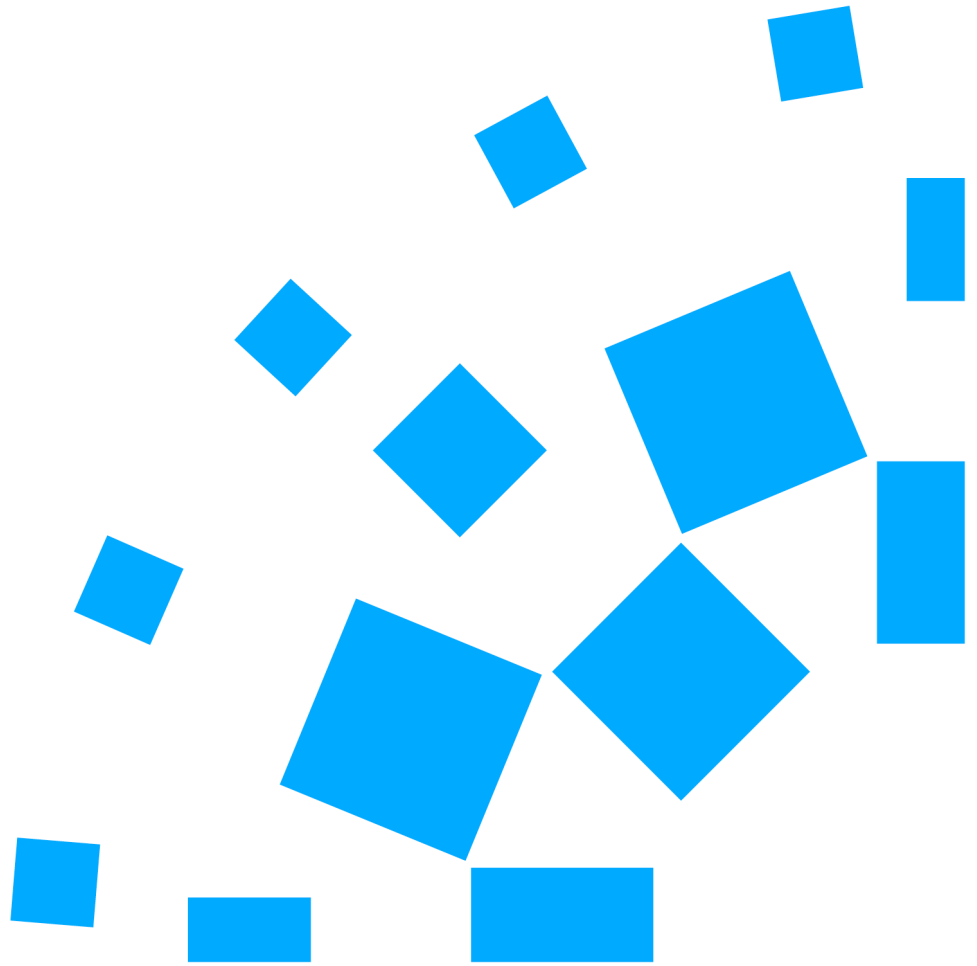


Fast Track national application form

Applicant guidance

2023



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Contents

Fast Track programme for serving constables	4
Overview of the selection process	5
The Fast Track national application form	6
When does the Fast Track National Assessment Centre window open?	6
What is the online application system?	6
Filling in the online national application form on Oleo	6
Common Oleo troubleshooting	8
Reasonable adjustments	9
Biographical data	9
Late applications	10
Assessment questions	10
How should I complete the assessment questions section?	10
Role requirements.....	11
The CVF for policing	11
Evidencing the requirements within the assessment questions	13
Methods for answering competency and values-based questions	14
Checklist	14
How will I be assessed?.....	15
How do I determine whether I am successful?	15
How will I receive feedback on my performance?	15
Enquiries and further information	17
Appendix A	18
The abilities, skills and characteristics needed by future leaders to deal with the challenges the police service will face	18
The abilities, skills and characteristics that are desirable for candidates on the Fast Track programme.....	20

Fast Track programme for serving constables

The Fast Track programme for serving constables is a development programme and promotion mechanism to enable the most talented serving police constables to advance to the rank of inspector within two years.

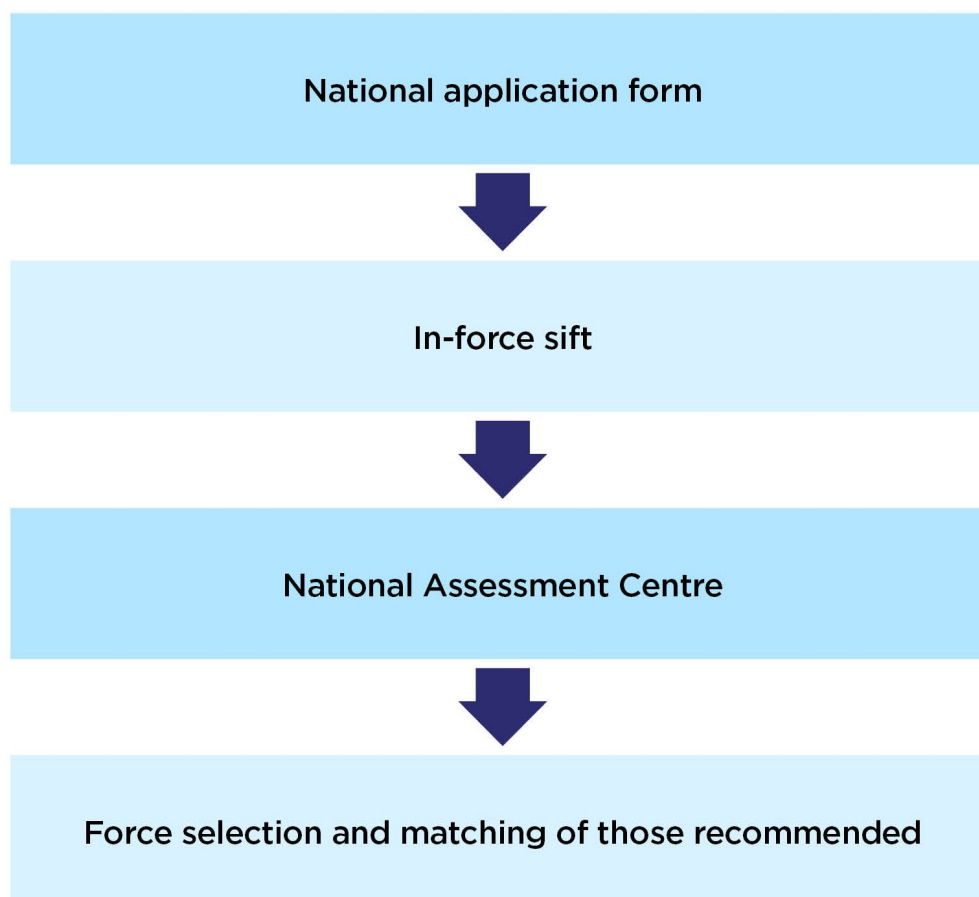
The programme is provided for by the Police Regulations 2003 and the Police (Promotion) Regulations 1996. It supports the Policing Vision 2025 in helping the successful implementation of force talent management strategies by:

- attracting, identifying and developing the most talented constables from within the police service who will:
 - bring new perspectives, diversity of thought and backgrounds
 - support the continuous development of policing
 - have a positive impact on the management and culture of the service
- offering a development programme and promotion mechanism that supports individuals to advance to the rank of inspector within two years for serving constables and to reach the senior ranks of the service (at least superintendent)
- supporting individuals' continuing development to provide a cadre of officers with the skills, experience and capacity to reach senior ranks of the service

The programme focuses on the development of leadership, management and operational competencies to equip individuals with the skills, knowledge and experience required to be promoted to the level of inspector on successful completion of the programme. Individuals will be supported by their force and will undergo regular assessments, where they will need to meet set standards to remain on the programme.

Appendix A contains information that has been gathered through a research project looking at the future challenges facing the police service and what skills, abilities and characteristics future leaders will need to address these challenges. Similarly, there is a list of desirable abilities, skills and characteristics for candidates on the Fast Track programme. They are therefore useful to consider in relation to the type of thinking that you are aiming to demonstrate at the target level.

Overview of the selection process



To be considered for the Fast Track programme, applicants will complete the online national application form, where applicants are required to demonstrate the relevant competencies and values for the programme. Applicants should consider the national eligibility criteria before completing the application form. Further information on national eligibility can be found in the [Fast Track programme handbook](#).

Applicants should note that alongside national eligibility, forces may have their own specific eligibility criteria, which can be found on force websites. Some applicants may then sit a further selection process within their force, such as an interview. Those successful at the in-force sift will then become supported candidates and invited to attend the Fast Track National Assessment Centre, hosted by the College of Policing.

Candidates who are recommended at the assessment centre will then be considered for a place on the programme by their force. They will then start the two-year

programme as a temporary sergeant, subject to a satisfactory pass at the NPPF step-two inspectors' legal examination.

The Fast Track national application form

This section will provide you with an overview of the Fast Track national application form. Please note that this is designed to be generic guidance to support the completion of the form. Each individual force holds responsibility for sifting the application form and for any other sifting methods prior to the assessment centre.

When does the Fast Track National Assessment Centre window open?

The application window will be open from 00:00 on **Monday, 3 October 2022** until 23:55 on **Monday, 31 October 2022**. You can access the application form through our online application system, Oleeo. Your force will be provided with this link to share with you ahead of the application opening.

What is the online application system?

The national online application system (hosted by Oleeo) enables you to submit your application online to your force. Subsequently, the system allows your force and the College to manage the applications and communicate with applicants directly from the system throughout the selection process.

The application form is a structured way to gather information about applicants against the requirements for a role.

Filling in the online national application form on Oleeo

This information is also available on the application page via the 'instructions' tab on Oleeo.

You will initially be directed to the job advert page, where you will need to click 'apply' on the left-hand side of the advert. This will then lead you to a registration page, where you will be required to create a login account. Registration allows you to create a username and password that will enable you to log in and out of the system

as often as you wish. **Please make a note of your login details**, as you will need them throughout the application process.

Once you have registered with Oleeo, you will be able to access the College of Policing online application form. When completing your application form, you can use the page links on the left of the screen to navigate through the sections. Each page has a status symbol next to it, so you can see at a glance how far you have completed each stage of the application.

- **Green tick:** You have completed all questions.
- **Blue tick:** You have completed all mandatory questions, but not every question. This could be due to some questions being non-applicable.
- **Red cross:** There are still mandatory questions that haven't been completed.

Please note that, depending on the version of web browser you are using, these status symbols may not appear.

The application itself contains fields to capture all the necessary information. Throughout the application form, help icons provide guidance notes alongside the questions, to assist you to complete the form and key information around eligibility and selection criteria. As you proceed through each page of the application form, use the 'continue' button to ensure that you have saved your details.

To save your text, you **must** select 'continue' to the next page to ensure that the system stores your responses. You can then review them later if you log out of the system and return later. If you just log out or get timed out, this **will not** automatically save the information that you have inputted into the form.

When you are satisfied with your application, click on the 'submit' button to send us your form. Once you have submitted, you **cannot** modify your application (apart from your contact details, which you can amend by clicking on 'Edit Contact Details' on the left-hand menu in the Communication Centre).

Once you submit your application form, we will acknowledge its receipt by sending you an email. You can revisit the application site to obtain a status update on the progress of your application at any time. The force to which you are applying will provide more detailed information.

Our online application form has been designed to be convenient and easy to use. Take great care with your application, as it is your opportunity to tell us about yourself. Please read the points below before completing your application.

Do

- Make a note of your username and password so you can return at a later date.
- Be open and honest in the answers you give.
- Take time to browse through the application form so that you can prepare. You may wish to prepare offline, then copy and paste answers onto the form. If you do so, please ensure that this copies correctly into the application.
- **Save your information** as you complete each page – you can always go back and change your information before submitting your form.
- Work in a full-size window. This will make the application form easier to read.

Don't

- Leave your uncompleted registration without saving it (by pressing 'continue').
- Submit your application until you are completely satisfied with it and have answered all the relevant questions.
- Submit more than one application form.
- Use the browser 'back' or 'forward' buttons to navigate between pages, as this will log you out and may not save your application. Please use the links in the left-hand menu.

In completing your application, you will have access to Oleeo's technical online help centre, who will reply within two working days. If you have any technical problems that cannot be resolved this way, you will be directed to contact the College's Senior Selection team for assistance.

Common Oleeo troubleshooting

As mentioned above, you will have access to Oleeo's technical online help centre while completing your application, which provides assistance for some common queries. If this does not answer your query, you can fill in a contact tech support form and they will respond to you within two working days. We have included common

issues that applicants face when completing the Fast Track national application form, to provide guidance on how to solve the issue in the first instance.

- To use the application form, you must have cookies enabled, otherwise you may not be able to see the login section of the application form.
- If you have already registered with another application form, you will have an account with Oleo. Your username will usually be the email address that you used to register. You can retrieve your password by clicking on 'Change Password'. If this doesn't work, please contact the College's Senior Selection team.
- Mandatory fields must be completed before you can submit the application form.

Reasonable adjustments

The College of Policing is committed to equality and diversity. If you have particular requirements (for example, a disability) and require a reasonable adjustment to be able to complete your application form, please email

seniorselection@college.police.uk

Biographical data

At the end of the application form, you will be asked to provide some biographical data. This is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and allows us to develop an understanding of programme and workforce diversity. The information will help us to monitor any potential barriers faced and to direct positive action initiatives. Providing this information is voluntary. However, we ask for your help in collecting this information to help us strengthen our understanding and to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Please note that your biographical information will not be used to assess your application in any way. Your data will be processed lawfully and securely. For further guidance on how your personal data will be processed, please refer to the [Fast Track privacy policy](#).

Late applications

In extenuating circumstances (such as sickness or bereavement leave), the application deadline may be extended. This will be on a case-by-case basis and you should discuss this with your force contact as soon as possible. Your force contact will then need to email seniorselection@college.police.uk to confirm that they wish to support your application submission.

Assessment questions

The aim of the national application form is to measure your suitability for the programme, including your potential to progress further in your policing career. You will be assessed on four questions within the application form. These are based on the requirements of the role and the competencies and values from the [competency and values framework \(CVF\) for policing](#). It is important that you read the [competency and values framework overview document](#) and are familiar with the competencies and values, as well as their descriptions and levels.

How should I complete the assessment questions section?

Application forms are a structured way to gather information about people against requirements for a role. The aim is to provide the most convincing evidence of how you meet those requirements.

The answers given to the assessment questions will be assessed against the competencies and values in the CVF at level 3, to ascertain your ability to advance to a role of inspector within two years and your capacity to reach senior ranks of the service (at least superintendent).

A key difference between competency-based questions and values-based questions is that the values within the CVF are not divided into levels. The same indicators therefore apply to each value when applied to any role. Please refer to the CVF overview document when completing this section of the application form for more information on the competencies and values.

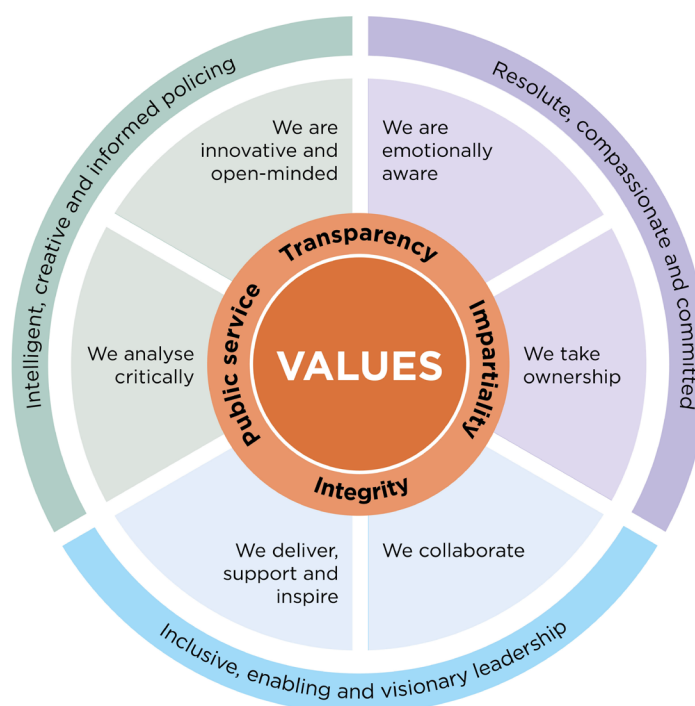
Role requirements

To provide evidence of how you meet the requirements of the programme and role, make sure that you are clear about what they are. You should therefore ensure that you are familiar with the aims and demands of the programme, as well as the CVF.

It is important that you think carefully about your answers and apply them at the right level for the role.

The CVF for policing

The competencies and values assessed are as follows.



The CVF, created by the College of Policing, aims to support all policing professionals, both now and in the future. It sets out nationally recognised behaviours and values, which provide a consistent foundation for national processes. The framework provides clear expectations of everyone working in policing, which in turn leads to standards being raised for the benefit and safety of the public.

The CVF has six competencies and four values.

You are advised to use the CVF to prepare, to ensure that you can perform at your best in the Fast Track national application form and, more broadly, in your policing career.

Competencies

Competencies are characteristics such as behaviours, skills, attributes or knowledge that result in successful performance. Behavioural competencies focus on the approaches that you use when you work. They are less about 'what' and more about 'how'. The CVF is a document that helps users understand how to demonstrate behaviours that lead to successful performance. It is not a finite list, and is never used as part of a tick-box approach. However, it provides guidance on the types of behaviours that may be demonstrated overall and at each level. The description and 'why it is important' section for each competency should be used to understand the competency itself and the behaviours it includes. The levels then give examples of these behaviours, but these should only be used to help you understand where your own examples might be applied.

Each competency has three levels associated with it and each level is incremental. You will be assessed at level 3 (senior management or executive) of CVF competencies. You must therefore demonstrate behaviours at this level in your application form. Use the CVF to highlight effective behaviours that you demonstrated, but ensure that they are tailored to what you did and your considerations. Merely repeating the behaviours or wording will not score well, so try to focus on **how** you demonstrated the behaviours.

Values

Values are moral principles and standards of behaviour that everyone in the police service should display, regardless of their role or level. Values are about the underpinning drivers for our behaviour. These are 'why' we do things.

Note: The values within the CVF do not have levels. This is because the behaviours demonstrated within the values are expected of all roles and levels. However, you should still consider the aims and demands of the programme, as well as how you will evidence your considerations and behaviours to show your potential to work at superintendent level.

Evidencing the requirements within the assessment questions

The application form clearly explains what is being assessed (for example, competency or values area) and asks a specific question to elicit evidence around that. You must answer the questions that are posed.

The questions will either be a past behaviour-based question or a future-focused question. This helps to provide a good balance between what you have done and how you would apply your experience, as well as an opportunity to demonstrate your wider thinking.

Within your answers, you need to show who you are, what you can do and why you are ready for the programme. This is about you and what you have done, so use 'I' and not 'we'. Those reviewing your application can only assess you on what you have actually written and won't be able to infer anything that's not included.

When answering the question, choose examples that will best demonstrate evidence of your understanding and considerations at the target level. Providing evidence at the wrong level is one of the most common errors applicants can make. While you are not expected to have experience of operating at a senior level, how you demonstrate your understanding of the behaviours at this level will help you to evidence your potential to succeed on the programme and reach more senior ranks in your career.

You must give specific examples of what you did or said where the questions ask for this. It is important that you can show, in as much detail as possible, exactly how you behaved. Generalisations about what you do, what you did on a number of previous occasions, or what your group/team have done will not score well. You need to explain what part **you** played on that occasion.

- You should read the questions fully and choose your examples very carefully.
- Avoid using jargon or slang terms. Remember that this is a formal application for an important and responsible role.
- You can use examples from a work setting or from your social, domestic or educational life.
- You must adhere to the word limits for each question.

- The application must be all your own work.
- Applications that contain any material that is not original or accurate may be discontinued.
- You must ensure that the examples you provide answer the question fully.

Methods for answering competency and values-based questions

There are multiple approaches to writing answers to competency and values-based questions. A common approach is the STAR methodology. The acronym STAR stands for situation, task, action and result. The STAR methodology is a widely recognised communication technique that allows you to structure your answer to ensure you cover the relevant points.

- **Situation:** Briefly describe the specific event or situation. This should be a short description to set the context.
- **Task:** Briefly explain what you had to do. What were you trying to achieve from the event or situation? What were the success criteria?
- **Action(s):** Here is 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?
- **Results:** Summarise the results of your actions. What was the outcome?

When writing your response, don't provide anything that isn't needed. Say briefly what the situation was and why it was your responsibility to manage it. Explain what **you** did, making sure that it is clear how this links to the role, values or competency criteria. Finally, what was the outcome and, if possible, did you review what you did?

Make sure you check and refine your responses. Sometimes a fresh pair of eyes can be useful – ask a trusted colleague or friend to check them and give you honest feedback. Is your response compelling and at the right level? Do you answer the question? Is it clear what you did and does all this relate to the values, competencies and level you are trying to show? Make sure you meet any word count limits.

Checklist

The following are useful points to consider when completing your application form.

- You should read the questions fully and choose your examples very carefully to ensure that they answer the question posed.
- Give yourself plenty of time and avoid waiting until the week of the deadline.
- Refer back to the CVF and information on the role you are applying for.
- Show evidence at the relevant level required.
- Avoid using jargon or slang terms. Remember that this is a formal application for an important and responsible role.
- Challenge yourself on whether you are demonstrating **how** you evidenced that competency or value. Explain what you did and why.
- You must adhere to the word limits for each question, so avoid storytelling and unnecessarily explaining situations.
- The application must be all your own work.
- Applications that contain any material that is not original or accurate may be discontinued.

How will I be assessed?

Once the national application window closes, each force will begin their sifting processes. This will vary from force to force, to take into account their own local needs, so you should liaise with your point of contact in force to understand more about this process.

How do I determine whether I am successful?

Once forces have completed sifting the application form, it is likely you will be informed whether you have been successful at this stage. They should also then communicate with you regarding the next stages of the sifting process or confirm whether they are supporting you to attend the National Assessment Centre.

Note: To be successful and gain a place on the Fast Track programme, you must be recommended at the National Assessment Centre **and** be selected by your force.

How will I receive feedback on my performance?

Each force will manage their own feedback process for the sifting stages, so you should ask the point of contact in force about how to receive feedback on your

performance. Regardless of outcome, any feedback that you receive will be useful to aid your personal development in your current role and on the Fast Track programme.

Enquiries and further information

Enquiries and requests for further information should be directed to:

Senior Selection Team

College of Policing

Central House

Beckwith Knowle

Otley Road

Harrogate, HG3 1UF

Email: seniorselection@college.police.uk

Appendix A

The abilities, skills and characteristics needed by future leaders to deal with the challenges the police service will face

- Personal integrity and commitment to public transparency, such as:
 - exemplary personal integrity and actions
 - being able to communicate and set standards for others
 - greater demonstration of transparency
- Flexible transformational leadership skills, such as:
 - being able to move beyond command and control
 - trusting staff to get on with their jobs and applying discretion
 - empowering and engaging staff
 - leading a corporate organisation over operational management
 - being able to create effective senior teams and manage greater accountability
- Resilience and positivity, such as:
 - having a positive attitude to making things work
 - being able to work under pressure and amid uncertainty
 - staying calm under pressure and sticking by decisions
- Internal business and financial skills, such as:
 - business acumen
 - dealing with the challenge of ongoing budget reductions
 - being able to hold deliverables to account
 - understanding commissioning and procurement
- Building integrated strategic partnerships, such as:
 - developing partnership working on a strategic level outside policing
 - more radical and integrated collaboration
 - sharing power and autonomy with others
 - utilising a collective leadership style to build alliances

-
- engaging partners in solving problems
 - Able to lead effective organisational change, such as:
 - being positive to create momentum for change
 - being able to pitch new ideas convincingly and sell the benefits
 - being comfortable with facilitating organisational change
 - leading and motivating staff through change, using continuous improvement
 - Holding a long-term strategic vision, such as:
 - thinking about the longer-term benefits for the organisation or service beyond personal tenure
 - having a strong vision with the ability to translate this
 - considering alternative strategic visions and how they may be achieved
 - Creativity and innovation, such as:
 - demonstrating agility and flexible thinking to identify new ways of doing things
 - creating new opportunities
 - Open-minded and willing to challenge existing culture and practice, such as:
 - looking beyond what has always been done
 - creating opportunity rather than waiting for it
 - being open to new perspectives and diversity of thoughts
 - adapting quickly to new circumstances
 - challenging the status quo
 - learning from mistakes rather than seeking to apportion blame
 - having a willingness to challenge authority
 - Humility and self-professional development, such as:
 - being reflective of own practice and influence from others
 - learning from mistakes rather than seeking to apportion blame
 - having a willingness to compromise
 - Political astuteness, such as:
 - greater political awareness at local and national level

- having a more outward-facing approach politically
- knowing how to influence and persuade political leaders
- working together with political leaders to build relationships
- understanding and engaging with the relationship between policing and politics

The abilities, skills and characteristics that are desirable for candidates on the Fast Track programme

- Challenging existing culture and practices, such as:
 - being prepared to think independently
 - asking why things are done this way
 - being less deferential to rank
- Taking learning from other organisations, such as:
 - having an outward focus to learn from other organisations
 - having experience of how things can work differently
 - sharing best practice
- Greater creativity and innovation, such as:
 - being able to think of new ways of solving problems
 - being radically innovative
 - being willing to take risks
 - supporting the ideas of others
- Leading effective organisation change, such as:
 - being positive about change and able to persuade others of its value
 - being able to implement transformational change
 - delivering rapid change
- Financial confidence and commerciality, such as:
 - having commercial awareness and confidence
 - having entrepreneurial skills
- Able to lead staff through challenging times, such as:

- being able to adapt leadership style
- making bold decisions
- inspiring others to achieve goals
- having a greater influence
- Supportive staff management, such as:
 - having effective general management skills, such as performance management, welfare and development
 - being able to engage staff
- Political astuteness, such as:
 - understanding the political dynamics
 - being able to operate in a more political environment
- A focus on customer service and victim support, such as:
 - understanding victim experience
 - listening to the public
 - having an ingrained customer service ethos
- Comfortable with accountability and transparency, such as:
 - being comfortable with public scrutiny
 - understanding public perception of what is acceptable
 - being honest when mistakes are made
- Effective internal and external communication skills, such as:
 - using language that the public understand

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