

Frequently Asked Questions – Application Process Including Selection Tests

How do I apply for an application form?

Details of how to obtain an application form will be made available on our website prior to the commencement of any wholetime firefighter recruitment process.

Why do you limit the number of application forms?

This is because every single one of our applications is thoroughly evaluated before a being shortlisted. This process can take up to an hour for each form. Unfortunately we simply don't have the resources to do this for unlimited numbers of forms.

Why have you restricted applications to individuals who live within a 30 mile radius from the centre of Reading?

To assist us in managing the numbers of applicants applying to Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) as we are expecting a high volume. In addition we have had in the past, individuals who complete their training and become competent with us and then transfer to their local fire service.

Why don't you give application packs to the individuals who attend 'Have a Go' events to take away/ make them available at fire stations?

Not all 'Have A Go' attendees choose to pursue a career in the fire service, and getting candidates to apply for an application ensures not only that RBFRS is able to monitor application requests but also that only those who are seriously considering a future in the fire service will apply. In addition, fire stations do not have personnel available to deal with large numbers of ad hoc visitors.

Why don't you allow applicants to apply for several different fire services at the same time?

A national recruitment process is used for UK fire services. Candidates cannot complete the same tests multiple times as it invalidates the test results – a minimum period between applications has to be maintained. For one candidate to go through the process with several brigades simultaneously would be a waste of resources, as ultimately only one offer of employment could be accepted.

Why is the application form so long?

These questions enable applicants to demonstrate that they have the essential qualities required of a firefighter so that RBFPS can select only the best candidates. There should be enough time available before the closing date such that applicants can think about and review their answers, and do not need to complete the form in one sitting.

If I'm unsuccessful at any stage will I be able to obtain feedback?

Unfortunately, due to the volume of candidates that apply it is not possible to provide feedback on individual applications. General advice is available on the website. We also produce a brief outline of the most common pitfalls following the application stage which is available on our website.

When undertaking the physical test the fire kit I tried on was too big, what should I do?

We do ask for shoe and clothes size at the application form stage so we can provide fire kit for individuals to undertake the physical tests. Whilst we do try to provide the correct size this isn't always possible when dealing with large volumes of candidates. The kit that is available will also depend on the stock at the time, as you can appreciate it is not possible to hold lots of spare fire kit. You should obtain 'best fit' and you will be asked to bring along extra socks to assist with footwear. If you have any concerns regarding your fire kit for the testing please highlight this to the training instructor present.

How can I improve on my interview?

Higher scoring candidates in the interview process tend to be able to draw on a range of experiences across a number of aspects of their life. These candidates explained the situation, the task and actions taken together with the outcomes for each example they provided in line with the relevant Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQA) area being asked.

Is further interview guidance available?

Available to all on our website is an interview guidance booklet which provides details on what to expect in the interview and also some practice questions. This is also sent automatically to those candidates who are invited in for an interview.