

## SOCA APPLICATION FORM - GUIDANCE NOTES

Read these notes carefully **BEFORE** completing the SOCA application form.

### 1. Introduction

The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) has many exciting career opportunities in an environment that is focused on developing lawful innovative strategies and tactics aimed at fighting serious and organised crime.

We require drive, determination and a strong commitment to the prevention and detection of serious and organised crime through the highest professional and ethical standards.

Our selection process is designed to give you an opportunity to demonstrate that you have the abilities and potential to perform at the highest level in the role for which you are applying.

### 2. Application Information

To apply for a vacancy you will need:

- Personal Quality Framework (PQF)
- A copy of the job advert and advertised instructions
- The role profile
- A SOCA application form (including an Equal Opportunities monitoring form).

All these are available from our website Careers pages.

### 3. Role Profile

The role profile outlines the specific requirements for the post:

- Behavioural competencies e.g. communication, teamwork and partnership
- Entry criteria i.e. the skills, knowledge and experience you will be required to demonstrate upon entry into the role.

*Please note you will only be required to evidence against five behaviours and three entry criteria – see section 4.5.*

### 4. The Application Form

- Every section of the application must be completed. Applications may be clearly hand written, or typed in Arial font size 10.
- Do not extend beyond the specified word count. Any evidence provided beyond the specified word count will not be considered.
- Do not attach a CV to your application as this will not be taken into consideration.
- All sections must be completed in line with these guidance notes.

#### 4.1 Personal Details

Please complete every box and clearly specify the post for which you are applying, including full job title, post number and location.

#### 4.2 Training and Qualifications

Please provide details of any specific training and/or professional qualifications required for the role as identified in the job advert. Where this is deemed to be 'essential' any applicant without the appropriate training or qualification will not pass the sift stage.

Please include details of any other training or professional qualifications you consider relevant to this application.

Present your most recently gained qualification first and include any membership of professional bodies and registration numbers.

#### 4.3 Employment History – Current Post

Your work experience is important in providing background information about the work activities you have participated in and the career opportunities you have had. The Serious Organised Crime Agency welcomes applicants with a diverse mix of experience and potential.

Please provide full details of your current employment including a summary of your current duties and, where appropriate, line management experience.

#### 4.4 Employment History – Previous Posts

Please provide details of your full employment history including any breaks in employment. Starting with the most recent first, provide a **brief** description of your main responsibilities.

#### 4.5 Evidence of Suitability for the Post

This is an important section of the application form as it provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate your suitability for the role. The evidence you provide will help to determine whether you meet the required standards to be invited to the selection and interview stage.

SOCA will select a total of five personal qualities/behaviours and three entry criteria from those listed within the relevant role profile. These will be the most appropriate to the specific vacancy being advertised. They will be clearly outlined in the job advert and will provide the basis for the selection process.

Applicants will only be required to provide evidence against the selected personal qualities/behaviours and entry criteria shown in the job advert and NOT the full list contained in the role profile.

You should evidence your suitability for the post by:

- Detailing your knowledge, skills and experience against the specified entry criteria, with examples of what you did and a summary of the outcome;
- Providing specific examples from your work, college/university or from activities outside the workplace to demonstrate how you meet the specified personal qualities/behaviours.

Please note that any information exceeding the 250 word count will not be considered.

#### **4.5.1 Personal Qualities / Behavioural Requirements**

The Personal Qualities Framework (PQF) describes the behavioural characteristics valued by SOCA which promote good performance and achieving results. Clear definitions of these behaviours and examples of positive indicators at each grade are contained with the PQF. These are suggestions only and wording should not be lifted from the PQF into the application form – applicants should provide clear examples of situations where they have demonstrated these qualities and behaviours.

#### **4.5.2 Entry Criteria**

The entry criteria requirements are a selection of the specific skills, knowledge and experience an applicant will be expected to demonstrate upon entry into a role. The entry criteria shown in the role profile is not an exhaustive list nor will every criterion apply to every vacancy, therefore each time a vacancy arises SOCA will identify the three *most suitable* entry criteria from the relevant role profile.

#### **4.5.3 Providing Evidence**

To help you compile your evidence of personal qualities / behavioural requirements and entry criteria effectively it may be useful to consider the following STAR method:

- S** – Situation
- T** – Task
- A** – Action
- R** – Result

STAR is a universally recognised communication technique designed to enable you to provide a meaningful and complete example or answer. A useful tip is to focus on A (Action) and the actions you took.

#### **4.6 References**

Your nominated referees must be able to provide information that will confirm your suitability for this post. Ideally, one of your referees will be your current or most recent employer. Where this is not possible you may list someone else who is

qualified to comment on your performance at work or full-time education (in the case of recent graduates).

#### **4.7 Signed Declaration**

Please ensure that you sign your form before submitting it. If submitting your application form online, please type your name into the signature box. Your signature confirms the accuracy of the information provided.

#### **For Permanent SOCA Employees Only**

Your application must be signed off by your immediate Line Manager and also a Countersigning Manager.

#### **4.8 Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

At the end of the application form there is an Equal Opportunities monitoring form.

This form is for monitoring purposes only and will be detached from the completed application form on receipt by the SOCA Recruitment Team. It will not be seen by the short-listing or interview panels.

Applicants who consider themselves to have a disability and meet the minimum behavioural competency and entry criteria standards will automatically be selected for interview.

### **5. Vetting and Pre-employment Checking Procedure**

Applicants who are selected for permanent appointment to SOCA will be subject to checks, including security screening, in order to fulfil our aim of developing an ethical, professional and robust organisation and ensuring the highest levels of security. The majority of our roles will be subject to Developed Vetting (DV).

If you are successful we will require you to disclose further information about yourself, your partner, your finances, your parents, your children and anyone else who lives at the same address as you.

Information provided at each stage of the recruitment process may not necessarily prevent your application progressing; however, failure to disclose relevant circumstances or information may be regarded as evidence of unreliability and will be taken into account in assessing your suitability for appointment with SOCA.

The vetting procedures are compliant with the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA 1998) and in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998). Information obtained during the vetting process will be treated in the strictest confidence and only be used for the purpose for which it is obtained.

Please note that the post for which you have applied is NOT protected by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). You must disclose any criminal convictions, including those that are spent.

**6. Submitting your Application**

Please return your completed application either

By email:

**The Recruitment Team**  
**central.recruitment@soca.x.gsi.gov.uk**

or;

By post:

**The Recruitment Team**  
**P.O. Box 58352**  
**London**  
**NW1W 9JT**

**For security reasons do not refer to SOCA on the envelope**

Please check the cost of postage prior to posting, as insufficient postage may lead to a delay in delivery. Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.

In line with security requirements, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you not to discuss the details of this application beyond your immediate family.