

# Online assessment process candidate guide

This guidance contains information on online assessments for applicants who have been invited to take part and those wanting to find out more.

First published 11 April 2023

## Introduction

This guide sets out:

- what the online assessment process will involve
- technical requirements for the exercises
- how you will be assessed
- how you can prepare for the online assessment process

We recommend that you take the time to read this guide before starting the assessments and use this to aid your preparation. We suggest reading this guide in a quiet environment away from distractions to enhance your preparation and understanding of the assessments.

We wish you the best of luck with the process.

## What is the College of Policing online assessment process?

The College of Policing online assessment process includes a selection of exercises used to assess candidates' suitability for policing. These exercises are mandatory assessments designed specifically for initial police recruitment.

Throughout the exercises, you will be assessed against the competencies and values that are important for effective police constables. The competency and values framework (CVF) sets out the behaviours expected in policing. For initial police recruitment, the competencies review criteria is set at level 1.

You can find out more about the CVF here: [competency and values framework \(CVF\)](#).

## Your journey as a candidate

The online assessments consist of the sift and the online assessment process. These are to be taken within a timeframe agreed between the College and the force you have applied to. The sift will be completed first, followed by the online assessment process.

The process breaks down as follows.

<b>Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You apply and register to your recruiting force.</li><li>• Your recruiting force completes application and eligibility checks.</li></ul>
<b>Sift</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You will complete either an in-force sift or the national sift. The sift allows you to demonstrate your suitability for entry to the online assessment process.</li><li>• The sift you complete will depend on the force you have applied to.</li></ul>

## Online assessment process

The online assessment process consists of the:

- competency-based interview (CBI)
- written exercise
- briefing exercise

Each exercise is described in further detail in the sections that follow.

You do not need any prior knowledge of policing or the police role to complete the online assessment exercises.

If you are unsure what your application process is, please contact the force you have applied to directly who will advise on the process and timeframes.

## Online assessment process overview

On the date your online assessment process opens, you will receive an email containing a link to your candidate dashboard. As a candidate, you do not need to log in with a username and password to access your candidate dashboard. Instead, you can access everything directly from the link in the invite email you receive. There, you can complete the online assessment process.

You will complete your assessments on the online assessment platform Tazio. Please allow for the full day to receive your email invitation. Your recruiting force will inform you about when you can expect to receive the invitation email and the deadline to complete the assessments.

If you do not receive this email by 5pm on the day specified, please contact your recruiting force or [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk). To avoid issues with receiving your invitation email and further communications about your online assessment, please add [support@tazio.co.uk](mailto:support@tazio.co.uk) to your safe senders list. Remember to check your junk folder.

Please be aware that once you click 'start assessment' for an exercise, the exercise will begin and you will be unable to restart. This will be recorded as your attempt at the exercise.

## Competency-based interview (CBI)

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 personal life.

During the interview, we encourage you to:

- refer to the guidance given on the platform, including use of on-screen prompts to structure your answer – please note that you may need to scroll to view all of the prompts
- express yourself clearly and concisely
- be specific – remember that you have limited time to respond
- try to relax – we can only assess you based on what you tell us about how you have dealt with past situations that relate to the competencies and values
- answer all five questions, ensuring you consider the relevant competencies and values

Do not use notes or scripts that have been prepared prior to your assessment to support your response. Any evidence of this may result in an [automatic failure](#).

## Completion time

Approximately 40 minutes.

## CVF competencies and values assessed

The CVF competencies and values that are assessed are:

- courage
- public service
- respect and empathy
- we take ownership
- we are innovative and open-minded

## Answering competency and values-based interview questions

A common approach to responding to competency and values-based questions is the STAR (situation, task, action and result) method.

The STAR method allows you to structure your answer to ensure that you cover the relevant points. It may be beneficial to provide one example for each question and describe this in detail, rather than using different examples.

<b>Situation</b>	Briefly describe the specific event or situation. This should be a short description to set the context.
<b>Task</b>	Briefly explain what you had to do. What were you trying to achieve from the event or situation? What were the success criteria?
<b>Action(s)</b>	Here is the main part of your answer where you can really explain how you displayed the relevant behaviours and understanding. What did you do? How did you do it? Why did you do it that way? What skills did you use?
<b>Result</b>	Summarise the results of your actions. What was the outcome? What did you learn?

## What to expect

The interview will follow a structured format with a set list of questions. These 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 provide some prompts for you to consider when answering. These will be presented as text on screen. A pre-recorded video of an assessor will also appear, and the questions will be read out to you.

For each question, you will have one minute (60 seconds) of thinking time to consider the question and prepare your answer. You will then have five minutes (300 seconds) to record your answer.

Nothing that you say during the thinking time will be recorded. Once you have answered the first question, you will then move on to the next question and progress through until you have completed all five.

Please note, times may vary if you have a timings-related reasonable adjustment.

## Written exercise

In this exercise, you will take on the role of a police constable and complete an urgent written task for your line manager. You will be provided with 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 information.

During the written exercise, we encourage you to:

- manage your time using the timer displayed on your screen
- make use of the information that is provided to you in the exercise
- ensure you answer each question in the same response box

## Completion time

The candidate instructions should take approximately 10 minutes to read. The exercise should take approximately 40 minutes to complete but we have set a time restriction of 120 minutes (two hours), so you do not have to rush things. If the time runs out, everything currently written in the text box will be submitted.

## CVF competencies and values assessed

The CVF competencies and values that are assessed are:

- respect and empathy
- we analyse critically
- we support and inspire
- we collaborate

## How can I complete my written response?

Once you feel confident you have completed the written exercise, please click the 'continue' button to submit your response. Once you have submitted your response, you will not be able to return to

your answer. Therefore, please only press 'continue' when your answer is completed to your satisfaction, and your full response is typed into the answer box.

The only way for you to complete your written response is through the Tazio platform. Please do not use any other means of communicating your answer as this will not be accepted. Copying and pasting your response from another application onto the platform will not be accepted and may result in an **automatic failure**.

If you have any system issues, please:

- do not complete the exercise
- click 'technical support' at the bottom of your screen

## Spelling and grammar

Your spelling and grammar will not be assessed as part of the exercise. We appreciate candidates will be completing the written exercise on different devices and some may have access to spell-check while others may not. Therefore, to ensure a fair approach, we will not be assessing candidates' spelling or grammar in this exercise.

## Briefing exercise

In this exercise, you will take on 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 verbal response to a number of questions in relation to these issues. 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.

Each question and the prompts that follow will be presented as text on-screen. A pre-recorded video of an assessor reading out the question will be displayed.

During the briefing exercise, we encourage you to:

- consider the issues raised and how the police can build positive relationships
- refer to online guidance on the platform, including use of prompts, to structure your answer.  
Please note that you may need to scroll to view all of the prompts
- express yourself clearly and concisely

- be specific – remember that you only have a limited amount of time to respond
- try to relax – we can only make an assessment based on what you tell us in relation to the relevant competencies and values
- prepare alone and without reference to any materials or information outside of the preparation material, whether electronic or printed
- answer all of the 12 questions, ensuring you consider the relevant competencies and values throughout

Do not use notes or scripts that have been prepared prior to your assessment to support your response. Any evidence of this may result in an **automatic failure**.

## Completion time

Approximately 60 minutes (one hour).

## Assessed CVF competencies and values

The CVF competencies and values that are assessed are:

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

## What to expect

### Exercise preparation

You will be presented with some initial information about the exercise. You should take approximately 10 minutes to read the preparation materials and consider your response to part one of the scenario. This initial preparation stage is not timed and is not assessed.

### Exercise

You will then have approximately 50 minutes in which you will be given questions to answer. This will be split into three parts.

### Part one

After completing your preparation, you will be asked to answer four questions in part one. For each question, you will be presented with a video where the question is read aloud. The question will also appear on your screen so you can read it. Once the video ends, you will have up to one minute (60 seconds) of thinking time to prepare your response to the question. You will then have three minutes (180 seconds) to provide your response to the question.

### **Part two and part three**

In part two and three you will be provided with some new information to consider, and you will be asked to answer a further four questions for each part. Again, for each question you will be presented with a video where the question is read aloud. The question will also appear on your screen so you can read it. Once the video ends, you will have up to one minute (60 seconds) of thinking time to prepare your response to the question. You will then have three minutes (180 seconds) to provide your response to the question.

Please note that the remaining time will be made up of viewing the video questions and navigating the platform.

## **Confirmation and results**

### **Confirmation**

Once you have submitted your responses, you will receive a confirmation email from the assessment platform confirming receipt of each of your exercises. You can also check that your exercises have been successfully submitted by checking that each exercise is showing at 100% on your candidate dashboard.

### **Results**

Your recruiting force will provide you with information on the expected timeline for receiving your results. Once available, you will receive an automated email from [police.assessments@notifications.service.gov.uk](mailto:police.assessments@notifications.service.gov.uk) with instructions of how to access your results.

Please note that this is an automated inbox. Emails sent to this inbox will not be responded to.

## **General technical guidance**

The online assessments will not assess your technical skills. However, to support you in completing the online assessments, please ensure that:

- you have all the relevant equipment required to access the exercises online
- you are using one of the following software:
  - Apple macOS and iOS
  - Microsoft Windows
  - Google Android OS
  - common Linux distributions
- your device does not have any updates waiting to be installed, and you install any updates before sitting your assessment
- you are using updated browsers - browsers update regularly so we recommend enabling automatic updates or checking for updates, outdated browsers may not work with the online assessment platform
- you are using supported browsers – we support the latest versions and the Long Term Support (LTS) versions of the following browsers:
  - Google Chrome
  - Microsoft Edge
  - Apple Safari
- you have a stable internet connection via Wi-Fi – if you have a weak connection, or if you are unsure, connect with an Ethernet cable
- your device is on 'do not disturb' mode and electronic devices are fully charged or plugged in
- you do not close, refresh or click 'back' during the exercises, as you will lose your response
- you do not open multiple exercise links at the same time or across devices, as this will result in unsuccessful submission of the assessments on the platform

## Equipment required

You need a laptop, desktop computer, tablet or mobile device with access to speakers, a microphone and a webcam or inbuilt camera. Where possible, we recommend the use of a laptop, desktop or tablet.

Before completing the exercises, you will be taken to a screen that will guide you on how to set up your camera. You will also be required to take a picture for identification purposes.

## Technical difficulties

If you encounter technical difficulties during the online assessment, please contact the assessment platform immediately. Please do not finish the exercise if you are experiencing technical issues.

Technical support will be available by clicking the 'technical support' button at the bottom of the assessment platform. This will take you to the [College of Policing assessment support](#) page, where you can speak to the technical team through a chat function or by submitting a request.

Support will be available from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. You can expect a response within 15 minutes of your query. A chatbot will be available outside of these hours.

You may also contact [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk), stating your recruiting force and full name in the email, if your assessment was affected by technical issues. If there are any issues that have not been fully addressed by the assessment deadline, please be assured that the issue will still be dealt with.

It may be that you have experienced a technical issue that you were not aware of. In this instance, you may be granted a retake. To avoid any emails with information about retakes or technical issues going into your junk, please add [police.assessments@notifications.service.gov.uk](mailto:police.assessments@notifications.service.gov.uk) to your safe senders list and check your junk folder.

## How you will be assessed

A fair and transparent recruitment process is important to us. The online assessment process has been designed to ensure we assess each of the competencies and values associated with effective performance in policing roles.

For the online assessment process, you do not need to know about the law or procedures relating to police work to be successful.

For the exercises in the online assessment process, our assessors will assess you solely on your performance in the exercises you take. We have a team who are responsible for quality assuring the performance of assessors to ensure a fair process.

## Assessors

The assessors are a mixture of police officers, police staff and people who have been specifically chosen from the community, many of whom have supported previous police recruitment campaigns. All assessors have received specific training in relation to the online assessment process for each exercise, and they are continually monitored to assess their performance.

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.

## Results

For the online assessment process, you will receive the final outcome following the assessing and marking of your completed exercises. You will receive an email with notification and instructions on how to access your results and your personalised feedback report.

The candidate feedback report outlines your overall score for each exercise, along with more information about the exercise. It will outline the kinds of performance that distinguishes better-performing candidates from those who did not perform as effectively.

Your recruiting force can provide you with more information on when you can expect results. If you are successful, your recruiting force will contact you to discuss next steps.

## Automatic fail policy

You are expected to act in line with the principles and standards of behaviour set out in the [Code of Ethics](#) at all times during the assessment. If you are believed to have contravened the Code, behaved inappropriately to others or acted to obtain 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. An automatic fail means that you fail the assessment process regardless of your performance in the individual exercises. The independent verification by the QA team allows us to be confident of the decision made. Therefore you cannot 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.

## Reasonable adjustments and accommodations

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 neurodiverse conditions – 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. They can assist you with further advice on applying for an accommodation or reasonable adjustment.

If you have been granted a reasonable adjustment or accommodation relating to assessment timings, your assessment timings may vary from those described in this document. For more information, please review the [reasonable adjustments and accommodations guide](#).

Regardless of whether you have been granted a reasonable adjustment or accommodation, you will be able to access the accessibility toolbar Recite Me. If you would like to use Recite Me, the software can be accessed on the assessment platform by clicking 'accessibility' at the bottom right corner of the page. The toolbar will then open at the top.

For more detailed information about the Recite Me software, please refer to the [reasonable adjustments and accommodations](#).

## Preparing for the online assessment process

Before you begin each exercise, we encourage you to do the following.

- Remind yourself of the deadline to complete the exercises. This will be 11.59pm on the date specified in the email from the force you applied to. Make sure you are ready to sit the assessments. If you feel that there are extenuating circumstances that could affect your performance, please refer to the guidance in the [Further information](#) section.
- Remind yourself of the competencies and values being assessed in each exercise. Please refer back to the [Your journey as a candidate](#) section.

- Ensure you are in a quiet room without distractions so you can concentrate. We do, however, recognise that unexpected interruptions may occur. If you are interrupted during your assessment, please take a moment to gather your thoughts and continue with your response. If you feel this interruption will heavily affect your performance, please contact [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk).
- You must complete each exercise on your own, with no additional support. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in an **automatic failure**.
- Read and listen to the instructions carefully. Remember that all the information you need is provided.
- Ensure you have enough time to complete each exercise. Only click the link to open an exercise when you are ready to complete it.
- Familiarise yourself with our **General technical guidance** to prevent and overcome any technical issues that may arise during the online assessment process.

## Prepared notes

You cannot bring prepared notes into any of the online assessments. Everything you require to answer the questions will be provided on the Tazio system. As each exercise is different, please see below a breakdown of what preparation you are entitled to on the system.

- Competency-based interview — after receiving the question, you can make notes to prepare your answer.
- Written exercise — you can make notes in the answer box, but please ensure you delete any content you do not want to submit. Once submitted, all text in the answer box will be assessed, so please ensure your final response is the only text submitted.
- Briefing exercise — you can make notes during the preparation phase and after receiving the question.

You can refer to notes that you have written during the exercises.

If there is evidence to suggest any notes, digital or physical, were prepared before your assessment, this may result in an **automatic failure**.

In line with the candidate declaration that you will have accepted before accessing the candidate dashboard, please ensure all notes are securely destroyed. Notes must not be shared with anybody, including potential candidates or other parties. This would be considered a breach of integrity and could affect your potential to be recruited into the role.

## Further information

### Resitting the online assessment process

If unsuccessful, you may wish to resit the online assessments. You may do so from three months after the start date of your assessment window.

You will be limited to attempt the assessments twice in a 12-month period. You will be required to complete all exercises in the assessment process again.

### Applying to more than one force

You may have started an application with more than one force. However, please note, you are only permitted to sit the online assessments with one force at a time. You must inform us immediately if you have already completed the assessment process with another force. Please contact us at [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk).

### Transferring an online assessment process pass between forces

You may be able to transfer your online assessment process pass from your original recruiting force to another force upon receiving your results.

It is at the discretion of forces if they wish to accept your transferred score. You will need to consult with the forces regarding this.

To see if a transfer is possible, you will need to contact the force you wish to transfer to. You should request that they obtain your previous online assessment pass from your original recruiting force that you sat the online assessment process with. This process should be conducted between forces.

### Appeals procedure

Our aim is to ensure that you have a positive experience of our online process and that you have the opportunity to perform at your best. If you have a concern about an issue that occurs during the assessment, you should raise it with your recruiting force. They can escalate to the College if

required.

If you feel the matter has not been resolved after initial communication, you must make a written appeal to the force you are applying to. This situation would apply if you believe there are any extenuating circumstances or procedural concerns that may have affected your performance. To support your appeal, you will need to provide evidence.

You must submit the appeal to the force recruiting department within 24 hours of taking the assessment. Appeals received after this date will not be considered. You therefore cannot appeal after receiving your final result following the assessment.

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 required. Procedural issues, however, will still be investigated as they may have important implications for the assessment process 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 or a heavy workload prior to completing the online assessment process may not allow you to perform at your best. However, these are not considered to be extenuating circumstances.

Prior to completing your assessment, if you are aware of extenuating circumstances that will affect your performance or involvement, you may ask to complete the assessment later. If the assessment window is due to expire, notify your force to explain and request an extension. 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 undertake it later.

We provide all candidates with this opportunity. We recognise that it is important for candidates to feel ready and able to take the assessment, so they can perform at their best.

If you have further queries related to the online application process that cannot be answered by Tazio or your recruiting force, please contact [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk). State your recruiting force in the header of the email.

## Giving feedback about the online assessment process

As part of the monitoring and development of the police constable online assessment process, we would like to hear your views on your experience. Following the assessment, you may be invited to take part in a candidate feedback questionnaire.

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

You may also email any feedback you have on the online assessment process to [recruit@college.police.uk](mailto:recruit@college.police.uk). If you have any feedback on the wider recruitment process, please direct this to your recruiting force.

## Welsh translation

- [Proses asesu ar-lein Canllawiau ymgeiswyr \(pdf 280.33KB\)](#)

## Tags

Police recruitment