



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2010-03175  
**Keyword:** Human Resources  
**Subject:** 2009 Recruitment Campaign

### Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

### Question 1

All questions relate to the March 2009 recruitment campaign for Trainee Police Constables Patrol/Probationers.

Firstly, in relation to the merit list passed from Deloitte to the PSNI (following the Assessment Centre phase of selection) and used to form the pool of qualified candidates:

What was the total number of suitable candidates passed to the PSNI by Deloitte?

### Answer

There were 1065 candidates in the merit pool.

### Question 2

Of this number of suitable candidates, how many were members of the Roman Catholic community?

### Answer

263 of the candidates were members of the Roman Catholic Community

### Question 3

Within this group of Roman Catholics, what were the highest, lowest and average scores from the Assessment Centre phase of the selection process run by Deloitte?

### Answer

Highest – 67  
Lowest – 36  
Average – 49

**Question 4**

Of the number of suitable candidates, how many were members of the non-Roman Catholic (i.e. Protestant/Others) communities?

**Answer**

802 of the candidates were members of non - Roman Catholic communities.

**Question 5**

Within this group of non-Roman Catholics, what were the highest, lowest and average scores from the Assessment Centre phase of the selection process run by Deloitte?

**Answer**

Highest – 68

Lowest – 35

Average – 50

**Question 6**

In relation to those suitable candidates in the pool who subsequently entered police training: What was the anticipated number of student officers to be recruited from this campaign?

**Answer**

Appointments from recent campaigns are normally in the region of 440 per annum. However, it should be stated that the lengthy nature of the appointments process means campaigns often straddle financial years, and also that any one campaign is restricted by the total number appointable in the Catholic (CB2) pool. In the March 2009 campaign, the number of successful CB2s reaching the merit list was 263 (see Q2 above). Consequently, if the number of CB2 candidates then failing medical, vetting, or withdrawing, brings this figure below 220 (being half of 440), then we can only appoint a corresponding number of CB1s.

**Question 7**

What was the actual number of student officers recruited from this campaign?

**Answer**

There have been 248 student officers recruited from this campaign to date. Appointments are still in progress.

**Question 8**

Of the number actually recruited, how many were members of the Roman Catholic community?

**Answer**

132, to date, are members of the Roman Catholic Community.

**Question 9**

Within this group of Roman Catholics actually recruited, what were the highest, lowest and average scores from the Assessment Centre phase of the selection process run by Deloitte?

**Answer**

Highest – 67

Lowest – 37

Average - 49

**Question 10**

Of the number actually recruited, how many were members of the non-Roman Catholic (i.e. Protestant/Others) communities?

**Answer**

116, to date, are members of non-Roman Catholic Communities.

### **Question 11**

Within this group of non-Roman Catholics actually recruited, what were the highest, lowest and average scores from the Assessment Centre phase of the selection process run by Deloitte?

### **Answer**

Highest – 68

Lowest – 54

Average – 58

### **Question 12**

It is my understanding that upon receiving the merit list of qualified candidates from Deloitte, the PSNI External Appointments Department divide the list into Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic groups and candidates are then ranked according to their Assessment Centre scores. Offers of vacancies are then made upon successful completion of medical assessments and security vetting, on a fifty-fifty basis. In relation to this process, is the above summary of what takes place correct?

### **Answer**

The PSNI divide the merit list according to community background in accordance with the legislative requirements, and retain the respective merit order within these backgrounds. Candidates are processed in batches, in a top-down approach from both lists, through the medical, vetting and substance misuse stages. Appointments are offered to those who successfully complete these stages, and are within the appointable band, according to merit principles.

### **Question 13**

What process is used to allocate places to candidates on training courses once they have completed their medical assessments and security vetting? For example is it simply a case of "first-come, first-serve"; are only those candidates who have successfully passed their medicals and vetting actually ranked (or re-ranked); alphabetical; randomly selected etc?

### **Answer**

Please see answer to question 12 above.

### **Question 14**

Is it possible for a candidate, who has scored well at the Assessment Centre phase, but whose medical or security vetting has been delayed, to be passed over in favour of another candidate who has perhaps not scored as well but whose medical and security vetting processes have been completed?

### **Answer**

The PSNI make offers of appointment to successful candidates under the merit principles and in line with the 50/50 arrangements. In the circumstances described, our practice has been to hold a place until the process is completed. However, as we approach the end of the 50/50 arrangements in March next year, and are predicting no recruitment in the year 2011/12, there will be no provision to carry forward appointments beyond this date. In this case, and as the PSNI must fulfil its legislative obligations under 50/50 to appoint the required numbers by the end of March, it is possible that candidates whose medical or vetting outcomes remain outstanding may be passed over in favour of the next appointable candidate on the order of merit. Every effort will be made to avoid this outcome but there can be no guarantee, because of the practicalities of the ending of the legislation.

### **Question 15**

What mechanisms exist for informing the remainder of candidates left in the pool after all vacancies have been allocated, that they will not be receiving the offer of a place in police training?

## **Answer**

Applying the 50/50 arrangements is a hugely complex process for the PSNI. In simple terms, there are generally 3 categories at the outset – those who fall within the number required (for example, within the respective top 220 for 440 appointments), those who are so far down the merit list that it is unlikely they will be offered a training place at all (and they are written to on these terms), and the middle group of ‘unable to determine at this point in time’. The outcome for these individuals depends on the circumstances of those above them, and how many places are available (which is often restricted by the total number from the minority pool). As appointments are made on order of merit, on rolling 5 weekly intakes, it can sometimes take 12 - 18 months from receipt of the merit list to conclude a campaign. However, at this time, all remaining candidates are then advised that all appointments have been made, and the campaign is closed.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.