



College of  
Policing

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LEADBEYOND

# Direct Entry Inspector

Frequently asked questions

Version 2

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## Is there an age limit?

We will consider applications from people up to the age of 57 (at the time of application).

## Is there a probationary period?

Yes. This programme runs for a total of 24 months. You will be on probation for the length of the programme.

## What will happen if I decide that the programme is unsuitable for me or I am deemed unsuitable during the ongoing assessment?

Because you will be on probation, standard regulations will apply. There will not be an opportunity to reduce in rank. Programme members must pass each assessment component to graduate the programme. If deemed unsuitable, programme members will exit the programme, although in exceptional circumstances the probationary period may be extended.

## Can I apply for both Direct Entry programmes?

No. You can only apply for either the Direct Entry Inspector or the Direct Entry Superintendent programme.

## Can I apply to more than one force?

During the application process, you can indicate your preferred force by ranking the forces that are participating. If you are recommended to join the programme following the National Assessment Centre but are not offered a position with your preferred force, you will be considered for other forces through a national clearing process.

## Is there a maximum number of times that I can apply for the programme?

You can apply for the programme as many times as you want. If, however, you attend the National Assessment Centre and are unsuccessful on two occasions, you will not be eligible to attend for a third time within a five-year period.

## Will applicants be tested for substance misuse?

Yes, all applicants may be subjected to a substance misuse test during the course of the selection process. We will ask for your consent to take either a hair, urine or saliva sample prior to the test. Failure to provide a sample may result in your application being terminated.

## Is the interactive self-selection questionnaire part of the application process?

No, but we strongly recommend that you check our core competencies and complete this before beginning the application process. It will ensure that you are eligible for your chosen programme and suitable for a career in the police service.

## Will I have the same powers as a regular police officer?

Yes. Successful applicants will be warranted police officers with the full powers of any other regular officer.

## Are candidates guaranteed a job at the end of the programme?

Yes, all candidates who successfully complete the full programme (and pass the ongoing and final assessments) will be guaranteed an appointment.

## Does having a disability affect applications?

The Equality Act 2010 applies to all appointments in the police service and we welcome applications from people with disabilities. Adjustments will be made to the selection process and/or the working environment wherever possible.

## If I have a learning difficulty (such as dyslexia), can any adjustments be made?

All candidates attending the National Assessment Centre can apply for a reasonable adjustment if they have a recognised disability in line with the Equality Act 2010. Please review the 'Reasonable Adjustment and Accommodation' policy here. It is also a good idea to notify your chosen force when you fill out the application form. That way, you can ensure that any relevant adjustments can be made to the in-force sifting processes.

## How can I check on the progress of my application?

A series of emails will be sent to you, updating you on your application progress. You can also log in to your online account to check the status.

## Is there anything I can do to prepare for the National Assessment Centre?

Make sure you are familiar with the core competencies required and make an honest assessment of your strengths, plus any areas that need some development. This is the best way to see if you are suitable for the programme.

## Will flexible working be allowed while I am on the programme?

This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and each individual force will have its own process.

## Will I be able to put my participation in the programme on hold?

If there are unforeseen and exceptional personal circumstances in which a programme member wishes to defer from the programme, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and in agreement with the force chief officer lead and the College Fast Track and Direct Entry programme lead. Exceptional personal circumstances may include, but are not limited to, the ill health of the officer or a close family member, maternity, paternity/maternity support or adoption leave, or other significant personal matters.

## Will I have to work shifts?

Policing is a 24-hour operation, so shift work is a necessary element of the job. Your actual shift pattern will depend on the need of your individual force, but it is likely that you will occasionally need to work at night and weekends as well as being on call.

## How many hours will I work per week?

You will be required to work around 40 hours per week, in line with other police officers.

## Will I need a degree?

While a degree-level qualification or equivalent experience within the workplace is desirable to participate in the programme, it is not a prerequisite for application. Currently, there are no specific academic or educational qualifications required in order to apply for the Direct Entry Inspector programme.

## Can existing police officers apply?

Existing police officers can apply for the Direct Entry Inspector programme. Those who are interested in a scheme designed for acceleration to the rank of inspector, however, might be better served by the Fast Track (police constable to inspector) programme.

## What career opportunities are there in policing once I have completed the programme?

The programme provides you with the skills required to become a competent uniformed inspector. On completing the programme, programme members will be able to apply for other roles and promotion opportunities in the same way as other inspectors.

## Will I receive a salary when on the programme?

Yes, programme members receive a starting salary of around £48,000 a year from day one of the programme. Different allowances may be paid in each force.

## Will I required to work away from my force?

During the College-delivered phases of the programme, you will occasionally be required to travel and stay away from home for periods of time. You may be required to work from different police stations in your force area in order to give you an opportunity to experience a range of situations while on the programme.

## How long is the training and where will it be delivered?

The programme is for 24 months. Approximately 80 per cent of your time will be in force on operational rotations performing core police duties at ranks up to and including inspector. The remaining 20 per cent of the time will consist primarily of taught lessons delivered at one of the College of Policing's sites.

## Do I have to pay for the programme?

No, programme members are not required to pay for the programme.

## Will successful applicants complete the same initial training as a regular police officer?

Programme members will complete a largely bespoke training programme that will provide all the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the role of inspector. This will not be the same as a regular police officer but will provide you with a broad foundation of knowledge and practical exposure on which to build.

## How will programme members be assessed?

Programme members will be assessed through a combination of methods, including knowledge-based examination, work-based assessment and community and operationally focused projects.