



**A GUIDE FOR POTENTIAL ROYAL NAVY AND
ROYAL MARINE CANDIDATES
FROM OUTSIDE THE UNITED KINGDOM**



Aim

1. The purpose of this guide is to give you an insight into the selection process that you must undertake to join the Royal Navy (RN) or Royal Marines (RM), and to inform you of some of the challenges that you may encounter as an overseas candidate.
2. Overseas candidates who choose to arrive without an invite letter or those who apply on arrival in the UK will have their application rejected.
3. Overseas candidates who reside in the UK on Long Term Biometric Residency Permits or Visas (over 6 months) can apply as normal using their UK address.

Professions available

4. You can find professions that are available to you at this link [Royal Navy | Commonwealth and non-British \(mod.uk\)](#).

Recruiting Process

5. In order to progress your application, you will be required to supply the ORT with essential information which will be requested via your online recruitment Portal.
6. **Defence Aptitude Assessment (DAA)**. DAA is an online aptitude test which can be taken in your home country or if you prefer once you are in the UK. The DAA measures the aptitude of all candidates (ratings and officers) across the following areas, numerical reasoning, mechanical comprehension, work rate, verbal reasoning, electrical comprehension, spatial reasoning.
7. Guidance will be given on how to conduct the DAA, along with a link to the practice assessment on the RN website. If you successfully pass the DAA in your home country, you will then move on to the next stage of the recruitment. If you choose to sit the test in the UK, you will be required to conduct the test within an Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO).

Process prior to arrival in the UK

8. The following parts of the recruitment selection process will be undertaken under the direction of your CA and must be completed prior to your arrival in the UK:
 - a. **The Video Selection Interview**. A one-to-one online video interview conducted by your allocated RN Career Adviser, will be undertaken via the SHINE video platform prior to your arrival in UK. Information will be sent to you on how the interview is carried out. You will be informed of the result the same day.

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

- b. **Security Clearance (SC).** If successful at your selection interview, we will be required to conduct security clearance checks. A link along with detailed instructions on how to access your account on the United Kingdom Security Vetting (UKSV) portal. Apple devices are unable to be used accessing the UKSV portal. The information you return will be looked at by the Defence Vetting Agency who will arrange police, financial and Security Checks. You will be required to bring this documentation with you to the UK to complete the remainder of the recruitment process. You will not be invited to the UK until Security Clearance has been issued.
- c. **Medical.** You will be provided with a Medical Questionnaire and Opticians Report together with information about the medical triage process. These documents are to be completed on the PML website as instructed in the medical forms. A PML nurse will contact you with details of your appointment to conduct the Medical Triage telephone call. The Medical Triage telephone call does not authorise you to make plans to travel to the UK for the face-to-face medical.
- d. **Royal Marine Candidates.** Will be required to conduct an online virtual Pre-Joining Fitness Test (vPJFT). This is a basic assessment designed to test your basic cardiovascular ability and your upper body and core strength & endurance. The vPJFT is the first stage in testing your physical ability and evaluating your suitability for RM training. Royal Marine recruit training is one of the most arduous military basic training courses in the world, where your physical preparation is vital for selection.
- e. Candidates will not be able to attempt this until they have passed the Medical Triage and only when they are sufficiently prepared, able to complete all exercises to a good standard and are confident of success. Once successful at Medical Triage, candidates can declare their readiness to undertake the test by emailing their Careers Adviser. Failure to reach the required standard for each exercise will result in a fail. This test must be successfully completed prior to arrival in UK. When all elements of the recruitment process that can be conducted in your own country has been completed (DAA (if opted for Unsupervised test), Medical Triage, Video Selection Interview (VSI), vPJFT/Strava evidence and SC) you will be invited by the ORT to travel to the UK.
- f. **Before booking your flight.** It is essential that you discuss your planned arrival time to the UK with your CA, as you must arrive in the UK with enough time to settle and prepare for the CPC. When in the UK your CA will advise you on the RN CPC or RM CPC and any other remaining elements of the process towards joining the Royal Navy. RN officers will be required to conduct an Admiralty Interview Board (AIB), RM officers will conduct an Officer Selection Course (OSC).

Process to be completed in the UK

9. The following must be completed in the UK:
- a. **Full Medical Examination.** You will undertake a Face-to-Face Medical in the UK carried out by a qualified Medical Doctor contracted by the RN. You are advised to bring with you all your medical records
- (1) Please note that your waist to height ratio will be assessed and is required to be between 0.4 – 0.59. To calculate your waist to height ratio, divide your waist measurement (in cm) by your height (in cm).

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

- (2) For Royal Marines your weight will need to be a minimum of 65 KG or a minimum BMI of 23, with a maximum BMI of 28. There is no maximum weight. To calculate your BMI: [NHS Waist to Height Ratio and BMI](#).
- (3) An inaccurate waist, height or weight reading in your initial application may result in your application being automatically rejected. Accuracy and honesty are vital.

b. **Royal Navy Candidate Preparation Course (RN CPC).** If you are applying as an RN Rating or Officer, you will be required to attend a 3-day course to assess your fitness ability, to confirm you are ready for entry to HMS Raleigh or Britannia Royal Naval College. RN CPC will be completed after arrival in the UK.

c. **Royal Marines Candidate Preparation Course (RM CPC).** A challenging 2-and-a-half-day selection event designed to select and prepare suitable individuals for Royal Marine Recruit Training. It is a demanding course in all aspects; testing your limits both physically and mentally and candidates should therefore ensure that they prepare extensively before arrival. The Royal Marine Swim Assessment (RMSA) is conducted also, should a candidate not achieve the RMSA standard required then they are to be offered swimming lesson assistance and allowed to re-attempt RM CPC in 3 months. The RM CPC should also be used as an insight into life in Recruit Training and as a Royal Marine within a Commando Unit.

d. **Recruit Orientation Phase (ROP).** ROP is a 4-week conditioning period at the beginning of RM recruit training. On completion of the 4-week ROP, having been developed through a progressive sub-maximal training programme, you will participate in a maximal assessment - the Commando Aptitude Assessment (CAA) - which will incorporate greater levels of PT, determination, and mental resilience.

e. **Officer Selection Course (OSC).** An arduous 3-day assessment designed to assess the candidate's suitability for a career in the Royal Marines and the potential to complete Royal Marines Young Officer (RMYO) Training. The OSC is a chance to gain a detailed insight into what to expect from life within the Royal Marines and during RMYO Training. It will examine your motivation both physically and mentally. Those who aspire to be Royal Marines officers should be aware of the high physical standards and must therefore prepare themselves extensively for this part of the selection process.

f. You must understand that it is possible to be unsuccessful at either the medical triage, Face-to-Face Medical or the RN CPC, RM CPC, ROP and OSC and therefore be ineligible to join the RN.

Travel and expense cost for selection test process

10. Once you have been invited to and have arrived in the UK, the RN/RM selection process can be completed within 4 working weeks, providing you pass all stages of each assessment first time. You must keep your CA aware of your travel dates. Please note, after successful completion of the remaining elements of the selection process you will be expected to join the Royal Navy within 31 days of passing the CPC.

11. You can only complete the final part of the selection process in the UK; therefore, before you make a potentially life changing decision to join the RN, you should consider the following:

- a. Acquire knowledge of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements/restrictions that will

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

apply to you until you join your New Entry Training Establishment (NETE). UKVI extensions are not normally granted to visitor Visas applied for outside of the UK and are only given under very exceptional circumstances before a valid Visa expires. Advice must be sought from an accredited UK Armed Forces Immigration Adviser; therefore if you are close to your Visa expiry date/expiry of Entry date into the UK and have not received confirmation of your NETE start date, or you have not completed and passed all of the assessments, you will be required to return to your country at your own expense, re-apply for a new visitor Visa and re-enter the UK to continue your application. If you outstay your visa or time in the UK, the RN will not be responsible, and this will affect your application to join.

b. You will only be invited to UK when you have passed a SC Check. This will be explained to you by your CA at your Video Selection Interview.

c. You will also be required to meet all medical, accommodation and living costs prior to your NETE start date. Prior to your intended travel to the UK, it will be your responsibility to secure a UK host and a UK address, which should match your visa application to the UKVI. If at any point your UK host or UK address changes, you are required to notify the ORT. The RN will pay for your travel from your UK residence (Sponsor's address) to your NETE.

Candidate awareness when selecting a UK host

12. **UK Resident Sponsor.** A candidate must provide details of a genuine sponsor who is resident in the UK. The candidate must understand and confirm that this sponsor will be able to, where required:

a. Support the candidate's travel from the UK point of entry to the sponsor's address. MoD will not fund travel to UK.

b. Provide accommodation for the candidate from arrival in UK until commencing Phase 1 Training at a NETE. The sponsor must be aware that the date of joining is subject to change due to factors outside MoD control and must be able to provide accommodation until the revised joining date. MoD will not provide or fund accommodation for candidates.

c. Support the recruit's accommodation during a main leave period when the Phase 1 Training establishment is closed down, aware that the recruit will be in receipt of a salary by this time. The recruit may be able to book accommodation at another MoD base in extremis.

d. UK hosts must provide contact details so the candidate's CA can contact them in the event of any problems and in the interest of the candidate's welfare.

e. Candidates who opt to stay with friends/family who are currently serving and living in Service Family Accommodation, the host will be required to notify the Service Family Accommodation estate warden if the duration of stay exceeds 3 months.

f. It is important to keep your host informed; hosts are encouraged to send a candidate home if a NETE start date is received after visa expiry date.

g. In the event of a candidate moving to another host, both are required to inform the ORT and the candidate is required to provide details of the new host and address.

13. **Return Travel to Country of Origin.** The candidate must have sufficient funds in their bank account to support a journey back home if the career in the RN does not work out for them in the early

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

stages. Their visa will not support remaining in the UK on leaving the Service and MoD will not fund their travel back home.

14. You should be warned that approximately only one in every eight people who apply to join the RN succeed in joining.

Immigration Issues

15. **Immigration.** If you are joining the RN from outside the UK, you will be exempt from immigration control under section 8(4) of the Immigration Act 1971 once you have entered Phase 1 training. This exemption will remain valid for the duration of your time in the RN. Your passport will be marked accordingly to indicate the immigration service that you are exempt. Once released from the Service, for whatever reason, you will have to return to your country of origin unless you have made your own arrangements to stay in the UK with the Home Office.

16. There are several options you can explore if you wish to stay in the UK after discharge:

a. If you are discharged after a minimum of 4 years' service, you will have 28 days to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) in order to remain in the UK, or you may apply up to 18 weeks prior to your discharge date. There may be exceptions to this 4-year rule if you are discharged as a direct result of injury sustained in service. Further free advice may be sought from the Naval Families Federation (NFF) in this regard <https://nff.org.uk/>.

b. After 5 years of service you will be eligible to naturalise as a British Citizen, whilst still in service.

c. If you choose to return to your country of origin after discharge, please be aware that the cost of repatriation and removal of personal effects can be very significant and should be planned for.

17. The exemption from immigration control does not extend to spouses or families and you will be required to abide by the Home Office rules in this respect. Further advice can be found [here](#).

18. **Visas.** If you succeed in becoming a member of the RN, visas will be supplied at public expense for all journeys necessary for service reasons. However, you will be required to pay for visas for all other personal and recreational journeys.

19. Medical officer candidates who do not have ILTR or ILTE Settlement in UK, will need to ensure that they have the correct visa when applying for the role above. Whilst a Graduate Visa is acceptable, the Student Visa, T2 General Skilled worker or T5 Charity or Sponsored Visas are not sufficient and therefore not accepted. For candidates who are ineligible for a Graduate Visa, it is advisable to return to their home country where their application will continue to be processed with the Overseas Recruitment Team.

20. Families often arrive in the UK with visitor visas that only allow them to remain in UK for a 6-month period. You should be aware, that if your immediate family wish to reside in the UK then you will need to fulfil the criteria with regards income as detailed by the Home Office and apply for 5-year settlement under 'Appendix Armed Forces'. Important note: You cannot enter the UK on a visitor visa if you are planning to settle, as you will not be able to switch to a dependant's visa once in the UK. Further information can be found at:

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

- a. <https://www.gov.uk/uk-family-visa/proof-income>
- b. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigrationrules/immigration-rules-appendix-armed-forces>
- c. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publicationRN/application-to-extend-stay-in-uk-hm-forcesform-flraf>
- d. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publicationRN/application-to-settle-in-uk-as-formermember-of-hm-forces-setaf>
- e. With regards to applications submitted from outside the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/applyuk-visa>
- f. Naval Families Federation (NFF) UK Visas and Citizenship information: <https://nff.org.uk/uk-visas-citizenship/>

21. **UK Citizenship.** This is a matter for the Home Office and being a member of the UK Armed Forces has no influence on the granting of UK Citizenship. Service personnel are eligible to apply for UK citizenship whilst still in service and after completing 5 years' service. The rules for family members are different. You are advised to check the Home Office website for more details. Applying for UK citizenship is not required to join the RN and is entirely voluntary. However, as stated, non-British citizens are only eligible to apply for a limited number of branches. Also, due to security regulations, promotions for Officers and Ratings within some of these available branches is available to UK citizens only.

Finance and benefits

22. **Pay & National Insurance.** In order to receive your salary, you will need a National Insurance Number (NINO) which could take up to 8 weeks. We will give you all the help needed to get one and, any other benefits you may be entitled to such as Universal Credit. Please note that Commonwealth candidates will automatically be put on an emergency tax code until they receive a NINO. At the same time, you will also receive help to set up a bank account and receive your immigration exemption stamp in your passport. As a minimum you will need 2 passport-sized photographs to process these applications, but please bring spares (up to 6). Without these passport-sized photos, the applications will be delayed, and you will not be paid. It may also mean your passport won't be returned to you in time for a leave period.

23. **Universal Credit.** There are certain eligibility criteria for Universal Credit, and there are several factors that will determine whether you can apply under the Universal Credit system, or whether you will need to apply to the relevant benefits separately, as per the old system. Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/universal-credit/eligibility.

24. If your family is granted Limited Leave To Remain for 5 years under the 'Appendix Armed Forces' route, they will not be eligible for social welfare benefits from public funds. This will mean that you, as the serving person, will need to make all claims for Universal Credit, or the appropriate benefit category.

25. **Financial Advice.** Experience shows that families new to the UK may be vulnerable to being taken advantage of by money lenders and local traders, due to difficulties obtaining credit when they

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

first arrive in the UK. It is recommended that you seek advice before entering into any financial agreements. You may also be eligible to join Forces Mutual, which is a Credit Union that service personnel can use for banking services if required.

26. **Service Accommodation.** If you are not married, you will be entitled to Single Living Accommodation (SLA). If you are married, you will be entitled to Service Family Accommodation (SFA) at your place of duty once you have completed Phase 2 training. You should wait for your first assignment order before you decide where to base your family, and your dependents must have valid Visas to live in SFA and have followed the guidance from the UK Home Office. Applications should be made to Defence Housing Executive on MOD Form 1132 as soon as possible, up to 4 months prior to the date required. Seek advice from qualified personnel before making an application. Please ensure that you bring proof of your dependent relationships with you, such as marriage/birth/adoption/guardianship certificates, to prevent delays in accommodation allocation.

27. **Food and Accommodation Charges.** When you are serving at sea, or in field conditions, you will not be charged for food and accommodation unless the ship is alongside for extensive periods. When you are serving ashore in an establishment you will pay an accommodation charge which will be automatically deducted from your pay. Pay as you dine (PAYD) is available in all Shore establishments.

Travel to 'home' country

28. **Compassionate Leave.** Should the need arise for you to travel to your 'home' country for compassionate reasons (e.g. the death or serious illness of a close relative), then it is likely you will have to self-fund your travel home. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Chain of Command (CoC) consider paying your travel cost at public expense. You may wish to consider starting an emergency savings account for these events.

29. **Regular travel during leave periods.** Contributed travel during leave periods is available for SP under the following schemes:

- a. **Get You Home (GYH) Travel.** All Service Personnel (SP) are entitled to GYH Travel allowance which allows for up to 10 return journeys a year to a registered home address that you maintain (rent or mortgage) within the UK. At present this allowance does not contribute to the cost of travel home to an address overseas.
- b. **GYH (Early Years).** During phase 1 training, or until the age of 18, whichever is later, all SP have an annual entitlement of 4 journeys a year to a UK address of a next of kin (parents, fiancé, etc). At present this allowance does not contribute to the cost of travel home to an address overseas.
- c. **GYH (Seagoers).** Whilst serving at sea, all SP can accrue up to 10 travel warrants a year to a UK address, proportional to the length of sea time served that year. These warrants can be used during shore leave. At present this allowance does not contribute to the cost of travel home to an address overseas.
- d. **Domiciled Collective Leave (DOMCOL).** Authorised periods of absence to visit the country of domicile ('home' country) granted to eligible SP who maintain a home outside the UK or Irish Republic at the time of joining the RN and continue to maintain a home in country of origin. If you do not qualify for DOMCOL, you may qualify for DOMCOL Substitute, which is

R&A Overseas Candidate Guide (Revised 20250116)

simply the accumulation of leave to be used for travelling home. JSP 760 contains more information and should be consulted in the first instance.

30. Please note, we do not accept candidates with tattoos that are visible 'in a passport photo', such as those on the face and neck. It is also regardless of whether they are considered tribal; they will not be accepted, and you will be unable to join.

31. Tattoos that are offensive, obscene, or excessive in size or number will also be a bar to entry.

Hair and grooming

32. Once in-service, hair and grooming requirements form part of the uniform regulations. Full details will be available upon joining but the following styles are acceptable:

- a. Neat cornrows with no decoration.
- b. Natural wigs.
- c. Plain headscarves that match RN uniforms.
- d. Dreadlocks to be styled in a bun with a net, if longer than collar length. Durag scarves are acceptable during firefighting if required.

Summary

33. A career in the Royal Navy/Marines is highly rewarding and very worthwhile; it will also be challenging and demanding. The entry standards are high, and there are criteria to meet before you become a successful entrant. If you are uncertain about what to do, or if you feel you may not make the grade, do not spend your money on travel until you have taken good advice from someone who knows the real facts, preferably a Royal Navy and Royal Marines Careers Adviser. More importantly **DO NOT TRAVEL TO THE UK** until invited by the Overseas Team. If you do choose to travel, be aware that the Royal Navy will not support you or accept responsibility, financially or otherwise, for you whilst you are in the UK.

34. Careful consideration should be taken when choosing which Profession of the RN you wish to apply for. You are advised to select a specialisation that suits your interests and skill set, leading to a career you will find both rewarding and challenging. In particular, the Royal Marines has exceptionally high physical fitness and mental toughness standards; as **MUST** you for this role.