

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Firefighter Recruitment Process





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Details of our application process and key dates will be posted on our website when our recruitment window opens.

<https://www.rbfrs.co.uk/careers/>

Stage 1 – Application / Eligibility Screen Process

Candidates will be asked to enter their details into an initial application form which will contain some basic questions to determine if you're eligible to move to the next stage of the process. Please note we will have a cap on the number of applications available. Once 500 eligible applications have been submitted the link will expire and you will no longer be able to apply. Therefore please complete your application as soon as possible after the recruitment window opens to avoid disappointment.

Qualifying Criteria

To submit an application form you need to be 17 years and six months or older at the point of application and 18 years or older when you commence in role.

Before being offered employment, you will be required to provide evidence of your entitlement to work in the UK, in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

To apply for a wholetime position you must live within a 30-mile radius of the centre of Reading. Take a look at [qualifying postcodes](#).

Whilst a full driving licence is not required to apply as a firefighter, without one, an individual would not be able to progress to competent status pay.

Declaration of Offences

If you have a criminal record this will not necessarily disqualify you from employment. All applications are considered on their own merits and in particular, whether the offence has a bearing on your suitability for employment as a firefighter. However, firefighters do need to have a high level of self-discipline and be people in whom the public can have complete confidence.

You will, therefore, be required to declare any conviction which is not yet 'spent' within the meaning of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and any charges that are pending. A Criminal Records Bureau check will be made.

Further guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act can be obtained via the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. Visit their website at www.nacro.org.uk for more information.



Stage 2 – Online Ability Tests

If you meet the requirements at Stage 1, the Initial Application/ Eligibility Screen, you will be invited to complete online timed Ability Tests.

This stage involves completing a series of online timed tests which are detailed below:

Numerical Reasoning

This test measures your ability to understand, interpret and logically evaluate numerical information. You will be presented with graphs, charts and numerical details and required to make calculations on the information presented.

Mechanical Reasoning

This test measures your ability to apply general mechanical principles that supports practical problem solving. You will be presented with a series of diagrams and asked to answer questions to demonstrate your understanding of the mechanical principles applicable.

Verbal Reasoning

This test measures your ability to understand and interpret written information. You will be presented with a passage of text and asked to answer questions to demonstrate your ability to interpret and analyse verbal information.

Stage 3 - Physical Tests

Candidates who are successful in the Ability Tests will be invited to take the Physical Tests. These will consist of:-

Ladder Climb

Candidates wear a safety harness and ascend two-thirds of the way up a 13.5-metre ladder and take a leg-lock. They are then asked to lean backwards and outstretch their arms to the sides, and then whilst looking over their shoulder they are to say out loud what symbol is being shown by the assessor at ground level. This will test confidence at heights.

Gym Based Tests

Candidates are required to replicate raising the pawls on a 13.5 ladder by completing a 60kg rope pull (1 repetition). Candidates will then be asked to replicate extending a 10.5m ladder by completing 23 x 28kg rope pulls. There is not a pass / fail for these tests – your performance will be noted.

Candidates will be required to simulate putting the 13.5m ladder on top of the appliance by completing a shoulder press; the operational standard is 35kg

Candidates will be required to complete a 60kg deadlift (1 repetition) and a 28kg single arm deadlift (1 repetition each arm)



Enclosed Space

Candidates put on a facemask with un-obscured vision although this will be in a dark environment. They will make their way through a crawl and walkway. Once inside the crawl/walkway, they have their vision obscured and return to the start. This will test confidence, agility and stamina.

Equipment Assembly

Candidates are given a demonstration of the test before having to assemble and disassemble a number of components to make an item of equipment which will test manual dexterity.

Ladder Lift Exercise

Candidates are required to lift the ladder lift simulator to the required height and lower it safely under control. The cradle is loaded with 15kg but including the weight of the equipment the total is approximately 25kg.

Drill Ground Assessment

Candidates are required to complete a series of tasks that simulate firefighting activities such as carrying equipment, running out hose and casualty evacuation, within a set time. This is a test of physical fitness.

Stage 4 - Interview

Candidates who successfully complete both the online ability and physical tests will be invited to interview.

The main aim of the interview is to find out about you and why you want to be a firefighter. Additionally, the interview will ask you to gather examples of when and how you have used skills and behaviours that are important for potential firefighters.

You should answer based on your personal experience and apply relevant examples. More information around the interview structure and how to prepare will be available later on in the recruitment process.

Stage 5 - Medical

Firefighters may be exposed to extreme physical and psychological demands in hostile and dangerous environments. Candidates reaching this stage of the process will be required to attend a medical.

Candidate must meet the minimum eyesight standards. Corrected visual acuity should be 6/9 binocularly, and a minimum of 6/12 in the worse eye. The minimum uncorrected vision for recruits should be 6/18 in the better eye and 6/24 for the worse. There is an upper hypermetropic (long-sighted) limit of +3.00, and colour vision must reach the required standard. Prior to attending a medical appointment candidates would be required to visit an opticians for a full eye sight test, bringing the results to their medical appointment. We must stress that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will be unable to reimburse any costs that may be incurred by booking and attending this appointment.



Hearing and lung function will also be tested during the medical and candidates will undergo screening for use of illegal drugs and alcohol misuse.

If you have any of the following conditions you should consider carefully whether the nature of the work and the attendance pattern, (which includes the possibility of very long hours at major incidents), would be detrimental to your health:

- Significant joint injury or disease, especially if it affects the back or knees.
- A chronic respiratory problem, e.g. asthma.
- A history of hypertension, diabetes, epilepsy, cardiac or circulatory disease.
- Contact dermatitis, psoriasis or eczema.
- Vertigo, claustrophobia or acrophobia (fear of heights).

Your medical records from your General Practitioner may be required, for which you will be asked to give consent at the appropriate time.

More detailed information regarding the medical will be available to candidates later in the recruitment process.

As previously mentioned you will also be required to undergo a Chester Step Test. The Chester Step Test is a 12 minute graded, treadmill walk test designed to assess whether or not a candidate can achieve the firefighter fitness standard of 42mls O₂ /kg/min.

Next Steps

The application process can take several months to complete, and it may be that we have more candidates who reach the required standard than we have vacancies. If this happens, we will take candidates in merit order from the pool of those who have passed the process. It's therefore vital that you do not assume that you will be employed until you receive a formal offer of a job, in writing. In particular, do not give notice to a current employer just because you have passed the interview stage.

Useful Websites

www.rbfrs.co.uk

www.fire.gov.uk

www.fireservice.co.uk (not an official website)

