

A career pathway in response policing

Response policing

Response policing is the term widely used to describe the teams of police officers that respond to emergency and non-emergency calls from members of the public. Response policing teams are made up of constables and a sergeant with a response inspector overseeing them.

What do response officers do?

Response officers are at the heart of uniformed policing and will often be the first police officer many members of the public come in to contact with. While responding to incidents is their primary role, in doing this they will also protect the public, proactively patrol their communities, manage critical incidents, communicate with vulnerable people, apply conflict management techniques, give emergency first aid and much more. The response officer needs to be omni-competent in a range of skills and must keep up to date with changes in the law and policing.

One of the most important aspects of the response officer role is adhering to the 'golden hour' principles at the start of an investigation. In this initial hour of a crime taking place, the actions of the response officer are key, as they will be responsible for preserving life and evidence, as well as identifying the victims, suspects and witnesses.

What roles are available in response policing?

Roles in response policing are constable, sergeant and inspector. There are lateral development opportunities too, with many receiving training in method of entry tactics and training to be part of a police support unit (PSU) dealing with crowd control and public order. By enhancing these skill sets, officers are able not only to do more as a response officer, but also to work in other areas of the force, such as policing football games. Response officers are also likely to train to hold qualifications in police driving and Taser. Each response officer will have a unique set of skills that will make them an asset for their team and may also help them branch out into other areas of policing.

Those in the sergeant and inspector ranks will often be the first supervisors at critical and major incidents, often overseeing complex and dynamic situations. In some forces, inspectors will often be the most senior officers on duty and will be constantly reviewing the demand on their resources, deploying officers effectively and making use of their powers in law, such as granting extra search powers.

What are the progression opportunities?

It is likely that every police officer will be a response officer in their career and many will return to response policing between roles. Therefore, the opportunities for progression are endless. Those seeking promotion will often undertake the duties of a response sergeant, as many of the skills needed for progression into specialist areas start in the response policing world. Response officers can progress within the role and gain lots of skills throughout their career, or they may choose to specialise in other areas of uniformed policing. However, due to the strong investigation skills needed in response policing, a career as an investigator is also a likely possibility.

Exploring response policing further

The diagram on the next page shows how you may develop in response policing as a constable. As you can see, it is likely that both new recruits and experienced officers will be drawn to response policing. The opportunities to develop and 'bolt on' skills and qualifications are also shown. If you are looking at progressing through the ranks, you should look at the **National Police Promotions Framework (NPPF)** information. It may not be possible to progress through the ranks within a particular job family, as forces may assign newly promoted individuals or those in acting posts, in line with organisational need.



How your career could look in response policing

