role-specific criteria detailed in your application pack.

Skills & personal qualities

These criteria vary according to the role you are applying for. Please check that you have carefully read and understood the job description and that you are able to demonstrate the required competencies.

Qualifications & experience

All police staff vacancies advertised by the MPS should come with a list of competencies/skills required to undertake the role. You will be required to show in your application how you meet these requirements. In view of this, qualifications are no longer a requirement for each post, unless there is a specific need attached to the post, in which case the qualifications will be stated on the advert.

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WHAT WE WILL GIVE YOU IN RETURN

Many of the benefits the MPS offers are significantly better than those you would find in other organisations and that is partly why we are regarded as an employer of choice. These range from discounted goods (MetBenefits) and private healthcare services, right through to excellent sports and social facilities and generous leave and paid sick leave.

Contract

Standard employment contract for permanent staff.

Holiday entitlement

In addition to public holidays, your paid annual leave entitlement will range from 24.5 days to 32.5 days depending on grade and length of service.

Metropolitan Police Civil Staff Pension Scheme

The MPS offers a choice of pension schemes, Nuvos and Partnership. Details regarding these choices will be made available to you at the initial offer of employment.

Interest-free season ticket loan

After two months, you can apply for an advance for the purchase of a quarterly or longer period season ticket. Repayment is by deduction from salary.

Maternity leave, maternity support leave and adoption leave

If you satisfy the qualifying conditions, you may apply for maternity leave, maternity support leave (formerly known as paternity leave) or adoption leave.

Flexible working

The MPS offers a number of flexible working opportunities, balancing the needs of the individual with those of the Service. Requests for flexible working will be dealt with on an individual basis.

This represents just a small sample of the range of benefits available to police staff at the MPS. For full details, please visit our website.



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CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

You will be on probation during your first year. In deciding your suitability for appointment, we will assess whether the maximum period of service you will be able to provide (given the normal retirement age of 65 ½) is sufficient to complete the period of appointment and to recoup any training and induction costs.

Certain posts may require a higher level of security vetting. Details will be provided if applicable.

You must be able to provide regular and effective service. You will therefore be required to complete a Health Declaration form.

Termination of employment

Monthly paid staff: all staff in senior band A and B roles (or their shadow equivalents) must provide not less than three months' notice prior to the last day of service. All other bands must provide not less than one month's notice prior to the last day of service.



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COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

When completing your application form, always bear in mind what you're trying to achieve: that is, to provide the assessors with evidence of how you meet the criteria they're looking for. Your first task, therefore, is to go through the original job advertisement and information pack thoroughly, making sure you fully understand what those criteria are. When you've done this, you're ready to fill in the form.

What to include

You should look to include as much relevant experience, knowledge and skills as you can – anything that will help demonstrate your suitability for the role. Where possible, you should do this using examples of where you have carried out similar responsibilities in your work. If you are unable to provide work examples, you may use instances from other aspects of your life, but be sure to keep them relevant. Try also to use only fairly recent examples, avoiding anything that seems old or outdated.

Make sure you read the application form carefully and provide full answers to all questions.

How you structure your answer is up to you. You might like to organise your points using bullet points or headings relating to different parts of the question. As long as what you are saying is clear enough for the assessor to understand, it doesn't matter. However, do not exceed the space provided; there shouldn't be any need. And if you are asked to provide one (or an) example, do just that. Do not add more.

Sell yourself

Simply referring to your skills and experience isn't always enough. Remember that the assessor does not know you or your capabilities, or how effectively you may perform on a daily basis. All they have to go on is what you say in your application. You therefore need to make sure you really sell yourself, taking every opportunity to fill in any potential gaps in the assessor's picture of you.

If you find that you don't have specific examples that will highlight your ability to do the job, do all you can to link the experience that you do have with the role you are applying for. You might also use other examples to indicate your willingness and ability to learn new skills or refresh old ones.

Avoid generalisations

Don't say things like 'I have good communication skills' without backing it up. Anyone could say they have good communication skills; why should the assessor believe you? By going on to explain 'I demonstrated strong written communication skills when I...' you will do a much better job of convincing the assessor of your abilities.

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DO'S AND DON'TS

When completing your application...

DO:

- Practise with a copy of the form before filling it in for real
- Ensure that your handwriting or typed text is legible
- Ensure that you have checked your spelling and grammar
- Avoid unnecessary complicated jargon
- Describe your own role in the examples you provide
- Explain what you actually did
- Describe how you did it
- Say what the outcome was (e.g. What difference did it make? Who benefited?)
- Ask a trustworthy friend or colleague to review your form and provide feedback
- Re-work your form according to their feedback
- Return your completed form by the relevant closing date

DON'T:

- Unless otherwise stated use your application as a CV. Include only relevant information
- Assume that the assessor will understand local practices and procedures
- Waste space explaining unnecessary details
- Rush. Take your time and prepare thoroughly

REMEMBER - 'ASPIRE'

Finally, a helpful way of remembering the principles you should adhere to when completing your application form:

APPROPRIATE Make sure your examples are of an appropriate nature

SPECIFIC Refer only to specific occasions. Do not generalise

POSITIVE Use only your best examples

INDIVIDUAL Focus on what you did, not what a team or group did

RELEVANT Make sure your answers relate to the question being asked

EMPHASISE Explain what you did and why. Emphasise your actions



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WHAT TO DO NEXT

Please complete the application form, along with any additional material you are required to submit, and send it to the postal or email address indicated on the application form. Make sure you do this before the relevant closing date indicated in your application pack. It is strongly recommended that you keep a copy of any completed forms you send us.

The recruitment process is thorough and could therefore prove quite lengthy. All decisions relating to your application will be confirmed in writing. Until an offer of an appointment is confirmed you should not assume that your application has been successful.

If you apply for a post and are offered the position, your appointment will be on the terms set out in your contract, which will prevail over any terms presented as part of this application pack in the event of any conflict between them. Please note that pay and conditions of service are liable to alteration.

The Commissioner reserves the right to reject any candidate whom he may consider unsuitable for the police service.