

CHAPTER 38

POLICY AND APPEARANCE

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CHAPTER 38**POLICY AND APPEARANCE****SECTION 1 - DRESS POLICY****3801. Authorised Uniforms**

- a. The uniforms, accoutrements, accessories, insignia, optional items and orders of dress set out in these regulations are those authorised for wear, as appropriate, throughout the Royal Navy.
- b. Tables of dress and their occasions for wear are detailed and illustrated at the Annex 39A and Annex 40A. Dress for Joint Service ceremonial occasions is detailed in Chapter 43.

3802. Outfit and Kit Scales

- a. All Naval personnel shall be provided, on entry, with clothing and equipment to the authorised entitlement, as laid down in the scales of issue at the Annexes to Chapter 39 and Chapter 40. Individuals are personally responsible for the care and custody of all items of clothing, including accessories and accoutrements, issued to them. Personnel are to ensure that items are maintained and ready for use at all times.
- b. Any Royal Navy individual (Officer or Rating/Other Rank) who undertakes Gender Reassignment will be entitled to a gratuitous issue of a complete outfit of uniform (as in [Para 3802](#) sub-para a above) appropriate to their acquired gender, including any necessary equipment items. The exact timing of the issue is to be agreed between the individual's Career Manager and Commanding Officer and a request form is to be raised by and signed by the individual's DO for a complete re-issue. Further advice may be sought from Navy Command HQ D&I Policy staff.
- c. Major components of uniform such as trousers and jackets shall not be interchanged or mixed and shall only be worn with the order of dress for which they are intended eg. uniform items of No 3s and No 4s are not to be worn together. Some accessories and accoutrements such as shoes, socks, belts, raincoats, gloves and shirts, however, may be worn with several orders of dress.

3803. Optional Items

Certain clothing items and accoutrements are authorised for optional wear, provided that they are not obtained at public expense.

3804. Master Patterns and Specifications

- a. To ensure uniformity and quality of dress, all Naval clothing items whether issued through the supply system or purchased from civilian tailors shall be made according to the approved master patterns which govern the official specification for each clothing item. The necessary specifications may be obtained from Defence Clothing (DC) Team.

- b. Royal Navy personnel shall not wear any item of dress which does not conform to approved patterns or which has not been authorised for wear on an optional basis or ordered for wear in the specific user trials.

3805. Alterations and Modifications

Items of clothing shall not be altered or modified except in order to obtain a reasonable fit. The cost of correcting or replacing any items of clothing that have been altered or modified without proper authorisation shall be borne by the individual.

3806. New and Superseded Items

Whenever an item of clothing in a new pattern is authorised and introduced, an amendment to these regulations shall be implemented by Navy Command HQ. The amendment will include the conditions under which the obsolete or superseded items may continue to be worn and the procedure for taking the new item into use.

3807. Supply and Issue

- a. Supply and issue of the various items of Royal Navy clothing shall be in accordance with current accounting regulations set out in JSP 886 (Defence Supply Chain Manual).
- b. Specialist Clothing scales are issued by DES DC-CSTCSORN to individual units.

3808. Wearing of Uniform

- a. Unless otherwise directed, all Officers, Ratings and Other Ranks shall wear uniform:
 - (1) As prescribed, when on duty.
 - (2) As required when serving as a Naval or Defence Adviser or Attaché.
 - (3) As required when serving with the Armed Forces of other countries.
 - (4) If desired, in public using the guidelines laid down at [Para 3809](#).
- b. Members of the Reserves shall wear uniform when:
 - (1) On duty.
 - (2) Attending a function or ceremony at which the wearing of uniform is appropriate.
 - (3) If desired, in public using the guidelines laid down at [Para 3809](#).
 - (4) Acting as RNR Liaison Officers in the WWE, NE, SNI and EE regions when undertaking a Military Support and/or Resilience Function in which uniform and rank is of particular importance.

- c. Royal Navy personnel attending civilian educational institutions such as universities shall not normally wear uniform unless participating in training exercises, parades or functions.
- d. Application to wear uniform whilst on leave outside the UK shall be made through the appropriate Chain of Command.
- e. Certain civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence, such as non-industrial personnel serving in RFAs and some overseas exchange appointments as well as accredited war correspondents, may wear appropriate uniform, as authorised by the relevant administrative authority.
- f. Former members of the Royal Navy may wear uniform on state or other occasions of ceremony, provided it is in the best interests of the Service to do so. It should be noted that it is illegal for anyone who is not a former member of the Naval Service, the proof of which lies upon the individual, to:
- (1) Wear a Naval or any other uniform that is so similar to the real uniform that it might be mistaken for it.
- And
- (2) Wear a distinctive mark relating to service performed, wear a service medal, ribbon, badge, decoration/order or imitation thereof, or any other that is awarded for campaign service or any imitation thereof, that is likely to be mistaken for any such mark, medal, ribbon, badge decoration or order.
- g. **Royal Naval Volunteer Band.** Members of Royal Naval Volunteer Bands, who are not themselves serving members of any Military Service or other non-military uniformed Service such as the Police/Fire Brigade etc, may wear a uniform as laid down in Annex 39F when on Service recognised band engagements, given they are representing the Royal Navy in the Public Eye. Furthermore:
- (1) Retired officers and ratings who are members of an RN Volunteer Band may, at the discretion of the VBO, wear uniforms according to the rank held on retirement.
 - (2) Any retired officer or rating who finds themselves required to wear uniform is to uphold the values and standards expected of the Royal Navy in the public eye. Uniform is to be maintained in good order, and the individual must conform, in full, to the current dress and appearance standards expected of serving members.
- h. **RN Personnel Employed in Joint Operations.** Members of the RN/RM who are employed in Joint Organisations and who are under a non-RN/RM Command are to wear only RN/RM uniform and accoutrements. Under no circumstances should an RN/RM serving member wear uniform/headgear of another Service. Local tactical badges/ashes, however, may be worn.

3809. Wearing of Uniform in Public

The Navy Board strongly encourages the wearing of Uniform in Public, taking into account the security advice. In doing so it is clear that the highest standards of dress and bearing are required. It is therefore incumbent upon all those wearing uniform to be aware that it is their duty not to bring the Service into disrepute as a result of their demeanour or actions, or otherwise to impact adversely on the efficiency or reputation of the Armed Forces.

3810. Wearing of Uniform in Foreign Countries

- a. This regulation does not apply to individuals or units serving with a British Force or mission etc where specific regulations will apply.
- b. Service personnel, on or off duty, may wear uniform in foreign countries at Commanding Officers discretion. In addition, individuals must:
 - (1) Obtain permission from the local British Embassy of High Commission.
 - (2) Observe all relevant security instructions and requirements, including travel to and from the foreign country concerned.

3811. Uniformity in Dress

When taking part in a Joint Service parade or function, Royal Navy personnel shall be required to wear the equivalent order of dress, in line with the other Services, as laid down in the Joint Services Ceremonial Dress Tables (JSCDT) at Chapter 43 and promulgated before the event.

3812. Wearing of Plain (Civilian) Clothes

- a. Civilian (plain) clothes shall be worn as directed when on duty in the Ministry of Defence and on other occasions when appropriate. Royal Navy personnel in plain clothes shall present a neat and well-groomed appearance in accordance with the provisions of this Section.
- b. Marks of respect are to be paid when wearing plain clothes in accordance with BRd 1834, RN Ceremonial and Drill.
- c. The Naval Service Identity Card, MOD Form 90, must always be carried when wearing plain clothes.
- d. Visible civilian items of apparel shall not be worn with uniform except where specifically authorised in these orders. Similarly, items of uniform shall not be worn with civilian attire except for items such as gloves, which do not explicitly identify the wearer as a member of the Royal Navy.
- e. The kilt, (Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, Manx), with appropriate socks, shoes and accoutrements, may optionally be worn by entitled male officers, Warrant Officers and Senior Ratings when attending mess functions at which Number 2B or 2BW dress is ordered. Entitled female officers, Warrant Officers and Senior Ratings may wear equivalent long skirts. As they are not part of official uniform, in common with mess boots and boat cloaks, kilts will not be provided at public expense.

f. Civilians may wear items of uniform such as caps and berets with badges in public displays, performances and at special events, provided that such action is not to the detriment of the Royal Navy. In particular:

(1) By custom, ex-service personnel may wear caps or berets with badges on remembrance and memorial occasions.

(2) Historical re-enactment groups and staff in preserved historic ships are to be authorised to wear obsolete uniforms.

g. Chaplains in the exercise of their religious duties may wear ecclesiastical and academic clothing as appropriate over, or in lieu of, uniform.

3813. Royal and Honorary Ranks and Appointments

a. Members of the Royal Family holding royal and honorary appointments in the Royal Navy shall receive an initial issue of uniform at public expense.

b. An Officer holding such an appointment or honorary rank is authorised to wear the current uniform, rank insignia, accoutrements and accessories applicable to that appointment or rank.

c. Number 1 dress is to be provided, on request, from the existing DC Team contract. Lesser orders of dress may be obtained on temporary loan, but Mess Undress must be provided by honorary appointees at their own expense.

3814. Wearing of Maternity Uniform ([Fig 38-1a](#) and [Fig 38-1b](#))

a. The aim of maternity uniform is to provide a professional, smart and yet comfortable alternative to regular uniform that can be worn throughout pregnancy. The wearing of maternity uniform by pregnant Royal Navy personnel is compulsory when they can no longer fit comfortably into their service uniform. The only exception is when written authority is given by the Medical Officer for a servicewoman to wear plain clothes for medical reasons. On occasion it may be necessary for certain conditions or occasions to be assessed by the pregnant servicewomen's Chain of Command (CoC) in order to adopt an appropriate 'equivalent' state of dress. In these circumstances, common sense must prevail and further guidance beyond these regulations can be obtained from the regional Maternity Cells.

b. Pregnant Service personnel will be allowed some flexibility as to how they wear their maternity uniform. The individual garments (dress, trousers, short-sleeved shirt and cardigan) may be worn in any combination. Shirts are to be worn outside trousers. The short-sleeved shirt is to be worn open necked without a tie. The maternity uniform will routinely be worn with the usual service insignia of rank/rate badges (including regulating crown for RN Police), hosiery, shoes and headdress. No mixed wear of items of standard and maternity uniform other than these insignia/accessories is allowed. A white dress is available for those in clinical appointments. The following guidance is given for Line Managers:

(1) **Headdress.** Certain pregnancy conditions may be exacerbated by the wearing of headdress. Pregnant servicewomen may request, through their CoC, to their CO (or equivalent), to be exempted from wearing headdress, or to limit the amount of time it is worn.

(2) **Footwear.** Foot and ankle swelling can be common in pregnancy, making the wearing of standard service footwear uncomfortable. In such cases, pregnant servicewomen may request to wear non-issue shoes. Shoes must be of plain design (no details or external stitching), black, flat 'ballet pump' or low-heeled style.

(3) **Ceremonial or Formal Occasions.** Pregnant servicewomen are not to be excluded from any event as a result of them wearing maternity uniform. When No1 or No2 dress or equivalent is ordered, a pregnant servicewoman may wear her blue maternity dress or request to wear smart civilian maternity attire where it is deemed more appropriate to the occasion. The wearing of civilian maternity wear on duty remains entirely at the discretion of the Unit CO or equivalent.

c. Individual Female Officers and Ratings (including Maritime Reserves) are issued with a maximum of 4 'tops' in a combination of dress, short-sleeved shirt and trousers, plus cardigan. Combinations available are:

- (1) 4 dresses.
- (2) 3 dresses, 1 shirt, 1 pr trousers.
- (3) 2 dresses, 2 shirts, 1 pr trousers.
- (4) 1 dress, 3 shirts, 1 pr trousers.
- (5) 4 shirts, 2 prs trousers.

d. Female Nursing/Dental Staff may opt for 4 clinical white dresses or the combinations detailed in sub [sub para c](#) above.

Figure 38-1a. Wearing of Maternity Uniform**Figure 38-1b. Wearing of Maternity Uniform****e. Items available for demand via clothing catalogue**

TL Number	NSN RN (Dark Blue)	Size
TL1064506	8410-99-680-2239	68
TL1064507	8410-99-680-2240	72
TL1064508	8410-99-680-2241	76
TL1064509	8410-99-680-2242	80
TL1064510	8410-99-680-2243	84
TL1064511	8410-99-680-2244	88
TL1064512	8410-99-680-2245	92
TL1064513	8410-99-680-2246	96

3815. Sea Cadet Corps

a. Senior Ratings in the Sea Cadet Corps may, exceptionally, wear the uniform(s) of their equivalent RN Senior Rating provided that all such uniforms bear 'Sea Cadet Corps' flashes in a prominent position. The wearing of such uniforms does not confer on SCC senior ratings other rights and privileges that might normally be accorded to regular RN or Royal Navy Reserve personnel unless stated elsewhere. The entitlement to wear uniform is in the form of a concession from the Ministry of Defence and confers non-Crown Servant status - either military or civilian - on the wearer.

b. Senior Ratings in the Sea Cadet Corps should only wear uniform when:

(1) On duty.

(2) Attending a function or ceremony at which wearing of uniform is necessary.

3816. Special Measure Uniform

Special measure uniform is only to be authorised when there is discernible evidence that the change in physical size is attributable to either natural growth or a physical fitness change in muscle bulk. Other requests for special measure should firstly be referred to the local Medical Officer.

3817. General

a. The deportment, appearance and conduct of Officers and Ratings/Other Ranks, whether in uniform or in plain clothing, shall on all occasions reflect credit on the Royal Navy and upon the individual. It is the responsibility and duty of all those in authority to ensure that the policies, regulations and instructions contained herein are to be adhered to. When transiting in uniform Service personnel are not to eat, smoke (including e-cigarettes which the MOD considers the same as traditional cigarettes), drink or use mobile phones; there are areas designated for these activities in all ships and/or military establishments.

b. **Smart and Presentable Appearance.** Officers and Ratings/Other Ranks in uniform shall be well groomed with smart and properly pressed uniform and clean footwear. In particular, buttons, fasteners and zips shall be kept closed; pockets shall not be bulged; personal items such as glasses, sun glasses, pens, pencils, key rings, Bluetooth Headsets, iPods or papers shall not visibly protrude from pockets nor be suspended from waist belts or pockets. Mobile telephones or beepers, personal radios, tape or CD players and other such electronic equipment, shall not be visibly worn, or operated except when provided from Service sources for the performance of a specific duty where their ready accessibility is required. Service personnel in uniform are not to use their mobile phones when transiting in Ships and/or military establishments.

c. **Jewellery.** Apart from wristwatches and cuff-links where appropriate, no jewellery, friendship bracelets or visible chains (including bracelets, necklaces and anklets) are to be worn with uniform other than those listed below. Wristwatch straps and cuff links are to be non-garish and conservative by design (see also [Para 3821](#) sub [sub para v](#)):

(1) Signet, engagement and wedding rings for male personnel.

(2) Signet, engagement and wedding rings, and a single small plain silver or gold sleeper or stud (not more than 6mm in diameter) earring in the centre of each earlobe for female personnel. Conservative pearl studs may be worn with No.2 Mess Dress/Undress.

(3) When in Ward Dress a wedding ring is the only item of jewellery permitted to be worn by QARNNS personnel.

(4) A single charity wristband may be worn by personnel in working uniform but not in No 1 uniform. Due consideration must be made with regards to the health and safety of individuals working in places where the wristband could become a snagging hazard. In accordance with QRRN, it remains for the Commanding Officer to decide upon the overall suitability of any particular wristband.

d. Local Orders for Royal Guards or other occasions of major ceremony may further limit items of jewellery to be worn.

e. **Body Piercing**

(1) Other than those items detailed at [Para 3817](#) sub para c above, no form of jewellery is to be worn on the body. Even where a part of the body has been pierced or prepared, whether for any ring, stud or sleeper, no such items are to be worn when in uniform or on duty. Body piercing does not include the piercing of the earlobe for the wearing of a stud or sleeper.

(2) Any scarring, such as that caused by a 'flesh tunnel' or other body decorations, injury, infection or illness caused as a result of body piercing, or through the wearing of any form of body jewellery (other than that permitted in these regulations), and with the exception of any minor legacy scarring acquired prior to enlistment, will be deemed to have been self-inflicted and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter which may ultimately lead to an Administrative Discharge if any of the criteria at [Para 3817](#) sub para g sub para (2) cannot be met.

(3) For clarification, a 'Flesh Tunnel' is that specific form of self-inflicted scarring which occurs following the insertion of (usually) every increasing in size circular 'stretchers' which, over time, produce a larger and larger earlobe. When such stretchers are removed, a large and visible hold (the flesh tunnel) remains.

f. Similarly, when in plain clothes, the wearing of body jewellery and trinkets whilst on board or on duty is not permitted, nor at any other time when likely to reflect adversely upon the Royal Navy. Body jewellery represents a risk to individual safety in the event of an incident.

g. **Body Art (Tattoos and other forms including Scarification and Flesh Tunnels)**

(1) Following a recent review, the service tattoo policy has changed. In recent years there has been an increasing number of RN personnel with 'ineligible' tattoos on visible areas, especially on hands (already allowed in the RM). Easing the restrictions on tattoos for both potential recruits and serving personnel, whilst maintaining professional standards, is entirely consistent with overall Diversity and Inclusivity policies as well as reflecting the society that the Royal Navy lives in and protects.

(2) Tattoos and all other forms of body art (including scarification, flesh tunnels and any other deliberate body scarring) are now deemed unacceptable if they are judged by the Commanding Officer, or at the recruiting stage by the Recruiting Officer, to meet any one of the following criteria:

(a) If they are visible on a front view passport photograph taken whilst the subject is wearing an open necked polo style shirt with one button undone; that is on the face or throat area, on the front of the ear or forward of a line from the bottom of the ear to the collar bone.

(b) Irrespective of its size or position on the body, a tattoo will be obscene and unacceptable if it refers to or depicts an image of:

- i. A sexual act.
- ii. Extreme pornographic behaviour.
- iii. Violence of any kind.
- iv. Drugs.
- v. Racism.
- vi. Political views.

(c) Irrespective of its size or position on the body, a tattoo will be offensive and thus unacceptable 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). A tattoo should only be considered to have such an effect if, having regard to all the circumstances, it can be viewed as offensive by an objective standard.

(d) Any tattoo which does not meet one or more of the criteria above but which, in the opinion of the individual's Commanding Officer or a Recruiting Officer, is nevertheless, by virtue of its size, position or nature, unacceptable and detrimental to the Service, for example, a message or inappropriate image on the hand which would be seen when saluting.

(e) In the specific case of tattooed eyebrows, these are permitted provided that in the opinion of the Commanding Officer or Recruiting Officer they appear as two discrete eyebrows and are deemed suitably realistic and inoffensive.

(f) A flesh scar or small flesh tunnel may be possible to be covered in order to allow the healing process to occur, however any scar or flesh tunnel which does not heal will need to be considered in accordance with the conditions above and may ultimately lead to Administrative Discharge.

(3) Serving personnel who presently have tattoos, scars or a flesh tunnel which contravene the regulations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the chain of command who will make a judgement based on when the item was acquired and under what circumstances. Personnel acquiring tattoos, scars and flesh tattoos that contravene the Service policy set out at [Para 3817.g](#) sub para (2) will be invited to have their tattoos removed at their own expense or for a flesh tunnel to 'close'. Acquisition of tattoos, scar or flesh tunnels in contravention of the regulations and policy will result in disciplinary action and subsequent failure to remove them is most likely to result in administrative discharge after an appropriate period on warning.

(4) Further guidance and visual reference for permitted tattoos in the Service can be found at [Annex 38B](#).

3818. Male Personnel

a. **Hair.** Hair shall be neatly groomed; taper trimmed at the back, sides and above the ears to blend with the hairstyle. On the top of the head it shall be no more than 15 cm in length and sufficiently short at the front and sides that when the hair is groomed, and headdress removed, no hair shall touch the ears or fall below the top of the eyebrows. It shall be kept above the shirt collar. Cultural and religious exceptions are described at [Para 3826](#) and [Para 3827](#).

b. Hair shall be no greater than 4 cm in bulk at the top of the head, with the bulk decreasing gradually from the top and blending with the taper-trimmed back and sides. Bulk is defined as the distance that the mass of hair protrudes from the scalp when groomed, as distinct from the length of the hair. Styling shall not present an exaggerated or non-conformist appearance, nor shall it interfere with the proper wearing of headdress. Excessively short hair can detract from a smart and well-groomed appearance; it may be permitted, however, at the discretion of the Commanding Officer. Unnatural hair colours (ie. those colours that are not within the colour range of the individual's natural hair colour) are not permitted.

- c. **Sideburns.** Sideburns shall not extend below the ear lobe, shall be of even width, and shall be taper trimmed and squared off to conform to the overall hair style. Sideburns for RM Personnel shall not extend below halfway down the ear.
- d. **Beards and Moustaches.** The Commanding Officer may permit all Royal Navy (except RM) male personnel to request to wear full set beards. RM male personnel may wear moustaches at their discretion. Beards and moustaches shall be kept neatly trimmed especially, in the case of beards, at the lower neck and cheekbones. It is within the subjective judgement of the Command (and delegated representatives, namely the Executive Dept and all personnel in positions of authority (LH/LCpl and above)) to define an acceptable appearance of a beard or moustache, as much depends on the features of the individual. As a guide, however, the following characteristics are not acceptable:
- (1) **'Designer Stubble'.** Designer stubble is assessed as any beard length shorter than Grade 1 (2.5mm).
 - (2) **Beards of Uneven Growth (eg. 'scrappy').** The definition of 'scrappy' remains within the subjective judgement of the Command (and delegated representatives, namely the Executive Dept and all personnel in positions of authority (LH/LCpl and above)).
 - (3) **Extended or 'hipster' Beards or 'handlebar' Moustaches.** Extended or 'hipster' beards or 'handlebar'/extended moustaches are not appropriate. The maximum acceptable length of a beard is to be Grade 8 (25.5mm).
 - (4) **Beards Taking Excessive Time to Grow.** The definition of an 'excessive amount of time to grow' remains within the subjective judgement of the Command (and delegated representatives, namely the Executive Dept and all personnel in positions of authority (LH/LCpl and above)). The advised maximum time for an individual to grow a sufficiently thorough beard is 2 weeks.
 - (5) **Religious or Faith Reasons.** Where facial hair is grown as a tenet of a faith by a genuine adherence to that faith, it may be grown in excess of the limit described above at [sub para \(3\)](#). Such facial hair may require to be trimmed, however, or be tied up or removed if it undermines the health and safety of the wearer or others in the unit, or if it undermines the operational effectiveness of the unit. Any faith or practice must be clearly established by an individual and not simply deemed as having been undertaken in order to defy the regulations contained within this BR.
- e. When the safety of an individual might be jeopardised by his beard or moustache, such as in the wearing of oxygen or gas masks, it shall be modified in such a fashion as to accommodate the type of equipment to be worn.

(1) **CBRN Threat.** The Commanding Officer retains the authority to determine the requirement for an individual to shave, based on the Operational requirement at that time. Once ARTS testing has been completed, COs **ARE** to order the shaving of beards when the CBRN threat level is MEDIUM or higher. Other occasions, such as Operational Sea Training and/or similar exercises, in which the CBRN threat is LOW will not warrant the requirement to shave. If the individual refuses to modify their facial hair (or headdress) to the extent necessary to maintain their own safety and Operational Capability, then they may be disciplined. Should they continue to refuse, commanders should consider not deploying that individual into theatre or removing them from theatre if already deployed. Disciplinary action and non-deployment are in extremis measures that should be adopted incrementally.

(2) **Royal Naval Air Stations.** In accordance with the instructions of the Chief Fire Officer, all Naval Aircraft Handlers employed at RNAS fire stations, or involved with fire-fighting training at the RNSFDO, are to be clean shaven.

f. Beards or moustaches shall be shaved off if the conditions of [Para 3818](#) sub para e cannot be met.

g. In addition to the guidance at [Para 3818](#) sub para e, the Command may order individuals to shave off beards deemed inappropriate for a Service Parade of any nature.

h. Beards should be of a length that does not extend beyond the top part of the collar front of a service shirt. More specifically, if the RN serviceman was wearing a shirt and tie, the beard would not obscure the knot of the tie. The breadth of the beard should not exceed the maximum width of the line between the RN serviceman's ears.

3819. Female Personnel

a. **Hair.** Hair shall be kept neatly groomed and shall not extend below the lower edge of the shirt collar. Long hair should be worn up and properly secured in a neat and tidy fashion using grips, hairpins, nets and conservative scrunchies (in both size and colour) where appropriate. Varying styles of hair, straight or curled, are permitted within these limits but unnatural hair colours (ie. those colours that are not within the colour range of the individual's natural hair colour) and exaggerated styles, including those with excessive fullness, shortness or extreme height, are not permitted. In no case shall the bulk or length of the hair detract from a smart and well-groomed appearance or preclude the proper wearing of naval headdress. Hair ornaments (including combs and Alice bands) shall not be worn. Every effort shall be made to ensure that grips, hairpins, scrunchies and nets used to secure the hair are as unobtrusive as possible and are to be as near as possible to the colour of the hair. Hairstyles shall be secured or styled back from the face; this includes corn braids/corn rows, which should be simple in design without beads or other adornments.

Female personnel, 'at sea' with hair long enough, are permitted to relax to a 'single pony-tail or single braid, secured with a non-synthetic (ie. not man-made fibre) band/ tie of natural hair colour, as part of the daily working dress. Consideration must be given to activities where there is a risk of hair entanglement (running machinery, aircraft safety and seamanship evolutions). This relaxation to policy does not override the need to meet ceremonial standards, whole ship duties or branch-specific working practices (food handling/hygiene). Cultural and religious exceptions are described at [Para 3827](#) and [Para 3828](#). Female personnel with hair loss may wear a wig which conforms to the hair rules described above and where not possible, for example during strenuous physical exercise or fire- fighting, may, at their discretion, wear a plain headscarf in a colour appropriate to the uniform being worn. When conducting fire-fighting duties, the headscarf should be of non-synthetic material (ie. not man-made fibre).

b. **Make-up.** When wearing uniform, or plain clothes on duty, make-up must be discrete. This shall preclude the use of false eyelashes, heavy eyeliner, brightly coloured eye shadow, and excessive facial make-up.

c. **Fingernails.** Fingernails are to be kept neatly trimmed and are not to be of an excessive length. No coloured nail polish (ie. clear French polish only, no nail art) is to be worn. False nails are prohibited.

3820. Glasses and Sunglasses

a. Both glasses and sunglasses shall be of conservative design and colour. Carrying cases shall not be visibly carried in or on uniform dress. Personnel who normally wear glasses may wear either conventionally framed prescription sunglasses or conservatively styled clip-on sunglasses when conditions and circumstances dictate. Sunglasses and photochromatic (reactive style) glasses are not permitted on ceremonial parades.

b. Mirrored lenses or half silver mirror are not to be worn by personnel in uniform.

3821. Wearing of Clothing Items

a. **Peaked Cap.** The cap shall be worn square on to the head with the tip of the peak in line with the eyebrows. The seam of the woven band, on which the cap badge is sewn, shall be in line with the seam inside the back of the cap. The centre of the cap badge shall be in line with the seam at the front of the cap cover.

b. **Cap Covers.** Cap Covers shall be white plastic. Officers only are permitted to wear cotton cloth cap covers in normal daily wear but shall only wear plastic cap covers on Ceremonial Parades and Reviews.

c. **Brown Leather Gloves.** Brown leather gloves are intended for wear by Officers and Warrant officers with greatcoats only. They shall not be worn on Ceremonial occasions unless specifically ordered by the Senior Officer. An Officer of the Guard, however, shall wear brown leather gloves when the occasion requires the ratings of the Guard to be wearing white gloves.

- d. **White Gloves.** White cotton gloves will be worn by ratings forming a Guard and on other ceremonial occasions when ordered and issued. An Officer will only wear white gloves when parading as the Queen's Colour Officer in a Guard of Honour or Street Lining detachment, irrespective of the time of year.
- e. **Tricorn Hat.** Tricorn hats are to be worn square on the head with the brim parallel to the ground and with no hair showing.
- f. **Seaman's Cap.** The seaman's cap is to be worn square on the head in both male and female versions. The central letter on the cap tally (including the letters HMS where present) is to be over the bridge of the nose; the bow is to be tied smartly to sit above the left ear. Chin stays, when down, are to fit flat to the face and pass just in front of the ears.
- g. **Beret.** The beret shall be worn evenly on the head, with the sweatband 2.5 cm above the eyebrows, the badge centred over the left eye, and the crown pulled downward to the right. The break of the sweatband shall be worn centred at the back of the head, with no drawstrings visible. Royal Navy personnel entitled to wear a green beret may do so in lieu of a blue one where appropriate.
- h. **Turban.** The turban and cap badge or cap tally are to be worn as detailed in [Para 3826](#) sub para c, [Para 3826](#) sub para e and [Annex 38A](#).
- i. **Jackets and Class II Jumpers.** Jackets and Class II Jumpers shall always be worn fully buttoned or zipped up. Elasticated drawstrings are to be pulled tight and cut to length.
- j. **Ties.** Ties shall be knotted neatly and shall be kept tight at the collar. The tie shall not be tucked into the shirt where a jacket or jersey is not worn. Tie pins are not permitted other than the crown pin worn by Service Police Petty Officers and a miniature Submarine Specialisation badge worn by appropriately qualified submariners. Knitted ties are not permitted on Ceremonial Parades.
- k. **Belts and Clasps.** Belts and clasps are to be service issue only, badge or shield type clasps are not permitted (Fighting arm clasps are acceptable).
- l. **Jersey.** Jerseys shall be worn with the sleeves rolled down and with flap covering any pens or pencils that might be carried in a pen pocket. When worn over a shirt with a tie the tie knot is to be plainly visible. When worn over an open necked shirt by JRs only, the shirt collar is to be worn open outside the jersey.
- m. **Skirts.** The skirt is to cover the kneecap, but shall not extend further than 5cm below the bottom of the kneecap.
- n. **Underwear.** White or skin coloured underwear, conservative in nature, is to be worn underneath white shirts, white PT shorts, and at all times when wearing tropical uniform.
- o. **Hosiery.** All female personnel wearing blue uniform skirts shall wear plain black tights or stockings. Tights and stockings are not to exceed 15 denier.

- p. **Footwear.** Footwear shall be kept clean and polished at all times. Court shoes; height of heel is not to exceed 2 3/4" or 6.5 cm and not be stiletto. Court shoes are to be worn only with skirts.
- q. **Ceremonial Greatcoats.** Ceremonial Great coats are worn when ordered between 1 Oct and 30 Apr and will be issued from HMS EXCELLENT stores when approved by SCTO. Ceremonial greatcoats are to be buttoned to the neck when worn by officers and ratings; shoulder boards are to be fully sewn to the coat.
- r. **Raincoats, Greatcoats (Non-ceremonial) and Waterproof Jackets.** Only Foul Weather Jackets, Greatcoats and, when appropriate, MTP waterproof jackets should be worn. All other legacy variants of raincoats and windproof jackets are obsolete and should not be worn. Garments need not be buttoned or zipped fully to the neck, but should, at all times, present a smart appearance. Elasticated drawstrings are to be pulled tight and cut to length. When carried, coats are to be draped over the left arm. Hoods, if fitted, are not to be deployed unless in extreme weather conditions, at the discretion of the Command.
- s. **Handbags.** Service issue handbags may be carried by female personnel but may not be carried by those fallen in as part of a formed body. Civilian handbags may be used that are of a plain black conservative design.
- t. **Handkerchiefs.** Pocket handkerchiefs may be worn with No1 uniform but must not be worn on Ceremonial Parades. Colours must be conservative and plain.
- u. **Umbrellas.** Umbrellas may not be used routinely with uniform in wet weather but may be permissible in certain VIP circumstances.
- v. **ID Card Holder Lanyards.** ID Card holder lanyards should be no wider than 15mm, predominantly dark blue in colour and of a non-garish nature. Lanyards from other organisations should not be worn unless the individual is serving as a member of that organisation.
- w. **Cummerbunds.** Ships' cummerbunds may be worn in Red Sea Rig or in lieu of black waistcoats when wearing 2B Mess Undress, at the discretion of the Command.
- x. **Baseball Caps.** Baseball caps may be worn at the Commanding Officer's discretion (at sea only).
- y. **Backpacks/Rucksacks.** Backpacks/rucksacks should be predominantly black or dark blue and free from distinctive insignia other than the RN logo.
- z. **Name Badges.** The approved RN design name badge shall be worn on the bottom half of the tie in No3A uniform and over the left breast pocket on No 3B uniforms. Name tapes are provided over the left breast pocket on No 4 (AWD) and No 4 (RNPCS) uniforms. Name badges will not routinely be worn on No 1 uniform, however Commands may locally authorise the wearing if they aid identification (eg. at Receptions, Meet the Public days etc).

aa. **Poppies.** Poppies may be worn to commemorate the National period of Remembrance from the time they become available until the day after Remembrance (Armistice) Day. Only official Royal British Legion poppies are to be worn in uniform. Poppies are not worn by those on parade at the National Cenotaph Parade in London. Poppies are to be worn:

- (1) Officers and all ranks – with greatcoats on the left lapel if lapel down or pinned to the left breast if lapel is buttoned up.
- (2) Officers, WO and SRs – on the left lapel buttonhole of No1 uniform.
- (3) Officers and all ranks – Secured to the left breast of the blue wool jersey.
- (4) Officers and all ranks – secured to the left breast pocket of short sleeve shirts or the tie when wearing long sleeve shirts, when in No3s.
- (5) Officers and all ranks – secured to the left breast of RNPCS shirts at the outboard end and slightly above the name tape.
- (6) Junior Ratings – all ratings below Petty officer dressed as seamen, all Royal Marines and QARRNS are to wear the poppy on the left side of the cap or hat, and with berets beneath the beret badge.

ab. **Cufflinks.** No ½ uniforms - Plain silver, gold, ship's own or Service related (conservative). No 3s - Plain silver, gold, ship's own or Service related (conservative).

3822. QARNNS, RNR, RMR and SCC/CCF(RN) Officers and Ratings/Other Ranks

Apart from the differences in rank/rate and distinguishing insignia detailed in Chapter 39 and Chapter 40, Reserve and Cadet personnel should wear the same uniform as regular Service personnel.

3823. Wearing of MTP in the Naval Service

a. Royal Navy personnel should wear Royal Naval uniform unless there are compelling environmental reasons to wear MTP. In this context, General Duty Rig (No 3s) or Personal Clothing System/Action Working Dress (No 4s) is the normal working rig for RN personnel whilst No 3A/3C 'Half Lovats' or No 3B Training Rig (MTP) is appropriate for RM personnel.

b. **RN Personnel.** The operational/working rig for RN personnel is to be No3s or PCS (No4s) as directed locally, supplemented as required by service overalls/coveralls. Exceptionally, MTP may be drawn/task issued for wear as follows:

- (1) Operations ashore where the operational commander judges:
 - (a) MTP is essential.
 - (b) When the distinction of Naval uniform represents an increased risk to the individual.

(c) In extremely hot climatic conditions (the definition of which is a matter of judgement for the Command but, as a guide, temperatures in excess of 29°C would be assessed as appropriate).

(2) Operational Training, Exercises and Adventurous training in the land environment.

c. **RM Personnel.** No 4 dress for RMs is MTP and the nature and diversity of tasks conducted in operational units and CTCRM make it difficult to define precisely when activities should be completed whilst wearing No 3A/3C 'Half Lovats'. In principle, the dress for operational, training and manual work for RM personnel is to be MTP. MTP may also be worn by members of the Joint Force Headquarters held at Extremely High Readiness. Other than in the circumstances above, the working dress for RM is to be No 3A/3C 'Half Lovats'.

d. Changes to this policy should be submitted in accordance with Para 3708 of this publication for consideration by the Naval Service Clothing Committee.

e. The policy for wearing MTP for all Royal Navy personnel is as follows; it does not cover operational theatres where local Command policy applies:

(1) Combat jackets are to be worn tucked inside the combat trousers (exceptionally, if environmental conditions make it necessary COs have discretion to allow the jacket to be worn outside the combat trousers).

(2) Belts (blue) issued with OPTAG kit are to be worn with the trousers.

(3) Sleeves are to be rolled up to just above the elbow.

(4) Service issued brown T shirts may be worn under the combat jacket.

(5) Rank/Rate slides (Multi Terrain Pattern) are to be worn on the front of the combat jacket and windproof smock.

(6) A 'ROYAL NAVY' flash is to be worn on both sleeves of the combat jacket and smock; the flash is to be attached centrally with the upper edge 7mm below the shoulder seams.

(7) Tactical Recognition Flashes (TRF) may be worn as directed by Force Commanders.

(8) If scaled for and held by the individual the windproof smock may be worn in inclement weather. No belt is to be worn over the smock.

(9) When personnel are engaged on tasks that entail high levels of physical activity, particularly at higher temperatures, local Commanders have discretion to allow the jacket to be worn un-tucked; similarly, local Commanders may choose to allow the T shirt to be worn without the combat jacket.

**Notes:**

1. On all occasions of wearing MTP, WO1s RN are to wear the Service issued brown wrist strap.

2. Royal Navy Police (RNP). Dependent upon the theatre of operations, RNP personnel are authorised to wear the Military Police (MP) badge (see Fig 39E-15c) on the right sleeve only and it is to be worn in addition to the black on green "Royal Navy Police" shoulder flashes (see Fig 39E-15d) and Para 3923).

3. On all occasions of wearing MTP, Masters at Arms wear a badge comprising laurel leaves supporting a crown as a brassard on their right wrist with brown wrist strap (in place of the white wrist strap).

3824. Wearing of Uniform by Former Members of Naval Service

This article does not apply to Officers of Flag Rank, nor retired Officers and ratings subsequently employed on duties within the Maritime Reserves. Retired Officers and ratings shall not normally wear uniform once they have left the Service. Exceptionally, retired Officers and ratings may wear uniform at a Remembrance Day Service if specifically requested to do so and if there is no other Naval Service representation. Any retired Officer or rating who does find themselves required to wear uniform is to uphold the values and standards expected of the Naval Service in the public eye.

SECTION 2 - CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

3825. Religious Sensitivity

a. The different cultural patterns of various religious groups should be respected, especially during moments of religious expression. In assessing attitudes to accommodating such differences, the Royal Navy distinguishes between the tenets of devout faith, which shall be allowed where operationally practicable, and the cultural and social customs of a particular group, which may be accommodated where disciplinary prudence permits. In cases where uncertainty remains, advice should be sought from the Diversity and Inclusion Policy Staff at Navy Command HQ.

b. Religious items or accessories (eg. a Christian Cross) which are not visible or otherwise apparent are unregulated and may be worn provided they do not interfere with the proper wear and use of uniform items, accoutrements or equipment, nor place at risk the safety and health of the individual.

3826. Wearing of Headdress

a. The wearing of headdress on different occasions reflects a combination of the cultural etiquette of British society, Naval custom and religious practices. As a guideline, the norms of formal etiquette should be followed. Further comments are given in the paragraphs that follow. These highlight the differences between those whose customs require removing the head-dress as a sign of respect, especially in religious circumstances (the European Christian norm); and those who cover the head as a sign of religious respect (Jews and others under varying circumstances). In addition:

(1) A male member of the Jewish faith may wear a dark, plain-pattern yarmulke whenever he removes other headdress.

(2) Special details for adherents of the Sikh religion are contained in [Para 3826](#).

b. **Naval and Military Funerals.** Headdress is to be removed by the bearer party (excluding those participating in a Jewish service) while the casket is being carried.

c. **Summary Trial.** The headdress of an accused member shall be removed prior to a summary trial. Prior to the administration of oaths, all members present shall be ordered to remove headdress. On completion of the administration of oaths, members present, other than the accused, shall be ordered to replace headdress.

d. **Court Martial.** Headdress shall be worn or removed in accordance with the directions of the Judge Advocate who determines the etiquette of the court.

- e. **Consecrated Buildings.** All Naval Service personnel shall observe the appropriate religious customs with regard to the wearing of headdress in a consecrated building. The one exception is that headdress shall be worn when on duty as a member of a vigil during the lying in state of a deceased dignitary or as a member of a colour party when depositing or receiving Colours.
- f. **Female Officers and Ratings.** Female officers and ratings are to wear their headdress at all times when in a consecrated building.
- g. **Parades.** Headdress shall be removed, when so ordered, by all personnel on parade, except for females, musicians, members of colour parties and those who are adherents of the Sikh religion. A male member of the Jewish faith who wishes to wear a yarmulke when other headdress is removed (see [Para 3825.a sub para \(1\)](#)), may be authorised to retain normal headdress on parade when others remove theirs to avoid drill complications.

3827. Sikhs

- a. Royal Navy personnel who are adherents to the Sikh Religion (Keshadharis) shall wear standard pattern uniforms and adhere to standard Service clothing policy and instructions with the following exceptions:
- (1) **Hair.** The hair and beard may remain uncut, provided that the operational mission and safety are not jeopardised when it is required that individuals wear occupational and operational equipment such as a respirator, oxygen mask, combat/vehicle/flying helmet, hardhat, diving mask etc. When a hazard clearly exists, the hair and/or beard shall be modified to the degree necessary for wearing the required equipment, in order to meet safety requirements.
- (2) **Religious Symbols.** In addition to uncut hair, four other symbolic requirements of the Sikh religion are authorised for wear by Royal Navy Service personnel with Numbers 1, 2 and 3 uniform dresses. Should conflict arise between the requirement to wear safety or operational items of clothing and equipment and these religious symbols, the manner and location of wearing these symbols shall be adjusted. Commanding Officers retain the right to order the manner of this adjustment as necessary to meet valid safety and operational requirements.
- (3) **Turban.** A turban may be worn by male members with Numbers 1, 2 and 3 uniform dresses. Turbans may also be worn with Action Working Dress and occupational working dress, subject to the safety and operational considerations noted in [Para 3826.a sub para \(1\)](#), above. When engaged in combat operations, operational training or when serving with peacekeeping or multinational contingents, adherents of the Sikh religion shall, when deemed essential, cover their head with a patka or other customary clothing items ([Para 3821](#)), over which they shall wear the headdress (including combat helmets) and other items of Service equipment as ordered by the Commanding Officer.
- b. Except as otherwise provided by [Para 3825](#), the turban worn by male personnel and the authorised headdress worn by female personnel shall not be removed while

wearing uniform. Similarly, when on duty wearing plain clothing, a civilian turban and an appropriate civilian woman's head covering shall not be removed.

c. The colour of turbans worn by male members shall be as follows:

(1) **Navy.** In blue uniform navy blue with white headband, and white with Navy headband in tropical uniform.

(2) **Royal Marines.** Olive Drab, Commando Green or white to conform with respective Dress.

d. Adherents to the Sikh religion may, subject to the provisions of [Para 3826](#), observe the following five symbolic requirements:

(1) **Kesh.** Leave the hair on the head, face and body uncut.

(2) **Kanga.** Wear a comb.

(3) **Kara.** Wear an iron bracelet.

(4) **Kirpan.** Wear a symbolic dagger with an overall length (including the handle and sheath) not exceeding 23 centimetres (9 inches).

(5) **Kaccha.** Wear special design knee length underpants.

e. **Method of Wear.** The following instructions are not intended to detail the method of styling and wearing hair on the head, wearing the comb or winding the turban. Instead, they provide sufficient direction to ensure uniformity of dress amongst Sikh personnel. Accordingly, symbols and associated badges shall be worn as follows:

(1) **Turban.** The turban is to be worn in a low, Sikh conventional manner, with the final winding right over left on the forehead.

(2) **Cap Badge.** The cap badge is to be worn centred on the front of the turban. The badge shall be locally modified to provide a brooch fastener to secure it to the cloth.

(3) **Cap Tally.** The cap tally is to be worn diagonally across the front of the turban from top right to bottom left, 2 cm up from the bottom of the turban.

(4) **Patka.** A traditional Sikh cloth head-covering worn when a turban is not suitable, such as under combat, flying or diving helmets, or during sports or strenuous physical activity.

- (5) **Kesh (hair).** Male personnel shall wear their uncut hair tied in a knot at the crown of the head, and shall secure the hair of the beard under the chin, presenting a close-to-face, groomed appearance. Female personnel shall wear their uncut hair styled in a bun at the rear of the head to facilitate the proper wearing of standard service headdress.
- (6) **Kanga (comb).** The kanga is to be worn concealed in the hair.
- (7) **Kara (bracelet).** The kara is to be worn on the right wrist.
- (8) **Kirpan (dagger).** The kirpan shall remain sheathed at all times, except for religious occasions and for cleaning purposes. The sheathed kirpan worn under the outer shirt or jacket shall be supported by a black cloth sling, slung from the right shoulder to the left side. Should the kirpan interfere with the wearing of uniform accoutrements or equipment, it may be slung from the left shoulder and worn on the right side.

3828. Rastafarians

a. Royal Navy personnel who are adherents to the Rastafarian faith shall wear standard pattern uniforms and adhere to standard Service clothing policy and instructions, with the following exceptions:

(1) **Hair.** The hair and beard may remain uncut, provided that the operational mission and safety are not jeopardised when it is required that individuals wear occupational and operational equipment such as a respirator, oxygen mask, combat/vehicle/flying helmet, hardhat, diving mask etc. When a hazard clearly exists, the hair and/or beard shall be modified to the degree necessary for wearing the required equipment, in order to meet the safety requirement. In addition:

(a) Rastafarian hair should not be of an exaggerated nature and may be worn in Cornrows or short plaits pulled away from the face and ear.

(b) Male Rastafarian hair is to follow the same general rules for other Service personnel in that it is to be neatly groomed and shall not extend below the lower edge of the shirt collar. If longer than collar length, hair should be worn up and properly secured in a neat and tidy fashion using grips, hairpins and nets where appropriate, as per [Para 3819](#) sub para a while on duty and able to be worn with all types of military headdress in such a way that it is compatible with the image of the Royal Navy.

(c) Female Rastafarian hair is to follow the same rules for other female personnel, as per [Para 3819](#) sub-para a, while on duty and able to be worn with all types of military headdress in such a way that is compatible with the image of the Royal Navy.

(d) If long hair cannot be worn pulled back from the face and ear and in a secure bun, it is to be worn in a black, brown or blonde (commensurate with the individual's hair colour) elasticated net compatible with the image of the Royal Navy, allowing headdress to be worn.

(e) When transitioning to dreadlocks a notification to Command must be raised to be in contravention of [Para 3827](#) until the hair can conform with regulations. This is for persons with hair not already in dreadlocks but transitioning to dreadlocks, and also to be used for those with different types of hair transitioning to dreadlocks.

(f) Whilst on board and when required to carry out firefighting duties, long hair may be worn in a ponytail to allow for the wearing of firefighting equipment as is practiced at ISSC and BSSC.

(2) **Turbans.** There are different sects of the Rastafarian faith, eg. the Nyahbinghi and the Bobo Shanti. Bobo Shanti Rastafarians wear turbans. The wearing of the turban falls in line with the tenets of the Rastafarian faith and allows all Rastafarians the ability to fully practise their beliefs. The cloth is available and there is a stores number covering the correct colours in line with the Naval colours required for uniform (see [Annex 38A](#) Uniform Diagrams).

3829. Muslim Women

Muslim women may wear uniform trousers, rather than a skirt and may wear a hijab except when operational or health and safety considerations dictate otherwise. Long sleeve shirts can be worn with all forms of Service dress. Tracksuit bottoms may be worn for sport. All Royal Navy personnel are required to achieve a basic swimming standard as part of their training. Although every effort will be made to ensure that these tests take place in an all female environment, it should be stressed to female Muslim personnel that this may not always be possible.

3829. Further Advice

Requests for further advice on Cultural and Religious differences with regard to uniform and appearance are to be directed to NAVY NPS-DandI SO2A or SO2B at Navy Command HQ, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth.

ANNEX 38A

EXPLANATORY DIAGRAMS

Figure 38A-1. Male Haircut



Taper trim haircut - front view



Taper trim haircut - rear view



Taper trim haircut conventional

Figure 38A-2. Female Haircut



Short hair style



Curled hair-style



Straight hair-style with bun



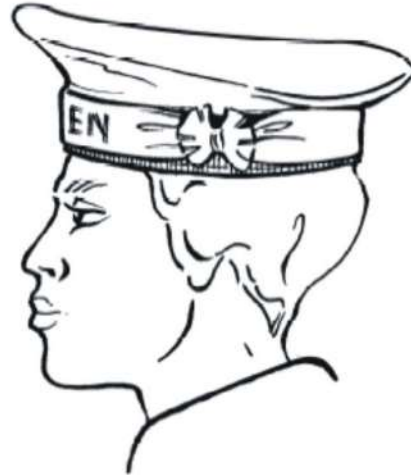
One stud ear ring may be worn centred in each earlobe

Examples - Hair shall be kept neatly groomed and shall not extend below the lower edge of the shirt collar

Figure 38A-3. Headdress



Tricorne



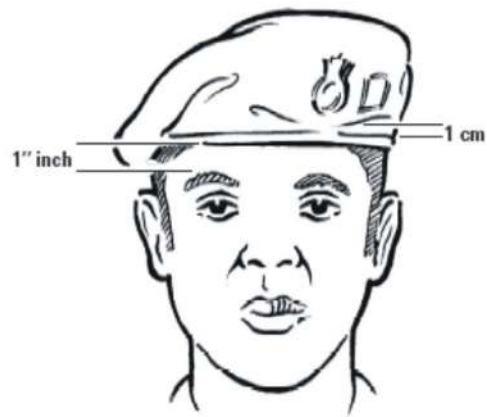
Cap



Cap



Cap



Beret

Figure 38A-4. Sikh Symbology (Headdress)



Figure 38A-5. Hijab RN



SIKH SYMBOLOGY

Figure 38A-6. Kanga (comb)



Figure 38A-7. Kara (bracket)



Figure 38A-8. Kirpan (dagger)



ANNEX 38B**VISUAL REFERENCE GUIDES FOR TATTOOS IN THE NAVAL SERVICE**

- 1.** The series of images below provide guidance towards that which is deemed acceptable and that which is not. In each case a simple 'APPROVED' or 'NOT APPROVED' label has been attached.
- 2.** It will become quickly apparent that providing the tattoo meets the two key criteria of not being visible above the shirt collar and not being visible forward of a vertical 'ear to collar bone line' (this essentially is the definition of 'a front facing passport photo') then it will be APPROVED in terms of the positioning of the tattoo.
- 3.** The remaining criteria will be determined by the messaging or any political or religious implications which the image denotes. Anything offensive, or which causes prejudice against any protected characteristic, will be deemed inappropriate.
- 4.** Although the guidance in this Annex and that at [Para 3817](#).sub para g (2) attempt to provide a complete set of principles, there is always the possibility that a tattoo or piece of body art will fall outside these guidelines. The immediate action drill for any command who is unsure as to how to assess a particular case should contact NCXT (NAVY NPS-EXEC SO1 or NAVY NPS-EXEC FXO) with photographic evidence for assistance.

5. Visual Reference Guides for Neck Tattoos

Figure 38B-5a.
Not Approved.

Tattoo above shirt collar line



Figure 38B-5b.
Not Approved.

Tattoo above shirt collar line



Figure 38B-5c.
Approved.

Tattoo below shirt collar line



Figure 38B-5d.
Not Approved.

Tattoo forward of 'ear to collar bone line'.



Figure 38B-5e.
Not Approved.

Tattoo forward of 'ear to collar bone line'.



Figure 38B-5f.
Approved.

Tattoo behind ear.



Figure 38B-5g.
Approved.

Tattoo not visible in a front facing passport photograph.



Figure 38B-5h.
Approved.

Tattoo not visible in a front facing passport photograph.



Figure 38B-5i.
Approved.

Nothing visible in a front facing passport photograph.



**Figure 38B-5j.
Left Profile.
Appears to conform to 'ear to collar bone' rule.**



**Figure 38B-5k.
Front Profile.
Appears to conform to 'ear to collar bone' rule.**



**Figure 38B-5l.
Right Profile.
Appears to conform to 'ear to collar bone' rule.**



**Figure 38B-5m.
Not Approved.
Figs 38B-5j and 38B-5l look acceptable until a passport photograph is viewed.**



**Figure 38B-5n.
Approved.
Although large, this tattoo conforms to the 'ear to collar bone' rule.**



**Figure 38B-5o.
Approved.
Tattoo not visible in a front facing passport photograph.**



**Figure 38B-5p.
Not Approved.**

Although not excessive, this tattoo can be seen in a front facing passport photograph.



6. Visual Reference Guide for Tattoos Illustrating Messages or Possible Religious Persecution.

**Figure 38B-6a.
Approved.**

The message in these tattoos are not of significant detriment.



**Figure 38B-6b.
Approved.
See below.**



Question: Is a religious symbol on the hand an issue? From an objective viewpoint, a member of the NS displaying this could appear to conflict with guidance as it refers to or depicts an image relating to a protected characteristic etc.

Answer: This is a sensible enquiry but it actually displays an understandable misunderstanding. The rules are related to religious discrimination or harassment, therefore if there was text stating "destroy the" and a religious symbol, that would be inflammatory. Having a religious symbol alone is not. [Figure 38B-6b](#) illustrates a pentagram associated with Paganism which is acceptable.

7. Visual Reference Guide for Hand Tattoos

Figure 38B-7a.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7b.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7c.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7d.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7e.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7f.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7g.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7h.
Approved.



Figure 38B-7i.
Initially Not Approved.
See [Note](#).



Note. Figure 38B-7i illustrates a tattoo that is detrimental to the NS if placed on the saluting hand (RM).