

Strategic Command Course (SCC) 2022

Application process guidance notes

For applications to:

- Senior Police National Assessment Centre (Senior PNAC)
- Senior Police Staff Assessment Process
- External applications to attend the SCC

Contents

Application process	4
Reasonable adjustments and accommodations	5
Application form	6
Endorsement from someone other than the chief constable	6
Applicants on secondment	7
Applicants from other agencies	7
Completing the application form	8
Section 1: Personal details.....	8
1.1: Applicant details.....	8
1.2: Entry route to the SCC.....	8
1.3: Assessment centre availability	9
Section 2: Career history and professional development.....	9
2.1: Career history	9
2.2: Qualifications and training.....	9
2.3: Career development	9
2.4: Previous attendance at the assessment processes for the SCC	10
Section 3: Statement of readiness	10
3.1: Core criterion: Substantial and challenging leadership in a significant role	11
3.2: Core criterion: Organisational strategy and business management.....	12
3.3: Core criterion: Valuing difference and inclusion	12
3.4: Core criterion: Values-based leadership	13
3.5: Core criterion: Policing operations (Senior PNAC applicants only).....	13
Section 4: Applicant declaration	13
Section 5: Chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference	14
Your role in the application process	14
5.1: Core criterion: Substantial and challenging leadership in a significant role	15
5.2: Core criterion: Organisational strategy and business management.....	16
5.3: Core criterion: Valuing difference and inclusion	17
5.4: Core criterion: Values-based leadership	17
5.5: Core criterion: Policing operations (Senior PNAC applicants only).....	17
5.6: Previous attendance (applicants who have previously attended the assessment processes for the SCC only).....	18

5.7 Overall assessment and declaration 18
5.8: Chief constable (or equivalent) declaration..... 18

Application process

The application process should be used by:

- police officers applying to attend the Senior Police National Assessment Centre (Senior PNAC) to attain a place on the Strategic Command Course (SCC)
- police staff applying to attend the Senior Police Staff Assessment Process to attain a place on the SCC
- those from external agencies applying to attend the SCC

This guidance is intended to assist applicants and chief constables (or equivalent) with the completion of the SCC application process. The purpose of the application form is for applicants to set out that they are capable of contributing to – and benefitting from – the SCC and that in time, having addressed their key development areas, they will be an effective chief officer (or equivalent).

It is important that applicants allow sufficient time for all stages to be completed before the application deadline. The application windows are as follows.

- For those applying to attend the Senior PNAC or the Senior Police Staff Assessment Centre May 2022 to attain a place on the next SCC 2022:
 - **Friday, 7 January 2022 – Thursday, 3 March 2022 at 11.59pm**
- For external applicants applying directly to the SCC 2022:
 - **until Tuesday, 31 May 2022 at 11.59pm**

The application form contains a checklist of tasks for the application process.

Applicants should ensure that they are familiar with this, and also with arrangements within their own organisation regarding the submission of application forms.

Applicants should complete the form. The application form is then forwarded to the chief constable (or equivalent), who completes the chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference. This reference should use all of the evidence in the application form to decide whether to endorse the application or not.

Endorsed applications should be sent to the College of Policing Selection and Assessment team to process the application. Applications that are **not** endorsed should not be sent to the College of Policing but should be shared with the applicant.

The form should be completed electronically, including the declarations. The fully completed application form and the biographical data monitoring form should be submitted electronically by the application deadline. An application form is only considered fully completed where the chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference has been completed. Applicants will receive confirmation of the receipt of their form within five working days of submission. If confirmation has not been received, then applicants should raise this with the College team.

Reasonable adjustments and accommodations

The College of Policing is committed to providing good access and support for all. If you are considering applying for a reasonable adjustment or accommodation for the assessment process, please refer to the Selection and Assessment Policy on Reasonable Adjustments and Accommodations for Candidates. This policy is available on the [Applying to the Strategic Command Course](#) webpage. You should complete the biographical data monitoring form and indicate that you wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment or accommodation. Following your submission of this form, the Selection and Assessment team will contact you to discuss further.

Please note that a reasonable adjustment can usually only be agreed following the production of a report containing a diagnosis of your disability and a recommendation of reasonable adjustment from an appropriate specialist in the area of your disability. The Selection and Assessment team will consider the diagnosis and recommendations within the report. Following a discussion with you – and where appropriate, the report's author – the Selection and Assessment team will agree a reasonable adjustment specific to the assessment process to be undertaken. If you wish to discuss your personal circumstances with the Selection and Assessment team, please email SeniorSelection@college.pnn.police.uk in the first instance. Your approach will be handled in complete confidence.

If you believe that you may require a reasonable adjustment or accommodation to support your attendance at the SCC, please state this in the email accompanying the biographical data monitoring form.

Application form

The application form is made up of the following sections:

- Section 1: Personal details
- Section 2: Career history and professional development
- Section 3: Statement of readiness
- Section 4: Applicant declaration
- Section 5: Chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference

Responsibilities for the application form is as follows:

- applicants should complete sections 1-4
- chief constables (or equivalent) should review sections 1-4 and complete section 5

In addition, applicants should complete the biographical data monitoring form, which can be downloaded as a separate document from the [Applying to the Strategic Command Course](#) webpage. This form should be completed by the applicant and sent directly to the email address stated. It is **not** a requirement for it to be verified by the applicant's chief constable (or equivalent).

Endorsement from someone other than the chief constable

In cases where the chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference is completed by a nominated chief officer other than the chief constable, the authorisation of the chief constable is also required to declare whether their force is endorsing the application or not. In instances where exceptional circumstances mean that the chief constable is unable to personally complete the structured reference or endorse the application, it may be delegated to the deputy chief constable (or equivalent). If the deputy chief constable is unable to do so for additional exceptional reasons, it can be delegated to another chief officer who has been nominated by the chief constable. However, in any such circumstances, the nominated individual completing the declaration must have been given authority by the chief constable to endorse the applicant on their behalf.

Applicants on secondment

If applicants are currently on secondment away from their home organisation, the application form should be forwarded to the chief constable (or equivalent) of the **home** organisation for completion of section 5, in consultation with the chief constable (or equivalent) of the seconded organisation where necessary.

Applicants from other agencies

Applicants from other agencies should note that the following references within this document and the application form should be interpreted as follows:

- police ranks should be interpreted as the organisation's equivalent grades
- 'policing' should be interpreted as 'law enforcement' or the organisation's equivalent
- 'police service' should be interpreted as your organisation
- 'force' should be interpreted as your organisation

Applicants from other agencies should provide information on their career history, achievements, qualifications and overall suitability to attend the SCC. Applicants must receive support and endorsement from a senior person (chief constable equivalent) within their organisation. This should be provided in the chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference.

Completing the application form

Section 1: Personal details

Please complete all elements of this section to provide all the necessary personal and contact details.

1.1: Applicant details

- **Work email address:** This must be a secure email address (such as a pnn email address), as this is the only type of address that the results can be sent to.
- **Vetting:** It is a requirement of attendance at the SCC for vetting to be achieved at the CT/NPPV3 level. Applicants who are not already vetted to this level are recommended to start that process now.

1.2: Entry route to the SCC

Indicate which entry route to the SCC you are applying for by replacing the tick box with a tick.

- **Police officer application for Senior PNAC:** For substantive chief superintendents or superintendents who wish to attend the SCC and intend to go on to apply for chief officer level roles.
- **Police staff application for Senior Police Staff Assessment Process:** For the following.
 - Police staff at the equivalent grade of chief superintendent or superintendent, leading large and/or complex areas of their organisation, who wish to attend the SCC and go on to apply for chief officer level roles.
 - Police staff currently working at executive or chief officer level who hold a substantive post on their chief officer or executive team, and who wish to attend the SCC.
 - Police staff from organisations within the UK policing family (such as the National Crime Agency) who wish to attend the SCC and go on to apply for roles at the level of chief officer (or equivalent).

- **External application to attend the SCC:** For those from international police forces aspiring to the most senior roles in their organisations. Also for those from non-policing partner organisations working in executive level roles.

1.3: Assessment centre availability

The assessment centres will take place in May 2022. Please indicate your preferred assessment date below by rank ordering the intake dates. While we will try to allocate your preferred dates, this may not always be possible. Please protect all available dates until your allocation is confirmed by the end of March 2022.

Section 2: Career history and professional development

2.1: Career history

In this section, you should include details of your career history.

- **2.1.1:** Please provide details of your current role and your previous two roles. This should include a brief description of your role.
- **2.1.2:** Please provide details of your relevant career history. You do not need to provide details of every role you have held, only those relevant to your career progression.

2.2: Qualifications and training

- **2.2.1:** Please provide details of your academic qualifications and training that you think are relevant to your development as a senior leader and therefore add strength to your application. It is not necessary to provide details of all qualifications and training undertaken.

2.3: Career development

- **2.3.1:** Responses to this question should be limited to no more than **300 words**. Please provide details of your personal and professional development over the last two years, not just specific career development activities. Include those things that you think are relevant to your development as a senior leader.
- **2.3.2:** Responses to this question should be limited to no more than **300 words**.

2.4: Previous attendance at the assessment processes for the SCC

- **2.4.1:** If you have not previously attended the Senior PNAC or Senior Police Staff Assessment Process, then select 'No' for this question and move on to section 3. You do not need to complete questions 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.
- **2.4.2:** If you have previously attended, please state every year that you have completed the assessment process. If you have previously applied but not subsequently attended an assessment process, you do not need to state this.
- **2.4.3:** Responses to this question should be limited to no more than **300 words**. Please provide details of the key development areas that were identified at your **most recent** attendance and outline how you have addressed these development needs since then. This should include details of the actions that you have taken to date and that are currently being undertaken.

Section 3: Statement of readiness

In this section, your chief constable (or equivalent) will be looking for evidence of your readiness to contribute to, and benefit from, the SCC.

Your response should demonstrate that you have upheld the values and behaviour contained within the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) for policing, as well as the Policing Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour outlined in the Code of Ethics. These documents can be downloaded here:

- [Competency and Values Framework for policing](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)

For applicants from organisations external to policing, your responses should demonstrate that the values and professional standards of your profession have been upheld.

In order to demonstrate evidence, you may wish to use examples drawn from:

- your experience within your current rank or grade
- experience that is relevant, contemporary and up to date from previous roles at other ranks or grades, if appropriate

For applicants from organisations external to policing, you should use examples drawn from your experience of senior management or executive-level roles within your own profession.

In assessing your readiness, your chief constable will be looking for a proven track record of delivery, considering the core criteria set out below.

To help establish whether you are ready to attend the SCC, consider how you can most effectively demonstrate evidence of the core criteria, and evaluate your behaviour in the workplace against the competencies and values at level 3 of the CVF contextualised to chief officer roles.

Your statement should be limited to no more than **1,000 words**.

3.1: Core criterion: Substantial and challenging leadership in a significant role

This criterion relates to your ability to lead and manage a team effectively, in order to achieve and deliver results that benefit the police service (or your profession) and the public that you serve in a substantial and challenging role. This also includes secondments. You should take personal responsibility for when things go wrong. You should demonstrate your ability to cope and deal with the ambiguity and tensions of the role. You should also consider how you demonstrate effective decision making and judgement in difficult and challenging situations.

You should have a proven track record of substantial and challenging leadership experience and behaviours. This could be achieved in a number of ways, including, but not limited to:

- solo or independent command of a territorial command unit
- head of a directorate, department or business unit
- senior investigative work (crime, professional standards)
- performing certain unique and nationally significant roles or effectively leading, managing and implementing a major change project or programme
- significant secondments at regional, national or international level

While this criterion focuses upon leadership and other significant roles, it is not intended to exclude you if you have not held such positions, but have nevertheless been able to demonstrate the necessary competencies.

3.2: Core criterion: Organisational strategy and business management

This criterion relates to work in your own business unit, directorate or department, or work that you have undertaken at force or organisation level. This can also include significant secondments at regional, national or international level. You may have demonstrated this through experience of, and ability in:

- balancing local and national priorities
- undertaking effective partnership work
- project management activity
- performance management activity
- corporate or organisational development
- understanding and embracing police reform and change management

It may be useful to consider your own policing vision (or equivalent). How you have contributed to the development and implementation of strategies to improve the service that you and your staff provide.

You should also consider your financial awareness and ability to manage finances. This may include managing budgets, securing financial resources, financial audit, and making financial savings and efficiencies, including partnership and collaboration activities. You may have demonstrated this through work that you have undertaken at business unit, directorate, department or force level.

3.3: Core criterion: Valuing difference and inclusion

This criterion relates to demonstrating effective leadership through a personal contribution to promoting and managing equality, diversity and human rights inside your organisation, as part of your work. You should consider how you, as a leader, have fostered and promoted people's equality, diversity and human rights. This could include, for example, how you have developed and led a strategy and plan for the

promotion and equality of opportunity and diversity in your force or organisation. This can also include significant secondments at regional, national or international level.

3.4: Core criterion: Values-based leadership

This criterion relates to your understanding of the importance of the values underpinning the policing profession (or those of your organisation). Evidence for this is likely to show that you understand situations in which you are required to demonstrate the values and how this should be done. For example, this could include how you have role modelled the values, to encourage others to consider their own values and how they apply them.

3.5: Core criterion: Policing operations (Senior PNAC applicants only)

This criterion relates to the breadth of your operational policing knowledge and leadership experience, including successful delivery of significant and challenging policing operations. These could include knowledge and effective application of statutory duties, effective judgement, fast-time planning and operations, and management of resources, taking account of best value.

It is important that you have a broad base and solid core of operational policing knowledge and experience in a number of areas, such as crime management, community relations and 'live' real-time command (such as managing serious crime investigations, firearm incidents, major sporting events or public order). Although there might be opportunities to operate at Gold (Strategic) Command level, subject to local force policy, it is anticipated that experience will predominantly be at Silver (Tactical) Command level. This can also include significant secondments at regional, national or international level. This criterion focuses on command positions and other significant roles. However, it is not intended to exclude applicants who have not held such positions, but are nevertheless able to demonstrate the necessary competence.

Section 4: Applicant declaration

Read the declaration carefully before replacing the tick box with a tick. Remember to complete this section of the form **before** you forward it to your chief constable (or equivalent).

Section 5: Chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference

Your role in the application process

Your role is to review the application form and complete the chief constable's (or equivalent) structured reference on behalf of your organisation, before deciding to endorse or not to endorse the application.

You should consider whether the applicant will contribute to and benefit from attendance at the SCC and will in time, having addressed their key development areas, be an effective chief officer. The structured reference provides a framework for you to consider the applicant's readiness against the core eligibility criteria. To complete the reference, follow the steps below.

- Review the guidance notes for applications to understand the information requested in different sections of the form, with particular consideration to the core criteria and the competencies and values outlined at Level 3 of the CVF.
- Complete section 5 on the application form: the core criteria assessment, previous attendance, overall assessment and declaration.
- The form should be saved in PDF format and submitted to the College of Policing at the address on page 3 of the application form by the application deadline.
- A copy of the form should be retained in your own force or organisation.
- The completed form should be shared with the applicant prior to it being submitted.

For applicants who are required to attend the Senior PNAC or Senior Police Staff Assessment process to attain a place on the SCC, they will be contacted to arrange their attendance once their form has been submitted to the Selection and Assessment team at the College of Policing.

5.1: Core criterion: Substantial and challenging leadership in a significant role

5.1.1: Has the applicant demonstrated that they can take personal responsibility when things go wrong?

Consider whether the applicant is able to manage situations and problems when things go wrong or when others cannot handle situations. Consider whether the applicant has demonstrated that they learn from their mistakes by considering how to approach things differently.

5.1.2: Has the applicant demonstrated that they will be able to handle the conflicting pressures, tensions and expectations of a chief officer (or equivalent) role and exercise sound judgement in difficult and challenging situations?

Consider whether the applicant has shown that they can manage conflicting pressures and tensions in their role, can cope with ambiguity, and can deal with uncertainty and frustration. Has the applicant shown self-awareness to reflect on their leadership style and consider how it can be improved? Do they reflect on their personal resilience when operating in difficult and sensitive circumstances? Does the applicant make balanced decisions that are in proportion to the problem being faced? Do they exercise good judgement, making fair decisions by logically analysing all the relevant factors, understanding what works in formulating strategies and tactics? Do they also test widely for possible reactions to controversial decisions and resist the pressure to make quick decisions where full consideration is needed? Can they make and carry through decisions, even if they are unpopular, difficult or controversial, and does the applicant stand firmly by a position when it is right to do so?

5.1.3: Has the applicant demonstrated effective leadership, including a proven track record of delivery?

Consider if the applicant has sufficient experience of leading a team or unit in a substantial and challenging role. Have they successfully led the team or unit so that where possible objectives were met? Have they led by example, showing a commitment and a determination to succeed? Have they shown that they can build

effective management teams that focus on maintaining strong working relationships motivating staff? Is there evidence of a transformational leadership style? Are they aware of the impact that their decisions have on others?

5.2: Core criterion: Organisational strategy and business management

5.2.1: Has the applicant made positive contributions to the strategic development of their business unit, force or organisation?

Consider whether the applicant shows understanding of current political and social issues that have an impact on the police service (or equivalent profession). Are they driven to apply this knowledge to develop and implement solutions for the force or their unit, business area or secondment? Do they take a broad perspective considering all stakeholders and effectively manage relationships with these parties (including, where appropriate, the community)?

5.2.2: Does the applicant demonstrate forward thinking and openness to change in their leadership style and use this approach to improve service delivery?

Are they comfortable with change management and able to motivate and support others to bring about change? Consider whether the applicant has shown how they improve the service they and their team provide. Are they able to identify gaps in performance and address these by implementing new ways of working, in order to maintain high standards of service?

5.2.3: Does the applicant demonstrate sufficient financial awareness and application of financial management skills?

Consider how the applicant, as a leader, has demonstrated financial understanding and an application of effective financial management skills. This could include, for example, how they have managed budgets, secured financial resources, undertaken audit activities or made financial savings and efficiencies, including partnership and collaboration activities.

5.3: Core criterion: Valuing difference and inclusion

5.3.1: Does the applicant sufficiently demonstrate that they value difference and inclusion within their force or organisation?

Consider whether the applicant sets and upholds high standards for themselves and others in valuing diversity and inclusion in all their work. Do they lead by example, demonstrating that they understand other people's views and taking these into account? Do they identify the value of diversity and use it to build effective working relationships and teams?

5.4: Core criterion: Values-based leadership

5.4.1 Does the applicant sufficiently demonstrate that they embrace, demonstrate and role model the values in the CVF?

Consider whether the applicant demonstrates an understanding of the values set out in the CVF and the importance of demonstrating them in their work. Do they lead by example by demonstrating them in their work, understanding that this influences the way that those around them demonstrate their own values? Do they identify the value of leaders role modelling the values of the CVF?

5.5: Core criterion: Policing operations (Senior PNAC applicants only)

5.5.1: Has the applicant demonstrated a proven track record in policing operations?

Consider whether there is depth to their policing operations experience. Have they managed an investigation, incident or project from beginning to end, experiencing a full operational cycle and the consequences of the outcomes of their input?

5.5.2: Has the applicant demonstrated sufficient breadth of operational policing knowledge and experience?

5.5.3: Would you feel confident in the applicant effectively leading and managing a major operation in your force?

What is their experience in Silver (Tactical) and Gold (Strategic) Command? Does this indicate that they can manage relationships with key stakeholders, in order to

facilitate cooperation in the resolution of critical incidents? More generally, how have they assessed and managed risks in their policing operations? Have they demonstrated that they provide for the safety, welfare and security of the general public, police staff and partner agencies? Have they shown understanding of operational parameters that appropriately balance human rights, proportionality, legality and operational considerations? Have they demonstrated understanding of their accountability as a leader?

5.6: Previous attendance (applicants who have previously attended the assessment processes for the SCC only)

5.6.1 and 5.6.2

Please refer to the applicant's responses in section 2.4 of the application form and endorse appropriately.

5.7 Overall assessment and declaration

5.7.1: Please explain what you think are the applicant's three key strengths

5.7.2: Please explain what you think are the applicant's three key development areas

In this section, you are asked to list and explain what you think are the applicant's key strengths and developmental needs. In answering these, think carefully about the applicant's strengths and areas for development. You may also refer to the applicant's current professional development review (PDR), or other appraisal system if PDRs are not in use, to help you complete this section.

5.8: Chief constable (or equivalent) declaration

The chief constable (or equivalent) is asked to review the application form and state whether or not they endorse the application. You should do so by replacing the tick box with a tick in one of the two boxes in this section.

If you do not feel that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient evidence to be endorsed, then you should place a tick in the **application not endorsed** box. You should provide details of the reasons why the application is not endorsed in the

space provided. If you are unable to support the application, the individual's application should not be sent on to the Selection and Assessment team at College of Policing. Instead, feedback should be provided to the individual, which can be fed into their personal development plan. It is good practice to allow applicants to see your assessment, to help them identify development areas.

If you feel that the applicant is capable of contributing to and benefitting from the SCC and in time, having addressed their key development areas, of being an effective chief officer (or equivalent), then you should place a tick in the **application endorsed** box.

Referees are encouraged to support candidates who may not yet have had the opportunity to undertake the full range of challenges within senior roles, but nevertheless show potential for chief officer roles. Referees should be clear about the areas for development for all applicants in section 5.7.2. If the candidate is successful at the Senior PNAC or Senior Police Staff Assessment Process, this will form the basis of a development plan, which the SCC will support the candidate in working to achieve.

About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

college.police.uk