



Edge Hill University
CAREERS CENTRE

Careers in the Police

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Inclusive Learning

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Edge Hill Careers Centre
Contact Details: Tel: 01695 584866

Website; www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

Opening hours:

Term-time: Monday – Thursday	9.00 am – 4.45 pm
Friday	9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Vacation periods: Mon – Fri 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
(closed for lunch 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm)

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Careers in the Police

Notes from a visit to Cheshire Police Headquarters, July 2008.

Police Staff

- Previously known as 'civilian jobs', Police staff do all roles where powers of arrest are not needed e.g. call centres; intelligence; forensics; IT; administration and finance.
- Numbers of Police staff have doubled in the last 10 years whilst the number of Police Officers has stayed the same.
- There are almost as many Police staff as Police Officers.
- In 2008, 113 new posts have been created

Recruitment Figures 2006/7

- 224 advertised vacancies
- Over 5,740 application packs issued
- 2,356 application forms received (376 internal and 1,980 external)
- Over 760 candidate interviews arranged
- 34 Assessment Centres provided
- 261 Appointments made

Expectations of You

- Service i.e. customer focus
- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Compassion
- Fairness & Equality

What You Can Expect from the Police

- Good Remuneration
 - Salary
 - Pension
 - Annual & flexi leave
- Career progression
- Job Satisfaction – making a difference, helping society to be safer

Recruitment Stages

- a. Application form - focuses on behaviours/competencies. In other words it asks for specific examples to illustrate how you have used skills to handle particular situations, for example diversity issues or achieving a result as part of a team.
- b. Short listing – almost 2 thirds of applicants are lost between application and short listing due to issues such as failure to complete the questions in enough detail, sickness record, or failure to give full and correct details of employment. Nationality can also be an issue – you

must be a British citizen, Commonwealth citizen or a citizen from the European Economic Area (EEA).

- c. Assessment centres - for specialist or management roles only, include personality tests, team exercises, situation simulations and psychometric tests etc.
- d. Structured Panel Interviews - panel of three people, last approx 45 minutes – 1 hour. Questions focus on the core behaviour competencies relevant to the role and should be answered using examples from work, home, university etc. You will be prompted to answer if required.
- e. Security checks & referencing – medical questionnaire, final security checks and vetting of family and contacts, medical examination if appropriate.

It is vitally important to be completely honest about everything, i.e. medical information, employment (even very short, part-time temporary jobs), previous addresses and convictions as they will be checked. If there are any discrepancies in the information given you will not get through to interview as your integrity cannot be relied upon. You **MUST** declare ANY contact you have had with the Police not just cautions and convictions. All contact e.g. as a witness, victim, speeding fines etc must be declared.

If you do have a caution or conviction it doesn't necessarily mean you cannot work for the Police, it depends on factors such as what the crime was, how long ago it was, how old you were etc. Criteria vary for Police staff and Police officers.

Close family members and associates (friends) will also be checked. As you may have access to restricted information, it is important that no-one who is close to you is actively involved (or likely to be involved) in criminal activity.

People who are disabled under the definition of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) are encouraged to apply. Reasonable adjustments will be made according to the requirements of the role and the needs of the individual.

Roles within Police Staff

1. Intelligence

- There are currently 55 staff and they received over 700 applications for posts during 2006-7.
- Intelligence analysts investigate all the information available on individuals e.g. credit card records, loan applications, mobile phone usage, associates, car driven, TV licence, doctors records, banking details, internet information etc.

- The information is used to identify and look at crime trends and themes, what's happening, how is it happening ('modus operandi') where is it happening and who is it likely to be?
- In the case of murders or kidnaps, analysts look at information on the victims and their associates, identify possible motives and who may have done it, and draw up sequences and timelines.
- Most intelligence jobs are desk-bound and require someone who can consistently plough through reams of information. You need an eye for detail, the ability to spot trends and themes and to make accurate hypotheses.
- Any degree subject is acceptable although law or criminology degrees often provide strong candidates

Intelligence Bureau structure:

- a. Systems Unit – first point of contact for receipt/request for intelligence. You need to be inquisitive, good with data and preferably to have some experience in this kind of work (e.g. fraud team in a bank, credit control roles)
- b. Analysis Unit – collects and disseminates information on what's happening in Cheshire. You need a degree for these roles.
- c. Research and Development Desk – mostly Police Officers who gather and collate information.
- d. Communications and Legislative Unit – deal with tasks such as managing and protecting Confidential Human Intelligence Sources (i.e. 'grasses'). You must be an accredited criminal intelligence analyst for this role.

Progression routes from these roles include: Police Officer roles, the communications industry (e.g. Orange etc), large retailers such as Tesco, project management, MI5 and MI6.

2. Call Management

3 areas of call management:

- a) crime recording- recording incidents and issuing incident numbers etc
 - b) non-emergency calls- general calls and advice
 - c) emergency calls – 999 line, 60% are not emergencies but those that are must be sorted out in 30 seconds, i.e. officers must be deployed to the scene
- All contact centre staff work a 3 shift pattern and each shift is 14 hours long
 - It is a stressful role as all the calls are nasty but staff turnover is half that of other contact centres and the average employee has 10-15 years service
 - You need to have excellent customer service skills and be able to handle pressure and a stressful environment. Experience of interacting with the public is an advantage

- It is an ideal introduction to the work that Police Officers do and can be a way into this role
- Students can do weekend work and would do 14 hours on Friday and Saturday

3. Forensics

- Forensics is based on Locard's Law:
'When 'A' comes into contact with 'B' something from 'A' transfers onto 'B' and vice versa'.
This can be pollen, body fluids, footmarks, hair, soil, bugs, fibres from clothing and furnishing etc
- The aim is to recover, package and store evidence in the best way possible to secure a conviction.
- Evidence can include: finger prints, bite marks in half eaten food, footwear marks, hair, cigarette ends, drinks bottles, used envelopes, blood stained items etc.
- Crime scenes are frequently very unpleasant and distressing.
- All evidence is processed in the unit except DNA which is sent off to a Government Forensic lab.

There are 2 functions within the Forensics Investigation Department:

- Evidence Retrieval
- Evidence Identification

It is possible to move between the 2 functions and people with skills in both are highly valued. Specialism within area e.g entomology is encouraged. Forensic Science Services are expanding both at Government Lab level (from 5 units in the UK to 11) and within each Police Force.

Roles within Evidence Retrieval Units

1. Volume Crime Scenes Investigator

- Collects evidence from crimes such as burglaries, vehicle crime, minor assaults and thefts.
- Need to have GCSE maths English and a science

2. Crime Scene Investigator

- Prefer you to have a science degree (plus GCSE maths and English) as a science background helps you to stand up to scrutiny in court.
- Forensic qualifications and crime scene investigation courses can be a useful background but you would still need to undergo Police forensic training
- Photographic ability is desirable.
- Must be articulate, have good analytical ability, an eye for detail and strong problem solving skills in order to consider all aspects
- Must able to work shifts and the 'on call' rota for weekends

- Must live within 20 minutes of your base to take advantage of the 'golden hour' after an incident
3. Crime Scene Manager
 - Understands all the expert roles (e.g. entomologist, pathologist, biologist etc) and it is their job to manage the order of procedures at a crime scene to ensure optimum effectiveness
 4. Crime Scene Investigation Team Leader
 - Looks after a number of investigations and manages the Crime Scene Managers. This role is mainly desk based.
 5. Head of Crime Scene Investigation
 - Has responsibility for the effective functioning of Crime Scene Investigation unit.

Sections and Roles within Evidence Identification Units

1. Forensic Submissions
 - DNA officer- this is an administrative role focussing on what tests are required and which lab it needs to go to. You need GCSE maths and English for this role.
 - Forensic Submissions Officer – purpose is to determine what information can be gained from the types of evidence collected in relation to the nature of the crime, and to decide where it needs to go to. A level science is required for this role.
2. Imaging Department
 - Aim is to visually record the scenes of accidents and crimes for use as evidence at the scene
 - Evidence may include photographs of tire marks, fingerprints, footprints, blood spatters, and bullet holes.
 - Detailed photographs of injuries sustained through accidents or assaults and of dead bodies are also required.
 - The work can be very emotionally distressing.
 - Entry is possible at Photographic Technician level with A level photography, or with a degree in photography as a Photographer.
 - Photographic Trainer – responsible for supervising and developing other staff
 - Digital Imaging Officer- responsible for enhancing forensic images.
3. Chemical Enhancement Lab
 - Chemical Enhancement Technician - uses chemical processes to treat fingerprints to make them visible.
 - Materials that can be treated include paper, plastic, leather, vinyl and rubber.
 - A science degree is needed for this job.

4. Fingerprint Bureau

- Ten Print Technician – role is to quality assure the marks, put them onto the national fingerprint database and check the identity of people in custody
- Trainee Fingerprint Officer - analyses, compares and evaluates fingerprint casework. Also prepares evidence for court. Entry is possible with A levels.
- Fingerprint Expert - responsible for recognition and classification of fingerprint patterns to allow search and comparison. Also analyses finger, palm and foot print impressions from crime scenes to assessing their suitability for comparison. Gives fingerprint evidence in court.

5. Forensic Footwear Unit

- Footwear mark evidence is the most common forensic evidence left at crime scenes. Footwear marks can be recovered from a wide range of surfaces and the patterns of wear matched to suspects' footwear.
- Footwear Technicians - to become trainee technician you will need an A level (preferably in Science) and must complete a national training course.
- Footwear Mark Experts- you must be an experienced technician to progress to this role.

4. IT Services

- Biggest support service for the Police
- Work in conjunction with many external organisations e.g. DVLA, Court Systems, Highways Agency and Home Office
- State of the Art technology and are currently introducing a hand held device/printer to facilitate 'mobile data'. This is the technology to allow officers to input and access data without returning to base.
- Run over 80 business IT services to 5000 users across 3300 PCs, laptops and mobile devices. From Sept 08 this will increase to 4000, and to 6000 by Jan 09.
- Services include digital technology (radio receivers etc), communications, operational support for Police Officers, finance, Human Resources, internet access and databases in addition to PCs laptops and handheld devices.

There are 3 areas within IT Services:

- Business Change and Development
- Service Assurance
- IT Services

Business Change and Development

- Roles include: project managers, application developers, information delivery, web development, systems analysis, and technical development.
- Entry is possible with a relevant degree plus 2 years work experience.
- Junior roles e.g. project support are a good route in for graduates with no work experience. It is possible to progress into more senior roles and to change to a different area within IT Services.

Service Assurance

- Roles include: customer liaison, complaints, quality assurance and contract management
- All customer facing roles are junior roles

IT Services

- Roles include: service desk, PC support, server management, mobile data, IT security and information delivery.
- Customer facing roles are good entry level positions and qualifications such as a degree in Business Information Systems, ECDL, and Microsoft Qualifications are a good background alongside experience of working with customers.
- You can apply by sending in a CV and vacancies are advertised via recruitment agencies.
- Many staff progress to work for banks such as Barclays, MBNA and HSBC where salaries are more competitive

Police Officer Recruitment

Recruitment Stages

1. Application Form
2. Initial Vetting
3. Assessment Centre
4. In Force interview
5. Physical Assessment
6. Final Vetting
7. Medical/ Uniform Fitting /References

It takes between 3 and 18 months from application to starting in the Police Force.

1. Application Form

- 2/3 of applicants lost at this stage
- 4 Competency Based Questions
 - Respect for Race & Diversity
 - Team Working
 - Resilience
 - Effective Communication

Applicants are lost due to issues such as failure to complete the questions in enough detail, sickness record, or failure to give full and correct details of employment. Nationality can also be an issue.

People who are disabled under the definition of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) are encouraged to apply. Reasonable adjustments will be made according to the requirements of the role and the needs of the individual. Impairments/health conditions should be declared on the application form.

Competency Based Questions:

- Respect for Race & Diversity
- Team Working
- Resilience
- Effective Communication

It is very important to read the question carefully and follow the prompts in order to meet the criteria. Examples from work, sports teams, university, family, voluntary work and work experience are all acceptable as long as they allow you to demonstrate the skills being sought in each question. There is information and examples on the Police: Could You website www.policecouldyou.co.uk

2. Initial Vetting

It is essential to be completely honest about everything, i.e. medical information, employment (even very short, part-time temporary jobs), previous addresses and convictions as they will be checked.

If there are any discrepancies in the information given you will not get through to interview as your integrity cannot be relied upon. You MUST declare ANY contact you have had with the Police not just cautions and convictions. All contact e.g. as a witness, victim, speeding fines etc must be declared.

If you do have a caution or conviction it doesn't necessarily mean you cannot work for the Police (although Merseyside Police do not accept anyone with a conviction) it depends on factors such as what the crime was, how long ago it was, how old you were etc. Criteria vary for Police staff and Police officers.

Close family members and associates (friends) will also be checked. As you may have access to restricted information, it is important that no-one who is close to you is actively involved (or likely to be involved) in criminal activity.

Home Office Circular 51/2003 gives guidance on convictions that can and cannot be accepted. The 'Police Could You' website has guidance on all requirements.

3. Assessment Centre

It is a national standardised process typically lasting from 8.00 am to 2.30pm. Detailed information on it can be found on the 'Police Could You' website.

Part 1

- Series of structured written assessments against the Behavioural Framework for a Constable. These take the form of problem solving exercises (scenarios).
- Scenarios are set within the 'Westshire Shopping Centre' as a Customer Services Officer.
- You are assessed against the Behaviours, and spelling and grammar are also checked.
- A pack is issued in advance of the assessment centre and you are advised to read it thoroughly as it contains everything you will need to know in order to prepare for the day

Part 2

Interview. This is very scripted and doesn't flow.

- Four questions- asked against the Behaviours
- The questions are structured and only limited probing is permitted. Each question has a time limit of 5 minutes.
- There is no other interaction and the next question will not be asked until the time for the previous question has expired, even if you have finished speaking.

Part 3

Interactive Stage.

- You will be involved in a number of short interactive activities or stations.
- Within the station will be a role actor and an assessor

- You will be required to deal with the situation based on 5 minutes preparation time and 5 minutes interaction
- The role actor only speaks if spoken to
- You must stay at each activity or station for 10 minutes even if there is no interaction or the situation has been dealt with

Part 4.

Police Initial Recruitment Test

- Two Tests
- Numerical (12 minutes)
- Verbal and logical reasoning (25 Minutes)

People with a condition such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or any other impairment or health condition may require adjustments to be made at the Assessment Centre. Such conditions should be declared in advance and proof provided where appropriate.

The national pass rate for the Assessment Centre requires you to score 50% across the whole day. However, in areas such as North Wales and Greater Manchester the pass rate is higher (at 60% and 55% respectively) as such Forces need to recruit smaller numbers.

You can take the Assessment Centre anywhere in the UK and if you pass it you can then enter the recruitment process in another Force within the next 12 months. This is an advantage for students studying away from home but who may wish to join their local Force.

4. In Force Interview

- Not all Forces do this but Cheshire and Lancashire do as a way of cutting out people who don't have a realistic grasp of the job
- Follows after passing the Assessment Centre
- Aims to find out more about how you, your experiences and expectations e.g. what the impact might be on your life and family, have you considered how it might feel when a rest day is cancelled at short notice?
- Assessed against behavioural competencies
- More like a traditional interview

Applicants pass, fail or are deferred for 6 months.

5. Physical Assessment

- Dynamic Strength - involves performing five seated chest pushes and five seated back pulls on the Dyno machine to measure your strength. You must push 34 Kg and pull 35 Kg to pass.
- Endurance - you will be asked to run to and fro along a 15 metre track in time with a series of bleeps, which become increasingly faster.

Coastal Forces also have a swimming test, and Welsh Forces have a Welsh language test.

You are allowed 3 attempts at the physical assessment.

Further information on these requirements and on how to prepare can be found on the 'Police Could You' website and Greater Manchester's website: www.gmp-recruitment.co.uk

6. Final Stages

- Medical
- Security checks – including checks of partner, parents, siblings, children etc
- Uniform fitting
- References- will go back a minimum of 5 years

Trainee Police Officers complete a 26 weeks training course before beginning operational duties.

25% of applicants are graduates, but most do not go onto the high potential development scheme (details on 'Police Could You' website)

People who have taken a gap year may not be accepted. This is because it can be difficult to provide proof of where you were and what you were doing. Cheshire Police will consider gap year completers, but you are advised to check your local Force's policy.

If you apply to the Police and are unsuccessful you must wait 6 months before applying to the same or another Force.

Cheshire Police recruit 5 times per year. The 'Police Could You' website has details of each Force and their recruitment cycles.

Further Information

www.allpolicejobs.co.uk - advertises Police staff and Police Officer vacancies
www.policecouldyou.co.uk

Local Forces

www.cheshire.police.uk
www.gmp-recruitment.co.uk
www.lancashire.police.uk
www.merseyside.police.uk

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CUSTOMER VIEWS

Your views are important to us and help us to continually improve the quality of our services.

We would appreciate it if you could complete this form and tell us what you thought of the information we've given you.

Publication title :

Will this publication help you?

YES / NO

Did you find the information easy to understand?

YES / NO

Was the publication interesting?

YES / NO

Did you like the design of the publication?

YES / NO

Do you have any other comments about Edge Hill's Careers Centre or the information we've given?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please return it to the Careers Centre