**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](http://recruit.college.police.uk/Special/Documents/npia-01-20112835.pdf)

**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**
No formal education is necessary, but you will be required to pass an assessment centre which includes written tests and ability tests.

**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. The test will basically measure whether your fitness levels are high enough; the two key areas being strength and endurance.

The strength exercise involves performing five seated chest pushes and five seated back pulls on a Dyno machine. For the endurance test, you will be asked to run back and forth a 15 metre track in time with a series of bleeps. As the test goes on, the bleeps become increasingly faster.

**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 employment 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).  Failure to meet the medical and eyesight standards will mean you cannot be appointed. 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 visible on the hands, face, head or neck above the collar line will not be permitted regardless of their nature or size.

**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. This includes anyone who has received a formal caution in the last five years, committed a violent crime or public order offence. When making our decisions we are guided by the [National Policing Improvement Agency Circular 02/2011.](http://www.npia.police.uk/cps/rde/xchg/SID-3F5771EB-7D26EC6E/npia/root.xsl/404.htm?rdeStandardPropertyPage=yes)

**Previous applications**
You can only apply to one police constabulary at any one time. If you have previously applied to join the police service and 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 may be rejected.