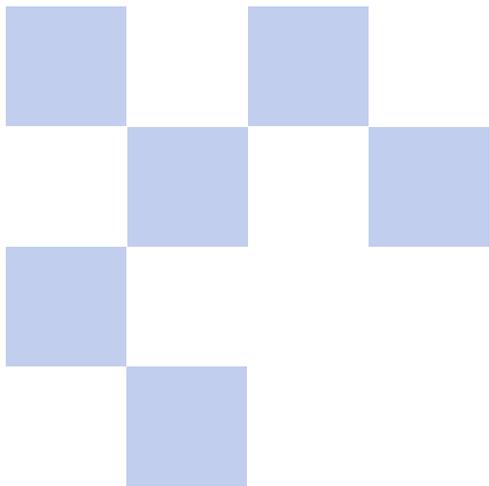# Competencies relevant to the role of police constable

Integrated Competency Framework

The Integrated Competency Framework is a series of national standards and guidelines that enable the Police Service to improve quality and consistency of performance and assessment.

The competencies that are particularly relevant to the role of a police constable are assessed during the recruitment process: at application stage and more fully at the assessment centre. Descriptions of these competencies can be found in this booklet.

At the application stage, candidates must demonstrate four of the core competencies needed to be effective in the role of a police constable as part of the competency assessment in Section Four of the application form.

The full range of competencies in this document are assessed at the assessment centre during a variety of exercises, including:

- a competency-based structured interview, made up of four questions;
- a numerical reasoning test;
- a verbal logical reasoning test;
- two written exercises; and
- four interactive exercises.

More information about the assessment centre will be sent to candidates who are successful at the application stage and are invited to attend the assessment centre.

Community and customer focus

Focuses on the customer and provides a high-quality service that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Understands the communities that are served and shows an active commitment to policing that reflects their needs and concerns.

Provides a high level of service to customers. Maintains contact with customers, establishes what they need and responds to them.

Positive indicators

- Presents an appropriate image to the public and other organisations.
- Supports strategies that aim to build an organisation that reflects the community it serves.
- Focuses on the customer in all activities.
- Tries to provide solutions to customers' problems as quickly as possible.
- Apologises when they are at fault or have made mistakes.
- Responds quickly to customers' requests.
- Makes sure that customers are satisfied with the service that they receive.
- Manages customer expectations.
- Keeps customers updated on progress.
- Balances community and organisational interests.
- Rectifies errors or mistakes as quickly as possible.

Negative indicators

- Is not customer-focused and does not consider individual needs.
- Does not tell customers what is going on.
- Presents an unprofessional image to customers.
- Only sees a situation from their own point of view, not from the customers' view.
- Shows little interest in the customer (e.g. only deals with their immediate problem).
- Does not respond to the needs of the local community.
- Slow to respond to customers' requests.
- Fails to check that customers' needs have been met.
- Focuses on organisational issues rather than customer needs.
- Does not make the most of opportunities to talk to people in the community.

Effective communication

Communicates ideas and information effectively, both verbally and in writing. Uses language and a style of communication that is appropriate to the situation and people being addressed. Makes sure that others understand what is going on.

Communicates all needs, instructions and decisions clearly. Adapts the style of communication to meet the needs of the audience. Checks for understanding.

Positive indicators

- Deals with issues directly.
- Clearly communicates needs and instructions.
- Clearly explains management decisions and policy, and the reasons behind them.
- Communicates face to face wherever possible and if it is appropriate.
- Speaks with authority and confidence.
- Changes the style of communication to meet the needs of the audience.
- Manages group discussions effectively.
- Summarises information to check that people understand it.
- Supports arguments and recommendations effectively in writing.
- Produces well-structured reports and written summaries.

Negative indicators

- Is hesitant, nervous and uncertain when speaking.
- Speaks without first thinking through what to say.
- Uses inappropriate language or jargon.
- Speaks in a rambling way.
- Does not consider the target audience.
- Avoids answering difficult questions.
- Does not give full information without being questioned.
- Writes in an unstructured way.
- Uses poor spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Assumes that others understand what has been said without actually checking.
- Does not listen, and interrupts at inappropriate times.

Personal responsibility

Takes personal responsibility for making things happen and achieving results. Displays motivation, commitment, perseverance and conscientiousness. Acts with a high degree of integrity.

Takes personal responsibility for own actions and for resolving issues or problems that arise. Is focused on achieving results to required standards and developing skills and knowledge.

Positive indicators

- Accepts personal responsibility for own decisions and actions.
- Displays initiative, taking on tasks without having to be asked.
- Takes action to resolve problems and fulfil own responsibilities.
- Keeps promises and does not let colleagues down.
- Takes pride in own work.
- Is conscientious in completing work on time.
- Follows things through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Is self-motivated, showing enthusiasm and dedication to their role.
- Focuses on a task even if it is routine.
- Improves own professional knowledge and keeps it up to date.
- Is open, honest and genuine, standing up for what is right.
- Makes decisions based upon ethical considerations and organisational integrity.
- Aware of their own strengths and weaknesses.

Negative indicators

- Passes responsibility upwards inappropriately.
- Is not concerned about letting others down.
- Will not deal with issues, and instead just hopes that they will go away.
- Blames others rather than admitting to mistakes or looking for help.
- Unwilling to take on responsibility.
- Puts in the minimum effort that is needed to get by.
- Shows a negative and disruptive attitude.
- Shows little energy or enthusiasm for work.
- Expresses a cynical attitude to the organisation and their job.
- Gives up easily when faced with problems.
- Fails to recognise personal weaknesses and development needs.
- Makes little or no attempt to develop self or keep up to date.

Problem solving

Gathers information from a range of sources. Analyses information to identify problems and issues, and makes effective decisions.

Gathers enough relevant information to understand specific issues and events. Uses information to identify problems and draw logical conclusions. Makes good decisions.

Positive indicators

- Identifies where to get information and gets it.

- Gets as much information as is appropriate on all aspects of a problem.

- Separates relevant information from irrelevant information, and important information from unimportant information.

- Takes in information quickly and accurately.

- Reviews all the information gathered to understand the situation and draw logical conclusions.

- Identifies and links causes and effects.

- Identifies what can and cannot be changed.

- Takes a systematic approach to solving problems.

- Remains impartial and avoids jumping to conclusions.

- Refers to procedures and precedents, as necessary, before making decisions.

- Makes good decisions that take account of all relevant factors.

Negative indicators

- Does not deal with problems in detail and does not identify underlying issues.

- Does not gather enough information before coming to conclusions.

- Does not consult other people who may have extra information.

- Does not research background.

- Shows no interest in gathering or using intelligence.

- Does not gather evidence.

- Makes assumptions about the facts of a situation.

- Does not notice problems until they have become significant issues.

- Gets stuck in the detail of complex situations and cannot see the main issues.

- Reacts without considering all the angles.

- Becomes distracted by minor issues.

Resilience

Shows resilience, even in difficult circumstances. Prepared to make difficult decisions and has the confidence to see them through.

Shows reliability and resilience in difficult circumstances. Remains calm and confident, and responds logically and decisively in difficult situations.

Positive indicators

- Is reliable in a crisis, remains calm and thinks clearly.
- Resolves conflict and deals with hostility and provocation in a calm and restrained way.
- Responds to challenges rationally, avoiding inappropriate emotion.
- Deals with difficult emotional issues and then moves on.
- Manages conflicting pressures and tensions.
- Maintains professional ethics when confronted with pressure from others.
- Copes with ambiguity and deals with uncertainty and frustration.
- Resists pressure to make quick decisions where full consideration is needed.
- Remains focused and in control of situations.
- Makes and carries through decisions, even if they are unpopular, difficult or controversial.
- Stands firmly by a position when it is right to do so.
- Defends their staff from excessive criticism from outside the team.

Negative indicators

- Gets easily upset, frustrated and annoyed.
- Panics and becomes agitated when problems arise.
- Walks away from confrontation when it would be more appropriate to get involved.
- Needs constant reassurance, support and supervision.
- Uses inappropriate physical force.
- Gets too emotionally involved in situations.
- Reacts inappropriately when faced with rude or abusive people.
- Deals with situations aggressively.
- Complains about problems rather than dealing with them.
- Concedes inappropriately when under pressure.
- Worries about making mistakes and avoids difficult situations wherever possible.

Respect for race and diversity

Considers and shows respect for the opinions, circumstances and feelings of colleagues and members of the public, no matter what their race, religion, position, background, circumstances, status or appearance.

Understands other people's views and takes them into account. Is tactful and diplomatic when dealing with people, treating them with dignity and respect at all times. Understands and is sensitive to social, cultural and racial differences.

Positive indicators

- Sees issues from other people's viewpoints.
- Is polite, tolerant and patient with people inside and outside the organisation, treating them with respect and dignity.
- Respects the needs of everyone involved when resolving disagreements.
- Shows understanding and sensitivity to people's problems and vulnerabilities.
- Deals with diversity issues and gives positive practical support to staff who may feel vulnerable.
- Listens to and values others' views and opinions.
- Uses language in an appropriate way and is sensitive to the way it may affect people.
- Acknowledges and respects a broad range of social and cultural customs, beliefs and values within the law.
- Understands what offends others and adapts own actions accordingly.
- Respects and maintains confidentiality, wherever appropriate.
- Delivers difficult messages sensitively.
- Challenges inappropriate attitudes, language or behaviour that is abusive, aggressive or discriminatory.
- Takes into account others' personal needs and interests.
- Supports minority groups both inside and outside their organisation.

Negative indicators

- Does not consider other people's feelings.
- Does not encourage people to talk about personal issues.
- Criticises people without considering their feelings and motivation.
- Makes situations worse with inappropriate remarks, language or behaviour.
- Is thoughtless and tactless when dealing with people.
- Is dismissive and impatient with people.
- Does not respect confidentiality.
- Unnecessarily emphasises power and control in situations where this is not appropriate.

Teamworking

Develops strong working relationships inside and outside the team to achieve common goals. Breaks down barriers between groups and involves others in discussions and decisions.

Works effectively as a team member and helps to build relationships within it. Actively helps and supports others to achieve team goals.

Positive indicators

- Understands own role in a team.
- Actively supports and assists the team to reach their objectives.
- Is approachable and friendly to others.
- Makes time to get to know people.
- Co-operates with and supports others.
- Offers to help other people.
- Asks for and accepts help when needed.
- Develops mutual trust and confidence in others.
- Willingly takes on unpopular or routine tasks.
- Contributes to team objectives no matter what the direct personal benefit may be.
- Acknowledges that there is often a need to be a member of more than one team.
- Takes pride in their team and promotes their team's performance to others.

Negative indicators

- Does not volunteer to help other team members.
- Is only interested in taking part in high-profile and interesting activities.
- Takes credit for successes without recognising the contribution of others.
- Works to own agenda rather than contributing to team performance.
- Allows small exclusive groups of people to develop.
- Plays one person off against another.
- Restricts and controls what information is shared.
- Does not let people say what they think.
- Does not offer advice or get advice from others.
- Shows little interest in working jointly with other groups to meet the goals of everyone involved.
- Does not discourage conflict within the organisation.