

## **Criminal convictions**

This document offers further guidance on criminal convictions. Note that it is just a guide.

Eligibility will depend on the nature and circumstances of the offence. It is not possible to set out a full list of convictions that may preclude you from becoming a police officer. Each case will be considered on its own merits, and if the offence is deemed sufficiently serious you will be rejected irrespective of age at time of offending. There may be circumstances where an individual does not fall within the criteria, but whose suspected involvement in crime, or criminal associations make an offer of employment inappropriate.

### **1. Applications will not be accepted if an applicant of any age has been convicted or cautioned for an offence such as:**

- Treason
- Murder
- Manslaughter/culpable homicide
- Rape
- Offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 punishable by life or more than ten years imprisonment
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Incest
- Sexual activity with a child
- Hostage taking, hi-jacking or torture
- Involvement in espionage, terrorism, sabotage or any actions to overthrow/undermine parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means or association (past or present) with any organisation advocating such activities
- Any driving offences involving "causing death by"

- Firearms offences
- Domestic violence offences

## **2. Convictions which will lead to rejection unless there are exceptionally**

### **compelling circumstances:**

- Violence
- Offences involving serious violence or injury including grievous bodily harm (GBH) and actual bodily harm (ABH)
- Offences involving unsolicited violence towards others
- Unlawful possession of weapons, firearms or going equipped to steal
- Gross indecency
- Acts of indecency
- Abuse or neglect of children
- Public order offences – involvement in riot, violent disorder, affray, causing fear or provocation of violence, causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress

### **Dishonesty**

- Interference with the Administration of Justice or the investigation of offences
- Burglary
- Offences which involve elements or acts of dishonesty, corruption, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone including theft, fraud and deception

## **Drugs/driving offences**

- Serious involvement in drugs including possession of a class A drug (e.g. heroin, morphine) or more than one Class B drug (e.g. amphetamines) and/or supplying drugs of any kind
- Reckless or Dangerous Driving within the last ten years
- One offence of drink driving or drunk in charge or drugs driving within the preceding ten years
- More than one offence of drink driving or drunk in charge or drugs driving
- Other serious motoring offences such as convictions within the last five years of driving without insurance, failing to stop after an accident or driving whilst disqualified
- More than three endorseable traffic convictions (including fixed penalties, excluding parking) within the last five years (for offences on different dates)
- Two or more convictions for regulatory offences such as failure to renew vehicle excise licence within the last five years

## **General**

- Any offence committed as an adult or juvenile which resulted in a prison sentence (including custodial, suspended or deferred sentence and sentences served at a young offenders' institution or community home)
- Cautions (includes reprimands and final warnings) for recordable offences within the last five years
- Juvenile convictions within the last five years for any recordable offence
- Any recordable offence other than listed above within the last five years

An applicant's age at the time of an offence, the length of time and the aggravating circumstances surrounding the offence will all have a bearing in the following cases:

- Drunk and Disorderly - no more than one offence and only after two years have elapsed following a caution or three years have elapsed following a bind over/conviction
- Minor drugs offences or substance abuse – no more than one offence and only after two years have elapsed following a caution or two years from conviction
- Common Assault - no more than one offence as a juvenile and only after two years have elapsed from end of bindover/conviction

### **3. Undisclosed convictions**

Where it is suspected that an individual has failed to declare a conviction or caution, enquiries should be made to ascertain whether the conviction or caution is attributable to the individual. Such enquiries should include reference to the relevant court to ensure that the conviction has not been overturned on appeal. Where it is established that an individual has deliberately failed to disclose a conviction or caution then his or her application should be rejected.

### **4. Outstanding charges and summonses**

Where an individual discloses an outstanding charge or summons the application should be put on hold until the outcome is known, at which point it will be considered in accordance with this guidance.

### **5. HM Forces**

Serving members of the armed forces who are convicted of any criminal offence by a military tribunal will have any such offences recorded on the PNC. This will include any aspect of a conditional discharge.

## **6. Relatives or associates**

Where the relatives or associates of an applicant are found to have spent or unspent convictions or cautions for recordable offences, or there is intelligence suggesting involvement in criminal activity, the following will be considered:

- The likelihood that the applicant's performance of duty will be adversely affected, for example, through adverse pressure or a conflict of interests
- The nature, number and seriousness of the offences or involvement in criminal activity and the time period over which these took place
- Whether the circumstances are likely to bring discredit to or embarrass the police