

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service

Trainee Firefighters - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I have long hair - will I need to have it cut if I were selected as a Trainee Firefighter?

It is not compulsory but to comply with Health and Safety requirements, long hair has to be worn above the collar and held in place by secure means e.g. hairnet. It is very important that the wearing of a helmet and breathing apparatus is not impeded.

Q. Are beards, goatees or moustaches allowed?

Only where they will not impede the wearing of breathing apparatus.

Q. I have had body-piercing will I be able to wear jewellery whilst on duty?

We would discourage the wearing of exposed jewellery due to Health and Safety reasons.

Q. Is there a minimum height restriction?

No.

Q. Is there a minimum age restriction?

Although you can apply at the age of 17 years and 6 months you have to be at least 18 years of age to join.

Q. Do men and women wear the same design Firefighter uniform?

All uniforms are made to the same design although necessary considerations are taken in account for the differences between the male and female form. All personal protective equipment, which includes tunics and trousers are tailor made.

Q. Are the recruitment standards different for men and women?

No. The same assessments are carried out for both.

Q. My faith requires me to allocate certain times a day for prayer. Will this be accommodated?

Due to the nature of the job there may be times when this is not possible, however, every effort will be made to provide appropriate facilities for employees.

Q. I suffer from dyslexia - will this make me ineligible to be a Firefighter?

No. Reasonable adjustments will be made.

Q. If I am not successful with my first application how many times can I apply?

You can make one application per year.

Q. How many Trainee Firefighters do you recruit each year?

This will depend on the number of operational vacancies occurring due to retirement, inter-Service transfers or resignations.

Q. How long will my application be held for on file before I have to reapply?

Your application will be processed for a maximum period of 12 months. If after that time you have not been offered a place on a Trainee Firefighter course, you will need to reapply.

Q. If I am selected can I choose which Fire Station I want to be posted to?

No. Every effort is taken to place Trainees at the most convenient Station to their home, however, due to operational reasons, sometime Trainees have to be placed at the Stations where vacancies have occurred

Q. How long is the training course?

The training course is currently 10 weeks and the course is non-residential.

Q. I understand that the training forms the basis of an NVQ - is it compulsory to do this?

Yes. All new entry Firefighters must successfully complete a comprehensive development programme within their first 3 years of employment. The Service prides itself on the quality of training it provides which leads to a professional qualification "Operations in the Community" at NVQ Level III.

Q. When will my permanent appointment be confirmed?

Once the 10 month probationary service has been satisfactorily completed.