

# **POLICE VOLUNTEER APPLICANT GUIDANCE NOTES**

Thank you for the interest you have shown in Thames Valley Police. These notes are for your reference when completing the online 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 a personal file.

## **How to Complete the Online Application Form**

The online application form is a standard form used for all roles. 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, or if you wish to receive your application form in an alternative format please contact [Police Staff Recruitment](#).

## ***Application Form***

### **Post Details**

Each online application form that you complete is only considered for the role that it is linked to. However, some positions may be available at more than one location. Therefore, if an advert offers a choice of locations, please make sure you enter a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice when prompted.

### **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.

### **Interview Dates**

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.

### **Disability**

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is defined 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. The Equality Act does not apply to volunteering but Thames Valley Police will endeavor to make reasonable adjustments to make it possible for a person with disabilities to volunteer with our organisation.

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.

### ***References***

If you are successful at interview Thames Valley Police will take up references before you are confirmed in position. Please give the name and addresses of 2 people (not relatives) who have known you for a minimum of 2 years and are prepared to vouch for your character and recommend your application. Where possible, please give the details of your current or most recent employer or organisation where you have volunteered.

### ***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.

### **Permit to Volunteer**

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

### **Politically Restricted Posts**

Certain posts within the Force are "politically restricted". You may be politically restricted 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.

### **Driving Licence Particulars**

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

## ***Employment***

### **Work or Voluntary Work Experience**

Please give the names and addresses of your present/most recent and past employers or volunteer organisations. You must provide the dates you were employed, 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. This evidence can come from

employment, voluntary work, hobbies or education, but must be relevant to the role in question.

## ***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'.

### **Diversity Policy**

Thames Valley Police is committed to equality of opportunity for all regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation. We are actively seeking to have a volunteer team 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 role related criteria and ability to do the role.

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 Equality Act 2010. Although not a duty, we are also seeking to monitor sexual orientation and religion or belief to help us comply with the Equality Act 2010.

### **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 recruit people eligible to volunteer 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, permit to volunteer. 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 for 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 [Police Staff Recruitment](#) if you require specific arrangements.

### **Certificates for Qualifications**

You may 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.

## **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.

### **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.

### **No Smoking Policy**

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

## **Queries**

If you have any queries about completing your application form, please contact [Police Staff Recruitment](#).

### **Data Protection Act: Consent and Certification of Details:**

Thames Valley Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley are under a duty to protect the public funds they administer. 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, we may use this information for the prevention and detection of fraud.

We may also share this information for the same purpose with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds. In this case, any sharing of such personal information will be in full compliance with the Data Protection Act. For further information please refer to the [National Fraud Initiative](#).

Please visit our website [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://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.