



## PEQF Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What are the new entry routes into the Police Service?

#### **Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)**

This is a three year apprenticeship that leads to a degree in Professional Policing Practice, enabling new recruits to join the police service as an apprentice police constable and earn while they learn.

The PCDA is a three-year programme combining operational duties with academic learning. On successful completion of your probation, you will achieve a **BSc (Hons) degree in Professional Policing Practice**.

Not only does the PCDA pathway provide unrivalled training and job security, you will earn whilst you learn, with no student fees to repay. You will undertake training in areas critical to effective 21st century policing, such as evidence-based policing, decision-making and discretion, risk and public protection and criminality and crime prevention.

Unlike a traditional degree course, new apprentice recruits will spend most of their time on frontline duties, in the same way probationers work now.

If you **do not** already hold a degree and are looking for a career that offers first-class training, continuous development, unrivalled variety and unique challenges, the PCDA is the route for you.

#### **Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP)**

This entry route is aimed at existing graduates whose degree is in a subject area other than policing, for example history or sociology, and who may not have considered policing as a career when they went to university.

New recruits who join through this route will undertake a two year learning programme to enable them to perform the role of police constable. Again, as above, the learning will be done in the classroom and the workplace.

Successful completion results in achievement of a **Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing**.

If you **already** hold a degree this programme offers a fantastic opportunity for you to continue to learn beyond your initial degree, whilst earning a salary as a fully warranted police officer from day one.

#### **'Pre-join' Degree in Professional Policing**

This entry route involves completion of a three-year knowledge-based Degree in Professional Policing, prior to joining the police service. Becoming a Special Constable may be included as part of this programme. Candidates who are subsequently recruited will undertake practice-based training to develop specific skills and will be assessed against national assessment criteria in order to demonstrate operational competence.

## **The initial policing learning and development programme (IPLDP)**

This is the original route into the service which is gradually being replaced with the three new entry routes but is still offered by some forces. You join a force and undertake a two-year programme after which if you successfully complete probation, you become a confirmed police constable ready for duties.

### **2. Can you still join the police without a degree?**

Yes, as above, the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) does not require you to have a degree. However, you will be working towards the completion of a professional degree-level apprenticeship as part of this entry route which will need to be successfully completed prior to being confirmed in post. You would need to meet the minimum entry requirements for the PCDA programme and pass the recruitment process set out by the City of London Police and Coventry University.

### **3. What qualifications will I need to apply?**

This will depend on the entry route you choose to join.

#### **To undertake the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) you will need:**

Applicants must **in addition** to the general eligibility criteria, must hold a **Level 2 GCSE/functional skills in English (Minimum Grade C and above)** or education equivalent to Level 2 at point of application. In addition, applicants must have a **Level 2 qualification in Maths (Grade C and above)**. If you do not currently hold a Level 2 in Maths, we will support you to achieve this alongside the first two years of training with us.

In addition, you must have achieved a minimum of two **A Levels Grade A\*- C** or equivalent Level 3 qualification that is a minimum of 32 UCAS points (you can check how many points your qualification is worth on the [UCAS tariff calculator](#)).

Applicants with one Level 3 qualification or without Level 3 qualifications can be considered if you are:

- Serving, or previously served as a substantive **PCSO** or **Special Constable** with any force and have independent patrol status (IPS). Previous service is a minimum of 18 months service and left no longer than 18 months ago.
- Previously served in the military, armed forces or similar law enforcement agency, have successfully completed the minimum term of service and have an exemplary reference (previous service in military or armed forces is a **minimum of two years within the last five years**).
- They have previous work experience that can demonstrate transferable skills relevant to the role of a Police Constable.
- Gained a Certificate in Knowledge of Policing previously.

To complete the **Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP)** you will need:

Applicants, in addition to the eligibility criteria above also have successfully completed, and be able to evidence, a UK undergraduate honours degree (360 credits) in any subject. Applicants with non – UK degrees can be considered if their degree is recognised as equivalent by UK National Recognition Information Centre but will need to provide evidence of an acceptable English language qualification if their degree was not taught and assessed in English.

**Please note that certificates for all qualifications will be required prior to joining the force.**

#### **4. How do I know which entry route is best for me?**

If you already hold a degree which is not in Professional Policing then we will sign post you to the Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP).

If you do not have a degree then you have two options open to yourself. The first is that you apply to a Force to join the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA), whereby you are employed as an Apprentice Police Constable, completing a degree in Professional Policing Practice during the three-year apprenticeship programme.

You can apply to any university who are offering the College of Policing licensed Degree in Professional Policing. The degree is achieved prior to applying to become a police officer and you would be recruited as a Police Constable who will have acquired all of the knowledge base relevant to performance of the role.

#### **5. If I apply via one entry route, can I change my mind and swap to another?**

City of London Police is unable to support applicants switching between the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and the Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) entry routes into policing once an application has been submitted and the campaign window has closed.

#### **6. Can I apply if I don't yet have my A-level / Degree results? Will you make a conditional offer?**

No, you will need to have all the qualifications at the point of the application.

#### **7. Is the pay different for each entry route?**

The starting salary for the Police Constable- Student Officer pathways with The City of London Police is £26.682+ allowances shown in the advert & information pack.

#### **8. Will I be paid whilst I am training to be a police officer and studying?**

Yes, you will be paid throughout the period that you are training and studying for your Degree Apprenticeship in Professional Policing Practice or Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice.

#### **9. Can I apply for the Apprenticeship Scheme even if I already have a degree?**

You can apply to the Apprenticeship Scheme if you already have a degree, as long as that degree is not in a policing related subject.

However, it is recommended that you apply for the Degree Holder Entry Programme instead. This may be more suitable as it is a shorter course with a higher starting salary.

Once your application has been submitted you will **not** be permitted to switch between the entry routes, so you should carefully consider which route is right for you.

#### **10. I've already studied Policing at University – is this the same?**

The new pre-join degree in Professional Policing is based upon a brand new College of Policing licensed curriculum. As such your degree in policing might have covered some areas of legislation and practice but not everything will have been covered. We would sign post you to undertake the Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered, although some of your learning already gained would likely be eligible for Recognised Prior Learning and may reduce the amount of learning you need to undertake.

#### **11. Which university is the City of London Police working with to deliver the new entry routes?**

The City of London Police will be working with **Coventry University**, which has a long tradition of delivering vocational degree education programmes. New student officers will be educated and trained by both City of London Police officers and Coventry University academic staff to ensure that they receive the best education to provide them with the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to provide an excellent service to the communities of the square mile in an ever more changing society.

#### **12. Where will I learn and study when completing the Apprenticeship or Degree Entry Holders Programme**

Learning will be delivered at City of London Police locations as well as at the Coventry University London Campus. Delivery will utilise a blend of online and face-to-face sessions, with the latter taking place at the Coventry University London campus based within the city and a few minutes' walk from Liverpool Street station.

### **13. How will learning and work be split during the Apprenticeship?**

Our programmes have been designed to mix both classroom based theory with blocks of operational experience spread over a 36 month period. This will allow student officers to link practical experiences to theory and reflect on their practice. A blended learning approach will also be seen throughout the programme. As an apprentice, we will ensure that you receive 20% of your contracted working hours to dedicate to the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to become an effective police constable.

### **14. I don't want to study for a degree, can I still join?**

All routes into policing in the City of London Police will now incorporate formal study to undergraduate level (Level 6) or higher.

### **15. Will I need to pay tuition fees?**

The Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) will be funded by the City of London Police by using funding from the Apprenticeship Levy. The Degree Holders Entry Programme (DHEP) is fully funded by the City of London Police.

### **16. Will I have to attend University for lectures?**

Learning is flexible but you will be required to attend essential sessions that can only be delivered face to face. Our students will log into Coventry University systems for distance learning and some face to face lectures will be delivered by the university at the Coventry University London campus, based within the city and a few minutes' walk from Liverpool Street station. There will also be opportunities for you to use Coventry University's excellent facilities to further support your learning.

### **17. How often will I be expected to study?**

Your study will be ongoing throughout the programme. However you will be required to use approximately 20% of your work time for off the job learning, which will incorporate a range of learning activities, such as lectures, seminars, practical training and self-guided study.

### **18. Will I have to study for exams during my degree or graduate diploma?**

Yes, you will be required to take some exams, but you will also achieve your degree by completing varied assignment work, such as written report and presentations, and by demonstrating your skills on the job.

### **19. Can I still work or study an additional course part time whilst I am training and completing Degree Apprenticeship or Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice?**

No, you will be working as a full time police officer while you are studying towards your degree or graduate diploma.

### **20. Is it all classroom study? How will I learn the practical elements of policing?**

No, there will be lots of practical training and 'on the job' development too. We will also provide as much support as you need to achieve the required outcomes.

### **21. Can I choose which University I gain my qualification from?**

No, we are partnered with Coventry University to deliver the degree apprenticeship and graduate diploma. This partnership will bring two outstanding organisations together to provide an excellent opportunity for you to gain the best possible experience and qualification.

### **22. I don't have the required level two qualification in English – what can I do?**

A GCSE in English (Grade C and above) or equivalent is mandatory to apply for the role.

**23. I'm waiting for the results of my qualifications – can I still apply?**

No, currently we don't accept predicted grades and would require evidence of you passing your course. Therefore, at the point of application you need to already hold the minimum qualification for the entry route you have applied.

**24. I'm waiting for the results of my Level 2 qualifications – can I still apply?**

No, you will need to already hold the minimum qualifications for the entry route you have applied.

**25. For the degree conversion, does this include any foreign degree?**

To undertake the Degree Holder Entry Programme (a 120-credit Level 6 Graduate Diploma, in essence a graduate conversion) individuals must hold a bachelor's degree. On behalf of the UK Government a national agency called UK NARIC undertakes the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, and provides vital support to universities. If they deem your foreign degree an equivalent to a bachelor's degree then you will be allowed to use this, dependant on University regulations.

**26. What are my options once I have joined as a police officer?**

The foundation stage for both the PCDA and DHEP are very similar where you will learn the basic skills and knowledge that allows you to start working 'on the streets' alongside experienced uniform police colleagues and start putting your knowledge into practice.

In the final year of either programme you will work in one of three core policing roles, response policing, community policing or conducting investigations, where the learning is more tailored to those areas. However, once you have successfully completed your probationary period and have been confirmed in post as a Police Constable, you will have the option to look for promotion or specialise in areas such as serious crime investigation, roads policing, operations, etc. in the same way as any other serving police officer. Policing really does offer you career opportunities that very few other jobs do.

**27. What leave do I get when I am in training?**

During the first year of the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) the training is split into a number of teaching weeks comprised of classroom-based learning and working on operational patrol with a an experienced tutor constable to mentor you in your new role.

As such three weeks of your four weeks annual allocation will already be planned into the training programme. The fourth week will be for you to take once you are working on independent patrol. In years two and three you will have more freedom to choose when you would like to take your leave, although you will not be permitted to take leave during any of your formal blocks of learning.

**28. Will you get a student card with the apprentice route?**

Yes you will receive a student identity card. As well as being a full-time employed police officer, you are also a student at Coventry University and will have access to their facilities such as the library, support networks, student union, etc.

**29. Will I be expected to work night shifts?**

Yes, police officers work on a rota system which includes both day and night shifts, including weekends and public/bank holidays.

**30. Can I work part time?**

You will have to work full time during your probation – two or three years dependent on route but you can apply for part time working once this is completed. It should be noted there is no guarantee of part time working being granted in particular roles; requests are considered on an individual basis.

**31. If successful, can I join a specialist unit or become a detective?**

Not at first. All newly recruited police officers must undergo a probationary period in which you'll spend time in a response team, although attachments to other teams may be given.

**32. Can I choose where I work?**

No, you will need to be prepared to work within the Square Mile and at any department of the City of London Police.

**33. I live outside of the City of London, can I still apply?**

Yes, we welcome applications from outside the force area.

**34. Once I have passed my probation, are there opportunities for career development and promotion?**

Yes, you will be supported to develop throughout your career. There are a wealth of opportunities as a police officer including promotions through the ranks or lateral moves into specialist teams such as investigation including safeguarding, neighbourhoods, roads policing etc.

**35. What benefits does the City of London Police offer?**

There are many benefits, click here for details: <https://careers.cityoflondon.police.uk/working>

These include:

- Free travel in London
- Receive extensive training and development throughout your career
- Have access to a generous pension scheme
- Access to additional schemes such as childcare vouchers, employee assistance programme and lifestyle discounts.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**36. What are the basic eligibility requirements?**

The main entry criteria for police officers are as follows:

**Age:**

You must be 17 years old or over and no older than 57 at the point of joining. You can start the application process if you are 17 years old, but you must have reached 18 years to start the course.

**Residency:**

We do not have specific London Residency criteria and would welcome all eligible candidates across UK. You **must** however have resided in the United Kingdom for a minimum of three years prior to applying.

**Nationality:**

If you're from outside the EEA, it is essential that you have leave to remain in the UK for an indefinite period. If you are from within the EEA and not a British national you will still require proof for an indefinite leave to remain in the UK.

Candidates who are eligible will be invited to the City of London Police for a suitability interview. If successful, the following pre-employment checks will be required: Vetting, Medical assessment including eyesight standards, Fitness test, DNA, Fingerprints and Substance Misuse testing.

**37. Are there height restrictions?**

No, there is no minimum or maximum height requirements

**38. Do I need to hold a full driving licence?**

You do not need to hold a full driving licence to apply.

**39. I have a criminal conviction or caution - can I still work for the police?**

This will depend on the nature of the conviction or caution. You will need to provide full details to assist our vetting department in making a decision, via the applications process.

**PLEASE NOTE:** applicants must declare all convictions and cautions. Failure to declare certain details will seriously undermine an individual's integrity and credibility and is likely to prevent them from appointment, regardless of the nature / seriousness of the incident.

**40. Can I apply if I have been bankrupt?**

It is unlikely that you will be granted police vetting clearance if you are currently bankrupt, or if three years has not yet passed since your bankruptcy debts were discharged. The specific circumstances can be looked into on a case by case basis. If three years has passed since your bankruptcy debts have been discharged, a certificate of satisfaction will be required to confirm this.

**41. Can I apply if I have a County Court Judgment (CCJ)?**

It is unlikely that you will be granted police vetting clearance if you have an outstanding County Court Judgement (CCJ). The specific circumstances will be looked into on a case by case basis. If you have recently discharged your debt, a certificate of satisfaction will be required to confirm this.

**42. Can I apply if I have an Independent Voluntary Agreement (IVA)?**

If you have a current Independent Voluntary Agreement (IVA) a vetting application can be considered. However, you will be required to show that there is an IVA repayment plan in place and that you've maintained regular payments over a number of months.

**43. Can I continue with my other business interests?**

You must declare any other employment for hire or gain, or any other business interests that you intend to maintain, when you apply to become a police constable. A decision on your eligibility will be made based on all the information provided during the recruitment and selection process, and whether your business interests are compatible with performing the role of a police officer.

This also includes if you, or one of your close relatives, holds a license or permit relating to alcohol licensing, refreshment houses or betting and gaming or regulating places of entertainment in the force area.

**44. I am involved in politics, is this OK?**

Police officers are not permitted to take an active part in politics.

**45. I have a tattoo can I still apply?**

Tattoos are not a bar to appointment. However, some tattoos could potentially offend members of the public or colleagues, or could bring discredit to the police service. It depends on their size, nature and location, and sometimes on the extent.

Members of the public are largely accepting of police officers and staff with visible tattoos. Visible tattoos are unacceptable if they could reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory or offensive and/or indicate attitudes or views inconsistent with the College of Policing's Code.

**46. I have dyslexia, will reasonable adjustments be made for me?**

Adjustments such as more time to complete assessment centre exercises, ICT provision/aides to complete studies, and workplace adaptations can be made to ensure those with dyslexia are not put at a disadvantage on either the PCDA or DHEP. Adjustments will depend on the degree of your dyslexia which should be

confirmed in a report by educational psychologist. We ask any successful candidates that would like adjustments to be considered to provide this report at their own cost.

**47. How long does the selection process take? Can I choose when I start?**

The process length varies – we strive to complete the process within six months but it may considerably take longer. The process includes:

1. Completing the application form including proof of eligibility and assessment of your competency-based questions
2. Online assessment centre programme
3. Provisional offer
4. Pre-employment checks including fitness test, medical, references and vetting
5. Application to Coventry University for entry to the programme.

Once your checks are complete, we will generally offer you the next available start date considering your notice period.

**48. Will the applications process be adapted in any way given the current restrictions around COVID-19?**

Yes, so far as is possible we are business as usual, however under these uncertain times the force may be required adjust our approach and in these circumstances you will be informed of any changes

**49. Do I need to pass the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) before I apply?**

No, completing the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing (CKP) is not a requirement. However, if you have achieved this it will contribute to your overall UCAS points.

**50. I've previously applied to be a police officer in the City of London Police or another force – can I reapply?**

Yes, you can re-apply but assuming you have a valid SEARCH/DAY 1 pass or if you are beyond the validity time period that you are eligible to undertake assessment again.

**51. I am already part of the police family as Special Constable. Is this be considered towards the required qualifications?**

Yes, as long as you have at least 18 month's service as a Special Constable who has achieved Independent Patrol Status and is performing minimum hours.

**52. What about Police Staff members - is their service taken into account towards the required qualifications?**

Yes, as long as you have work experience that can demonstrate transferable skills relevant to the role of a Police Constable. Suitability of your professional experience will be jointly assessed by the City of London Police and Coventry University.

**53. I already have an application to become a police officer with another force – is that OK?**

You can apply to more than one police force/service at a time. However, you can only progress to the online assessment centre stage with one force.

**54. I have applied to become a PCSO / other police staff role – is that OK?**

Yes, you can have other live applications with the City of London Police, or another force, that aren't for the role of a police officer. However, as the applications progress you will need to make a decision on which you would like to take further.

**55. I've already passed the SEARCH / Day One assessment centre through my application to another police force, can I transfer my score?**

You will need to apply in the normal way and pass the assessment of your application form; once you reach this point, we will request confirmation of your SEARCH score and confirm its validity.



**56. I already work as police staff in the City of London Police, or another force, is the process the same for me?**

Yes, the recruitment and selection process is consistent for all.

**57. Can I claim expenses for attending the fitness test and medical?**

We are not able to reimburse you for any expenses incurred as part of the recruitment process??

**58. What is biometric vetting and what happens to the samples I give?**

Biometric vetting checks will be undertaken on those candidates who have reached the stage of being considered suitable and are undergoing pre-employment checks. A fingerprint and DNA sample will be taken and checks made against the appropriate databases. The purpose of the searches is to determine whether:

- The individual has come to police attention;
- If so, whether that was under the identity being used for the application; and
- If the individual is linked to any outstanding crime scene marks or stains

Only one set of fingerprints and DNA sample will be required. If subsequently appointed, these samples will be retained on the respective police database for elimination purposes. For those not appointed, their fingerprints, DNA sample and DNA profile and all copies and records will be destroyed.

**59. What does the drugs test involve?**

A hair sample will be used for drug and or substance abuse. For those unable to provide a hair sample, an alternative test may be utilised.

**60. What does the fitness test involve? How can I prepare?**

The test focuses on aerobic capacity. The purpose of the fitness test is to ensure that candidates have a basic level of fitness for entry into the police service. You will carry out a shuttle run over a 15 metre area and run in time with a bleep. At the end of each level, the time in between the bleeps is shortened and you therefore have to run faster to keep up with the pace. The recruit pass mark is level 5.4. This involves running for approximately 3 mins 40 seconds. It is mandatory that you maintain fitness for duty and to pass a fitness test on an annual basis. Failure to do so may result in your inability to complete your probationary period.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS:**

**61. How will you contact me through the process?**

Generally, we'll contact you via email. If we need to reach you quickly, we may give you a call. Invitations to assessment will be sent via email. It's important that you provide us with your correct details and update us if anything changes. It is important that you regularly check your spam or junk folder also.

**62. How do I contact the City of London Police if I have any questions about my application?**

Please read through the information on our recruitment pages and these FAQs. If you are unable to find the answer to your question, please email [Student Officer](#).

Please remember the process does take some time to complete and we are unable to provide specific feedback on progress of your application. However, we will keep you updated at key points in the process.

**63. I have a student visa – is that sufficient for me to apply?**

No, international students are not able to apply.

**64. How do I contact the City of London Police about my application?**

Regular updates will be provided and candidates can also contact HR Services about their application by emailing [Student Officer](#).

**65. I currently have a live application with another Police force, can I apply to the City of London Police?**

You can apply to more than one police force/service at a time. However, you can only progress to the online assessment centre stage with one force.

**66. I have a previous caution as a minor, but I can't remember the dates. Would I need to include this on my application form?**

Please declare any involvement with the Police - Civil, Military or Transport Police. Include as much information as possible, including cautions and traffic offences regardless of how recent they are. Where you don't have specific dates, provide all the details that are available so this can be reviewed accurately.

**67. Do I have to notify changes to my personal circumstances?**

Any significant changes in personal circumstances during your application, such as medical, permanent partner, new residents at your home, change of address, arrests, cautions or convictions or association with criminals should be notified to email [Student Officer](#).

**68. Will my medical history affect my application?**

Your medical history will be reviewed by our Occupational Health Department at your medical appointment. This will be carried out by a nurse and a doctor and each application is considered on an individual basis.

**69. Should I hand my notice into my current employer at the Conditional Offer stage?**

No, you are strongly advised not to hand your notice into your current employer until you have received your Formal Offer. Successful candidates will receive their Formal Offer of Employment once all pre-employment checks have been successfully completed and an intake date confirmed.

**70. How will I be assigned to an intake?**

Candidates are required to successfully pass all stages of the recruitment process in order to be issued with a final offer. Candidates will be progressed for an intake as and when pre-employment checks are complete, any delays in these checks may result in your application being deferred to a later intake date.

**71. Do you provide any support for applicants with protected characteristics?**

Support is available throughout the recruitment process for applicants through HR Services and our staff Support Networks who will ensure that will answer all of your questions. For further information on the networks and their contact details please visit: [Force support networks contacts](#).