



His Majesty's RN Service Eligibility and Guidance Notes



Introduction

The Royal Navy (RN) welcomes applications from everyone, regardless of race, religion, social or cultural background and the information in this document will help you understand if you meet the criteria to join the Service. Your eligibility will be checked in full if you decide to make an application and supporting evidence will be required (for example, passport, birth certificate and education certificates etc).

To ensure that your application is not refused later in the selection process you should check that you meet the basic eligibility criteria.

Age

The minimum and maximum ages for service are detailed below, however, there may be age restrictions applied to specific professions and roles in the RN. Please review the literature associated with your interest or consult with your Careers Adviser (CA).

Service	Age on Application / and to process	Age on Entry	Upper Age Limit
RN Ratings	15 years, 9 months	16	25-39 Role dependent (>39 with previous service or for some roles)
RN Officers	17 years, 6 months	18	
Royal Marines ORs	15 years, 9 months	16	32 (38 with previous service)
Royal Marines OFs	17 years, 9 months	18	25 (Max age to join)
Reserve Forces	15 years 9 months	16	Dependent on Service and Specialisation

Height and Weight

RN and Royal Marines (RM): The minimum height is 145cm for the RM and General Service Sailors, 157cm for the Submarine Service and 151.5cm for some Aviation roles. Your CA will be able to assist with specifics for each role. The minimum weight requirement for Royal Marines is 65kg (or min BMI¹ of 23).

¹ Body Mass Index

Tattoos

All face tattoos will be scrutinised and may be considered ineligible, especially where tattoos are visible on a front view passport photograph and if the tattoos are considered offensive or obscene and depicts an image or suggestion of:

- a. a sexual act
- b. extreme pornographic behaviour
- c. violence of any kind
- d. drugs
- e. racism
- f. political views
- g. sexism

Irrespective of its size or position on the body, however, a tattoo will be offensive if, by its nature it has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an adverse environment for others (for instance because it refers to or depicts an image relating to a protected characteristic of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability or age).

Body piercing

For health and safety reasons, you will be asked to remove certain items of body piercing jewellery before undergoing physical activity as part of the application and selection process. You will not be allowed to attempt the physical activities if you do not remove the body piercing jewellery when requested. Once you have joined the Armed Forces, you will be advised by Service authorities of the rules for wearing body jewellery when on and off duty. Flesh tunnels are a bar to entry.

Nationality

For entry into the RN, you must meet one of the following requirements:

You must be a British, Commonwealth or an Irish National OR hold Dual nationality with certain countries.

Residency

The RN welcomes applications from British Nationals, British Overseas Territories and Commonwealth wherever they are, and we recognise the valuable experience which people will have gained from living, studying, and working overseas.

Whilst, for security purposes, our usual residency requirement is that you should have been living in the United Kingdom (UK*) for 5 years immediately prior to your application to join us, we also welcome applications from people who have spent extended periods abroad studying,

on “gap years” or because of either themselves or their parents being employed abroad. Your CA will be able to advise you on the detail, but it may affect the career or job you are applying for.

*The UK includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland and for these purposes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

Medical Standards, Initial Medical and Physical Criteria

The RN requires anyone who enters to be medically fit to serve worldwide.

All New entrants to the RN undergo intensive training, which is both physically and mentally demanding. The Armed Forces medical authorities should be aware of your medical history and of any conditions that may affect your performance as a service person. Applicants who do not meet the required medical standards may be rejected.

Your medical history is confidential and will not be given to anyone not authorised to hold this information.

The initial medical examination

Further medical examinations for some branches may be conducted later in the selection process and your CA will be able to offer advice regarding this requirement.

Basic medical requirements

Medical conditions that preclude entry:

The conditions in the table below make a person permanently unsuitable, except where specifically time limited, for entry into the RN.

- Note: This table is for general guidance only. Many conditions that are compatible with civilian employment and sport may be considered incompatible with service in the RN.
- If you have a recurrent medical condition that is not mentioned below, or if you are unclear about the impact of your medical history, you should seek further advice from your CA.
- Please note that CAs and their office staff are not medically qualified and that all final decisions regarding medical suitability for entry are only made by appropriately appointed medical staff.

Eye disorders	Eye disease, e.g. glaucoma, keratoconus, retinitis pigmentosa. Double vision. Visual field defects. Corneal grafts or recurrent corneal ulcers. Cataract or cataract surgery. Detached retina. Vision only in one eye. Squint surgery in the previous six months. For those that have undergone laser eye surgery, they must be over the age of 22 on application and 6 months must have elapsed post procedure. Any candidate who has undergone eye surgery who is under the age of 22, 12 months must have elapsed. Not all laser surgery is acceptable and evidence of eyesight before and after surgery will be needed.
Ear, nose and throat disorders	Ongoing ear, nose, throat, or sinus disease. Deafness. Presence of grommets. Current perforated eardrum. Certain surgical procedures. Severe hearing loss and use or tinnitus which disturbs sleep or affects hearing.
Heart and cardiovascular disorders	Heart disease. Certain congenital heart conditions e.g. repair of tetralogy of Fallot, coarctation of the aorta. Certain heart valve abnormalities. High blood pressure. Raynaud's disease. Established cardiomyopathy, certain abnormal heart rhythms.
Respiratory disorders	Asthma, wheeze or asthma symptoms or treatment within the past four years. Lung disease including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, bronchiectasis, cystic fibrosis. Active tuberculosis.
Abdominal and digestive disorders, including diet	Ongoing abdominal, digestive, or liver disease. Crohn's disease. Ulcerative colitis. Loss of spleen (splenectomy). Chronic hepatitis. Untreated hernia. Most requirement for specific dietary restriction. Coeliac disease is acceptable with limited career options
Neurological disorders	Ongoing nervous system disease. Epilepsy or more than one seizure/fit after the age of five (although benign Rolandic epilepsy is acceptable). Single seizure/fit within the last ten years. Multiple sclerosis. Complications following head injury. Hydrocephalus (with or without shunt). Severe or recurrent headache (including migraine) within the last 2 years
Endocrine disorders	Diabetes. Adrenal disorders. Pituitary disorders. Certain thyroid diseases. Any ongoing treatment must be established as stable for at least one year
Skin disorders	Chronic eczema or dermatitis. Psoriasis. Severe acne. Under follow up for skin cancer.
Female reproductive disorders	Chronic breast pain. Chronic pelvic pain or inflammatory disease. Endometriosis. Menorrhagia affecting normal daily activities
Male reproductive disorders	Current cancer of the testicle or prostate gland. Chronic scrotal pain.
Musculoskeletal disorders	Any abnormality that interferes with the ability to undertake military training. Spinal abnormalities. Certain spinal operations. Recurrent back pain or sciatica. Joint disease, pain, or limitation of joint movement. Hypermobility (laxity) of the joints. Bone or joint operations within the last 12 months. Anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction. Recurrent joint dislocations. Severe deformity following fractures. Loss of a limb. Foot abnormalities (e.g. club foot or hammer toe). Complete loss of either big toe. Complete loss of either thumb. Arthritis and similar conditions. Fractures within the last 12 months, except fractures of the digits / clavicles. Some complex fractures with a high risk of arthritis. Internal fixation (metalwork) may be acceptable.
Blood disorders	Certain blood diseases, such as G6PDD, sickle cell disease, congenital spherocytosis, Thalassaemia, Haemoglobinopathy. Any bleeding disorder or abnormality of blood clotting. Bone marrow transfusion. Sickle Cell Trait (carrier) is acceptable.
Infections	Carriers of Hepatitis B or C. Past history of leukaemia or malignant lymphoma. HIV positive applicants stable on medication will be considered on an individual basis.

Malignancy (cancer)	Most cancers are considered to place an applicant below the medical entry standard. Exceptions: some cancers in childhood or early adult life that have been successfully treated and are regarded as cured. But all follow up must be completed and individuals discharged from hospital care.
Allergic disorders	Severe allergic reactions and/or anaphylaxis. A need to carry adrenaline injections (EPIPEN, etc). Nut and peanut allergy. Egg allergy. Latex allergy. Vaccine allergy (including tetanus allergy).
Conditions resulting from exposure to extremes of temperature	Heat illness. Frostbite and non-freezing cold injury.
Psychiatric disorders	Ongoing psychiatric illness. Psychosis. Schizophrenia. Obsessive-compulsive disorder. Candidates with Autistic spectrum disorder will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Personality disorder. More than one episode of deliberate self-harm of any type. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Alcohol, drug or substance dependence. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) unless free of symptoms and not requiring treatment for at least three years. Anorexia and bulimia.
Kidney disorders	Ongoing kidney disease. Polycystic kidney disease and kidney stones. Donation of kidney in the past six months.
Other	Transplanted organs.

(information updated by SEMC Mar 26)

Eyesight

The minimum standards for both uncorrected and corrected vision are determined by service medical staff and are dependent on the proposed employment and Profession / trade group. Spectacle or contact lens correction must not be greater than +5.00 dioptres / -6.00 dioptres in any meridian. Impaired colour perception (colour blindness) is not a bar to service but may limit your career choices. You will need to have a copy with you of any acuity prescription from your optician when you go for your medical examination.

Temporary conditions

The following conditions require the selection procedure and/or entry to be temporarily put on hold until you are fully recovered, discharged from hospital follow-up, and fit to undergo arduous training and physical exercise:

- a. Pregnancy
- b. Waiting list for an operation
- c. Temporary illness or injury

At the discretion of Service medical authorities, your application may be rejected, due to other medical reasons if none of the above apply.

Contact with the Police or a Prosecuting Agency

Criminal Convictions

If you have been convicted of an offence, then you may still be able to join the RN. All applicants must declare any unspent convictions as part of the application process. Guidance can be found on MoD Form 493 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This form explains whether you should give the details of any convictions. You may be prevented from entering or re-entering the Armed Forces if you have committed certain offences or have undergone certain types of sentence. Your CA will be able to help to clarify your situation.

For all branches of the RN you must undergo a full Security Check (SC) this is done online and for this check you must declare all previous convictions whether spent or not.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check Navy

For those applying for the Medical or Dental Branch of the RN there is a statutory requirement for undergo suitability checks by the Disclosure & Barring Service. These checks include the disclosure of your criminal record. If appropriate, a Suitability Certificate will be issued. Your CA will advise you when and how this certificate is to be obtained.

Drug and Substance Misuse

The short, medium, and long-term effects of the misuse of either illegal drugs or substances or legally obtained drugs or substances can have a damaging impact on mental and physical fitness and health.

Drug or Substance misuse constitutes a direct threat to the operational effectiveness of the Armed Forces; the security and safety of Service personnel; and, potentially, the security and safety of the civilians whom they protect. Illegal misuse of drugs or substances by Service personnel also damages the reputation and standing of the Service. For these reasons, the misuse of drugs or substances is not tolerated within the RN. The RN recognise, however, that drug or substance misuse is increasingly common in civilian life, particularly among the young, and that you may have misused drugs or substances yourself in the past. This will not necessarily prevent you from joining, as all applications are considered individually. Acceptance into the Services will depend on the frequency of use and the class and type of drug or substance that has been misused. Criminal convictions for trafficking or supply of any class of drug or substance will bar entry.

Once you have joined the RN, you are required to stay clear of drugs or substances always and to avoid association with drug or substance misuse and suppliers. Once you join the RN, you will be liable by law to random compulsory drug testing throughout your Service career. If these tests show that you have misused drugs or substances, it is Armed Forces policy that, with very few exceptions, you will be discharged.

Financial commitments – Debt and Bankruptcy

You may be ineligible to join the RN if you have financial commitments, debts or loans that you would have difficulty in repaying or lead to financial hardship if you entered the RN. Look carefully at the appropriate rates of pay so that you can work out your situation.

A person who is declared bankrupt (and thus does not have a working bank account) or is insolvent may be ineligible to join the Armed Forces.

Academic Requirements

For many jobs, there are no formal entry qualifications, however, if you have GCSEs (or equivalent), the range of opportunities is wider still. To apply to become an Officer, you'll need 180 UCAS points (Old scoring system) or 72 UCAS points (New scoring system) based on the recognized UCAS Tariff and 5 GCSEs (A*-C) (9 - 4) or Scottish Standard grades or equivalent, which must include English and Mathematics.

For direct graduate entry as an Officer, you will need a degree or equivalent, the same UCAS requirement as detailed above and 5 GCSEs (A*-C) (9 - 4), or Scottish Standard grades or equivalent which must include English Language and Mathematics. Some roles such as engineering have a higher engineering requirement. If you're still unsure about whether you meet the minimum qualifications, contact your CA.

Fitness Standards

RN

All members of the Armed Forces are required to be physically fit to a standard which enables them to perform their duties effectively in the most demanding of environments. Accordingly, if you are considering a career in the RN, you should be aware of the Fitness Standards expected for the Pre-Joining Fitness Test (PJFT) and during the first weeks of training. As part of the application process, you will be required to complete your PJFT at the RN CPC.

If you are planning to attend your RN CPC before 1 Oct 26 will be required to take the 2.4km run version of the PJFT to the times required below:

Gender	Age	2.4km Run Pass	Fail
Male	16-24	13.56	>13.56
	25-29	14.26	>14.26
	30-34	14.57	>14.57
	35-39	15.28	>15.28
	40-44	16.03	>16.03
	45-49	16.37	>16.37
	50-54	17.13	>17.13
	55-59	17.50	>17.50
Female	16-24	16.27	>16.27
	25-29	17.01	>17.01
	30-34	17.38	>17.38
	35-39	18.11	>18.11
	40-44	18.50	>18.50
	45-49	19.28	>19.28
	50-54	20.07	>20.07
	55-59	20.49	>20.49

If you are planning to attend your RN CPC **from 1 Oct 26 onwards**, you will be required to take the tri service version of the PJFT. The standards to achieve this, irrespective of your age and gender are:

- MSFT / Bleep Test to Level 6.6
- Isometric Mid-Thigh Pull to achieve a read out of 50kg
- Seated 4kg Medicine Ball Throw to a distance of 2.7m

All 3 elements of this test must be achieved to be awarded an overall PASS on your PJFT. A failure in any one of the test elements will constitute an overall FAIL and you will need to retake the whole PJFT again at a later date. Your CA will be able to provide you more information on these test elements.

RN Diver.

For applicants to become a RN Diver will need to pass the RN Divers Pre-Joining Fitness Assessment (PJFA) and the fitness requirements are below:

Event	Level 1 Pass	Level 2 Pass**	Fail
MSFT	10.5	10	<10
Press Ups	30	25	<25
Sit Ups	40	35	<35
Pull Ups	4	3	<3

** - More than one Level 2 pass achieved in the whole PJFA will constitute an overall Fail.

Royal Marines

All UK based RM candidates will undertake a Royal Marine Pre-Joining Fitness Assessment which will consist of:

Event	PASS	Fail
MSFT	10.5	<10.5
Press Ups	30	<30
Sit Ups	40	<40
Pull Ups	4	<4

All Overseas RM candidates are required to conduct a virtual Pre-Joining Fitness Test (vPJFT) via a video call from their home or other compliant location of their choice.

The vPJFT will consist of the following circuit:

- Burpees x 20
- Sit-ups x 30
- Press-ups x 20
- Plank - 1 minute
- 2 mins rest
- 3 x Pull-ups

This circuit will be completed 3 times for RM Other Ranks and 4 times for Officer candidates.

All candidates are strongly encourage to follow the fitness guidance which can be found at: [Get fit to Join RN Fitness Programmes and Guides](#) for at least 4 weeks prior to their PJFT and in advance of their joining date.

Candidates who have been issued a URN are strongly advised to download and access the following free Apps via Android or Apple devices:



Social Media and Personal Security

To protect both yourself, other potential recruits and current serving personnel, individuals considering joining the Royal Navy are advised not to share information about their intentions, applications, or progress on social media. Posting screenshots of application documents, recruitment letters, or event outcomes online is also prohibited.

Travel Advice

You can access advice on the risks and warnings associated with overseas travel, including entry requirements, safety and security, health risks, and legal differences. If you have already received Security Clearance (SC), you may be a potential target for Foreign Intelligence Services, particularly if you disclose your clearance status.

Regardless of your current SC and before travelling abroad, you are strongly encouraged to review the guidance below and familiarise yourself with the risks linked to travel in certain countries overseas.

[Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

Meningitis Vaccinations

Following the unprecedented MenB outbreak, primarily among University of Kent students in March 2026, and clusters in Weymouth and Reading, the United Kingdom Health Security Agency has decided to offer vaccination to all personnel aged 25 or under on 21 Jul 2026 who are starting further education and living at further education establishments. This includes Phase 1 New Entry Training for the Armed Forces.

On receipt of your Offer of Service of joining the RN, you can take this document to a local community pharmacy to obtain your vaccination. Full details of the nature of the vaccination will be provided by the pharmacy.

The full course consists of two vaccinations at least 28 days apart. You should bring proof of vaccination with you, even if you only achieve the first vaccination, when you join your New Entry Training establishment. Failure to be vaccinated will NOT prevent you from starting training but receiving the MenB vaccine before entry helps protect both the individual and those around them, reducing the risk of illness during training and service in the Royal Navy.

[Meningitis B Immunisation Guide](#)