

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

**WARNING**

**No candidate from outside the UK should travel to the UK unless directed to by the Overseas Team or UK Royal Navy Careers Advisor in order to conduct essential elements of the recruiting process prior to being assessed as eligible to join the Royal Navy or Royal Marines. Any persons who do travel to UK without this direction will not be the responsibility of, or supported by, the Ministry of Defence.**



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



**PLEASE NOTE**

**Only those Commonwealth Overseas candidates invited to the UK by the Overseas office and who have a valid entry stamp/Visa will be dealt with by an Armed Forces Careers Office. Those who choose to arrive without invite, or apply on arrival, will have their application rejected. Commonwealth candidates who reside in the UK on Long term Biometric passes or visas (over 6 months) can apply as normal using their UK address.**

**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 branches listed below. (First you should check Education requirements to ensure you are Eligible)

- Diver
- Logistic Officer
- Logistician (Catering Services)
- Logistician (Supply Chain)
- Logistician (Writer)
- Marine Engineering Officer
- Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering)
- Accelerated Apprentice Scheme (Marine Engineering)
- Direct Entry Petty Officer Technician Marine Engineer
- Dental Officer
- Dental Hygienist (Qualified)
- Dental Nurse (Qualified)
- Dental Nurse (Student)
- Environmental Health Officer
- Medical Officer

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- Medical Assistant (General Service)
- Medical Technician Qualified (Biomedical Scientist)
- Medical Technician Student (Biomedical Scientist)
- Medical Technician Qualified (Radiographer)
- Medical Technician Student (Radiographer)
- Medical Technician Qualified (Operating Department Practitioner)
- Medical Technician Student (Operating Department Practitioner)
- Nursing Officer Qualified (Adult)
- Nursing Officer Qualified (Mental Health)
- Naval Nurse Qualified (Adult)
- Naval Nurse Qualified (Mental Health)
- Naval Nurse Student (Adult)
- Naval Nurse Student (Mental Health)
- Naval Chaplain
- Naval Airman (Aircraft Handler)
- RNP (Regulator)
- Physical Training Instructor
- Royal Marines Officer
- Royal Marines Other Ranks
- Royal Marines Bugler
- Royal Marines Musician
- Seaman Specialist
- Training Management Officer
- Warfare Specialist (Mine Warfare)
- Warfare Specialist (Hydrographic and Meteorology)

3. Prior to travel to the UK you will be required to supply the Royal Navy (RN) Overseas Recruitment Office with essential information which will be requested via your online Portal. Only on receipt of **all** the requisite information will you be sent your medical questionnaire and information about the medical triage process. These are to be completed and returned, via your DRS Portal, to the Nursing staff at the Recruitment Medical Team, Capita. A Capita nurse will contact you within 28 days, by text or email, with details of a telephone appointment to conduct the Medical Triage telephone call. If successful, the overseas office will advise you on your next step and issue further instructions. Passing the triage **does not authorise** you to make plans to travel to the UK for the face to face medical. At this point, provided you have supplied all the information we require and have successfully passed your Medical Triage, you will be allocated a UK Careers Advisor who will conduct the remainder of your recruitment journey.

4. The following parts of the recruitment selection process will be undertaken under the direction of your UK Careers Advisor and **must be completed prior to your arrival in UK.**

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. ***This part of the application is currently undertaken in UK but will soon be available online and candidates will be able to complete this prior to arrival.***

b. **The Selection Interview.** A one-to-one virtual video interview conducted by your Royal Navy Careers Adviser, which will be undertaken via the SHINE platform prior to your arrival in UK.

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Information will be sent to you on how the interview is carried out. You will be informed of the result the same day. If successful, we will instigate security checks on you.

c. **RM Candidates: Virtual Pre-Joining Fitness Test Plus (vPJFT+).** This is a basic assessment designed under the COVID-19 restrictions. It will 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. vPJFT+ will initially be sent to candidates for their fitness preparation. Candidates will not be able to attempt this until they have passed the Medical Triage. On successful Medical Triage Candidates can declare by email that they are ready to attempt the test but must fully prepare and complete all the exercises to a good standard. Failure to reach the required standard of each exercise will result in a fail. This test is also a requirement to Pass prior to arrival in UK.

d. When all of the 'in-country' elements of the recruitment process have been completed (Medical Triage, Selection Interview (SI), RT, vPJFT+/Strava evidence and SC) you will be invited by your CA to travel to the UK not less than one month prior to your allocated joining date. When in UK you will be advised on the conduct of your PRNC, F2F Medical and how to complete the process and join the Royal Navy.

e. **Admiralty Interview Board (AIB). (vAIB)** All officers joining the RN normally conduct a 3-day assessment at the AIB<sup>1</sup> in Gosport, Hampshire; additionally, RM officers conduct a Potential Officers' Course at CTCRM. This AIB is currently undertaken as a virtual 1-day assessment vAIB due to Covid and could continue in this format.

5. To complete your application, you may be required to visit an AFCO in the UK, at a location nominated by the RN Overseas Recruitment Office, to undertake the following: (future intentions are the Recruit test will be done online/virtually in your home country.)

a. **Full Medical Examination.** If you were successful at your Medical Triage, at a later stage you will undertake a face to face Medical in UK carried out by a qualified Medical Doctor contracted by the RN. 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.

An inaccurate height & weight and thus BMI reading in your initial application may result in your application being automatically rejected. **Accuracy and honesty are vital.**

All applicants must be able to swim a minimum of 50 metres and confidently tread water. Non-swimmers will automatically be rejected.

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<sup>1</sup> Since Mar 19 this has been developing as a Virtual assessment. Officer Candidates will be advised how to prepare and attend based on the format and requirements when appropriate.

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- b. **RN Candidates: Pre-joining Fitness Test** (Run only). A test conducted in UK, 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](#). Prior to arrival in UK you will provide a screenshot of your 2.4km running time using apps such as STRAVA.
- c. **Pre-Royal Navy Course (PRNC) (RN ratings candidates only).** *(This maybe waived due to Covid-19)* 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](#).
- d. **Recruit Orientation Phase (ROP)** for Royal Marines candidates. The Recruit Orientation Phase (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 similar to the PRMC (Pre-Royal Marines Course) - the Commando Aptitude Assessment (CAA) - which will incorporate greater levels of PT, determination and mental resilience.
- e. **Potential Officers Course (POC)** An arduous 3-day assessment that will test the candidate's motivation both physically and mentally. RM candidates must prepare themselves adequately for this part of the selection process.<sup>2</sup>

### TRAVEL AND EXPERNE COST FOR SELECTION TEST PROCESS

6. If you are applying for the RN/RM 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 AFCO aware of your travel dates. 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 so don't travel without confirmation by your Careers advisor.
7. You can only *complete* 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 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 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 RN will **NOT** be responsible, and this will affect your application to join.
  - c. You will only be invited to UK when you have passed a Security Check. This will be explained to you by your careers advisor at your virtual video interview.

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<sup>2</sup> Suspended in Mar 19 due to CV-19

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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 A UK HOST

a. **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:

(1) Support the Candidate's travel from the UK point of entry to the Phase 1 Training establishment. MoD will not fund travel to UK.

(2) Provide accommodation for the Candidate from arrival in UK to commencing Phase 1 Training. 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.

(3) Support the Recruit's accommodation during a main leave period when the Phase 1 Training establishment is closed down, cognizant the recruit will be salaried by this point. The Recruit may be able to book accommodation at another MoD base in extremis.

b. UK Hosts must provide contact details so the applicant's careers adviser can contact them in the event of any problems and in the interests of the Candidate's welfare.

c. 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.

d. 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.

e. 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.

f. **Return Travel to country of origin.** The candidate must have sufficient funds in their bank account to support a journey back home in the event that the career in the Royal Navy does not work out for them at an early stage. Their visa will not support remaining in the UK on leaving the Service and MoD will not fund their travel back home.

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

## SECURITY CLEARANCE

9. All Overseas candidates are now to be security **cleared before** being invited to travel to the UK. A Link will be sent to you via your current email address which is on database. (Ensure you use internet explorer as your browser). The information you return will be looked at by the Defence Vetting Agency who will arrange police, financial and Security Checks. **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 that is requested is in date and uploaded to your DRS Portal. You will be required to bring this to the UK when you are INVITED here to complete the remainder of the process. You will not be invited until Security Clearance (SC) has been issued.

## More Information

10. You can find more information on all aspects of the selection process on the [RN Careers Website](#).

## THE JOINING ROUTINE

11. If you successfully complete the entire selection process your name will be placed on a waiting list to join the RN. 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 Face to Face Medical examination and final briefings in the weeks prior to entry into the Service. The medical will be conducted by Nuffield Trust medical professionals at one of their clinics and the Final Entry Brief will be via video on-line. When available as CV-19 restrictions are lifted you will also be required to attend PRNC or PRMC as appropriate. You must understand it is possible to fail the Medical or the PRNC / PRMC and thus be ineligible to join the RN. The RN will pay for your travel from your UK residence (Sponsors address) 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 allocated 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 at the final stages of selection or during training.

## HELP AND ADVICE

12. **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 advice, 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.

13. **Royal Navy Family and People Support (RN FPS).** In addition to your DO, the RMRNW organisation will be able to help you if required. The RN FPS has offices near to all the major Royal Navy establishments; the contact numbers will be made available to you when you join. Further information on support available can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

## IMMIGRATION ISSUES

14. **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 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.

15. 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](#).

16. **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.

17. 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 fulfil 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/immigrationrules/immigration-rules-appendix-armed-forces>.

Other useful information can be found at the following links:

- a. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publicationRN/application-to-extend-stay-in-uk-hm-forcesform-flraf>
- b. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publicationRN/application-to-settle-in-uk-as-formermember-of-hm-forces-setaf>
- c. With regards to applications submitted from outside the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/applyuk-visa>

18. **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 RN 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

19. **Pay & National Insurance.** When you join your allocated NETE, we will help you request a National Insurance (NI) Number (this could take up to 8 weeks) which you will require to be paid your salary and, if entitled, 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. Commonwealth candidates will automatically be put on emergency tax until they receive a National Insurance Number.**

20. **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:

- a. Child Tax Credit.
- b. Housing Benefit. □ Income Support.
- c. Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance.
- d. Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- e. 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](http://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.

21. **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.



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22. **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 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.

23. **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 wages. Pay as you dine (PAYD) is available in all Shore stations.

### TRAVEL TO 'HOME' COUNTRY

24. **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.

25. **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 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 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

26. 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.

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

## HAIR AND GROOMING

28. 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

29. 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 many 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 your Careers Advisor. If you do the RN will not accept you into service and will not be responsible for you.

30. Careful consideration should be taken when choosing which Branch of the RN to apply for. You are advised to select a specialisation that suits your skill set, leading to a career you have a natural affinity for. The Royal Marines has exceptionally high physical fitness and mental toughness standards; so must YOU before applying for this Branch.

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