

Joining as a special constable

How to become a special constable – a volunteer police officer with the same powers as a regular officer.

First published 22 September 2022

Special constables are volunteer police officers, sometimes known as specials. They take part in frontline police work and have the same powers as regular officers.

- [Read more about the role of special constables](#)

Application and assessment process

To become a special constable, you must apply directly through your chosen police force. Check for open vacancies on the force's website.

Your application will be reviewed by the force. If your application is progressed, you will be asked to complete a national sift and an in-force interview.

This process tests the key competencies and values that are important for the role of a special constable and form the national standard for special constable recruitment.

National sift

The national sift consists of two exercises. These are:

- a situational judgement test
- a behavioural styles questionnaire

You will be assessed against the competencies and values that are important for effective special constables, as set out in our [competency and values framework \(CVF\) for policing](#). The competencies review criteria is set at level 1 for special constable recruitment.

Go to our [national sift candidate guidance](#) to help prepare for the exercises.

In-force interview

You will be interviewed by a panel from the force you applied to.

The panel will ask you a series of questions based on the CVF. These may be followed by additional questions to further explore your initial answer.

The panel may interrupt your answer to make sure they understand what you have said or to ask for more information. This is to help prompt you to present as much evidence as possible.

The panel will take notes during the interview to capture all evidence.

Reasonable adjustments and accommodations

Some people need extra help or more time during assessments.

If you have a condition – temporary or permanent – that may cause you to be disadvantaged during your assessment, then you may be entitled to receive assistance via an appropriate accommodation or reasonable adjustment. For example, pregnancy, injury, medical conditions, disability or neurodivergence such as dyslexia or autism.

Reasonable adjustments may include additional time in the exercises or other adjustments. Any accommodation or reasonable adjustment will be based on the supporting information provided to your recruiting force in a relevant report, produced by an appropriately qualified professional.

If you believe you may have a condition that could disadvantage you, contact the force you are applying to directly. They will be able to assist you.

- [Read our accommodations and reasonable adjustments policy](#)

Reasonable adjustments and accommodations guide

You can find out more about the adjustments and accommodations that can be requested in the [Reasonable adjustments and accommodations guide for online assessments candidates](#).

Download the reasonable adjustments and accommodations guide in Welsh

- [Addasiadau a chymwysïadau rhesymol ar gyfer asesiadau ar-lein](#)

Related resources

Find out more about the special constabulary and its training and management.

- [Overview of the special constabulary](#)
- [Training for special constables](#)
- [Managing special constables](#)

Tags

Police recruitment Career pathways