

# **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 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 an employee personal file.

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

The online application form is a standard form used for all jobs. 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 or job application 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.

### **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 Business Partner (People). You must also get your application supported by your Business Partner (People) if you are applying for a secondment. This can be forwarded in an email to [Police Staff Recruitment](#).

### **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.

### **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.

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. **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](http://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](http://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).

### **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.

### **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.

## ***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 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 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 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 [Police Staff Recruitment](#) if you require specific arrangements.

### **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.

## **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.

# WORKING FOR THAMES VALLEY POLICE

## **Conditions of Service**

All police staff are directly employed by the Chief Constable. Any changes to conditions of service, agreed as a result of legislation or local or national negotiations between the Chief Constable 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 Police Staff 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, unless advertised otherwise. 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 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December. The leave entitlement per year is as follows:

### ***Salary Broad Band 1:***

170.20 hours rising to 207.20 hours after 5 completed years' service

### ***Salary Broad Bands 2 and 3:***

177.60 hours rising to 214.60 hours after 5 completed years' service

### ***Salary Broad Bands 4 and 5:***

220 hours

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 [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.