Firefighter Recruitment Information

Entry requirements
You must:
- Be a minimum of 18 years at the commencement of training.
- Have attained a level 2 qualification in English language and maths.
  (GCSE grade C and above, or National Test Level 2 Pass, 1 or O level grade C or above)
- Have a level of aerobic fitness and strength to enable you to undertake fire fighting duties.
- Be able to pass medical and eyesight examinations to ensure you are fit to undertake fire-fighting duties.
- Not have any unspent criminal convictions

Guidance on health and fitness for potential applicants
Each applicant will be assessed individually in relation to his or her health and fitness.

Generally if you are applying for a firefighter role you will need to be fit enough to meet the demands of the job whenever required to do so. You must be able to undertake work that will involve periods of intense activity, punctuated by periods of inactivity.

Women often have many preconceptions of how strong and fit you have to be to become a firefighter and automatically rule themselves out of the process before they have found out the facts. Many women are successful firefighters and there are no stereotypical types of women who join the Service.

All medical conditions will be assessed on an individual basis. Your health records will be requested with your consent.

Fitness - It is essential to have a good level of aerobic fitness. This is set at 42 VO2 maximum,

Vision - A good standard of vision is required. You should have uncorrected vision of 6/18 in the better eye and 6/24 in the worse eye. Correct vision of 6/9 in both eyes and 6/12 in the worse eye is acceptable. Colour vision defects will be assessed on an individual basis. If you are unsure of your level of vision please consult an optician. Certain kinds of corrective laser surgery will be considered, provided that there have been no complications one year post-operation and subject to further eyesight tests.

Laser eye surgery - Certain kinds of corrective laser surgery will be considered, provided that there have been no complications one year post-operation and subject to further eyesight tests.

Hearing - A good standard of hearing is required as this is a safety critical role and will be assessed.
Pulmonary function test - An adequate intake of oxygen is essential when carrying out fire-fighting duties. Your respiratory capacity should be sufficient to withstand considerable exertion over prolonged periods, whilst wearing breathing apparatus.

Personal qualities and attributes
During the recruitment and selection process, your skills and experience in relation to Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQAs) will be assessed. You will be asked to recall past experiences using specific examples because past performance and experience is a good indicator of future performance. A useful tool to use to prepare your application and for your interview is the S.T.A.R model. This model is defined as follows:

S = Situation - a specific situation that addresses the question
T = Task - the tasks associated with the situation
A = Action - the actions taken to address the situation
R = Result - the results of your actions

For more information about the different PQAs, visit www.ipds.co.uk

Completed application forms are carefully checked and answers scored. If you meet the nationally agreed level you will be invited to undertake the written tests.

Written tests
You will undertake the National Firefighter Ability Test which consists of - Working with Numbers, Understanding Information and Situational Awareness and Problem Solving and a memory retention test.

The tests are taken under exam conditions and will last approximately 3 hours. If you meet the satisfactory standard, you will be invited to undertake the physical and job related tests.

Job related tests/physical
The tests will determine whether you have the required levels of aerobic fitness and strength to carry out the role of a firefighter. You will be asked to complete medical declaration forms prior to taking these tests. We suggest you wear suitable clothes such as tracksuit bottoms, T-shirt and trainers.

In addition, you will be required to carry out job-related awareness tasks. These are designed to simulate aspects of a firefighter’s role. You will be required to wear a fire kit, which will be provided. You should not be concerned at the prospect of taking these tests, as you will be closely supervised. Examples of the tests and the attributes being measured are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ladder climb</td>
<td>To test confidence and ability to follow instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casualty evacuation</td>
<td>To test physical upper and lower body strength and co-ordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladder lift</td>
<td>To test physical upper and lower body strength and co-ordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enclosed space</td>
<td>To test confidence, agility and identify claustrophobic tendencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment assembly</td>
<td>To test manual dexterity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment carry</td>
<td>To test aerobic fitness, stamina, upper and lower body strength and co-ordination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training can improve your aerobic capacity - in the very unfit by as much as 100%, in the moderately fit, by around 20 - 40%, and in the already fit by no more than 15%. By carrying out an exercise programme suitably geared for your age and sex, you can achieve substantial improvements in your aerobic capacity.

You are therefore advised to prepare for the tests by seeking appropriate advice from your local gym/fitness centre. Any exercise programme should be aimed at improving your physical fitness and stamina in preparation for the fitness tests detailed in this information pack for example, walking, swimming, running, circuit training etc.

You are advised to consult your own doctor before commencing any exercise programme to avoid any adverse side effects.

If you meet the required standard you will be invited to attend an interview.

**Interview**

This will be a panel interview and will comprise of at least 2 panel members. You will be asked several scenario-based questions and we advise that you use the S.T.A.R model to answer these questions. Further details about this model are provided in the section covering Personal Qualities and Attributes. The interview will last no more than 1 hour. If you are successful at the interview stage, you will be required to attend a full medical.

**Medical**

The full medical takes place at one of our Occupational Health Units and you will be expected to declare any health problems. It will be a matter for a Fire Service Occupational Health Doctor to consider whether any physical or mental impairment is incompatible with the duties of a firefighter. Each individual will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that there is no discrimination against individuals with a disability, however where safe adjustments cannot reasonably be made it may be necessary to reject a candidate on medical grounds. You will be required to give your consent for the Occupational Health Unit to obtain all your health records from your GP.

**Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service**

As this post will involve contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, employment is subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring check.

**Offer of employment**

An offer of employment will only be made when satisfactory references, a satisfactory criminal disclosure check and medical approval have been obtained.