

POLICE STAFF APPLICANT GUIDANCE NOTES

Thank you for the interest you have shown in Thames Valley Police. These notes are for your reference when completing the application form. Please read them carefully to ensure that your form is completed correctly.

What will happen to the information on your form?

Information about you will always be treated in strict confidence. All information with regard to recruitment will be collected, stored and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be used to assess your suitability to join the Police Service and may be shared by other police related organisations in the United Kingdom in respect of any recruitment applications you make. The information you provide may also be shared with other police related organisations for monitoring purposes.

Unsuccessful applications will be stored for 12 months before being confidentially destroyed. Successful applications will be transferred to an employee personal file.

How to Complete the Application Form

The application form is a standard form used for all jobs and mirrors our online application form. Do not worry if you are not able to enter information in all the sections, but please write N/A in any section you cannot complete to indicate that you have not missed it by accident. Please avoid the use of abbreviations and jargon.

If you have a learning difficulty or a disability and require reasonable adjustments in completing this form, please contact [HR Recruitment](#). If you wish to receive your application form in an alternative format, for example in large print or by audio please contact HR Recruitment for advice.

Application Form

Post Details

We regularly recruit for many different positions at once, so it is important that you state on your form the title and closing date of the position you are interested in. We also ask that you state the location(s) of the job you are applying for (which will be stated on the advert). If the advert offers a choice of locations, please enter a first and second choice.

How did you hear about this vacancy?

It is helpful to us if you provide this information for our statistics.

Personal Details

This information will be used if we wish to contact you to arrange an interview, so please ensure you provide as much information as possible and that it is correct.

Internal Applicants

If you are an internal candidate that has been in post for less than 12 months your application will need to be supported by your HR Business Partner. You must also get your application supported by your HR Business Partner if you are applying for a secondment. If a signature cannot be obtained then this support can be emailed with your application or separately to the relevant email address.

Interview Dates

We will do our best to take into account any dates given here when arranging interviews. However, we cannot guarantee that interviews can be arranged to suit all candidates, and it may be that if you cannot make the interview date, then you will not be able to continue your application.

If you feel that you have a disability which may affect your application, please let us know of any additional arrangements you require. This may involve any difficulty in completing your application and/or the arrangements for interview.

Tattoos and Facial Piercings

Tattoos and facial piercings will not necessarily preclude you from appointment; it depends on their size, nature, location and health and safety implications (for piercings). Some facial piercings and tattoos could potentially offend members of the public or colleagues or bring discredit to the police service. Each case will be considered on its merits. Tattoos containing images perceived to be depicting violence, sexism, racism, religious intolerance or homophobia will not be acceptable. If you have piercings and/or tattoos on your face, neck, forearms or hands you will possibly be asked to provide photographs.

References

If you are successful at interview Thames Valley Police will take up references before you are confirmed in position. **References will only be sought after a provisional offer has been made.** We require one reference from your current/most recent employer, and the second to be from your next most recent employer, but if this is not possible (for example if the company has closed down) please give another previous employer. If you are unable to provide employment references please supply educational or personal references. If you currently work for Thames Valley Police through another employer (e.g. Reliance, Crown Prosecution Service, Employment Agency) please give your employer as a reference and not anyone from TVP.

Additional Information

Residency

In order for us to confirm your residency, we will need you to inform us if you have been outside of the UK for longer than a 3 month period. National policy states that in order to be meaningful, security checks must cover at least the last three years. This means that applicants will need to have been resident in the UK for the last three years, with an exemption for those having lived abroad in the service of British Government organisations or the Armed Services. Short term absences/holidays of less than two months will not be counted towards residency criteria.

Thames Valley Police operates a flexible approach on this issue, and you may still be considered if you do not meet residency requirements but may be required to provide a certificate of good conduct from the country or countries visited. If this is not possible we may be able to consider work/character references. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Work Permit

If you require a work permit to work in this country copies will need to be taken of the original documents at interview stage. If you are unclear on your eligibility to work in the UK please visit www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk for further information

Part Time Working

If the job for which you are applying is open to part time working it will be stated in the job advertisement.

Politically Restricted Posts

Certain posts within the Force are "politically restricted". A post is politically restricted from Salary Band 5 or equivalent and above, and restricts employees from the following activities:

- Holding office in a political party.
- Canvassing at elections.
- Speaking or writing publicly on matters of party political controversy.
- Being a candidate for public elected office (other than to a parish or community council).

Exemption may be granted in some cases (see Politically Restricted Posts Policy) for criteria for exemption.

Business Interests / Secondary Employment

Employees are permitted to undertake additional employment where this does not conflict with the interests of the police service; adversely affect their performance; undermine public confidence in the service and/or bring it into disrepute. If you are currently in paid/voluntary employment which you would intend to continue if you were offered a position with Thames Valley Police please give details so that approval can be sought.

In accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998 it is advisable an employee should not exceed working more than 48 hours per week. More information on this subject can be found at www.acas.org.uk.

Reserve Forces

The priority of Thames Valley Police (TVP) is to consider the needs of the communities that it serves. All employees of TVP need permission to either join or remain a member of the Reserve Forces (RF). The potential for call-out of officers and staff could have a detrimental affect on the service we provide and on those colleagues left behind (officers and staff do not get automatic exemption from call-out). Please state whether you have served /are serving in the: Royal Navy, Merchant Navy, Royal Air Force, Royal Marines, Army or Volunteer Reserves.

Previous Service/Applications

In order for us to process your application quickly and efficiently, please disclose whether you have ever worked for or applied to work for Thames Valley Police in any capacity.

Driving Licence Particulars

If the position requires a driving licence this will be stated in the Job Description.

Education and Training

Educational Qualifications

In this section please give details of any academic or practical qualifications obtained at school, college or university. **Please do not include copies of certificates at this stage.**

Relevant Training

Please include in this section any work based trainings including relevant course titles/training sessions and dates completed. These can include training such as diversity, first aid or IT.

Professional Membership and Qualifications

Please include any valid professional qualifications and memberships you hold e.g. CIPD, ICAS.

Employment

Present/most recent and previous employment

In the Present/most recent and Previous Employment sections please give the names and addresses of your present/most recent and past employers to cover the last ten years. You must provide the dates you were employed, the salary, job title, main duties and responsibilities, and your reason for leaving. These should be in the order in which you held the jobs starting with your most recent employer. This section should include voluntary or temporary employment, particularly where you do not have previous permanent paid work experience.

Gaps in Employment

Another way for us to confirm your residency is by examining your employment history to see if there are any gaps. In this section you will need to account for any such gaps such as a university gap year, a period of unemployment or if you were travelling abroad.

Short listing Criteria

You must provide your reasons for applying and evidence to show you possess the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours required for the role. Your evidence must cover all of the essential and desirable criteria stated. This evidence can come from employment, voluntary work, hobbies or education, but must be relevant to the job in question. You must provide specific examples to support what you are saying. Simply making a statement will not enable us to make a judgment as to whether you meet the short listing criteria.

If you need any further space for this section or any other section please use the continuation sheet or additional sheets indicating clearly which sections you are continuing.

Diversity Monitoring

Thames Valley Police is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants. The information given will not be seen by the short listing panel or management at any stage of the recruitment process.

Diversity Data

We are obliged to request that you provide us with this information, but you do not have to supply it if you do not want to. If you do not wish to answer any of these questions, please select 'I do not wish to disclose' rather than leaving the section blank.

Diversity Policy

Thames Valley Police is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation. We are actively seeking to: employ a workforce which reflects the communities in which we serve; ensure that our methods of selection are fair and that they are based solely on merit, objective job related criteria and ability to do the job.

The intention of monitoring is to identify if there are different success rates, which will allow us to take action to ensure that no group is treated unfairly. Monitoring also forms part of our duties, as a public sector employer, set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Sexual Discrimination Act 1975 (Amended) and Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment 2000). Although not a duty, we are also seeking to monitor sexual orientation and religion or belief to help us comply with The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disability as a physical or mental condition which has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities e.g. mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, ability, ability to lift everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand, understanding the risk of physical danger.

Disability Data

If you feel that you have a disability which may affect your application process, please let us know of any extra arrangements you require. Examples to consider are:

- Correspondence – e.g. are certain forms of correspondence inconvenient for you?
- Travel – e.g. will you require disabled parking?
- Mobility – e.g. would you need your interview to be on the ground floor?
- Attendance – e.g. would you need someone to accompany you to interview?
- Testing – e.g. would you need special equipment/software or extra time?
- Interview – e.g. would certain forms of interview be inappropriate for you?

Please be aware that the people conducting your interview may not have had any experience with your disability, so make sure you have explained **ALL** of your requirements, even the ones which may seem obvious. If you have an educational or agency contact who you wish to be involved in your application, please provide us with their details and explain to what degree you wish them to be involved.

Declaration

Where the application is being returned electronically, the submission of a completed application form will be deemed to constitute the author's signature and commitment to the declaration.

Security Checks

The nature of police work and the sensitivity of the information which is accessible by employees makes it necessary to ensure that people employed or working in support of the police service are reliable, trustworthy and of sound integrity. It will therefore be necessary to ask you to supply detailed information regarding your address history and family members. It is your responsibility to inform your family of these checks. Candidates will be required to complete a number of vetting forms and bring them along to interview with them along with a form of Identification and Proof of Residency.

The successful applicant will be subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act.

SHORT LISTED APPLICANTS

The following information is for applicants whose application has been selected for the next stage of the recruitment process.

Tests

You may be required to undertake certain tests in the recruitment process to demonstrate skills and competencies required in the role. The tests will be used as part of the decision making process for appointment. If testing is required you will be informed.

Travel Expenses

It is not Thames Valley Police policy to reimburse candidates for any tests, assessments or interviews they attend.

Information for applicants who are selected for interview

Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

Thames Valley Police has a legal obligation to ensure that we only employ people eligible to work in the United Kingdom. As part of this process you will be asked to provide documentary evidence of permission to live and work in the UK e.g. passport, birth certificate, work permit. These original documents will be checked on the day of your interview and copies retained as part of our vetting process.

Disability

Thames Valley Police is committed to removing unnecessary barriers to the employment of disabled people and recognises that some people may require special arrangements, in order that they may compete on equal terms with other applicants at interview and/or testing. Please inform [HR Recruitment](#) if you require specific arrangements.

Information for applicants who are at provisional offer stage

Sickness Data/Medical Questionnaire

You will be asked to complete a confidential medical questionnaire. The questionnaire will be viewed only by our team of Occupational Health practitioners, if you are selected for the post after interview. You will also be asked to authorise your own doctor or specialist to disclose details of your medical history to the Occupational Health Practitioner, should they require further information. Based on the information disclosed in the medical questionnaire and on the result of such other enquires made, a medical examination may be deemed necessary. The Occupational Health Practitioner will advise whether or not you are fit enough for the proposed appointment.

Certificates for Qualifications

You will be asked to provide original certificates for qualifications, training and licenses that you have included on your application form. Copies will be retained with your application and transferred to your personal file if you are successful at interview. In addition, random checks will be made with issuing examination boards or institutions.

WORKING FOR THAMES VALLEY POLICE

This is a brief overview of Thames Valley Police, who we are, our aims and what we can offer you as an employer.

Applicants who are offered employment will receive further details later in the recruitment process.

Introduction

Thames Valley Police is the largest non-metropolitan force in England and Wales, covering the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Buckinghamshire and serving a population of 2.1 million from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. The population in the Thames Valley is predicted to rise significantly over the next decade and Milton Keynes, Slough and Aylesbury have been identified as key areas for growth. We also play host to over six million visitors annually, who come to sample our festivals, history and sporting events.

The Force is divided into three Hubs; Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. These in turn, are divided into 15 Local Police Areas (LPAs), which are aligned with the local authority boundaries. The Hubs and LPAs are responsible for providing local policing and are supported by a number of Force-wide specialist teams such as Roads Policing and Firearms. **In March 2009 there were 4163 police officers (full-time equivalent), 3472 police staff including 528 police community support officers (PCSOs) and 304 special constables, assisted by over 555 volunteers.**

Thames Valley Police is also responsible for policing the largest stretch of motorways in Britain - 196 miles. The sections of the M4, M40 and M25 within the area are amongst the busiest motorways in Europe.

Thames Valley Police's aim is: *Working in partnership to make our community safer.*

It is through our people that we will succeed and it is essential that all of our staff, regardless of their role, feel valued. We have a wealth of talent, skills and expertise within our workforce and we are committed to attracting and retaining high calibre staff within all sections of the organisation. It is our priority to effectively manage and develop our people to enhance the service we provide to the public.

Conditions of Service

All police staff are directly employed by the Police Authority, although under the day-to-day direction and control of the Chief Constable. Any changes to conditions of service, agreed as a result of legislation or local or national negotiations between the 'Authority' and UNISON, are incorporated into the terms and conditions and staff handbook.

Work Location

Some posts require the post holder to travel to different locations throughout the Force. Please refer to the documentation provided by HR Recruitment to check if this is a requirement of the role for which you are applying.

Working Hours

The normal working week is 37 hours. Refreshment periods are not included in these hours. Normally, duties will be performed as described at the initial interview, in the offer letter and main terms and conditions of employment. As the police service has a 24 hour, seven day week commitment, there may occasionally be a need for an employee to work at

times and places, other than normal, especially on such occasions as major crimes, disasters or special operations.

Holiday Entitlement

The annual leave year runs from 1st January to 31st December. The leave entitlement per year is as follows:

Salary Broad Band 1:

23 working days rising to 28 working days after 5 completed years' service

Salary Broad Bands 2 and 3:

24 working days rising to 29 working days after 5 completed years' service

Salary Broad Bands 4 and 5:

30 working days

Employees receive pay for annual leave and public holidays.

Part time employees will receive annual leave and bank holidays on a pro-rata basis; these will be calculated in hours.

Employees starting or leaving employment during the year are entitled to leave proportionate to the number of completed months of service during the year.

Payment of Salaries

The Broad Band Pay Structure which operates within Thames Valley Police has five broad salary bands, each with a defined top and bottom range level. All jobs will be allocated to an appropriate pay reference point within these bands.

Each annual salary review (effective from 1 September) will be conducted in accordance with the Police Staff Reward policy/guidance, which will take account of market pay levels in the Thames Valley area and other relevant survey information including data on retention and from recruitment experience.

Thames Valley Police operate performance related pay linked to the Performance Development Review (PDR) process.

All Police Staff are paid by credit transfer to a bank or building society account.

Pensions and Superannuation Contributions

Any employee is eligible for membership to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). All employees are brought into the LGPS upon starting work (unless they opt out), except for casual employees, who are only brought in if they opt in. The contribution rate is 6% of pensionable remuneration and contributions will be deducted from the employee's salary. Thames Valley Police contribute a varying amount each year to ensure the Pension Fund is at 100%. Further details of benefits under this scheme may be obtained from the Force's pension advisers at Buckinghamshire County Council.

Health and Safety

It is the duty of all Thames Valley Police personnel, irrespective of rank, grade or position, to take reasonable care of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

All personnel have a duty to co-operate with the Force in order to ensure compliance with the health and safety policy statement and its implementation. No-one should intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything that has been provided for health and safety reasons.

Probation

The appointment of police staff to the service of Thames Valley Police will normally be subject to a period of probation not exceeding six months. For Trainee Police Enquiry Officers and Trainee Communication Operators the normal period of probation is nine months. During this period, the member of staff is expected to establish his/her suitability for the appointment. The probationary period may be extended where it is deemed necessary.

Training

Thames Valley Police is committed to providing its employees with learning opportunities e.g.

- "On the job" training
- Internal and external training courses
- Support for Study - up to 50% sponsorship may be awarded
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in Customer Services, Training and Development, and Administration.

Health and Welfare

Thames Valley Police provides the following benefits for employees:

Maternity Provisions, Adoption Leave, Compassionate Leave, Time off for Dependents, Paternity Leave, Parental Leave and flexible working where appropriate.

Welfare and Occupational Health

Thames Valley Police has a Welfare and Occupational Health unit providing a confidential service to all members of staff.

Health Scheme

A health scheme is available which is run through an external provider.

No Smoking Policy

Thames Valley Police operates a no-smoking policy in order to create a healthy and comfortable environment for all members of staff.

Sports and Social Club Membership

The Sports and Social Club arrange frequent events including theatre trips and other excursions. Members may also join the monthly Force Lottery which has various cash prizes. Gymnasiums are available at some Thames Valley Police sites.

Queries

If you have any queries about completing your application form, please contact [HR Recruitment](#). You will find contact details provided in your application pack.

Data Protection Act: Consent and Certification of Details:

Thames Valley Police Authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers. If you are successful in your application, as well as using the personal information you provide in written or electronic form for the purposes of staff administration, the Authority may use this information for the prevention and detection of fraud. The Authority may also share this information for the same purpose with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds.

For further information please refer to the National Fraud Initiative link on www.tvpa.police.uk.

Please visit our website www.thamesvalley.police.uk for more information about Thames Valley Police.

We thank you for your interest in Thames Valley Police and look forward to receiving your application form.