

## Wholetime Recruitment FAQ's

### **How do I apply?**

The recruitment campaign will open on 29 January 2018 and there will be a link available which will take applicants through to the application stage. All stages up to the physical tests have to be undertaken online.

There will be a Candidate Information Pack available the week before the campaign opens which will give you all the information you will need about the recruitment process. This will be made available on our website.

### **What is the application process?**

The process consists of the following:

- Online Registration
- Online Tests
- Job related (physical) tests
- Interview
- Medical

There is a strict timetable for applying and undertaking the different stages. A full Candidate Information Pack will be available the week before the campaign opens which will detail all of recruitment process dates. You should note that these dates are set and cannot be changed, and no alternative dates can be offered.

### **What are the written tests?**

There are two different stages of written test:

- SIFT Assessments – these consist of a Behavioural Styles Questionnaire and a Situational Judgement Test.
- Ability Tests – these consist of assessments of numerical, verbal and mechanical reasoning.

More information on all the tests will be included in the Candidate Information Pack. The pack will contain example SIFT Assessments and a link will be available on our website for you to see examples of the Ability Tests.

### **How long do the written tests take?**

The SIFT Assessments are not timed, but you should allow yourself approximately 15 to 20 minutes for the Behavioural Styles Questionnaire, and approximately 30 minutes for the Situational Judgement Test.

The Ability Tests are timed, and you will be notified of the time allocated to each test before they start.

You will need to ensure that you undertake all written tests in a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Once answers are submitted, or the allocated time has expired, the test cannot be re-taken.

### **Is there any specific eligibility criteria?**

You will be asked a number of eligibility questions as part of the application process, which are:

- Will you be 18 at the commencement of the recruits course on 30 April 2018?
- Do you have the right to work in the UK?
- Do you have unspent criminal convictions?
- Do you have any court judgements outstanding against you?
- Do you live in one of the following counties:
  - Shropshire
  - Herefordshire
  - Worcestershire
  - Staffordshire
  - West Midlands
  - Cheshire
  - Wrexham
  - Powys

Once you have answered these questions you will be informed whether or not you are eligible to continue with your application.

### **Will having a criminal record prevent me from applying?**

Not necessarily. You only have to declare unspent convictions.

Some guidance is available from the Nacro site which you can access by following this link: [www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-individuals/disclosing-criminal-records/disclosing-criminal-records-employers/#longspent](http://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-individuals/disclosing-criminal-records/disclosing-criminal-records-employers/#longspent)

However, if you are unsure whether your conviction is spent or not please take separate legal advice.

### **I wasn't able to attend a taster session, will this affect my application?**

No. Attendance, or non-attendance, at a taster session in no way affects your ability to apply in the campaign.

### **How will you contact me during the recruitment process?**

We will contact you by email throughout the process to let you know how to proceed with your application and invite you to different stages of the campaign, so it is important that you make sure the email address you register with is correct.

**Do I have to be a certain height / weight to apply?**

No. This is a popular misconception as there used to be restrictions on height, weight and chest expansion, but this is now no longer the case.

Candidates will be expected to pass strength and fitness tests as part of the recruitment process and these are at a level achievable for both men and women of all different sizes and builds.

**What is the minimum / maximum age range to apply?**

Applicants will need to be 18 at the time of the recruits course on 30 April 2018. There is no maximum age limit.

**How long will the recruitment process take?**

The campaign opens on 29 January 2018 and the recruits course commences on 30 April 2018, for 8 weeks. Full details of dates will be available in the Candidate Information Pack which will be published the week before the campaign goes live.

**Can I choose which Station to work at?**

Unfortunately no. Candidates will be placed at Stations where there are vacancies.

**I have a beard for religion reasons, will I have to shave it off in order to be a firefighter?**

Unfortunately yes. The Service respects everyone's religious beliefs but there are health and safety reasons as to why facial hair cannot be accepted.

As a firefighter you will be required to wear a facemask when you are wearing breathing apparatus. To ensure that the facemask forms a seal around the face, it is necessary to keep the face shaven to prevent any dangerous airborne chemicals entering the facemask.

**I wear glasses / have had laser eye surgery, can I still apply?**

Yes. Part of the recruitment process will include a medical and this will include an eye test. Our Occupational Health Physician will determine whether your vision meets the standards to become a firefighter.

**I have a disability, can I apply?**

Yes, anyone who considers themselves to have a disability can apply to join the fire service.

You will be asked if you have a disability as part of the recruitment process and to provide details of any adjustments that you may require to take part in the selection process and to fulfil the role of a firefighter. Each case will be considered on an individual basis and if reasonable adjustments can be made, your application will proceed.

**I'm dyslexic, will I be able to cope with the written tests?**

Dyslexia is classed as a disability and you will be asked if you have a disability as part of the recruitment process.

If you suffer with dyslexia, you will need to provide proof such as a report, letter from your GP or a letter from school, and forward it to us before you undertake the timed written tests. You will then be allocated extra time to undertake the written tests, and this will be automatically put into place when you start the timed tests.

**Do the written tests have to be done online?**

Yes, all the written assessments have to be completed online. We are unable to offer hard copies of the tests.

**Can I use my mobile phone / tablet to apply?**

The system is not suitable to be used on a mobile phone.

For other devices, you need to make sure you have the minimum internet browser requirements. These are:

- Internet Explorer 9
- Firefox 4
- Google Chrome 10.0
- Safari 5 (Mac and PC)

Your browser should also have JavaScript and Cookies enabled. You can refer to the Help section of your browser for guidance about these settings.

The site is designed to be viewed with a screen resolution of at least 1024 x 768 pixels. You can check this by viewing your monitor's settings.

**Can I have a second job?**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service has a policy on secondary employment. Employees cannot engage in this without first obtaining written approval.

**What is the salary?**

You will start on a trainee rate of £22,459 per annum.

Upon completion of your recruits course, you will be moved onto development rate which is £23,394 per annum.

Upon completion of your NVQ, you will move to competent rate which is £29,934 per annum.

If you are employed under a job share scheme, these salaries will be pro rata.

**What are the hours of work?**

You will work 42 hours per week. Day shifts start at 08:30 and end at 18:30. Night shifts start at 18:30 and end at 08:30.

**What is the shift system?**

The rota system for Wholetime firefighters is the Flexible Rostering system. Firefighters work 2 day shifts and 2 nights consecutively and have the ability to rosta on and off for a maximum of 8 occasions, dependant on staffing levels.

If you are employed under a job share scheme you will work 1 day and 1 night consecutively and have the ability to rosta on and off for a maximum of 4 occasions, dependant on staffing levels.

**I see that you are considering job shares, what does that mean?**

If you are employed under the job share scheme, you will work 1 day and 1 night shift, as opposed to a full time member of staff who will work 2 days and 2 night shifts.

Your salary will also be pro rata.

**What do the different coloured Watches mean?**

Operational staff at each station are split into shifts called 'Watches'. There are 4 Watches with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, Blue, Green, Red and White.

The reason for the 4 Watches is so the Service can provide continual service 24 hours a day.