



Uniform Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1219)

Appendix A: Uniform and Standards of Appearance Principles

The Uniform Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1219) and the Uniform and Standards of Appearance Principles apply to **ALL** uniformed staff, both public facing and non-public facing. Also, extended police family including volunteers and cadets.

Hereafter referred to as individuals issued with a uniform.

The Uniform Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1219) and the Uniform and Standards of Appearance Principles also provides guidance for those in non-uniformed roles.

1. Key Principles

1.1 It is essential, always, to present a professional and dignified image for the Surrey Police and Sussex Police (hereafter referred to as the Forces) that will enhance public confidence. It is the responsibility of all officers, staff, and members of the extended police family to adopt a standard of dress and appearance that contributes to the professional image and dignity of the Forces.

1.2 It is recognised that officers, staff, and the extended police family work in a wide variety of circumstances, and that different clothing will be appropriate to different circumstances. With limited exceptions, for example for authenticity in covert operations, the same underlying principles may be applied to all circumstances.

1.3 It is the responsibility of leaders to set and enforce standards of dress and appearance that meet those objectives and must set an example with their own high standards of appearance. Leaders must ensure groups of uniformed staff and officers working together in public view are dressed uniformly as far as is practicable, subject to operational commitments, religious observance / cultural needs, medical, maternity or health reasons.

1.4 In deciding what is appropriate or not, consideration must be given to the unique role that policing has in society, and the rightfully high standards that the public expect from officers, staff and Special Constables and members of the extended police family.

1.5 Leaders will be expected to challenge those whose appearance falls below the standards explained in this document. This is a subjective assessment, and if the person being challenged disagrees, they can appeal to a leader one rank higher in the same team, area, or department. There is an expectation that officers / staff will comply with a direction under this document.

1.6 Any breach of the standards set out in this document will be dealt with by the normal range of management actions, including the use of disciplinary / misconduct processes where appropriate.

1.7 In setting and maintaining standards of dress and appearance managers, supervisors, officers, and members of staff must have regard for the following:

Health and Safety Legislation / Hygiene Regulations

Compliance with Health and Safety Legislation requires a risk assessment of any work activity. Unless risks can be adequately controlled by other means, employers must provide suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to individuals who may be exposed to such risks. Officers and staff are required to wear Personal PPE and adhere to uniform standards identified as essential by the risk assessment process.

Equality Legislation

This document complies with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Compliance with Equality Legislation does not require identical appearance for all officers and staff, neither does it require complete freedom of officers and staff to dress as they please. The following matters should be considered:

- Different modes of dress may be adopted according to gender. However, the requirements should not be significantly more demanding on one gender than any other. Guidance on the variation in dress during maternity should be followed.
- Police officers and staff may have religious beliefs, customs and practices that require them to dress or adopt an appearance in a certain way. Managers should ensure that these observances are accommodated wherever practicable.
- Support and flexibility will be adopted for an officer or member of police staff to accommodate gender identity and expression. The [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy \(Surrey and Sussex\) \(193\)](#) and The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Guidance on Gender Reassignment should be followed.
- Variation in dress standards will be permitted where this is a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010. Consideration will also be given in cases where an allergic reaction condition is supported by medical evidence.

1.8 Where consideration of a variation in a standard of dress or appearance may be needed the matter must be discussed directly and discretely with the individual concerned. Where a variation in a general standard of dress is determined by a manager or supervisor, the variation, and the reason for it should be recorded in writing and placed on the personal file.

1.9 Except where there is a genuine business need, for example in respect of authenticity in covert operations, the presentation of a professional and dignified image of the Forces will always be of importance.

This will be achieved by the following:

- The wearing of uniform as authorised and as officially issued by the Forces.

- The adoption of common standards of uniform by all those on duty at specific events where appropriate. For a specific event, the operational order should specify the mode of dress.
- The meeting of the expectations of the community; the organisation and the individual in that order.
- The avoidance of giving offence to any member of the public.
- The adoption of high standards by officers and staff whose contact is solely or primarily with other officers and staff of both Forces.

2. General points

2.1 Officers, Special Constables, and staff deployed on uniformed duties (including cadet's) will wear role specific clothing and equipment (except footwear) issued by the Forces through the Uniform Stores. If additional or different equipment is considered necessary for a role, then authority for its use must be sought through the Joint Uniform Committee. This is to ensure that all Health and Safety and other legislation has been considered that the equipment is cost effective and there is a budget to supply it, alongside consistency of appearance.

2.2 Police officers (including Special Constables) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), police staff and our extended police family including volunteers and cadets are to ensure that uniform and other equipment is kept clean and in good repair. Any repairs need to be carried out via the uniform stores.

2.3 Uniformed officers must ensure that they have their issued rank / insignia (including warrant number for Constables and Sergeants) clearly visible on the outer most layer of clothing.

2.4 Uniform will only be worn on duty. Officers should exercise caution about travelling to and from work in police uniform, but if done, must cover or remove identifying marks. This applies to all uniformed staff.

2.5 Only wear police-issue items of equipment on the uniform belt. Utility belts should be worn over the trousers or skirt and fleece or blouson for Health and Safety reasons and to ensure uniformity.

2.6 Officers will not wear large bunches of keys hanging from the belt to avoid risk of injury, unless there is an operational requirement (e.g., custody). This applies to all uniformed staff.

2.7 As a matter of courtesy and professionalism the chewing of gum will not be permitted when dealing with the public or at professional meetings.

2.8 Any members of the workforce who are in non-uniform roles are expected to dress in a manner that reflects the professional image of policing. The standard of dress may vary depending upon the work environment, but all officers and staff are reminded that a professional image is important when dealing with colleagues and internal customers as well as the public.

Uniform will be stored in a locked locker when left on site, if a locker is not available the individual will speak to their line manager who will escalate to Estates and Facilities.

3. Appearance

The below guidance is a mandatory standard to public facing staff. If a non-public facing staff member, then the below can be discussed with your line manager and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

3.1 Hair

- Hair must be worn so that it is cut or secured above the collar and ears and is neat and tidy. A short above collar “bob” style is also acceptable. Supervisors are required to remember that the appearance of “neat and tidy” will vary depending on the natural texture of an individual’s hair, but it should not present a Health and Safety hazard. Any hair accessory must be plain in design and black or navy blue in colour. Extreme and vivid hair colouring is not permitted. Do not dye it in conspicuously unnatural colours, as hairstyles and facial hair, of uniformed staff / officers must convey professionalism.
- For police officers and other operational uniformed staff, pigtails and ponytails are unacceptable due to officer safety implications.
- Non-uniformed staff public facing staff, must ensure their appearance reflects the same high standard required of all other members of the Forces, dependent on working environment (if the role is not one which requires face-to-face contact with the public, there is room for discretion).

3.2 Facial hair

- Any facial hair that is allowed to grow should be kept neat and tidy. It is not appropriate to maintain an “unkempt” appearance. Facial hair should not be dyed in conspicuously unnatural colours. Warrant and ID cards must be updated when there is a substantive change in appearance.
- An unshaven / stubbly appearance is unacceptable unless you are growing a beard or moustache. This does not apply where there is a genuine medical reason not to shave. Officers intending to grow beards, moustaches etc, should aim to do so away from work.

3.3 Tattoos

The overriding factor in considering whether a tattoo is appropriate is whether it is likely to undermine the professional image of the Forces, or if it is inconsistent with the [College of Policing Code of Ethics of Standards of Professional Behaviour](#).

- Tattoos that are considered racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, violent, crude, lewd, rude, are associated with crime or gangs or are intimidating are not acceptable.
- Where tattoos are inappropriate to the role of the officer or member of staff, they will be directed to keep them covered whilst at work.
- The number and location of tattoos may be a factor in determining whether they are appropriate.

- Tattoos on the face and hands are more likely to be inappropriate and careful consideration will be given by the organisation to any tattoo on the neck, face, or hands in deciding if it is acceptable. Keep these principles in mind when deciding whether to have such a tattoo.

3.4 Cosmetics

- You are permitted to wear minimal makeup appropriate to your natural skin tone or in connection with your religion / faith, e.g., the Bindi. You may also wear makeup to conceal a facial disfigurement or significant blemish
- Uniformed operational staff, for Health and Safety reasons, should keep fingernails trimmed short and clean. You may not wear any jewellery or attachments on nails. Nail polish must be clear or of subtle colour, with the same colour used for all nails.

3.5 Jewellery

- Jewellery is worn at your own risk and Forces are unlikely to be liable for any loss, damage, or theft of such. You are therefore encouraged not to wear valuable jewellery to work
- A minimal amount of jewellery should be worn to maintain a professional image and minimise risks to Health and Safety. Police officers, police staff and Special Constables have a duty of care to themselves and others to carry out a risk assessment in relation to the nature of jewellery worn, and the circumstances they are in at the time.
- Facial studs, and piercings will not be worn. Any cultural or religious reasons for needing to wear facial jewellery should be brought to the attention of a supervisor.
- There is a potential Health and Safety implication with wearing jewellery. You are permitted to wear a watch, a band ring (e.g., a wedding, civil partnership, engagement, eternity, or modest signet ring), small stud earrings and a necklace (provided this is worn under clothing and is not visible).
- You may wear other jewellery with permission and on a case-by-case basis. This could be on medical grounds, e.g., an alert bracelet, or religious grounds, e.g., Sikh staff are permitted to carry a miniature Kirpan out of sight beneath outer clothing
- Individual pieces of jewellery may be subject to Health and Safety Assessment, and you may be required to remove these whilst at work or carrying out tasks.

3.6 Wearing of Badges

- Officers are permitted to wear small badges / pins on their clothing, whether that is uniform or not, if it does not support an identified political party, support any proscribed organisation, contain any symbol or other material that is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, violent, crude, lewd, rude, are associated with crime or gangs or is intimidating. This applies to all uniformed staff.
- The placing of any such badge or flag should not obscure any other fixed thing or required element of the item of clothing. (For example: it should not be placed on a "Police" badge, or on the blue and silver chequered band on body armour). It should also

not damage police property, must be capable of being easily removed and must not be too large nor interfere with the operation of that item of clothing.

3.7 Sunglasses / Spectacles

- Frames should be plain and neutral in colour and style. Mirrored reflective lenses are not permitted.
- Officers and staff should remove sunglasses when talking to a member of the public and inside a building unless it is necessary to continue wearing them for medical reasons or because they are prescription sunglasses. In such cases, consultation will be required with a supervisor to support this, e.g., a medical note from the GP or a request from Occupational Health.
- Prescription spectacles worn during operational activity, including roles that involve direct contact with the public, must have lenses made of safety plastic and not glass, for Health and Safety reasons. The frame should generally be plain and neutral in colour and style. Those members of staff holding a Forces driving authority and required to drive as part of their role should avoid wearing spectacles with wide arms due to them blocking side-vision.
- Under certain circumstances, you can obtain an optical voucher from the Forces towards payment of spectacles – refer to your local administration officer.

3.8 Headgear

It is compulsory for uniformed staff to wear Forces-issued headgear while performing public duties. This not only projects a professional image but, where appropriate, assists in the Health and Safety of staff.

The following also applies:

- Except on religious and medical grounds officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and members of the Special Constabulary will wear Force-issued headgear.
- Officers and uniformed staff in police vehicles may remove their headgear while in the vehicle but must wear it outside the vehicle at all times unless operational commitments prevent this, e.g., chasing suspects or saving lives, home visits, severe weather such as high winds (police officers and PCSOs riding police pedal cycles while on duty are to wear pedal cycle safety helmets and police motorcyclists will wear Forces-issue motorcycle helmets when on patrol).
- You may remove headgear when providing television interviews to avoid shading the eyes and when posing for non-operational photographs.
- Sikh officers and uniformed staff may wear a black or dark navy-blue turban with a modified cap badge.
- Muslim officers and staff may wear a black or dark navy-blue headscarf / hijab under the police issue hat.
- Sikh officers and staff who wear turbans are exempt by law from having to wear motorcycle helmets and are also therefore exempt from having to wear pedal cycle safety helmets while on duty or at work, however, a risk assessment will be undertaken in

relation to the specific role to be performed, including any potential communications issues.

- Officers and uniformed staff may wear prayer caps at the appropriate time and when the need arises while on duty.
- Specialist headgear such as baseball caps and black woollen hats may only be worn as per the scale of issue for the role you are undertaking, for example, Police Support Unit (PSU) staff, and can only be worn in connection with that role.
- In cold weather conditions, uniformed staff are permitted to wear standard issue plain black wool cap when deployed outside a vehicle instead of standard headgear.

3.9 Police issue Trousers / Skirts

Officers should only wear the trousers / skirts issued for their role. It is not acceptable to wear search trousers or other similar items on general patrol activities nor adapt uniform unless to improve fit or as part of a reasonable adjustment. Tailoring of uniform remains the officer's responsibility. This applies to all uniformed staff where applicable.

3.10 Police Issue Shirts

- Operational police officers will normally be expected to wear black wicking type shirts, either long or short sleeved. These will be worn with the zips done fully up, and kept tucked in.
- Uniformed officers who are not in operational roles, or for other specific requirements may wear a police officer issued white shirt and tie / cravat. Ties may be removed, and collars undone in very hot weather.
- Undergarments worn under either shirt type will be plain and appropriate in colour and the sleeve length will not exceed the length of the uniform shirt sleeve.

3.11 Body Armour

- The default position is that body armour will be worn when on patrol unless a dynamic risk assessment indicates that it is appropriate to remove it. (For example, it may be worn to and from a public meeting and removed for the course of that.)
- Wearing protective vests will be decided according to the protective equipment risk assessment process in-force.
- Officers are not permitted to wear a tactical vest unless it has been issued by Uniform Stores, following the recommendation of the Occupational Health Team.

3.12 Warrant / Identification Cards

- Everyone must always carry warrant / police identification. At times of increased security officers and staff must wear it outside clothing in a prominent place, usually in a lanyard or a name badge holder while on police premises.
- Loss or theft of a card must be reported to a line manager immediately due to security implications. Refer to [Identification Passes and Access to Police Premises Policy \(Surrey and Sussex\) \(1135\)](#). Users can report a lost card via the [Security and Breach Reporting](#)

[Tool](#) on the front page of the intranet. Out of hours, lost or stolen cards must be reported to the IT Service Desk in Sussex or the Force Control Room in Surrey who will then update the system immediately.

- When visiting certain countries on vacation, seek guidance in relation to the current threat levels and whether you should take your warrant / identification card.

3.13 Footwear

• Uniformed staff

Wear plain black boots or shoes appropriate for the role to be performed. Footwear must be clean, with a low, flat heel. Socks and tights or stockings must be of a plain colour and appropriate to the uniform being worn.

• Non-uniformed staff

Only wear footwear that is clean, smart, and appropriate to your role and in keeping with the standards set for uniformed staff. Some styles of shoe are inappropriate in certain situations due to Health and Safety considerations, e.g., high-heeled shoes and open-toe sandals.

• All staff

If there is a medical need (e.g., disability or pregnancy) for certain types of footwear, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A change of standard clothing may be considered for those during maternity and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

3.14 High Visibility clothing

- If the risk assessment of a particular policing activity is such that high visibility jackets should be worn, then they are to be kept done up when engaged in that activity. Sleeves are not to be rolled up.
- Officers and staff should ensure that high visibility clothing is kept clean, and particular attention paid to the reflective strips.

3.15 Ceremonial Dress

- For an operational order or specific event, the standard of dress may be stipulated in the interests of the corporate branding or safety.
- Ceremonial Tunics will continue to be issued as “personal issue” to officers of the rank of Inspector and above.
- A Ceremonial Uniform consisting of tunic and matching trousers will be loaned to police officers for Force funerals, external awards ceremonies and for those being presented with a medal, such as the Long Service Medal. This may be subject to operational priority commitments of the stores and availability of stock. White ceremonial gloves will be designated and provided where appropriate. Tunics must be returned to the Uniform

Store within 2 weeks of the event. If a tunic is required for any other reason, Chief Inspector authorisation will need to be obtained before the request is forwarded to the Joint Uniform Stores. Permission should be sought from your Divisional / Department Commander to wear uniform to any occasion outside work.

- If you are not wearing a tunic then you must wear your smart day uniform. The wearing of polo shirts is only approved for use by specific police staff groups who are issued with work wear as per the scale of issue.

- Business suits or an appropriate smart jacket are the expected forms of dress whenever non-uniformed staff are attending ceremonial events.

Current process is that kit requests / gifts / awards for in and out of Force gifts are signed off at Chief Inspector level in Sussex and Professional Standards Department (PSD) in Surrey.

3.16 Pregnancy and Maternity

Variation in dress standards will be permitted where this is a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act. This will be discussed with your line manager and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

3.17 Medals

- For special events, medals and ribbon brooch bars must be worn on tunics where issued. The medal ribbon brooch bars may also be worn on fleeces. Position medal ribbons just above the left breast pocket flap of the tunic, centred over the pocket button, in order of importance from right to left, i.e., the Jubilee Medals first, followed by the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. The General Service Medal and other military medals should precede the Jubilee Medals.

4. Court Appearances

4.1 Police officers, Special Constables and police staff must wear the uniform that they usually wear to work when representing the Forces at either Magistrate or Crown Courts. Clean and smart operational uniform is acceptable.

4.2 When attending Magistrates Court, police officers and Special Constables will have their full PPE with them. This includes personal protective vests, baton, handcuffs, and irritant spray. The type of criminal cases heard in the Crown Court may be significantly different to those dealt with in the Magistrates Court, increasing in seriousness and often dealing with sensitive issues and vulnerable witnesses. Therefore, the decision to wear all PPE will be taken by the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO), however irritant spray will always be retained.

4.3 Police officers, Special Constables and police staff providing evidence via live link will be dressed in normal uniform for their role. When at a secure police premises, PPE need not be worn. Those issued with epaulettes with identification numbers should wear these. All individuals should be mindful that this remains an appearance at court and their overall appearance should reflect the professionalism that should be displayed at court.

4.4 Police officers can carry tasers in the Magistrates and Crown Court as part of their operational equipment when attending on routine business. For pre-planned operations in courts, plans must be submitted to the court if firearms and taser are being deployed as a tactical option.

4.5 Line managers should apply a common sense and informed approach to non-uniformed police officer and police staff appearance. Non-uniformed individuals giving evidence in court or via live link should be smart and professional wearing business attire, appropriate for the working environment, role and duties undertaken. Line managers will challenge if they consider that clothing or appearance is not in keeping with the required standard.

4.6 This also applies to attendance at Coroners Court.

5. General Instructions for Officers and Police Staff when Working from Home

5.1 It is the responsibility of the individual officer or staff member to display a professional image in keeping with the Uniform, Appearance and Standards guidance always when visible at work.

5.2 Officers and staff attending any meeting with external agencies, partners or stakeholders, or a formal internal meeting, should adopt a similar standard of dress to working in the office (the wearing of ties is discretionary – although the audience needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis).

5.3 For officers and staff attending a less formal internal meeting, so long as point below is adhered to, comfortable clothing is acceptable.

5.4 Standards of dress shall reflect a professional image. The following are examples of unacceptable standards of dress when working from home (this is not an exhaustive list) and it will be the decision of the relevant supervisor or manager as to what is acceptable, taking into consideration the role and specific task of the individual.

- Any garment with slogans or logos or motifs that may be considered inappropriate.
- Any garment which is likely to bring the respective Force into disrepute – this includes potentially offensive badges or logos.
- Beachwear.
- Sportswear.
- Nightwear.

6. Return of Uniform

6.1 All uniform no longer in use or needed, including ceremonial dress and damaged items, must be returned to the Uniform Store for repurposing or secure destruction. It is the responsibility of the individual and their line manager to ensure that this has been completed. If this is not completed, then a security risk has been created.

6.2 No items of personal issue uniform may be passed on or donated either internally or externally.

Team: Estates and Facilities Department