CHAPTER 11

RFA RECRUITING PROCESSES

(Sponsor: NAVY RA-DHd RA)

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Note. *Recruiting policy is being aligned across the Services and will transfer to JSP 545 on or before 1 Apr 27; no further policy amendments or additions will be made to BRd 3(1). Recruiting-related RNTMs and RIs will remain extant until incorporated to JSP545 or cancelled.*

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CHAPTER 11

RFA RECRUITING PROCESSES

1101. RFA General Information and Background

Recruitment into the RFA Service is based on the need to achieve projected workforce requirements in order to maintain efficiency and meet operational commitments.

a. R&A is responsible for RFA recruiting and provides marketing support and processes RFA candidates as follows:

(1) Carry out recruitment functions in accordance with this policy and to the level required by the RFA Recruitment Plan.

(2) This is to include administration of the routes of entry to the RFA:

(a) Qualified Entry.

(b) Non-Qualified Entry.

(c) Re-employment of former employees (responsibility for those who return within 12 months of leaving remains with RFA PER OPS).

(d) Lateral recruitment for internal candidates

b. Provide marketing advice and support in designing suitable advertisements for use by RFA units.

c. In consultation with R&A Marketing and appropriate stakeholders, design and produce recruiting publications, posters and publicity material.

d. Include RFA in national and regional ‘spotlight’ advertising campaigns where appropriate.

e. Include information about the RFA on the RN recruitment website.

f. Forward any enquiries concerning the RFA – received via TPUK, CAs or other means – to R&A RFA Recruitment.

g. Refer candidates to CAs for DAA for RFA candidates iaw ROM chapter 4 – DAA, should the candidate be unable to use their own device.

1102. References and Impact

a. All recruitment is to be in accordance with BRd 3(1), and with Civil Service and RFA PRG as per the following references.

(1) BRd 875 (Regulations for the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries) (including but not limited to), paragraph 0209. CP 04.5 Personnel Management.

(2) Recruiting Operations Manual V2.3 External Recruitment - Recruitment - Policy (Civil Service).

(3) BRd 3(1), Chapters 7 to 10, and 63, and JEM_RM_RN_RFA (see Chapter 7, paragraph 0701).

b. **Management Responsibilities.**

(1) Ensuring that all selection decisions are transparent, fair and equitable.

(2) Ensuring that the selection process does not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

(3) Ensuring that the department's specialist skills base is maintained by adhering to the minimum entry qualifications requirement.

(4) Acting in accordance with data protection legislation by treating information provided for the purposes of recruitment for selection function only.

c. **Applicant's Responsibility.** The applicant's responsibility is to provide evidence and information which is honest, accurate and in a timely manner.

1103. Application Criteria and Process

a. Applications are to be made to R&A RFA and:

(1) All applications must be made through the RITS.

(2) After initial contact, all candidates must generate a profile on RITS. All application forms and information required during the process will be despatched and collected by R&A RFA.

b. All RFA candidates must comply/pass/obtain:

(1) With the minimum age standards:

(a) Aged 17.5 years or above to be processed for recruitment.

(b) And aged 18 years or above to join.

(2) With nationality requirements laid down in Chapter 7 and JEM_RM_RN_RFA (Chapter 7, paragraph 0701).

(3) With the minimum qualification and experience requirements (for qualified entry).

(4) With minimum academic qualification requirements as per the JEM_RM_RN_RFA. Other qualifications, including advanced diplomas, will be considered on a case-by-case in accordance with chapter 7 if the minimum GCSE (or equivalent) requirements have not been met.

(a) All officer cadet candidates will be entered on an approved training course; candidates with a minimum of 64 UCAS points in relevant subjects will be assessed and may be allowed to follow a Foundation Degree study programme. Otherwise, officer cadets will follow an HND study programme.

(b) Officer cadet candidates who are graduates or Higher National Diploma (HND)/Higher National Certificate (HNC) holders in Mechanical or Marine Engineering, or in an engineering subject that covers at least four of the following 6 subjects:

i. Mathematics.

ii. Engineering.

iii. Applied Mechanics.

iv. Applied Heat.

v. Electrotechnology.

vi. Naval Architecture.

(c) Candidates may be allowed to follow an ‘alternative route’ designed for those with relevant engineering qualifications. They must apply directly to a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) approved nautical college for an action plan detailing the requirements they must meet to obtain an Engineering Officer of the Watch Certificate of Competency. This function was previously carried out by the MCA and known as a Letter of Initial Assessment (LIA). The college will assess the applicant’s qualifications and experience and issue an action plan that, along with MIN511(M), will detail the requirements for the applicant to meet Engineer Officer of the Watch (EOOW) unlimited, STCW Convention regulation III/1 standard. Candidates will be expected to obtain a LIA before proceeding to the DAA stage and the cost of this will not be reimbursed.

(5) A DAA as per JEM_RM_RN_RFA requirements.

(6) An ENG1 seafarer’s medical certificate - this must be unrestricted for worldwide sea service with a periodicity of 2 years.

(7) Internal applicants with 5 years or more service, an ENG1 seafarer’s medical certificate - this must be unrestricted for worldwide sea service with a periodicity of 1 year.

(8) A Ministry of Defence (MoD) Security Clearance at a level appropriate for the rank employed.

(9) All vaccinations as required by JSP 950 leaflet 7-1-1.

1104. Recruiting Process

Unless otherwise stated, candidates will be processed as follows:

a. Residency, nationality, unspent criminal convictions and educational requirements will be checked by R&A RFA.

b. A DAA can be completed remotely by candidate using a suitable personal electronic device or arranged at the local Careers Office by R&A RFA Staff. All candidate scores are held within the RITS and can be accessed by RFA R&A Staff, irrespective of location of test.

c. Supplementary application forms and MOD Form 493 to be completed.

d. R&A RFA Staff and SME carries out sift of applicants on strength of DAA and supplementary application (for Apprentice candidates).

e. R&A RFA SO3 carries out review of supplementary application and provides feedback as necessary to candidate.

f. Interview by SME and R&A RFA (for Apprentice candidates). Interview by R&A RFA SO3 for suitability at AIB (for officer candidates).

g. RFA AIB (for officer candidates).

h. Provisional job offer. This becomes a formal offer once the following have been received by R&A RFA: ENG1, SC, proof of vaccinations, discharge book and other personal details. Commence initial training at relevant establishment, as follows:

(1) BRNC Dartmouth - Officer candidates.

(2) HMS Raleigh - Deck Rating candidates.

(3) HMS Collingwood - CIS Rating candidates.

(4) HMS Sultan - ME Rating candidates.

(5) Worthy Down – LS Rating candidates.

Lateral entrants will be assigned to any training establishment with the most suitable start date.

1105. Recruiting Entry Levels

a. Non-qualified applicants may be recruited into training posts, or suitably qualified applicants may be recruited into active roles.

(1) **Qualified Entry.** Qualified Entry (QE) is the method of recruiting qualified personnel. Qualified personnel will be recruited to meet demand in accordance with the RFA recruitment plan.

(a) QE candidates are recruited because of the qualifications and experience they already have and, therefore, are only subject to minimal transfer training in order to take up a substantive post within the RFA. As the DAA is designed to determine suitability for training and likelihood of success, it is not required for the majority of QE candidates. One notable exception to this is QE Deck Officer candidates – due to the intensive nature of RN Navigation training, all Qualified Deck Officers must pass DAA with the appropriate score.

(b) QE candidate certification and CV must be passed to the relevant SME for initial sift and agreement sought to proceed to interview. QE candidates are not to be grouped together for sift as with trainee candidates – this approach does not achieve results as QE candidates are mostly already in successful careers and are very unlikely to wait for significant periods for sift results. All eligible candidates who apply within a given recruiting year and are accepted by the SME for interview will be selected if successful in that interview. On the rare occasion that significant numbers of applications are received for a given role/rank, then a traditional sift can be completed IAW Trainee procedure.

(c) At interview RFA R&A representative will conduct core competency-based questions, and maintain overall control of the interview timeline, noting the requirement to allow significant time for SME questioning of functional competencies. All SMEs must utilise existing functional competency question sets, however these can be amended upon request, this is to ensure consistency of questioning and relevance to current practice. RFA R&A will maintain a depository of SME questions. At the end of the interview, RFA R&A and SME will debrief the candidate and inform them of an approximate timeline to notification of interview result. The decision of grade/rank of entry must be cognisant with targets set by workforce planning, the experience of the individual and their aspirations, but also in respect of the SME opinion of their suitability for the role. The final decision on entry band sits with the interview SME.

(d) Following a successful interview, RFA SME staff alongside R&A Staff, will complete a Lateral Entry Action Plan (LEAP) (Annex 11A) for each QE recruit. This document will detail the route to be undertaken to close knowledge/skill/experience gaps found between existing RFA personnel and the qualified entrant. The founding principle of the LEAP is to fulfil all of the obligations of the Career Development Framework (CDF) that are **mandatory** for the QE grade/rank of entry. Performance objectives must be completed by the recruit once on board RFA ships and measured against the framework. Experience requirements will be achieved by completing appointments to RFA ships – if the interview SME feels there is a need to complete some supernumerary time, this must be detailed in the LEAP. Skills requirements must be detailed on the LEAP and should include an aspirational timeline for completion.

(e) Once a LEAP is agreed this document is to be uploaded into the personnel file of the recruit so that it can be accessed by the Career management team. These Staff Officers are responsible for delivering the contents of the LEAP and protecting both the individual and the role from too high a level of expectation in their early period of employment with the RFA. QE recruits are only to be 'handed over' from the Trainee Career Managers once **all** the mandatory elements of the relevant CDF are complete.

(f) Waivers can be provided by the interview SME in circumstances whereby the training found in the CDF is not appropriate given the experience held by the candidate and must be recorded in MAGELLAN in all events. Where an individual's existing certification has been deemed equivalent to that found in the CDF for existing employees, then this competence must be added to their MAGELLAN record via the waiver function. This task must be completed by RFA HR DEVELOPMENT such that the new entrant is not penalised for their QE status at future Career Development Panels (CDP).

(2) **Non-Qualified (Trainee) Entry**

(a) Qualified Logistics Supply Officers. Qualified LS Officers are recruited into 3/O training rank, and on completion of a training package are graded substantive 3/O (LS).

(b) Officer Cadet is an approved training course, split between nautical college and service onboard RFA ships which results in certification as a 3/O. This applies to Executive, Engineering, and Systems Engineering roles.

(c) Apprenticeships are used as a means of entry which train personnel for roles in all branches as ratings. On completion of an apprenticeship a formal offer of employment may be made. Apprenticeships are available in all departments.

b. Trainee Officer recruits (Cadets, 3/O LSO(T)) will be required to pass interview board and RFA AIB. If successful, they will attend a ten week course at BRNC Dartmouth before commencement of vocational training.

(1) **Internal Lateral Entrants**

(a) Current Employees may apply for positions advertised externally. R&A Staff will only ask for documentation to support the application as organisation already holds records for the candidate.

(b) LE candidate details must be passed to the relevant SME for initial sift and agreement sought to proceed to interview. LE candidates are not to be grouped together for sift as with trainee candidates – this approach does not achieve results as LE candidates are already in successful careers within the service and are very unlikely to wait for significant periods for sift results. All eligible candidates who apply within a given recruiting year and are accepted by the SME for interview will be selected if successful in that interview. On the rare occasion that significant numbers of applications are received for a given role/rank, then a traditional sift can be completed IAW Trainee procedure.

(c) At interview RFA R&A representative will conduct core competency-based questions, and maintain overall control of the interview timeline, noting the requirement to allow significant time for SME questioning of functional competencies. All SMEs must utilise existing functional competency question sets, however these can be amended upon request, this is to ensure consistency of questioning and relevance to current practice. RFA R&A will maintain a depository of SME questions. At the end of the interview, RFA R&A and SME will debrief the candidate and inform them of an approximate timeline to notification of interview result. The decision of grade/rank of entry must be cognisant with targets set by workforce planning, the experience of the individual and their aspirations, but also in respect of the SME opinion of their suitability for the role. The final decision on entry band sits with the interview SME.

(d) Following a successful interview, RFA R&A Staff will complete a Lateral Entry Action Plan (LEAP) for each LE recruit. This document will detail the route to be undertaken to close knowledge/skill/experience gaps found between existing RFA personnel and the qualified entrant. The founding principle of the LEAP is to fulfil all of the obligations of the Career Development Framework (CDF) that are mandatory for the QE grade/rank of entry. Performance objectives must be completed by the recruit once on board RFA ships. Experience requirements will be achieved by completing appointments to RFA ships – if the interview SME feels there is a need to complete some supernumerary time, this must be detailed in the LEAP. Skills requirements must be detailed on the LEAP and should include an aspirational timeline for completion.

(2) **Waiver Criteria - RFA AIB.** Assessment designed to test academic and Leadership potential of candidates. Reasons for waiving this requirement could include:

(a) Previous in date pass of AIB.

(b) Previous recent experience of leadership at sea, possession of a Merchant Navy CoC.

(3) **Waiver Criteria - BRNC.** An introductory course to build leadership skills, gain RFA knowledge, and prepare one for the strains of life onboard an operational ship. Reasons for waiving this requirement could include:

(a) Previous completion of the entire RN BRNC course.

(b) Previous RFA service at officer rank where suitable leadership was demonstrated.

(c) Previous recent experience of leadership at sea, possession of a Merchant Navy CoC. Candidates who already possess these qualifications will be invited to attend a two week induction at BRNC in lieu of the ten week course.

1106. Re-Employment of Personnel

a. Persons who left the organisation less than 12 months before reapplication will be immediately transferred to RFA PERSOPS for processing/re-employment. Persons who left the organisation more than 24 months before re-application will be recruited using the standard entry process (either qualified or non-qualified positions). Any applicant who left the RFA between 12 and 24 prior to re-application, and if applying for the same or similar role, will be subject to the following process:

(1) Sift of application and qualification check for suitability by departmental SME.

(2) SHINE interview with R&A RFA and SME.

(3) Suitability for re-employment assessment based on experience, qualifications, interview results and service requirements as stated in the RFA Recruitment Plan.

(4) Security Clearance.

b. The requirement for DAA, RFA AIB, and BRNC are removed for personnel applying for re-employment within 24 months.

1107. Post-Interview Medical and Security Clearance

a. All roles with the RFA require SC. This should be applied for after a provisional job offer has been made. R&A RFA will provide guidance and advice.

b. ENG1 appointments are to be carried out by an MCA approved doctor and are booked by the applicant.

1108. Disability and Learning Difficulties - Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. Under the scheme, the RFA guarantees to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria as set out in paragraph 1103, sub-paragraph b. Details of declared disability or learning difficulty are to be recorded in the candidate's application. The following conditions will be applied:

a. RFA candidates who declare disability or learning difficulties will receive no adjustment to the assessment process or recruiting medical/academic standards and will be required to meet the basic criteria. No additional allowance is to be made during the recruiting process for any declared disability or learning difficulties, and each candidate's suitability for employment in the RFA is to be measured against the current standards.

b. For successful candidates who are offered employment with the RFA, reasonable adjustment will be made during training and in employment following assessment at the training establishment of the type and degree of disability or learning difficulty.

c. Candidates who declare a disability or learning difficulty are to be informed verbally of this policy.

1109. Contracts, Training Agreements, and Sponsored Reserve

a. Qualified entrants must sign an RFA Company Service Contract (CSC) effective from their first day of service.

(1) Prior to a CSC, entrants are required to sign a Sponsored Reservist agreement to become a special member of the RNR (this is activated only during times of conflict). Failure to sign this agreement will negate all clauses of the contract and any offer of employment will be withdrawn – iaw RFA probation policy.

(2) All entrants will complete a probationary period. This will be a minimum of 6 months or 2 appointments. During probation the RFA may terminate employment, with 4 weeks' notice, at any time if it is clear that the new employee will not meet the required standards of conduct, attendance and/or performance – iaw RFA probation policy.

b. Cadets/Apprentices are covered by the terms of their Cadet/Apprentice Agreement during their cadetship/apprenticeship. Officer Cadets and Apprentices will be advanced upon satisfactory completion of training, in accordance with performance and to meet the business need. This will involve the signing of the CSC and SR on an agreed date from which point any probation will begin.

1110. Personal Appearance

BRd 875 contains staff regulations for all RFA personnel. The personal appearance of all members of the RFA, all recruits and successful applicants is to be in accordance with BRd 875, 'Dress and Personal Appearance'.

ANNEX 11A

LATERAL ENTRY ACTION PLAN (LEAP)

LATERAL ENTRY ACTION PLAN (LEAP) *(Downloadable version available in BRd 3(1) Forms Section)*