

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

On Call (Retained) Trainee Firefighters – Frequently Asked Questions

How fit do I need to be a Firefighter?

You will be required to have a good level of all-round fitness. Details of the physical test are available in Recruitment Process section on this website.

What are the Entry Requirements to be On Call (Retained) Firefighter?

You must live or work within a maximum of 1 mile or 3 minutes travel time to the Retained Station where you would like to work. In addition you must be able to provide availability (a minimum of 79 hours per week) that suits the needs of the station.

Where are the Retained Stations in Berkshire?

They are in Pangbourne, Hungerford, Lambourn, Crowthorne, Mortimer, Ascot, Newbury, Bracknell, Maidenhead and Wargrave.

How long does the recruitment process take?

The process on average takes up to 6 months from the date the application is issued to the date of commencing the training course. We will endeavour to keep candidates updated at each stage of the selection process.

Is the recruitment process the same as a Wholetime Firefighter?

Yes. The process is the same.

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.

I have a conviction may I still apply?

With the exception of minor driving offences, if you are subject to a criminal conviction, not considered spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, your application would be rejected.

I am colour blind, can I still apply?

Individuals with protanopia, deuteranopia, monochromatism and tritanopia/tritanomaly are unfit for service as a firefighter. Individuals with protanomaly rarely meet the required standards while deuteronomalous individuals should be safe for firefighting. Whilst diagnosis of the defect is an important part of the assessment, subsequent confirmation of severity is essential to determine whether they are colour safe. Should you wish to discuss this further please contact the recruitment department by emailing recruitment@rbfrs.co.uk

How long is the training?

It is essential that you are able to commit to the training which will initially be Thursday evenings and some weekends. Details of the [training programme will](#) be available on our website.

Can I transfer from being an On Call (Retained) Firefighter to Wholetime?

Yes. But this will only be when Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) run a Retained to Wholetime transfer process. Normally we would only accept applications from Competent Retained Firefighters.

Where can I get more information? All the information should be available on our website. We would encourage all applicants interested in being an On Call (Retained) Firefighter to visit their location station prior to requesting an application form. Should you have any further queries please email recruitment@rbfrs.co.uk.

Why is the application form so long?

The application form has been designed to ask only relevant questions as determined by stakeholders, up to date employment law, as well as Fire and Rescue Services HR practice. It does take some time for applicants to complete the whole form, though this commitment is minor in relation to a career as a firefighter.

The PQA section of the application form is too detailed

The personal quality and attributes (PQA) referred to in section 7 of the application form are what is required to be an effective firefighter. In this section of the application form, we ask you to tell us about your skills and experience in relation to various personal qualities and attributes (PQAs) and this information is used to assist us in identifying whether you are suitable for the role of a Firefighter. A breakdown of the PQA's are sent out with all applications.

Who do I contact if I would like to discuss my application or my options?

We would encourage you to visit your local retained station for assistance alternative email recruitment@rbfrs.co.uk or contact our Headquarters on 0118 945 2888 and ask for the HR Department.