Am I eligible to be a special constable?

The guidelines for joining the Special Constabulary are pretty much the same as that for a regular police officer.

We encourage people from all backgrounds to join the organisation. Some occupations are considered incompatible with becoming a Special Constable however, for example, if you are a member of the armed forces, a door-person or working for a security organisation.

For further information please view NPIA Circular 01/2011

Age
You must be at least 18 years old to become a Special Constable. There is no upper age limit, but bear in mind that candidates must be able to satisfy the fitness, medical and eyesight requirements of the role.

Nationality
You must be a British Citizen, citizen from the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, Commonwealth citizen or foreign national with no restrictions on your stay in the United Kingdom. In accordance with Home Office guidance and the Association of Chief Police Officers’ National Vetting Policy, candidates are reminded that they must have been continually resident in the UK for the three year period immediately before an application is made. This is to satisfy the requirement to vet all applicants in an equitable manner and the UK Police service does not currently have any means of facilitating vetting checks overseas, to the extent required of those who have been resident in the UK. Applicants who cannot be vetted, cannot be appointed.

Education
You must have achieved a level 3 qualification (A level or equivalent) or successfully completed the online verbal reasoning and calculation assessment. Please note that your relevant qualification certificate must be uploaded at the same time as you submit your application. If you are not in possession of a valid certificate, at the time of submission, you will be unable to apply.

Physical Fitness
You must be physically fit in order to effectively complete the duties required of a Special Constable. All applicants must pass a basic fitness test before appointment. For the endurance test you will be asked to run back and forth a 15 metre track in time with a series of bleeps, in time the bleeps become increasingly faster you must achieve level 5.4.

Health
Applicants must be in good health mentally and physically to deal with the pressures and demands of the role.

Successful applicants who receive a conditional offer of appointment will then be asked prior to appointment to fill in a medical questionnaire and undertake a medical examination which will also include an eyesight test and BMI check (Body Mass
Index). The current Home Office circular 59/2004 outlines this as between 18 and 30. Applicants who do not meet this standard may find their application delayed and/or will not be appointed.

Special Constable Applicants with a BMI in excess of this will not be considered fit unless their body fat percentage is less than 30% for men or 36% for women. Failure to meet the medical and eyesight standards will mean you cannot be appointed. For eyesight requirements please refer to FAQs.

If you have a disability, we will make adjustments where it is reasonable to do so.

**Height Restrictions**
There are no minimum or maximum height requirements.

**Tattoos**
Candidates with visible tattoos may be eligible for appointment. Each case will be considered on its own merits, taking into account the number, nature, size, prominence, appearance and location of the tattoos. Tattoos must not be offensive to colleagues or members of the public or undermine the dignity of your role within the Force. Tattoos on the neck, face or hands are still deemed to be unacceptable but consideration may be given in some circumstances considering the size, nature and prominence of the tattoo. If candidates choose to have any additional tattoos during the recruitment process, after passing eligibility checks, the onus is on them to advise HR and provide appropriate photographs which will need to be checked.

**Financial Status**
All applicants will have their financial status checked. These checks are carried out because Special Constables have access to privileged information, which may make them vulnerable to corruption. Any applicants with outstanding County Court judgements, who have been registered bankrupt with outstanding debts, will be rejected. If you have discharged bankruptcy debts then you will need to provide a Certificate of Satisfaction with your application.

**Criminal Record**
You may still be eligible to join the police service if you have minor convictions/cautions, but there are certain offences and conditions that will make you ineligible. You MUST declare all convictions for past offences, formal cautions (including as a juvenile) and any bind-over imposed by the courts. You should also include all traffic convictions. Due to the nature of policing, it’s essential that we conduct rigorous vetting checks on successful applicants before they can join the program.

**Previous applications**
You can only apply to one police constabulary at any one time. If you have previously applied to join the Special Constable recruitment process and have been unsuccessful, you must wait six months from your initial rejection before you can apply again.

**Membership of the BNP or a similar organisation**
South Wales Police has a policy of prohibiting any of our officers or staff from
becoming members of the BNP, or a similar organisation whose aims, objectives or pronouncements may contradict the duty to promote race equality. If you are, or have previously been a member of the BNP or a similar organisation, your application will be rejected.