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G5 Experienced Investigator

Application Guidance and Process

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Eligibility, Accreditation and Equivalents

The NCA requires all criminal investigators to hold accreditation at one of the relevant levels of the Professionalising Investigation Programme (PIP). PIP is an accreditation programme for Detectives and Criminal Investigators which is owned by the National Police Chiefs Council and governed by the College of Policing.

The post you are considering applying for requires current minimum accreditation at PIP Level 1 – operational competence in priority and volume crime. You will need to demonstrate the following and be able to exhibit operational competence at PIP Level 1 through:

- Current and valid certification of accreditation from a Home Office Force or Law Enforcement Agency, PSNI or equivalent from Police Scotland or evidence from a relevant and competent authority such as HR unit or Force Learning and Development unit.
- Accreditation from one of the above which is valid within the past 36 months plus evidence of having undertaken a criminal investigation up to referral to the prosecuting agency (CPS/PPSNI/Procurator Fiscal) within the past 36 months.

To be eligible to apply, you must hold a PIP Level 1 or equivalent accreditation. The Agency will accept applications from candidates who hold PIP Level 1, with an expectation of achieving the other required accreditation (PIP2) within 12 months. In order to be considered equivalent, the claimed accreditation must be relevant to the investigative discipline and be attained through learning followed by a rigorous workplace-based assessment regime, where competence is confirmed prior to the award of accreditation. All evidence provided may be subject to confirmation with previous employers, training providers and accrediting or awarding bodies. The evidence provided will be assessed by the accreditation panel and a decision on whether a candidate's qualifications/accreditations meet the standard required will be notified to the advertising manager. If the panel assessment is that you do not meet the required level then your application may be withdrawn as you do not meet the essential criteria as specified in the job advert.

In addition to this, the post you are applying for requires PIP2 - operational competence in investigating serious and complex criminal investigations. Therefore, you will need to demonstrate the following and be able to exhibit operational competence at PIP2 through:

- National Investigators Exam (NIE) pass, completion of ICIDP and Advanced Interviewing programmes, assessment and verification of the PIP2 portfolio and continuing accreditation within the previous 36 months.

An alternative pathway for officers who became Detectives before PIP (2005) is for completion of the initial ten-week CID training course and a career history (as outlined in the) which shows continuation of criminal investigation activity in Force within the previous 36 months.

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Essential qualifications

cont.

- Active PIP Level 1 or PIP2 accreditation or PIP Level 1 or PIP2 accreditation that has moved to inactive within the past 12 months.
- Current, serving Police Constables who have passed their probationary period can be accepted as holding PIP Level 1 accreditation.
- Current, serving police Detective Constables who have completed their force's detective training programme and are signed off, following submission of their portfolio, as substantive detectives can be accepted as holding PIP2.
- Police Civilian Investigators who hold active (or moved to inactive within the past 12 months) PIP Level 1 and/or PIP2 accreditations. Officers will be required to provide evidence of the units upon which their accreditation is based and are expected to demonstrate operational competence of any current PIP Level 1 units that did not form part of their original accreditation within 12 months of taking up an investigations post.
- PIP1/PIP2 Home Office Immigration Enforcement (HOIE) officers' accreditations are accepted as PIP. The Immigration Enforcement Investigators Exam (IEIE) taken for PIP2 candidates is not a direct equivalent to the National Investigators Exam (NIE) and therefore officers joining via this route will be required to take and pass the NIE within 12 months of taking up their post, alongside any other exams and development required.

All experienced investigations officers will be required to demonstrate competence in the key policing skills of arrest, conflict management, escorting arrested/detained persons and presenting arrested persons to custody through either previous experience or by assessment against these skills during the first 12 months in post, alongside the successful completion of any required NCA examinations as appropriate.

Investigations officers within the NCA are not warranted officers but are designated with the powers and privileges of a Constable, Immigration officer, Customs officers and General Customs official. To be designated with these required powers you will be required to successfully pass a number of exams in relation to legislation effecting these four areas. Full training and support will be given to officers. Successful passing of these exams will be a condition of continued employment.

Equivalent Qualifications

Applicants holding accepted equivalent qualifications may apply. In order to be considered equivalent, a qualification must be relevant to the criminal investigation discipline, cover modules that are broadly similar to those covered by the PIP Level 1/PIP2 programmes, consist of taught elements and be followed by a rigorous workplace-based assessment process before the qualification/accreditation is awarded.

The NCA recognises the following as being broadly equivalent to PIP Level 1/PIP2:

- Military Police – Royal Military Police Initial Course (RMPIC) = PIP Level 1
- Volume Crime Investigation Course (VCIC) = PIP Level 1
- Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist (level 4 award) = PIP2
- Serious Crime Investigation Course (SCIC) = PIP2
- Police Scotland officers who have passed their probation can be considered to hold PIP Level 1 equivalent and officers who have completed the Police Scotland National Investigators Exam (NIE) and the Initial Investigators Programme (IIP) can be considered to hold PIP2 equivalent

Officers joining the NCA on a PIP-equivalent basis must attain the required PIP accreditation, and this will include taking all relevant exams and could include the requirement to complete an assessed portfolio of workplace-based evidence.

Application Process

The application and assessment process will comprise the following stages:

1) Online application. Candidates are invited to submit their application as outlined on this advert ahead of the advertised closing date. A shortlist, comprising candidates who pass this initial paper sift, will be carried out during the first two weeks of July 2025. All candidates will be advised, by email, with regard to the status of their application after this shortlist stage.
This sift will include an assessment of your eligibility to apply in relation to the minimum criteria. Please ensure that you mention any applicable accreditation dates to any accreditations on which you're relying.

A 'virtual event' for this role will be held from 6pm – 7pm on Wednesday 7th January 2026 on MS Teams. Please see the main advert for joining details.

2) Online interview. Candidates passing the paper sift outlined in stage 1) will be invited to a Microsoft Teams interview. These will be held throughout August 2025. Candidates will be invited to book their own interview slot at a time suitable for them. Due to the number of available slots, we will be unable to offer alternative interview slots. All candidates will be advised, by email, with regard to the status of their application after their interview.

3) In-person recruitment event. All candidates successful at interview will be invited to an in-person recruitment event. These will be held in three locations across the country, in an attempt to reduce distances that candidates are required to travel. The NCA will not be able to reimburse expenses incurred in travelling to these events. These events will be held in mid-late September 2025, and will comprise a 'knowledge check', substance misuse test, identity check and a body armour measuring check.

4) Appointments. Candidates successful at the recruitment event outlined in stage 3) will then be made offers of employment in strict merit and location order, according to the scoring criteria outlined within this advert. Offers will be made according to business requirements. Any candidate for whom a post is not immediately available will enter the 'candidate pool'. Candidates will remain on this reserve list for up to 12 months from the date of entry, which will be the date on which their candidate pool letter is issued by NCA.

End Slide

National Crime Agency