

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU READ THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY PRIOR TO ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM TO JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY

Warning

The Royal Navy/Royal Marines will never ask for money in order for your application to be considered. Do not be taken in by potential scams.



A GUIDE FOR POTENTIAL ROYAL NAVY AND ROYAL MARINES 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 applicant.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

2. Commonwealth candidates can apply for the officer/rating/marines branches listed below.

- a. Royal Marines Officer.
- b. Royal Marines Other Ranks.
- c. Royal Marines Bugler.
- d. Royal Marines Musician.
- e. Warfare Specialist (Mine Warfare).
- f. Warfare Specialist (Hydrographic and Meteorology).
- g. Diver.
- h. Physical Training Instructor.
- i. RNP (Regulator).
- j. Seaman Specialist.
- k. Logistic Officer.
- l. Logistician (Catering Services).
- m. Logistician (Supply Chain).
- n. Logistician (Writer).
- o. Environmental Health Officer.
- p. Dental Hygienist (Qualified).
- q. Dental Nurse (Qualified).
- r. Dental Nurse (Student).
- s. Medical Assistant (General Service).
- t. Medical Technician Qualified (Biomedical Scientist).
- u. Medical Technician Student (Biomedical Scientist).
- v. Medical Technician Qualified (Radiographer).
- w. Medical Technician Student (Radiographer).
- x. Medical Technician Qualified (Operating Department Practitioner).
- y. Medical Technician Student (Operating Department Practitioner).
- z. Medical Officer.
- aa. Dental Officer.
- bb. Nursing Officer Qualified (Adult).
- cc. Nursing Officer Qualified (Mental Health).
- dd. Naval Nurse Qualified (Adult).
- ee. Naval Nurse Qualified (Mental Health).
- ff. Naval Nurse Student (Adult).
- gg. Naval Nurse Student (Mental Health).
- hh. Naval Airman (Aircraft Handler).
- ii. Marine Engineer Officer.

- jj. Training Management Officer.
- kk. Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering).
- ll. Accelerated Apprentice Scheme (Marine Engineering).
- mm. Direct Entry Petty Officer Technician (Marine Engineering).
- nn. Naval Chaplain.

3. Prior to travel to the UK you will be required to supply the Naval Service (NS) Overseas Recruitment Manager (London) with essential information (a detailed administration order will be sent to you on receipt of your application). On receipt of **all** the information required, you will then be sent your medical questionnaire and information about the medical triage process. These are to be completed and sent back to the overseas desk at the London Armed Forces Career Office (AFCO) for onward relay to the medical team (run by Capita PLC). A Capita nurse will contact you within 28 days, by text or email, with details of a telephone appointment to conduct the medical triage questionnaire. If successful, the London Office will advise that you are ready to travel to the UK for the next stage of the application, and issue further instructions.

4. To complete your application, you will be required to visit an AFCO in the UK, at a location nominated by the NS Overseas Recruitment Office, to undertake the following:

a. **The Recruit Test (RT).** Made up of a timed ‘pencil and paper’ psychometric test. Practice questions are available [here](#). Further links to the practice test booklet and an app with a practice timed test will be attached to your invitation letter. If you successfully pass the RT, you will move on to the next stage.

b. **The Selection Interview.** A one-to-one interview conducted by your Naval Careers Adviser. If successful, you will be informed at the time and provided with the information on how to complete the following:

(1) **Eyesight Examination.** Conducted by a qualified optician. You should bring a copy of your prescription from your optician, if you have one.

(2) **Medical Examination.** Carried out by a qualified Medical Doctor contracted by the NS. You are advised to bring with you all your medical records.

A list of basic entry requirements can be found [here](#). Please note that your Body Mass Index (BMI) must also be in the “healthy range” of 18-28. This [NHS tool](#) will help you calculate your BMI. If successful at RT, Eye and Medical Examination (including BMI), you will be booked in for the following respective fitness assessment.

c. **RN Candidates: Pre-joining Fitness Test (Run only).** A test consisting of a timed 2.4km run on a running machine in a civilian fitness suite, run times in accordance with age and gender. Further details can be found [here](#).

d. **RM Candidates: Pre-Joining Fitness Test (Run only).** A test consisting of **two** timed 2.4 km runs¹ on a running machine; both runs are conducted in a civilian fitness suite.

5. If you have successfully passed the RT, Medical and Fitness Test and your security clearance has been issued, your careers adviser will bid for a place in the NS for you. Once an allocation date has been received for you to start your training at your chosen New Entry Training Establishment (NETE)², and you continue to hold a valid UK immigration status, you will be invited to attend the next stage in the recruitment process.

¹ First 2.4 km run must be completed in under 12 minutes 30 seconds; after a 60-second rest, a 2nd 2.4 km run is conducted, this must be completed in under 10 minutes 30 seconds.

² HMS RALEIGH, Torpoint; Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM), Lympstone; or, Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC), Dartmouth.

- a. **Pre-Royal Navy Course (PRNC) (RN ratings candidates only).** If you are applying as an RN rating, you will be required to attend a 3-day course to assess your fitness and swimming ability, and confirm you are ready for entry in to HMS Raleigh; PRNC must be completed at least 3 months before joining the Service. You will need to factor this in your travel plans. **This is a Pass or Fail course.** Details of requirements can be found at the [link](#).
- b. **Potential Royal Marines Course (PRMC) (RM other ranks candidates only).** If you are applying for the Royal Marines you will undertake the 3-day Potential Royal Marine Course (PRMC) at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM), Lymington.
- c. **Admiralty Interview Board (AIB).** All officers joining the NS conduct a 3-day interview at the AIB in Gosport, Hampshire; additionally, RM officers conduct a Potential Officers' Course at CTRM.

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE COST FOR SELECTION TEST PROCESS

6. If you are applying for the RN the selection process in the UK can be completed within 4 working weeks, providing you pass all stages of each assessment first time. Please ensure you keep your AFCCO aware of your travel dates. If you are applying to join the RM the selection process, including attendance at PRMC, can be completed in 5 to 6 weeks although this process can be longer. Please note, it may take up to 6 months or more to get a joining date for HMS Raleigh depending on which Branch you choose.
7. You can only complete the selection process in the UK; therefore, before you make a potentially life changing decision to join the NS, you should consider the following:
 - a. Acquire knowledge of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements/restrictions that will apply to you until you join your NETE. UKVI extensions are **NOT** normally given to visitor visas applied for outside of the UK and are only granted under very exceptional circumstances before a valid visa expires. Advice must be sought from an accredited UK Armed Forces Immigration OISC Advisor Level 3; therefore...
 - b. If you are close to your visa expiry date 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, the NS will **NOT** be responsible and this will affect your application to join.
 - c. You may also have to return to your country of origin at your own expense if your security clearance takes more than 6 months and results in your visa expiring prior to you being granted a NETE entry date.
 - d. 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 host or UK address changes you are required to notify the Overseas Recruitment Manager in London.

CANDIDATE AWARENESS WHEN SELECTING UK HOSTS

8. If you intend to stay with family or friends, they may be required to provide evidence that they are permitted to accommodate visitors, and that they are financially stable before your Visitors Visa is approved.
 - a. Hosts may/may not permit you to use their residential address in the UK therefore think carefully about your selection as you will be required to provide a UK residential address for the duration of the recruitment process.

- b. You need to choose a host where you can feel safe. Don't be afraid to change, just remember to inform the Overseas Recruitment Office and UKVI as required.
- c. Hosts may offer to assist financially but the burden of financial responsibility remains with the you throughout the recruitment process.
- d. Individuals need to be aware that hosts may not always provide accommodation for the full duration of the recruitment process or Phase 1 and 2 training; therefore, you should make arrangements for the entire period including main leave periods where training units will close for Easter, Summer, and Christmas leave.
- e. Phase 1 and Phase 2 equivalent Service Accommodation will be provided during training leave periods on request at the following locations:
 - (1) Plymouth – HMS Drake.
 - (2) Portsmouth/Gosport – HMS Sultan.
- f. Hosts must provide contact details so the applicant's careers adviser can contact them in the event of any problems.
- g. For 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.
- h. 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.
- i. In the event of a candidate moving to another host, both are required to inform the Overseas Recruitment Office in London, and the candidate is required to provide details of the new host and address.

9. The cost of travelling to UK for the selection tests can be considerable and you should be sure that you are committed to joining the NS and that you have done all you can to prepare for the selection process before you make arrangements to travel to the UK, otherwise you could be wasting a lot of money.

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

SECURITY CLEARANCE

11. If you are successful in all aspects of the selection process, your name will be forwarded to the Defence Vetting Agency who will arrange police, financial and Security Checks. **Be prepared, these checks can take up to 6 months**, depending on the time it takes for agencies in your home country to respond, so please ensure all the documentation you bring with you is complete and accurate. You will not be allowed to join until all the checks have been completed. You will be free to return to your home country whilst your Security Clearance is being obtained.

More Information

12. You can find more information on all aspects of the selection process on the RN websi.

THE JOINING ROUTINE

13. If you successfully complete the selection process, including obtaining security clearance, your name will be placed on a waiting list to join the NS. When you reach the top of the waiting list you will be allocated a NETE start date. You will then be required to travel to UK for final briefings in the week prior to entry into the Service, which will usually be conducted at the AFCO where you completed the selection process. These can also be done over the phone if required. The NS will pay for your travel from your port of entry into UK (e.g. Heathrow or Gatwick Airport), or your UK residence to your NETE. You will have to pay for your own travel to the UK and for any accommodation costs that you incur prior to arriving at your chosen NETE. You will need to demonstrate that you hold a valid visa and that you have the financial resource or a return ticket to return to your country of origin should you be unsuccessful during training.

HELP AND ADVICE

14. **Divisional System.** Like all Naval personnel, when you join your NETE, you will be allocated a Divisional Officer (DO) who will be able to provide you with guidance, support and signposting, should you require it. Your DO will be an officer or senior rate/non-commissioned officer who will have a wealth of experience on Service issues such as career progression, posting, terms of service etc. They are not qualified to give immigration advice. If you require immigration support this can be found independently from an accredited lawyer, or via the Seafarer's Advice and Information Line (SAIL). If your DO is not able to solve the problem, they will be able to direct you to an appropriate person who can help. Your DO will also act as a focal point for your family and, if you are under 18 years of age, they will talk to your parents if you are experiencing any difficulties.

15. **Royal Navy & Royal Marines Welfare (RN&RMW).** In addition to your DO, the RMRNW organisation will be able to help you if required. The RNRMW has offices near to all the major Naval establishments; the contact numbers will be made available to you when you join. Further information on support available can be found [here](#).

IMMIGRATION ISSUES

16. **Immigration.** If you are joining the NS 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 NS. Your passport will be marked accordingly to indicate to the immigration service that you are exempt. **Once released from 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.**

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 10 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 Army Families Federation in this regard. ILR can cost up to £2,389 (2018 prices), so we recommend you start saving as soon as possible if you plan to apply for this.
- b. After 5 years of service you will be eligible to naturalise as a British Citizen, whilst still in service. This can cost up to £1,330 (2018 prices), so we recommend you start saving early if you plan to apply for this.
- 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 NS, 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. 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, however, that if your immediate family wish to reside in the UK then you will need to fulfill the criteria with regards income as detailed by the Home Office, and apply for 5-year settlement under “Appendix Armed Forces”. Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/uk-family-visa/proof-income>, and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-armed-forces>.

Other useful information can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-to-extend-stay-in-uk-hm-forces-form-flraf>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-to-settle-in-uk-as-former-member-of-hm-forces-setaf>
- With regards to applications submitted from outside the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa>

20. **UK Citizenship.** UK Citizenship 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, after 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 NS, and is entirely voluntary.

However, as stated above, non-British citizens are only eligible to apply for a limited number of branches; also, promotions for officers and ratings within some of the available branches is only available to UK citizens, due to security regulations.

FINANCE AND BENEFITS

21. **Pay & National Insurance.** When you join your chose NETE, we will help you process a request for a National Insurance (NI) Number this could take up to 8 weeks, which you will require to be paid and in case you or your dependents are entitled to Universal Credit or other benefits. 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 spare (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.**

22. **Universal Credit.** As of 2018 a new system of welfare payments, or “benefits” is being rolled out across the UK. Six of the most common benefits in the UK have been merged into one system called “Universal Credit”. This replaces the following benefits:

- Child Tax Credit.
- Housing Benefit.
- Income Support.
- Income-based Job Seeker’s Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Working Tax 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.

If your family is granted limited leave to remain for 5 years under the “Appendix Armed Forces” route then 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.

23. **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 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. Your DO or SAIL will be able to help you get free financial advice, if you require it.

24. **Service Accommodation.** If you are not married, you will be entitled to Single Living Accommodation. If you are married, you will be entitled to Service Family Accommodation 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. 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.

25. **Food and Accommodation Charges.** When you are serving at sea, or in field conditions, you will not be charged for food and accommodation. When you are serving ashore in an establishment you will pay a food and accommodation charge which will be automatically deducted from your wages. Your Careers Adviser will be able to tell you the current rate of these charges.

TRAVEL TO ‘HOME’ COUNTRY

26. **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 travel home. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Chain of Command consider paying your travel cost at public expense. You may wish to consider starting an emergency savings account for these events.

27. **Regular travel during leave periods:**

- a. **Get you home (Travel).** All Service Personnel (SP) are entitled to Get You Home (Travel) allowance which allows for up to 10 return journeys a year (travel warrants) 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. **Get you Home (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. **Get you Home (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 NS 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 simply the accumulation of leave to be used for travelling home. [JSP 760](#) contains more information and should be consulted in the first instance.

TATTOOS

28. 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 does not matter whether they are tribal or not, they will not be accepted, and you will be unable to join.

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

HAIR AND GROOMING

30. 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 NS uniforms.
- d. Dreadlocks to be styled in a bun with a net, if longer than collar length. Durag scarves are acceptable during fire-fighting if required.

SUMMARY

31. A career in the NS is highly rewarding and very worthwhile; it will also be challenging and demanding. The entry standards are high, and there are many difficulties to overcome 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.

**Whether you decide to apply or not, we wish you the very best of
luck for your future**