



Her Majesty's Naval Service Eligibility and Guidance Notes

INTRODUCTION

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

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

Age

The broad minimum and maximum ages for service are detailed below, however, there may be age restrictions applied to specific branches or jobs i.e. Officer Entry, Engineering and Diver, please review the literature associated with your interest or consult with your Careers Adviser.

| | Age on Application | Age on Entry | Upper age Limit |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Royal Navy | 15 years, 9 months | 16 | 37 (Higher with previous service) |
| Royal Marines | 15 years, 9 months | 16 | 33 (Higher with previous service) |
| Reserve Forces | 15 years , 9 months | 16 | Dependent on Service and Specialisation |

Restrictions by Gender

The majority of careers, jobs, trades or branches within the Naval Service are open to both males and females. However, Royal Marines are NOT open to females, although females from other branches may be attached to such units

Height and Weight

Royal Navy and Royal Marines: The minimum height is 151.5cm. The minimum weight requirement for Royal Marines is 65kg. For the Royal Navy candidates they should be within the healthy range for Body Mass Index (BMI)

Tattoos

Tattoos that are offensive, obscene or excessive in size or number will be a bar to entry or re-entry. Tattoos that are visible on the head, neck and hand when in parade uniform are a bar to entry. If you have any you will be asked to complete a form describing your tattoos. They will be seen during your medical examination.

Body piercing

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

Nationality

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

You must be a British, Commonwealth, British Protected Citizen or an Irish National OR hold Dual nationality with one of the fore-mentioned.

Residency

For entry into the Naval Service, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be a British, Commonwealth, British Protected Citizen or an Irish National OR hold Dual nationality with one of the fore-mentioned.
- The Naval Service welcomes applications from British Nationals wherever they are, and we recognise the valuable experience which people will have gained from living, studying and working overseas. Whilst, for security purposes, our usual residency requirement is that you should have been living in the United Kingdom for 5 years immediately prior to your application to join us, we also welcome applications from people who have spent extended periods abroad studying, on "gap years" or as a result of either themselves or their parents being employed abroad. Your CA will be able to advise you on the detail but it may affect the career or job you are applying for.

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

Medical Standards

Initial Medical and Physical Criteria

- The Naval Service requires anyone who enters to be medically fit to serve worldwide.
- New entrants to the Armed Forces undergo intensive training, which is both physically and mentally demanding. The Armed Forces medical authorities have to be aware of your medical history and of any conditions that may affect your performance as a serviceman or servicewoman. Applicants who do not meet the required medical standards may be rejected.
- Your medical history is confidential and will not be given to anyone not authorised to hold this information.

The initial medical examination

- Your examination will take place locally and be arranged by your AFCO. Further medical examinations for some branches may be conducted later in the selection process and your CA will be able to offer advice regarding this requirement.

Basic medical requirements:

Medical conditions that preclude entry:

- The conditions in the table below make a person permanently unsuitable, except where specifically time limited, for entry into the Naval Service.
- Note: This table is for general guidance only. Many conditions that are compatible with civilian employment and sport may be considered incompatible with military service. If you have a recurrent medical condition that is not mentioned below, or if you are unclear about the impact of your medical history, you should seek further advice from your CA.
- Please note that Careers Advisers and their office staff are not medically qualified and that all final decisions regarding medical suitability for entry are only made by appropriately appointed medical staff.

| | |
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| Eye disorders | Eye disease, e.g. glaucoma, keratoconus, retinitis pigmentosa. Double vision. Visual field defects. Corneal grafts or recurrent corneal ulcers. Cataract or cataract surgery. Detached retina. Vision only in one eye. Squint surgery in the previous six months. For those that have undergone laser eye surgery, they must be over the age of 22 on application and months must have elapsed post procedure. |
| Ear, nose and throat disorders | Ongoing ear, nose, throat or sinus disease. Deafness. Presence of grommets. Current perforated eardrum. Certain surgical procedures. |
| Heart and cardiovascular disorders | Heart disease. Certain congenital heart conditions e.g. repair of tetralogy of fallot, coarctation of the aorta. Certain heart valve abnormalities. High blood pressure. Raynaud's disease. |
| Respiratory disorders | Asthma, wheeze or asthma symptoms or treatment within the past four years. Lung disease including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, bronchiectasis, cystic fibrosis. Active tuberculosis. |
| Abdominal and digestive disorders, including diet | Ongoing abdominal, digestive or liver disease. Crohn's disease. Ulcerative colitis. Loss of spleen (splenectomy). Chronic hepatitis. Untreated hernia. Requirement for specific dietary restriction. |
| Neurological disorders | Ongoing nervous system disease. Epilepsy or more than one seizure/fit after the age of five (although benign Rolandic epilepsy is acceptable). Single seizure/fit within the last ten years. Multiple sclerosis. Complications following head injury. Hydrocephalus (with or without shunt). Severe or recurrent headache (including migraine). |
| Endocrine disorders | Diabetes. Adrenal disorders. Pituitary disorders. Certain thyroid diseases. |
| Skin disorders | Chronic eczema or dermatitis. Psoriasis. Severe acne. |
| Female reproductive disorders | Chronic breast pain. Chronic pelvic pain or inflammatory disease. Endometriosis. |
| Male reproductive disorders | Current cancer of the testicle or prostate gland. Chronic scrotal pain. |

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| Musculoskeletal disorders | Any abnormality that interferes with the ability to undertake military training. Spinal abnormalities. Certain spinal operations. Recurrent back pain or sciatica. Joint disease, pain or limitation of joint movement. Hypermobility (laxity) of the joints. Bone or joint operations within the last 12 months. Anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction. Recurrent joint dislocations. Severe deformity following fractures. Loss of a limb. Foot abnormalities (e.g. club foot or hammer toe). Complete loss of either big toe. Complete loss of either thumb. Arthritis and similar conditions. Fractures within the last 12 months, except fractures of the digits / clavicles. |
| Blood disorders | Certain blood diseases, such as G6PDD, sickle cell disease, congenital spherocytosis, haemoglobinopathy. Any bleeding disorder or abnormality of blood clotting. |
| Infections | Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Carriers of hepatitis viruses. |
| Malignancy (cancer) | Most cancers are considered to place an applicant below the medical entry standard. Exceptions: some cancers in childhood or early adult life that have been successfully treated and are regarded as cured. |
| Allergic disorders | Severe allergic reactions and/or anaphylaxis. A need to carry adrenaline injections (EPIPEN, etc). Nut and peanut allergy. Egg allergy. Latex allergy. Vaccine allergy (including tetanus allergy). Gluten sensitivity (Coeliac disease). |
| Conditions resulting from exposure to extremes of temperature | Heat illness. Frostbite and non-freezing cold injury. |
| Psychiatric disorders | Ongoing psychiatric illness. Psychosis. Schizophrenia. Obsessive-compulsive disorder. Autism. Personality disorder. More than one episode of deliberate self-harm of any type. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Alcohol, drug or substance dependence. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) unless free of symptoms and not requiring treatment for at least three years. Anorexia and bulimia. |
| Kidney disorders | Ongoing kidney disease. Polycystic kidney disease and kidney stones. Donation of kidney in the past six months. |
| Other | Transplanted organs. |

Eye Sight

The minimum standards for both uncorrected and corrected vision are determined by service medical staff and are dependent on the proposed employment and branch/trade group. Spectacle or contact lens correction must not be greater than -6 dioptres or +6 dioptres in any meridian. Impaired colour perception (colour blindness) is not a bar to service, but may limit your career choices. You will need to have a copy with you of any acuity prescription from your optician when you go for your medical examination.

Temporary conditions

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

- Pregnancy
- Waiting list for an operation
- Temporary illness or injury

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

Contact with the Police or a Prosecuting Agency

Criminal Convictions

If you have been convicted of an offence then you may still be able to join the Service. All applicants must declare any unspent any previous unspent convictions as part of the application process. Guidance can be found on [MoD Form 493 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#). This form explains whether you have to give the details of any convictions. You may be prevented from entering or re-entering the Armed Forces if you have committed certain offences or have undergone certain types of sentence. Additionally having an 'unspent' conviction does not necessarily mean that you will be unable to join the Service. The Armed Forces Careers Office Staff will be able to help to clarify your particular situation.

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

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 – Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Check navy

For those applying for the Medical or Dental Branch of the Service there is a statutory requirement for undergo suitability checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. These checks include the disclosure of your criminal record. If appropriate, a Suitability Certificate will be issued. Your Armed Forces Careers Office will advise you when and how this certificate is to be obtained.

Drug and Substance Misuse

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

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

Financial commitments – Debt and Bankruptcy

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

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

Academic Requirements

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

For direct graduate entry as an officer, you will need a degree or equivalent, at least [180 UCAS points](#) and 5 GCSEs (A*-C), or Scottish Standard grades or equivalent which must include English and Mathematics. If you're still unsure about whether you meet the minimum qualifications, contact your local Armed Forces Careers Office.

Fitness Standards

Royal Navy

All members of the Armed Forces Must are required to be physically fit to a standard which enables them to perform their duties effectively in the most demanding of environments. Accordingly, if you are considering a career in the Royal Navy, you should be aware of the Fitness Standards expected for the Pre-Joining Fitness Test and during the first weeks of training. As part of the application process, you will be required to complete a 2.4km run on a treadmill at a local fitness centre. The maximum time in which you must complete the run are determined by your age and gender and range from 11 minutes 13 seconds to 15 minutes and nine seconds.

| AGE | Royal Navy Pre Joining Fitness Test | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| | MALE | FEMALE |
| 15 – 24 | 11 min 13 secs | 13 min 15 secs |
| 25 – 29 | 11 min 38 secs | 13 min 50 secs |
| 30 – 34 | 12 min 08 secs | 14 min 28 secs |
| 35 – 39 | 12 min 34 secs | 15 min 09 secs |

Diver.

For applicants to the Diving Branch the time required to pass is 10 minutes 30 seconds

Royal Marines

For applicants to the Royal Marines the pre-joining fitness test consists two 2.4km (1.5 mile) runs on a running machine set at a 2% incline and the time you needed to pass is 12 minutes 30 seconds for the first run and 10 minutes for the second.

For information and guidance can be found at the [Get fit to join](#) section on this website.