

College of Policing

Online assessment process

Candidate guide

Version 1.5

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1. Introduction

Congratulations on reaching the College of Policing online assessment process.

This guide provides information on the College of Policing online assessment process for all police constable applicants who have been invited to take part. This guide sets out what the assessment will involve, how you will be assessed and how you can prepare. It can also be used to help people who have a general interest in the process, or who are considering applying to become a police constable, to find out more information on the assessment and what to expect.

We recommend that you take the time to read this guide before starting the assessment. We wish you the best of luck with the process.

2. What is the College of Policing online assessment process?

The College of Policing online assessment process is an online process for the recruitment of police constables. It is a series of stages containing exercises that test the key competencies and values that are important for police constables.

The Competency and Values Framework (CVF) sets out the behaviours expected of everyone working in policing. You can find out more about the CVF here:

<https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/competency-and-values-framework/Pages/Competency-and-Values-framework.aspx>

3. What does the online assessment process involve?

The online assessment process is a staged process that consists of up to four exercises over three stages. The exact number of stages depends on the force you apply to, as some forces use a different sifting process.

The process is broken up as follows:

- Stage 1 – Situational judgement test (SJT)
- Stage 2 – Competency-based video interview
- Stage 3 – Written exercise and briefing exercise

Some forces may require you to undertake a sifting exercise before completing the online assessment. Candidates applying to these forces will, after successfully completing the force's sifting exercise, progress immediately to stage 2. If you apply to a force that does not require you to complete a sifting exercise, you will undertake stage 1.

No prior knowledge of the role of a police officer or any policing knowledge is required to complete the exercises. Further information on the role profile of a police constable can be found here: <https://profdev.college.police.uk/professional-profile/police-constable/>

4. How do I begin the online assessment process?

Once you have completed your force application, you will receive an email informing you to complete either stage 1 or stage 2 of the assessment process (depending on which force you are applying to).

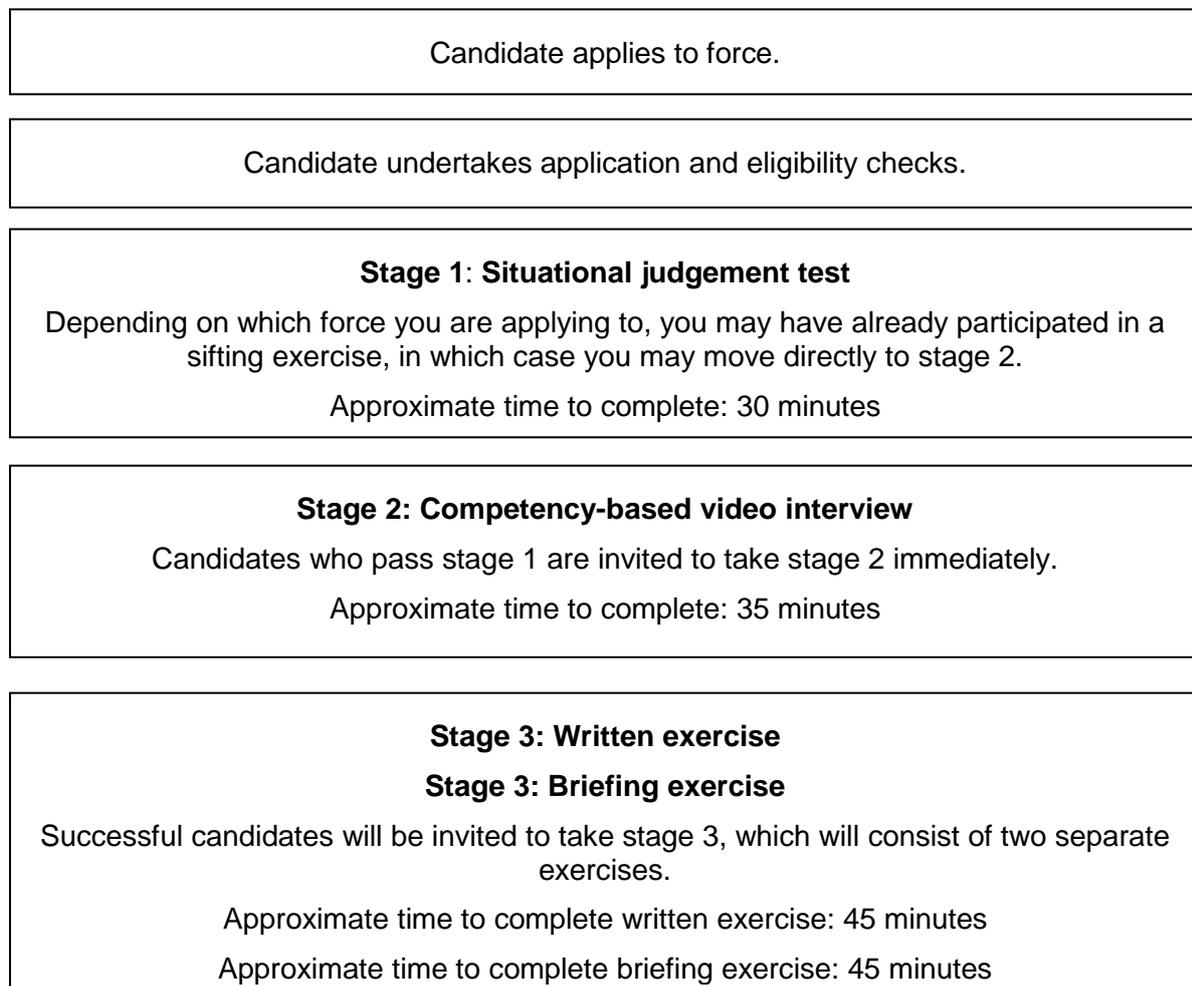
For candidates completing stage 1 – Once you have received your email and visited the link to complete the SJT, you will be given further information and instruction regarding how to complete the test. Once you have read the information, you will then be taken to the live

test. Upon completion, you will be immediately notified whether you have progressed to the next stage. If you have progressed, you will be given information to take stage 2.

For candidates completing stage 2 – Once you have received your email and visited the link to complete the competency-based interview, you will be given further information and instruction regarding how to complete the interview. Once you have read the information, you will be taken to the live interview. You will see and hear interview questions, and you will be asked to record yourself giving your answers to the questions. Upon completion, your recording will be sent to an assessor to mark.

5. Your journey as a candidate

Please see below a breakdown of the online assessment process from a candidate perspective.



6. Process breakdown

Stage 1: Situational judgement test

This test measures your ability to choose the appropriate action in situations similar to those you are likely to face as a police constable. This test will measure your judgement and ability to make effective decisions against the CVF.

What to expect

You'll be presented with 12 different questions, each with four response options.

After each question, you'll be prompted to say what you would do in the situation described.

Read each question carefully, and then select the response that you think is right.

The test is untimed, so don't rush things. Be sure to read everything carefully before making your selections. The test is to be completed in one sitting.

Before the test, we encourage you to:

- ensure you are in a quiet room without distractions, so you can concentrate
- make sure you have a strong internet connection via wifi – if you have a weak connection, or if you are unsure, connect via an Ethernet cable
- ensure you have the latest version of your chosen internet browser installed

During the test, we encourage you to:

- pick the response that you think is the most effective response for the scenario
- answer the questions in the order they are presented, as you must give an answer before moving on to the next question
- answer all of the questions
- contact us immediately if you have any technical issues, either via the 'need help' button that is visible during your exercise or directly at support@LaunchPadrecruits.com so we can support a resolution – please do not finish the test if you are experiencing technical issues

What do I need to take the test?

You just need a laptop, desktop computer, mobile device or tablet.

How long will the test take?

This exercise is expected to take up to 30 minutes. However, you will have up to 120 minutes to complete the test.

Can I take breaks?

No. This test must be completed in one sitting.

Do I need any specific experience to take, or do well in, the test?

No. All of the scenarios have been carefully designed and do not require any specific technical knowledge. They're appropriate for all candidates, irrespective of experience.

How long will it take to receive my outcome?

You will receive your outcome via the system immediately upon completion of this stage. If you are successful, you will be invited to take stage 2.

Is there a deadline to complete the tests?

In your invitation, you will be advised how long you have to complete each stage. This will differ from force to force.

This is an assessment process designed to help us find the very best candidates. It's very important to us that we give you an insight into what it's like to work as a police constable, so the questions have been carefully designed to do this.

Stage 2: Competency-based interview

You will be asked a series of questions about how you have dealt with specific situations in the past. This is your opportunity to provide some examples of the key competencies and values that are important for police constables. You can use examples from both your work and your personal life.

What to expect

The interview will follow a structured format with a set list of questions. These questions are designed to make the process as fair and objective as possible.

You will be presented with five questions in total. You will be asked each question in turn. Each question will have some supplementary points for you to consider when answering the questions.

Each question and the supplementary points will be presented as text on-screen. A pre-recorded video will also appear with an assessor reading the questions to you. For each question, you will then have 1 minute to consider the question and prepare your answer, after which you will have 5 minutes to record your answer.

You will not be able to re-record your answer.

Nothing that you say during the initial 1 minute will be marked by the assessor. Once you have completed a response for the first question, you will then move on to the next question and progress through until you have completed all five.

In this exercise, you will be assessed on the following competencies and values from the CVF:

- integrity
- public service
- transparency
- we take ownership
- we are innovative and open-minded

An assessor will review your responses once your session is completed.

Please ensure that you are able to complete this exercise in one sitting. You will not be able to pause or restart the exercise once you begin.

Before the test, we encourage you to:

- ensure you are in a quiet room without distractions, so you can concentrate
- have access to a working microphone, a webcam and Adobe Flash Player
- make sure you have a strong internet connection via wifi – if you have a weak connection, or if you are unsure, connect via an Ethernet cable
- ensure you have the latest version of your chosen internet browser installed

During the test, we encourage you to:

- refer to the online guidance given on the platform, but do not make any copy of the material by any means
- express yourself clearly and concisely
- be specific – remember that you only have a limited amount of time to respond
- try to relax – we are only making an assessment based on what you tell us about how you have dealt with situations in the past, nothing else
- answer all of the questions
- contact us immediately if you have any technical issues, either via the 'need help' button that is visible during your exercise or directly at support@LaunchPadrecruits.com so we can support a resolution – please do not finish the test if you are experiencing technical issues

What do I need to take the interview?

You just need a laptop, desktop computer, tablet or mobile device with access to a microphone, a webcam and Adobe Flash Player. If you are using a mobile device, please download the 'LaunchPad video interview' app.

How long will the interview take?

Up to 35 minutes. You will be asked five questions. For each question, you will be given 1 minute to consider the question and 5 minutes to record your response.

Can I take breaks?

No. This test must be completed in one sitting.

Is there a deadline to complete the interview?

This will be specified in your email from the force to which you applied.

Can I request feedback for the interview?

If you are unsuccessful at this stage, you will receive feedback in the form of a report that sets out how you performed against competency areas.

Stage 3: Written exercise

In this exercise, you will assume the role of a police constable and will have to complete an urgent written task for your line manager. You will receive four items of information to help you with this task. In your response, please only use the information provided and do not add or invent any additional information.

For this exercise, you will be assessed against the following competencies and values from the CVF:

- impartiality
- we analyse critically
- we deliver, support and inspire
- we are collaborative

You will have 40 minutes to read the information and complete the written exercise.

You must complete this exercise in one sitting. You cannot pause or restart the exercise once it has started.

Before the test, we encourage you to:

- ensure you are in a quiet room without distractions, so you can concentrate
- have access to a working microphone, webcam and flash player for verification
- make sure you have a strong internet connection via wifi – if you have a weak connection, or if you are unsure, connect via an Ethernet cable
- ensure you have the latest version of your chosen internet browser installed

During the test, we encourage you to:

- make note of the timer displayed in the top left of your screen to manage your time
- make use of the information that is provided to you within the exercise
- contact us immediately if you have any technical issues, either via the 'need help' button that is visible during your exercise or directly at support@LaunchPadrecruits.com so we can support a resolution – please do not finish the test if you are experiencing technical issues
- ensure you do not close your browser, as you may lose time during a timed assessment

What do I need to take the test?

You just need a laptop, desktop computer or tablet with access to a microphone, webcam and flash player to record your name at the end of the exercise. This is to confirm your identity when taking the assessment.

Can I take breaks?

No. This test must be completed in one sitting.

Do I take the written and briefing exercises together?

No. Although both exercises are part of stage 3, you will receive invitations to the two exercises separately.

Is there a deadline to complete the stage 3 exercises?

This will be specified in your email from the force to which you applied.

Can I request feedback for the stage 3 exercises?

If you are unsuccessful at this stage, you will receive feedback in the form of a report that sets out how you performed against competency areas.

Stage 3: Briefing exercise

In this exercise, you will assume the role of a police constable and will have responsibility for dealing with some issues presented to you. You will be tasked with providing a response to a number of questions in relation to this issue. You will be provided with preparation materials to consider your answer. In your response, please only use the information provided and do not add any additional information.

What to expect

The exercise will last a maximum of 46 minutes in total. The time taken to read these candidate instructions is not included within the timings for this exercise. The exercise will comprise of the following.

- 10 minutes to read the preparation materials independently and consider your response to part 1 of the scenario. Please do not present your response during this time, as these 10 minutes are not assessed.
- A further 36 minutes in which you will be given questions to answer. This will be split into three parts.
 - Part 1 – 12 minutes for you to present your initial thoughts to the questions posed in the candidate materials.
 - Part 2 – 12 minutes to consider part 2 of the scenario, where you will be provided with further information followed by four questions.
 - Part 3 – 12 minutes to consider part 3 of the scenario, where you will be provided with further information followed by four questions.

In this exercise, you will be assessed on the following competencies and values from the CVF:

- public service
- we are emotionally aware
- we take ownership
- we are innovative and open-minded

Before the test, we encourage you to:

- ensure you are in a quiet room without distractions, so you can concentrate
- have access to a working microphone, a webcam and Adobe Flash Player
- make sure you have a strong internet connection via wifi – if you have a weak connection, or if you are unsure, connect via an Ethernet cable
- ensure you have the latest version of your chosen internet browser installed

During the test, we encourage you to:

- consider the issues raised and how the police can build positive relationships
- prepare alone and without reference to any materials or information, whether electronic or printed
- remember you will be recorded during the preparation phase, which is not assessed
- contact us immediately if you have any technical issues, either via the 'need help' button that is visible during your exercise or directly at support@LaunchPadrecruits.com so we can support a resolution – please do not finish the test if you are experiencing technical issues
- ensure you do not close your browser, as you may lose time during a timed assessment

What do I need to take the briefing exercise?

You just need a laptop, desktop computer or tablet with access to a microphone, a webcam and Adobe Flash Player.

Can I take breaks?

No. This test must be completed in one sitting.

Do I take the written and briefing exercises together?

No. Although both exercises are part of stage 3, you will receive invitations to the two exercises separately.

Is there a deadline to complete the stage 3 exercises?

This will be specified in your email from the force to which you applied.

Can I request feedback for the stage 3 exercises?

If you are unsuccessful at this stage, you will receive feedback in the form of a report that sets out how you performed against competency areas.

7. How can I prepare?

Firstly, reading this candidate guide will help you know what to expect on the day and how to prepare effectively.

It may also be useful for you to consider your experience in relation to each of the competencies and values being assessed.

You may find it useful to carry out a self-assessment in order to think of any competencies you could develop or get more experience of. You may also consider talking to your colleagues, family and friends about the assessment.

8. How should I approach the online assessment process?

- Be professional.
- Stay relaxed.
- Have an open mind.
- Be yourself.
- Behave as naturally as possible.
- Remember that all the information you will need is provided to you.
- Read and listen to instructions carefully.
- Enjoy the experience and your opportunity to demonstrate what you are capable of.

9. How to plan for your attendance

- Read relevant documents sent to you by your recruiting force.
- Read the CVF and think about how you can demonstrate the competencies and values being assessed.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Ensure you have all the relevant equipment required to access the exercises online.
- Ensure the system you use is up to date and working at full capacity to support performance.

10. Frequently asked questions

What is the Red Flag policy?

You are expected to act in line with the principles and standards of behaviour, as set out within the Code of Ethics, at all times during the assessment. A copy of the Code of Ethics can be found here: http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

If you are believed to have acted in contravention of the Code, been inappropriate to others, or acted in a way that would provide you an unfair advantage over other candidates, the Quality Assurance (QA) team will be notified. The QA team will independently review any evidence in relation to your behaviour and decide if there is sufficient evidence to award you an automatic fail. As the independent verification by the QA team allows us to be confident of the decision made, you are not able to appeal against an automatic fail received at the assessment.

You should treat all exercises at the assessment as you would treat any other tests or examinations. You must not note or record the assessment material in any way.

How am I assessed during the exercises?

A fair and transparent recruitment process is important to us. Our assessors will assess you solely on your performance in the exercises you take. To ensure this, we will have a team who are responsible for quality assuring the performance of assessors to ensure a fair process.

We have designed the assessment to make sure that we assess each of the competencies and values relevant to the role of a police constable.

You do not need to know about the law or procedures relating to police work in order to be successful at the assessment.

Who are the assessors?

The assessors are police officers, police staff or people who have been specifically chosen from the community, many of which are fully qualified assessors and have supported previous police constable recruitment campaigns. All assessors have received specific training in relation to the online process and they are continually monitored to assess performance.

What information do the assessors have about me?

The assessors will only know your name and email address. They will not have seen any other information about you and they will not know whether you have applied before.

What accommodation or reasonable adjustment can be provided?

Should you have any condition, temporary or otherwise, that might cause you to be disadvantaged during the assessment – for example, pregnancy, injury or disability, including dyslexia – you **may** be entitled to an accommodation or reasonable adjustment.

If you believe you may have a condition that could disadvantage you at the assessment, please contact the force you are applying to, who will be able to assist you with your application for accommodation or reasonable adjustment.

Any accommodation or reasonable adjustment provided for the assessment will be based on the information provided to us in a relevant report produced by an appropriately qualified professional. Reasonable adjustments may include additional time, change of background colour, or other adjustments as recommended by a specialist.

How will you give me my results?

- Stage 1: Situational judgement test – the result will be communicated to you immediately through the online platform. If you pass, you will be asked to take stage 2 immediately.
- Stage 2: Interview – the content will be reviewed by a qualified assessor. Your result will be communicated to you via email.
- Stage 3: Written exercise and briefing exercise – both exercises will be reviewed by a qualified assessor and your result will be communicated to you via email.

How do I give feedback about the assessment centre?

As part of the monitoring and development of the police constable recruitment process, we would like to hear your views on your experience. Depending on which stage you complete, you may be given a link following the assessment that invites you to take part in a candidate feedback questionnaire.

Any feedback you can provide will be valuable. However, please note that we are not able to treat any feedback you provide in this questionnaire as a formal appeal. You should therefore not expect a response to issues raised through this channel.

What is the appeals procedure?

Our aim is to ensure that you have a positive experience of our online process and that you are provided with the opportunity to perform at your best. If you have a concern about an issue that occurs during the assessment, then you should raise it with:

kyle.madden@college.pnn.police.uk

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved after initial communication, and if you still wish to report any extenuating circumstances or procedural concerns that you believe may have negatively impacted your performance, you must do so in the form of a written appeal to the force to which you are applying. In order to support your appeal, you will need to provide supporting evidence.

You must submit the appeal to the force recruiting department **within 24 hours** of undertaking the assessment. Reports received after this date will **not** be considered. You are therefore not able to appeal after receiving your final result from the assessment, other than for stage 1, for which your result is received immediately.

If you have met the standard in the assessment, your appeal will not be considered further. Your appeal will only be considered if you have not met the standard. Procedural issues, however, will still be investigated as they may have important implications for the assessment as a whole.

Extenuating circumstances

Extenuating circumstances are likely to be a serious event or series of events, such as illness, accident or injury, or the death or serious illness of a family member. We recognise that lack of preparation and/or a heavy workload prior to attendance at the assessment may not allow you to perform at your best. However, these are not considered to be extenuating circumstances.

If you are aware of any extenuating circumstances prior to the assessment relating to its online nature, you may request to complete the assessment at a later date. If the assessment is due to expire, you should notify your force to explain and request an extension, as these will not be grounds for appeal after the assessment. It will be your decision as to whether you continue with the assessment or withdraw and attend at a later date.

We provide all candidates with this opportunity as we recognise that it is important for candidates to feel ready and able to take the assessment stages, so they are able to perform to the best of their ability.

Good luck with your application!