

Sellafield recruitment opens for Authorised Firearms Officers

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The CNC has opened AFO recruitment at Sellafield as part of a rolling programme to sustain armed protection at one of the UK's most sensitive nuclear sites.

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) has opened recruitment for Authorised Firearms Officers (AFO) at Sellafield as part of a rolling national programme to sustain continuous armed protection at one of the UK's most sensitive nuclear sites.

The CNC provides 24/7 armed policing to protect civil nuclear sites, materials and facilities across England and Scotland. Maintaining that capability requires ongoing recruitment and training to ensure operational resilience and a deterrent to those who would threaten critical national infrastructure.

Assistant Chief Constable (People) Kerry Smith said: "Our responsibility is to provide continuous armed protection to some of the UK's most sensitive infrastructure. A rolling recruitment programme is essential to that mission. It allows us to plan ahead, sustain capability and ensure we always have the right people, trained to the highest national standards, in place to deter and respond to threats.

"Delivering operational excellence demands the best recruits, who enter with the right values and behaviours, and who we train to be amongst the best in armed policing.

"In return, I am proud that a career with the CNC provides opportunities, work/life balance and a supportive culture. We are an inclusive employer, with the highest proportion of female AFOs compared to other forces. We achieved strong results in the 2025 National Police Wellbeing Survey.

Successful applicants will begin the Level 4 Non-Home Office Police Officer Apprenticeship (NHOPOA), delivered internally. From day one, they'll join the force as a police officer apprentice and receive a starting salary of £31,164 throughout training and probation.

Training begins with a 19-week Initial Foundation Programme (IFP), combining policing skills and firearms training to national standards. Officers are trained in relevant legislation, including the Energy Act 2023 and the Equality Act 2010, alongside the Code of Ethics and the statutory powers underpinning the CNC's role.

Firearms training is delivered in line with the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum and College of Policing standards. Officers must demonstrate competence in use of force, legal accountability and tactical decision-making. Performance, conduct and behaviour are continuously assessed.

Following the IFP, officers complete 20 months of structured development at their Operational Policing Unit, supported by a tutor constable and the Professional Development Unit. Mandatory training and fitness standards continue throughout an officer's career.

Sellafield officers work a four-on, four-off 12-hour shift pattern. Officers can apply for specialist roles while on probation but cannot be appointed until they have successfully completed probation and are confirmed in rank.

Officers also have access to award-winning occupational health and wellbeing support, with dedicated time within working hours to maintain fitness.

To find out more, click here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sellafield-recruitment-opens-for-authorized-firearms-officers>