

Date: 10th August 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/017401/I

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/017401/I

I write in connection with your request for information dated 06/08/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

What is the forces current tattoo policy in regards to weapons tattooed on the body

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information. I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP.

Extract from the relevant policy 'Uniform and Dress Standards Policy and Procedure January 2024':

5.2.4 Tattoos

Greater Manchester Police recognises that tattoos have become more widely accepted in modern society and that individuals have the right to make their own choices about their appearance. However, we are aware that for a cross section of the public we serve, visible tattoos can reduce the confidence they have, in us, as public servants.

With the above in mind GMP does not allow any tattoo on the face or scalp. Tattoos which could reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory or offensive and/or indicate attitudes or views inconsistent with the Code of Ethics and/or the Standards of Professional Behaviour are also unacceptable.

Tattoos which are considered unacceptable include those which are rude, lewd, crude, racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic, intimidating or violent, whether the tattoo(s) is visible or not.

As we don't allow tattoos which are intimidating or violent this means that tattoos incorporating guns, bladed instruments and/or other weapons are not acceptable. Exceptions to this may include tattoos which are linked to religions, the armed forces or other public services.

When deciding if a tattoo is acceptable, we'll consider them on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the size, nature, context and prominence of it. We may also seek further information on the meaning of tattoos where this isn't clear, e.g. a symbol or insignia.