

Filling in your application form

Step-by-step guidance on completing the College bursary application form.

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This guidance is designed to assist you when completing your bursary application form. All sections of the form should be completed in line with this guidance.

The 2024 bursary scheme is now closed and we cannot accept any further applications. We anticipate re-opening the scheme in spring 2025 (subject to confirmation of funding).

- [About the bursary scheme](#)
- [About the application process](#)

Application form

The bursary application form has been designed to provide the assessors with the information they need to decide whether applicants have the relevant personal and professional qualities, capability and drive to make the most of the opportunities offered by the College bursary scheme.

- [Download the application form](#)

Equal opportunities monitoring form

In addition to returning the application form, we request that you also complete and return the equal opportunities monitoring form. This is used for monitoring purposes and is not considered during the assessment of your application.

We are committed to diversity and equal opportunities for all. We want to provide an evidence-based approach to our decision making so that we can prioritise and focus on specific equality agendas, as we work towards creating an environment that is free from discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity.

By collecting this information, we can develop a deeper understanding of any potential barriers faced.

- [Download the equal opportunities monitoring form](#)

Personal data

Personal data will be recorded and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For further information on how we record, use and process this data, refer to [the bursary scheme's privacy notice](#).

Alternative formats

To request a copy of the forms in another format, email bursaryscheme@college.police.uk.

Section A – Personal details

In this section you need to provide your full contact details and indicate your preferred telephone number and email addresses for contacting you.

The College bursary scheme is only open to police officers and staff in England and Wales, and the National Crime Agency (NCA).

You are also required to state:

- whether you have applied previously to the bursary scheme
- whether you have previously received funding
- how you first heard about this year's scheme

This is for monitoring purposes only and will not be considered as part of the assessment process.

Section B – Study details

This section asks for information on the programme of study to which your bursary application relates.

A bursary can be used to fund, or contribute to, the cost of tuition fees of academic study at Level 6 or above. This covers undergraduate or postgraduate level – for example, a bachelor's degree (BA, BSc), a master's degree (MA, MSc, MPhil, MRes) or a doctorate (PhD).

- **Find examples of qualifications at Level 6 and above**

A bursary cannot be used to fund study below undergraduate level – for example, diplomas and higher diplomas, Higher National Diplomas (HND), foundation degrees (FD), Higher National Certificates (HNC), A levels, GCSEs or their equivalents.

You do not need to have been formally accepted onto a programme of study to submit an application. However, you will need to have identified a preferred programme of study and academic provider and have started the application process. To be eligible to apply for a bursary, your academic provider must be based in the UK.

You may also apply for a bursary if you are part way through a relevant programme of study and are seeking funding for the academic year starting in September 2024. However, the programme of study must be ongoing at the point of your application. You cannot apply for funding towards a programme of study that has already been completed.

On the application form, you must state the date that the programme of study will start or started, and the anticipated end date of the complete programme of study that you have applied for bursary funding to support.

Your selected programme of study must include a research component. You should use this section to briefly outline what this will entail. For example, an eight-week compulsory module on research design, an additional optional research methods module on statistical analysis or completion of a 12,000-word research thesis.

You must also state whether attendance is or will be full time, part time or by distance learning, and what the current status of your academic place or application is.

Section C – Funding details

Note the following points when completing this section.

- Bursaries can be used to fund tuition fees only.
- You can apply for funding for study that is undertaken during the two-year period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2026.
- The bursary scheme cannot fund any study that is undertaken outside of this two-year period.

- You cannot apply for a bursary towards a programme of study that starts after 31 March 2025.
- You can apply for up to £2,000 per year for up to two years of study, a maximum of £4,000 in total. For the purpose of the bursary scheme, the first year of bursary funding ('2024/25') relates to any study that you undertake during the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025. You can request a maximum of £2,000 towards tuition fees for this period of study.
- If your programme of study continues into the academic year 2025/26, you can also apply for bursary funds towards continuing study undertaken between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026 ('2025/26'). However, you must be studying towards the same qualification that you have applied for funding for in 2024/25. You cannot apply for funding towards the year 2025/26 only.
- For each year that you have applied for funding, you must state the period to which this bursary funding relates.
- You must also state the total cost of tuition fees for the period of study. This should be the same as, or more than, the bursary funding applied for. It cannot be less than the bursary funding requested. For example, if the total tuition fees for your study between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025 are £2,400 and you are applying for the maximum £2,000 towards these, then both amounts need to be stated in this section.
- If your study does not follow the traditional academic year start or end dates, the eligible funding period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2026 may only partly cover your study period. In this instance, we may need to pro rata funding accordingly so that it covers eligible months only.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they are able to pay for any tuition costs not covered by their bursary grant and any years not covered by the grant.
- A bursary can be used to match fund or top up money received from other sources. Details of any funding you are currently receiving or have applied for must be included in this section. For example, the amount of money you are receiving or have applied for, what the money is being used for and the source of the funds.
- If you are in receipt of or have applied for a student loan from the [Student Loans Company](#), you should also include details of this within this section. A bursary can be used to pay back a loan you are currently in receipt of, as long as the programme of study it relates to has not been completed. We do not require you to share details of any personal loans.

Example

If you are undertaking an undergraduate degree that started on 1 September 2023 and finishes on 30 June 2027, you can apply for funding towards any study undertaken between 1 September 2024

and 31 August 2026. You can apply for up to £2,000 towards tuition fees incurred during the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 under '2024/25' and up to £2,000 incurred during the period 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026 under '2025/26'.

Under this year's scheme, you cannot apply for funding for the study you undertook between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024 or for your continued study undertaken between 1 September 2026 and 30 June 2027. This would have to be self-funded or funded by an alternative source. For continued study after 1 September 2026, you could reapply to a future bursary scheme.

Section D – Previous academic qualifications

State the level of your highest academic qualification currently held. If you do not have any previous academic qualifications, then tick the box marked 'No academic qualifications'.

In the next table, you need to provide further details of your highest academic qualifications, where applicable, starting with the most recent.

Section E – Current role

Use this section to briefly describe your current role and your key responsibilities. If you have been in your current role for less than six months, also include details of your previous role.

You also need to state the total length of time you have worked in your current role and in policing overall (excluding any breaks in service).

Section F – Supporting information

The application form is the only evidence that assessors will use to decide whether you meet the criteria for shortlisting and selection. This is the most important section of the application form and provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate to the assessors that you have the drive, skills, knowledge, awareness and experience to exploit the opportunities offered by the scheme.

In answering the questions in this section, think carefully about why you have chosen your preferred programme of study, as well as how you can demonstrate the personal and professional skills and experience you currently have that will enable you to get the most out of your study.

We are particularly interested in what you see as the key personal and professional benefits you will gain from undertaking your selected programme of study and how these will add value to your force and/or the wider service.

Make use of the full word counts in this section but take care not to exceed them.

- Note that the maximum word count differs across the five questions. You are required to state your word count in each section.

For the 'Task management' question, we are looking for an honest and realistic assessment of any challenges you feel you may encounter during your studies. You should demonstrate that you have thought through the practical steps that you might take to overcome them (for example, managing your time and any competing priorities).

Evidence-based policing

For the 'Evidence-based policing (EBP)' question, you are asked to describe a project or task you have initiated or taken a key role in, which has developed or promoted evidence-based practice in your force or the wider service.

Ensure that you refer to the use of data or research evidence in this section.

We are not looking for examples of using evidence found during the course of an investigation.

You should familiarise yourself with [the College of Policing definition of EBP](#) when preparing your answer. You should outline the specific role you played, how this added value and what the outcomes were.

For example, you may have:

- introduced a new way of working or tackling a problem
- used data or other information to help you understand whether it worked (and if so, how well)
- shared your findings with others in the force or elsewhere and, in doing so, influenced practice in a specific area

In your answer, you could consider writing about:

- how you used evidence, such as data, to inform your decision making
- what was involved in carrying out research or a review of research evidence, such as a review of published academic evidence
- how you contributed to developing a working environment that values the integration of research, evidence and practice
- how you played a role in a knowledge exchange or translation activity
- an example of when you supported the development of a collaboration between police practitioners and academics

These are some examples of possible activities relevant to this section. However, this list is not exhaustive, and you may have another example you can share.

If you do not have a relevant example you can draw on, describe how you could take an evidence-based approach to your work, which will demonstrate your understanding of evidence-based policing.

Section G – Line manager details

This section should be completed by your line manager.

They should comment on your suitability to complete the programme of study that you have applied for, based on their knowledge of your previous experience and competence.

The College may contact the person named in this section if further information is required during the selection process. If the person detailed in this section ticks the 'No or not sure' box, they will be required to provide further details about why they are unsure of your ability to complete and achieve the qualification specified.

A failure to gain approval in this section will not invalidate your application. However, if you are shortlisted, assessors will contact the person detailed to discuss your application in further detail.

Many applicants intend to complete their study during their personal time. However, even in these circumstances, there are likely to be occasions when your force will be required to be sensitive to the requirements of your study (for example, providing you with the flexibility to attend mandatory tutorials, attend examinations or complete coursework assignments). We therefore strongly advise that you discuss your intended studies with your line manager before making your application.

Section H – Learning and development lead details

This section should be completed by a learning and development (L&D) lead or equivalent person in your force, such as an evidence-based policing or research lead.

The person who completes this section should be in a position to comment on the applicability of your selected study programme to your role or professional development. If you are successful, this is likely to be the main point of contact for the administration of the bursary.

We advise that you approach your L&D lead by Monday 25 March 2024 to process your application before submitting to the College by Thursday 4 April 2024. (There may be different arrangements in your force, so check beforehand with your L&D lead.)

Please note that your nominated force bursary lead has been made aware of the application timings and that the College will not accept applications that are delayed due to applicants not liaising with their line manager or L&D lead in good time. If you are not sure who your local lead is, email bursaryscheme@college.police.uk and we can advise.

As with section G, if the person detailed in this section ticks the 'No or not sure' box, they will be required to provide further details about this decision. A failure to gain approval in this section will not invalidate your application. However, if you are shortlisted, assessors will contact the person detailed to discuss your application in further detail.

Feedback from L&D leads involved in the administration of previous years' bursary schemes has identified the need for forces to have a central record of all members who have applied to the bursary scheme. Requiring applicants to provide details of the force L&D lead or equivalent at this stage will help to ensure that your force can monitor applications and provide guidance and support as applicable.

Section I – Applicant declaration and sign-off

Completing this section confirms that you have read the declaration and that you are confirming the information you have provided can be shared with those involved in the administration, assessment and monitoring of the College bursary scheme.

Completion of this section also confirms that the information you have provided is, to the best of your knowledge, accurate and complete.

To sign electronically, write out your name in the box provided. By completing and submitting the form electronically, your signature is implied and accepted.

Tags

Bursary scheme