



## **APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANT OR RENEWAL OF FIREARM **AND/OR** SHOTGUN CERTIFICATES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This advice is to help you with your application. We can't cover every individual circumstance, so this is designed to provide general advice on straightforward applications.

If you are a member of BASC and have difficulties with the forms which are not covered in this advice, please contact the Firearms Team on 01244 573 010 for personal help.

It is important to refer to the notes (form 201A) with the application form BEFORE you complete certain questions.,

Application forms, current fees, Firearms Licensing Department contact details and further advice is available from the Firearms Department pages at -

<http://www.basc.org.uk/en/departments/firearms/certificate-forms-and-fees.cfm>

It's a good idea to print at least two copies so that if you make an error, you can start afresh with a new page.

### **RENEWALS – GENERAL ADVICE**

*Please note that although Police Firearms Departments usually send out renewal reminder letters, they may NOT enclose the forms with them, and it is **YOUR** responsibility to apply in good time. We suggest ten weeks before the expiry of your old certificate.*

#### **At renewal, should I return my old certificate(s) for the police?**

Ensure that you keep your certificate(s) whilst your renewal form is being processed. Whilst your existing certificate(s) remain valid, you will need them to buy ammunition and to show that you are in lawful possession of firearms and ammunition and shotguns.

***Remember that your renewed certificate cannot be used until the date it comes into force.***

If your firearms licensing department ask for your certificate(s), photocopy the whole certificate and enclose the copies with your application. We advise you to keep copies of your application form in case queries arise in the future.

## What if I experience a delay in renewal?

If you have returned your application for renewal in good time and are experiencing delays which may put you in unlawful possession of firearms, shotguns or ammunition when your certificate expires, then you should ask for a temporary Permit under Section 7 of the Firearms Act 1968. This will allow you to keep and use your firearms and shotguns and also, by virtue of Section 5(2)(a) of the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1988, to purchase shotgun ammunition.

Unfortunately this will **NOT** allow you to possess expanding ammunition if you have any. This should be lodged with a registered firearms dealer until you have your renewed certificate.

Make sure that you complete the form carefully and return it **as quickly as possible in the case of renewal** to give the system a chance to work properly. Give the police reasonable time to issue a new certificate before the expiry date. 10 weeks should allow plenty of time.

## What if I'm asked to complete extra forms?

The Firearms Act 1968 states very clearly that the application shall be in the form provided by those Rules.

This means that the official application form (Firearms Form 201) is the only one you are required to complete. The Firearms Enquiry Officer (FEO) may ask for clarification of your answers to questions on the form but he may not require you to complete any other forms or ask you to get anyone else to do so.

## ***FILLING IN THE FORM***

## **GRANT OR RENEWAL**

Unlike the old forms, this form now applies to **BOTH** firearms **and** shotguns.

At the top of the form are a series of tick-boxes to tell the police which certificates you are applying for, whether this is a renewal or a new certificate application, and whether you want the two certificates to expire at the same time – “conterminously”

### **PAGE 1**

## **PART A - PERSONAL DETAILS**

### **Questions 1-8**

Note that the questions ask for your SURNAME FIRST and your first names second.

These questions concern your personal details and are self-explanatory. If you do not have an e-mail address or mobile 'phone number, you should put a line through the answer section, or enter “none”, “Not applicable” or “N/A.”

The contact details are there so that the Firearms Enquiry Officer (FEO) may make an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

### **Question 9**

If you are retired, unemployed or self-employed, answer “Not applicable” or “N/A.”

### **PART B - Personal health and medical declaration.**

*It is important that you read notes 5 and 6 and the declaration very carefully **before** you complete these questions.*

Note that you do not have to give details of **both** your General Practitioner (GP) **and** any specialist who might be treating you. If you have declared a relevant medical condition, then you should provide the details of the medical person principally treating you for that condition. Again, if you don't know the e-mail address there is no need to provide it.

Even if you have not declared any medical or mental conditions, you must provide your GP's details.

Historically, the guidance issued by the Home Office on Firearms Law stated that if the police wished to have a “medical report” from your GP (as opposed to simply details of your medical record) then the police should pay for it.

Unfortunately the Home Office removed this helpful advice in their latest guidance to firearms law despite BASC objections. The Home Office no longer offers any “guidance” on this matter – it is silent.

The Association of Chief Police Officers' advice is to encourage a nationally consistent approach to the requesting of medical reports associated with applications. The decision to request additional medical information from an applicant's GP should only be made following a risk assessment and be proportionate to any concerns that have been raised. There should not be a blanket policy of requesting medical reports simply because a declaration has been made.

They do however recommend that where a medical report is considered proportionate, that the applicant be written to making them aware and putting the onus on the applicant to pay for and provide a report from their GP.

**Question 10** refers to medical conditions WHICH WOULD AFFECT YOUR SAFE POSSESSION OF FIREARM OR SHOTGUNS – there is no need to declare minor issues which would not make you a danger with a gun. Note 5 make this clear.

If in any doubt ask your Doctor.

In **Question 11**, if you don't know the e-mail address of your GP's practice or medical centre you can write “not known”, although it will be helpful if you can find it.

## Medical declaration

This may seem an intrusion into your privacy but you must complete it if you want the application to be processed. In fact it is not quite so bad as might first appear because it only gives the police authority to approach your GP or medical specialist for "factual details" of your medical history; ie: a report. The police must not ask the Doctor for an opinion of your fitness to possess guns, nor are they allowed access to your full medical records.

Declaring a medical or mental condition is NOT an automatic bar to the grant or renewal of a certificate, but making a false declaration could result in prosecution

## PAGE 2

### Question 12

For purposes of the Firearms Acts **there is no such thing as a spent conviction**. You must include **all** convictions, ***including ALL motoring offences except fixed penalty and parking tickets, whether still recorded on your driving licence or otherwise*** - whether in Britain or abroad. **Informal Cautions do not need to be mentioned, but formal written cautions and conditional or absolute discharges do.**

Remember, It is not sufficient to write "please see your records" or "as previous application."

There is no need to give full details of each offence, just the date and type of offence is required.

If you haven't lived elsewhere in the last five years, we suggest you strike a diagonal line through each section.

## PAGE 3

## PART C - FIREARM CERTIFICATE ONLY

You might wish to draw a diagonal line across the page if you are only applying for a shotgun certificate.

You must read notes 9 (1) & (2) **BEFORE** completing this section.

### Question 13

Applies to firearms you currently possess. If this is an application for the GRANT of a firearm certificate, then you will need to write "none" in the box at the top of Question 13

“**Calibre.**” This asks for the calibre of rifle/pistol/shotgun, not for the name of the cartridge. However due to the complexity of ammunition development, it is advisable to list the specific cartridge designation e.g. .17HMR or .17 Remington as the difference in performance between these two examples differ greatly; One is rimfire and the other is centrefire. The police need to deal with the application with regard to the specific ballistics of the cartridge to ensure that what is applied for is appropriate and in some cases conform to legislation i.e. the ballistic requirements contained within the Deer Act.

**"Type"** means rifle, large magazine capacity shotgun, sound moderator or muzzle loading pistol for example.

**"Make"** is self-explanatory.

**"Serial number"** Some guns will have several different numbers embossed on them – serial number, patent number, model number, proof marks, and barrel number being amongst them.

The serial number is usually on the frame or action of the gun, and it is this one you should enter in this question. . Some guns (and particularly sound moderators) don't have serial numbers, in which case you could enter "none." If in any doubt, contact your shooting organisation's technical staff for help.

**"Reason"** for possession might be "target shooting", "Pest control" or "Deer/pest control" as the case may be. This is to establish that you still have a good reason for possessing each firearm. You do not need to detail every species of animal or bird you wish to shoot, as your certificate should have a condition to shoot the bird or animal you have asked for, as well as "any other lawful quarry."

For a sound moderator you might enter "to protect hearing and reduce disturbance" for example.

For a target rifle or a muzzle loading pistol used **ONLY** for target shooting, you **must** be a full member of a Home Office Approved Club which offers facilities for that type of firearm. In this case the answer to the question is "As a member of [club] rifle/muzzle loading pistol club and at other ranges."

For sporting rifles the best answer to this section is, "On [name of land, with details including the name address and 'phone number of the person granting permission to shoot there]... and on any other land where permission has been obtained."

You don't always need to nominate a piece of land as evidence of "good reason", but in this case you should provide written evidence, for example from gamekeeper, or a copy of a booking to shoot.

#### **Question 14**

Applies to any guns and sound moderators you want to obtain in the future.

If you do not want to acquire any more guns, write "None" in the box at the top of question 14.

If you have an authority to acquire a firearm which you have not been able to acquire before the renewal date and you still wish to acquire it, details of that gun – as well as your intended use - must be entered in question 14.

**"Calibre"** This asks for the calibre of rifle/pistol/shotgun, not for the name of the cartridge. However due to the complexity of ammunition development, it is advisable to list the specific cartridge designation e.g. .17HMR or .17 Remington as the difference in performance between these two examples differ greatly; One is rimfire and the other is centrefire. The police need to deal with the application with regard to the specific ballistics of the cartridge to ensure that what is applied for is

appropriate and in some cases conform to legislation i.e. the ballistic requirements contained within the Deer Act.

“**Type**” means simply “rifle” or “muzzle-loading pistol” for example. There is no need to be specific, (for example “bolt-action rifle” or “underlever carbine”) as this may limit your choices when you come to buy the gun.

In law, a sound moderator is considered to be a firearm in this case, so you should enter it here.

“**Reason**” for possession might be “target shooting”, “Pest control” or “Deer/pest control” as the case may be. This is to establish that you still have a good reason for possessing each firearm. You do not need to detail every species of animal or bird you wish to shoot, as your certificate should have a condition to shoot the bird or animal you have asked for, as well as “any other lawful quarry.”

For a sound moderator, the usual reasons for possessing are to protect your hearing and to reduce the disturbance caused by firing the gun.

For a target rifle or a muzzle-loading pistol used ONLY for target shooting, you **must** be a full member of a Home Office Approved Club which offers facilities for that type of firearm. In this case the correct answer to the question is “As a member of [club] rifle/muzzle loading pistol club and at other ranges.”

For sporting rifles the best answer to this section is, “On ...[name of land, with details including the ‘phone number of the person granting permission to shoot there]... and on any other land where permission has been obtained.”

You don’t always need to nominate a piece of land as evidence of “good reason”, but in this case you should provide written evidence from (for example) a gamekeeper, or a copy of a booking to stalk deer.

**NOTE:** The fact that you might have an “open” condition on your certificate is irrelevant; these questions are to establish that you have a good reason to have your guns.

## **PAGE 4**

Again, this page is **ONLY** for a **FIREARM CERTIFICATE APPLICATION**

If you are applying for a shotgun certificate, you might wish to draw a diagonal line across the page.

## **Question 15**

Here, you should enter the maximum amount of ammunition you require to **have in your possession** at any one time. This includes that which you are already authorised to possess, and any you want to acquire in the life of the certificate – such as for a gun you want to acquire and have entered in Question 15.

Remember that your secure ammunition storage has to be capable of holding the full amounts you are asking for. Be realistic – how much will you really need? The Home Office Guidance to firearms licensing law has made it clear that economy of purchase is NOT a good reason to possess large quantities of ammunition.

Note that you no longer have to enter the amount you want to **buy** at any given time, but you **MUST** not hold more than the amount you are authorised to possess.

For .22 rimfire the usual quantity will be 600 or 1,100 rounds, depending on how much shooting you do and how easy it is to get fresh supplies. For serious target shooters or rabbit controllers the required quantity may well be greater so that a good stock, (all of one batch number so as to maintain the rifle's zero), can be purchased at one time.

For centrefire cartridges it is more usual to have 250 rounds of each cartridge type, which allows the purchase in good time of further supplies of ammunition. Your favourite brand, bullet weight and bullet type may be difficult to obtain so enter enough to ensure that you do not run out. If you live a long way from your nearest dealer or if supplies are particularly difficult it may be sensible to increase the figure.

In the case of .22 target shooting, allocations of 1,000 rounds are not unreasonable for regular shooters. A serious target shooter (for example in a county or national squad) may wish to possess up to 6,000 rounds to ensure consistency in performance between batches.

In exceptional circumstances more may be required, but remember; be realistic – how much will you *really* need?

*If your rifle(s) are held for pest shooting or deer control don't forget that cartridges loaded with expanding bullets and even the bullets themselves are prohibited unless there is a condition on your Firearm Certificate allowing you to acquire and possess expanding ammunition. This condition will be automatically be added if you require the firearm and ammunition for quarry shooting. If you re-load, remember that the expanding bullets themselves count towards your total holding, so ensure that you have asked for sufficient amounts – particularly as bullets for re-loading are normally sold in 100's.*

## **Question 16**

Relates to your security provisions, and is fairly self-explanatory.

**PAGE 5**

## **SHOTGUN CERTIFICATE ONLY**

If you do not have a shotgun certificate and do not want to apply for one, you might wish to draw a diagonal line across this page.

## Question 17

List the shotguns currently in your possession. If this is an application for the initial grant of a certificate, the answer to this question should be "none" in the box at the top.

## Question 18

Relates to your security provisions, and is fairly self-explanatory.

## PAGE 6

You can use this page if you find that you have run out of space in any of the questions in parts A to E. It is NOT necessary to enter anything here unless this is the case. If you don't have to enter anything, you may wish to strike a diagonal line across the page.

## PAGE 7

This partially repeats the "tick-boxes" at the beginning of the form for some reason.

This applies to firearm AND shotgun certificate applications, both for renewals and grants. Read the declaration carefully so that you know **exactly** what you are signing, then complete it by signing your name, writing it in block capitals, and dating it. It is a criminal offence to deliberately make a false statement in order to obtain a firearm or shotgun certificate.

If you are under 18 years of age, then you must get your parent or guardian to tick the appropriate boxes, and to sign, print their name and date your application.

## PAGE 8

This is for **BOTH** firearm **AND** shotgun certificate applications. Now you only have to give the details of someone who has agreed act as a referee for you if necessary. That person must be resident in the UK, have known you for at least two years, and must NOT be a police employee, Registered Firearms Dealer, a member of your immediate family, or someone of "ill repute!"

**Other than that, anyone can be a referee – they do not have to be "important people!"**

## PAGE 9

This is **ONLY** for a Firearm certificate application. If you are applying for a shotgun certificate you should draw a diagonal line across this page.

Exactly the same requirements above apply to both referees.

## PAGE 11

It is not a legal requirement to complete this page – you may wish to simply tick 1. "I would prefer not to answer any of the following questions" This will not hinder your application in any way, and you will not be considered uncooperative if you don't complete it.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Regardless of what you are applying for, your form must be accompanied by **four** passport size photographs, and you must sign and date the back of one photograph.

## NOTES

These are at the end of the application form, and are intended to help you complete the form correctly. It's important that you read them properly **before** completing the questions.

## AND NOW ?

Send the form, photos and payment to the police if asked to do so. Some police forces prefer to collect the form from you.

You can find a list of the addresses of firearms licensing departments from the BASC website, as well as the person to whom any cheque should be made payable.

If you are renewing your certificate(s) get the form completed and sent to the police **as quickly as possible**. It is no good complaining that the police have failed to renew the certificate in time if you sat on the application form for months before returning it.

ENQUIRIES TO:      Phone 01244-573010  
                             E-mail: [firearms@basc.org.uk](mailto:firearms@basc.org.uk)

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