

Firearm

Section 1 of the [Firearms Act 1968](#) (as amended) applies to all firearms except:

- **A shotgun**
- **An air weapon (unless declared 'specially dangerous')**
- **Prohibited weapons such as centre fire self-loading rifles, handguns, machine guns etc (unless specifically authorised)**

Shotgun

Section 1(3)a of the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended) defines a shotgun as:

- **A smooth bore gun (not being an air weapon)**
- **Having a barrel not less than 24" (60.96cm) in length and a bore not exceeding 2" (5.08cm) in diameter**
- **Either having no magazine, or a non-detachable magazine incapable of holding more than two cartridges**
- **Not a revolver gun**

Referees

When applying for either a firearm or shotgun certificate, you should have gained the permission of two people who have agreed to act as referees for you.

The referees who have agreed to act for you must:

- Have known you personally for at least the last two years
- Have had a reasonable degree of contact with you during that period
- Be resident in Great Britain

A referee **must not be a member of**

- Your immediate family.
- A registered firearms dealer .
- A serving police officer .
- A police employee.
- A Police and Crime Commissioner or a member of their staff, or a member of, or a member of staff of, the Scottish Police Authority.
- Referees must be of good character and any references they agree to provide must be given freely and not on payment. You should ensure your referees know what is required of them by acting in such capacity by providing them with the [guidance for referees](#).

Coterminous applications

To apply for both a firearm certificate and a shotgun certificate and to have them expire at the same time (coterminous certificates) you should complete the sections for firearm and shotgun certificates.

The fee payable for such certificates may be less than the normal fee for the grant or renewal of a shotgun certificate if both of your applications are dealt with at the same time.

Medical information

You must disclose any relevant physical or mental health conditions that you have been diagnosed with or treated for in the past as this may affect your ability to safely possess and use a firearm or shotgun.

Sections 27 and 28 of the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended) specify that in order to issue a firearm or shotgun certificate the chief officer of police must be satisfied that an applicant can be permitted to possess a gun 'without danger to the public safety or the peace'.

Medical fitness is one of the factors police must consider when assessing a person's suitability.

Relevant medical conditions which must be disclosed are:

- Acute Stress Reaction or an acute reaction to the stress caused by a trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder
- Suicidal thoughts or self harm or harm to others
- Depression or anxiety
- Dementia
- Mania, bipolar disorder or a psychotic illness
- A personality disorder
- A neurological condition: for example, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's or Huntington's diseases, or epilepsy
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Any other mental or physical condition or combination of conditions, which you think may be relevant

The list above is not intended to be exhaustive. A mental, physical or neuro-developmental condition may be relevant depending on the severity of the disorder and how it presents. If in doubt, consult your GP or contact the police firearms licensing department.

It is your responsibility to arrange for your GP or another suitably qualified * GMC-registered doctor, to provide medical information to the police concerning your suitability to possess a firearm and/or shotgun, to provide medical information to the police concerning your suitability to possess a firearm and/or shotgun, **you are expected to meet the cost if a fee is charged for this.**

*** Is a doctor with a GP or a full Specialist General Medical Council registration, and a licence to practise. This also applies to doctors providing a service for a private company.**

When the medical information is being provided to the police by a doctor from a private company, the doctor must receive the applicant's medical information direct from the GP practice and not via the applicant.

With regards to data protection, it should be noted that the medical information will be processed on a public interest basis for the legitimate policing purpose of assessing the suitability of someone to be granted a firearm or shotgun certificate.

Medical practitioners have separately requested that an applicant's consent is provided in order for medical practitioners to be satisfied that they have discharged their obligations under their duty of confidentiality in relation to their patients. The application form requests the applicant's consent for the release of the information for that reason.

Relevant medical issues

Where the doctor indicates that there are relevant medical issues and police require further medical information to consider the application, you should obtain a report about these medical issues, **you are expected to meet the cost of a fee if it is charged**. Following this, if police require an additional report to be provided they will meet the cost of the fee charged.

The police will ask your GP to place an encoded reminder on your patient record to indicate that you have been issued with a firearm or shotgun certificate. The GP is asked to notify the police if, following issue of the certificate, you are diagnosed with or treated for a relevant medical condition (listed above), or if the GP has other concerns about your possession of a certificate that might affect your safe possession of firearms. Following contact from your GP there may be a need for a medical report to be obtained to assist with assessment of your continued suitability to possess a firearm or shotgun certificate. **The police will pay if a medical report is required**.

Following the issue of a firearm or shotgun certificate please note that the declaration you have signed, consenting to information sharing between your GP and police, applies during the application process and during the validity of any firearm or shotgun certificate, which may be up to five years.

You are expected to inform the police if, following issue of the certificate

- **You are diagnosed with or treated for a relevant medical condition while the certificate remains valid.**
- **You change your GP practice, and provide details for the new practice.**

You are instructed to provide details of GP practices for the previous 10 years, and whether you have consulted medical practitioners, other than at your GP practice, so that all relevant information is available to the police enabling assessment of your suitability to possess a firearm certificate.

Military personnel who are posted abroad and have a service GP may still be regarded as resident in the UK for the purposes of the application.

You can download the GP form from the application service, have your GP fill it in, and upload it with your online application.

Previous offences

- You must not withhold information about any conviction, bindover, out of court disposal, formal written caution, reprimand or fixed penalty notice (including fixed penalty notices for motoring offences such as speeding, but not including parking offences), in and outside Great Britain, and (by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975) convictions which are spent under the 1974 Act. A conditional discharge and an absolute discharge both count as convictions for this purpose.
- Section 21 of the Firearms Act 1968 places restrictions on the possession of firearms and ammunition by those previously convicted of crime.
- A person receiving a sentence of imprisonment of three months or more is prohibited from possessing a firearm, shotgun, antique firearm, air weapon or ammunition for five years from the date of their release.
- In the case of a suspended sentence the prohibition applies from the second day after being sentenced. If the sentence is three years or more the prohibition applies for life unless lifted by the Crown (or Sheriff) Court.

Inspection of premises

Please allow the police to inspect your guns and security when requested as the absence of a warrant requires your consent for the police to enter and inspect your premises.

Photographs

- A digital photograph must be used for online applications.
- Photographs must be of a professional standard, against a plain cream or grey background and without other objects or people in the background.
- The photograph must be a true likeness and full face without a head covering (unless it is worn for religious or medical reasons).
- In your photograph you must be looking straight at the camera, have a neutral expression, with your eyes open and mouth closed.
- You must not wear sunglasses or tinted glasses, and the photographs must not have any 'red eye.'

Equality monitoring

The equality monitoring information you provide aims to assist the force in meeting its duties as a Public Authority. The information will be kept separately from the application.

Submission of application

The receipt for the submission of an electronic application, where available, will be automatically generated by the system.

If an application is being made for a variation, the certificate to be varied must be included with your application. (You may wish to keep a copy of the certificate.)

Section 1 firearms only

To acquire or possess firearms or ammunition under Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968, you have to provide evidence that you have a good reason to do so.

This applies to the grant, renewal or variation of a firearm certificate.

This evidence can take several forms: permission to shoot over land or membership of a target shooting club, or a booking or invitation to go deer stalking are examples, but these are not exhaustive.

Please provide the address of one area of land where you have permission to shoot, together with the name, address and telephone number of the person who has given you that permission or the details of a Home Office approved club of which you are a full member.

NB: You will not necessarily be limited to shooting over that individual piece of land or at that club.