Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub De Cymru

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Wholetime Duty System

Firefighter Recruitment Campaign 2019/2020

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Information Pack

This document is also available in Welsh

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Equal Opportunities

The Fire and Rescue Services in Wales are committed to the development and promotion of Equal Opportunities and Fairness at Work.

This document is also available in Welsh

For more information visit:-

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
www.southwales-fire.gov.uk

All of the information required to apply to become a Firefighter is contained within this Information Pack. If you have any queries in relation to an Application for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, please contact us via e-mail:-

wds@southwales-fire.gov.uk

South Wales Fire and Rescue Services are pleased to invite applications for Wholetime Firefighters to join us in this challenging and highly rewarding career.

The communities in Wales value the services that we offer and need to feel confident in the highly skilled teams that we have reducing risk as well as dealing with emergency situations. We are continually evolving and improving how we operate whilst maintaining the highest standards. Appointing the right people is essential in helping us to achieve our ambitions for the future.

If you feel that you have what it takes, we invite you to join our 2019 recruitment process.

Chief Fire Officer, QFSM
Huw Jakeway
South Wales
Fire & Rescue Service

List of Wholetime Duty Fire Stations in each Service area

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service	
Ebbw Vale	Ely
Cwmbran	Cardiff Central
New Inn	Merthyr Tydfil
Maindee	Pontypridd
Malpas	Aberdare
Duffryn	Tonypandy
Aberbargoed	Maesteg
Caerphilly	Bridgend
Whitchurch	Barry
Roath	Penarth

This document has been written to provide you with details of each stage of the Recruitment Process involved with the role of Wholetime Firefighter. Within this campaign, you are invited to apply for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. It is important that you are aware of how you will be assessed and what you can expect at each stage. All details that you need to apply are provided in this document.

If you have any queries prior to entering into the campaign, you are invited to e-mail:-

wds@southwales-fire.gov.uk

Job Description

Role
Firefighter

Location
As directed by the Chief Fire Officer

Principal Aim
To protect and save people and property from fire and other hazards in the most competent and effective manner to the highest possible standard of care and quality.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Emergencies

- Respond immediately and safely to all emergency calls and requests for assistance.
- Deal with emergencies as directed and work effectively and efficiently as a member of a disciplined team.
- Minimise distress and suffering, including giving first aid care.

Dealing with People

- Establish and maintain the confidence of members of the public.
- Maintain links within the community.
- Be sensitive to the needs of others with regard to fairness and dignity issues.

Fire Safety

- Give general fire safety advice and guidance to people when requested.
- Work to help educate members of the community in the risks and hazards of fire and other emergencies.
- Assist in Service initiatives, programmes and strategies to reduce fire calls.

Health and Safety

- Recognise health and safety issues at work and deal with them to minimise or eliminate the degree of hazard or risk.
- Ensure personal safety and that of others at all times.

Personal Fitness and Hygiene

- Maintain level of physical and medical fitness necessary to carry out the duties of a Firefighter.
- Maintain personal appearance, hygiene and cleanliness of uniform in keeping with a disciplined service.

Equipment

- Maintain all firefighting and emergency equipment in a state of readiness, including cleaning, repairing and testing as required to approved standards and procedures.
- Check firefighting resources provided for Fire and Service use, including hydrants and fixed installations.

Local Geography

- Know the local streets, roads and buildings situated within the Fire Station response area.
- Be aware of the risks, possible hazards and water supplies to be found within the Fire Station area.

Administration

- Complete basic paperwork and routine administration, including recording of information.
- Use information technology as required and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Keep personal records up to date.

Training

- Take part in a continuous training programme by attending lectures, exercises, practice drill sessions and other forms of training to maintain competence levels.
- Attend training courses as directed.

Fire Authority

- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level of responsibility and expertise as may be required by the Chief Fire Officer.
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Service.

Person Specification

Factor	Evidence	Essential/ Desirable	Evidence
General Ability	Formal qualifications are not required however Numeracy, Literacy and Problem Solving Skills will be tested (tests are set at Essential Skills Level 2)	Essential	AB
Knowledge/ Experience	Ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh	Desirable	SFT
	Awareness of the role of the Firefighter	Essential	SL
Personal Style	An understanding and respect for people's differences and committed to adopting a fair approach to others	Essential	SFT & SL
	Ability to maintain confident and resilient attitude in highly challenged situations	Essential	SFT & SL
	Openness to change and the desire to actively seek to support it	Essential	SFT & SL
Intrapersonal	Ability to work effectively with others both within the Fire & Rescue Service and in the community	Essential	SFT & SL
	Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing to a range of different audiences	Essential	SFT & SL
	Commitment to and ability to develop self and others	Essential	SFT & SL
Task	Ability to understand, recall, apply and adapt relevant information in an organized, safe, systematic way	Essential	SFT, AB & SL
	Ability to maintain an active awareness of the environment to promote safe and effective working	Essential	AB & P&P
	Ability to adopt a conscientious and proactive approach to work to achieve and maintain excellent standards	Essential	SFT, SL
	Ability to maintain a high level of appropriately directed activity – showing determination and the capacity to work hard in a challenging environment	Essential	SFT, P&P
	Ability to follow orders and take direction	Essential	SFT
	Appropriate aerobic capacity/fitness	Essential	P&P
	Satisfactory unaided eyesight and colour vision	Essential	MED
	Satisfactory hearing	Essential	MED
	Ability to work at heights and in confined spaces	Essential	P&P

Evidence Codes
SFT – SIFT
AB – Ability Tests
P&P – Physical & Practical Assessments
SL – Selection
MED - Medical

Our Commitment to you…
We are fully committed to meeting our duties to matters of equality as set out in current legislation. The Fire and Rescue Services cannot make any adjustments to the Person Specification requirements as identified above or to nationally set Fitness Standards. These requirements and standards have been set to ensure that individuals are safe at work, for their own protection and that of others.

If you have a disability and feel that you are able to meet the essential requirements of an Operational Firefighter as detailed in the Job Description and Person Specification, but the assessment process prevents you from fully demonstrating your abilities, reasonable adjustments to the process will be considered. **To ensure that support is readily available, you are required to bring your specific needs to the attention of the appropriate testing centre in advance.**

Rates of pay

Rates of Pay for Operational WDS Firefighters from 1st July 2019.

Role	Annual £
Firefighter Trainee Development Competent	£23,366 £24,339 £31,144

Hours of Work
The Fire and Rescue Services in Wales operate rota systems, each involve the requirement to work anti-social hours, weekends and public holidays.

Do you really want to be a Firefighter?

The following list of questions has been designed to help you decide whether being a Firefighter is really for you. Simply tick YES or NO to each of the following questions.

	Yes	No
Are you genuinely interested in people?		
Can you get on with people from different backgrounds and cultures?		
Do you want to work as part of a close knit team?		
Can you work under pressure?		
Can you think on your feet and solve problems when you know a lot depends on the suggestion you come up with?		
Do you have the sensitivity to deal with members of the public when they are distressed, confused or being obstructive?		
Can you take responsibility for representing the Service when you are at work and when you are not?		
Are you committed to always maintaining and developing your skills?		
Are you prepared to study to develop and expand your skills?		
Are you prepared for the demands of working in a disciplined uniformed service in which you will have to take orders from other people?		
Can you accept the need to keep to rules that tell you what you can and cannot wear?		
Are you committed to maintaining your health and physical fitness?		
Is regular exercise part of your everyday life?		
Are you a practical person who likes to work with your hands/equipment?		
Do you enjoy making things or finding out how things work?		
Are you someone who can always be relied on to be somewhere on time?		
Are you someone that others see as dependable?		
Are you prepared to work outside in all types of weather, when it is wet and cold?		

If you answered 'Yes' to ALL of the above, and you think that you have what it takes to serve and protect the community you live and work in, read the information provided and join our recruitment campaign.

The Recruitment Process

The following notes are designed to give you an indication of the Recruitment Process, what to expect and what will be required of you.

Registration

The *first element* requires you to give some personal details and register with us. You will then be presented with details of the Firefighting role and asked to consider how the role meets your expectations in terms of working environment and future career. You will also be asked some basic questions to ensure that you are eligible to apply. As part of your eligibility assessment, we will identify:-

- Whether you are over the age of 17 years and 6 months
- Whether you have the right to work in the UK
- Whether you have any unspent convictions that may temporarily preclude you from working as a Firefighter (all unspent and pending convictions must be declared – failure to do so will result in your application being automatically withdrawn). If you are unsure whether a conviction is spent, please contact NACRO for advice www.**nacro**.org.uk.

	What is involved?	How long will it take?
Online Registration	Registration Realistic Job Preview Eligibility Check	You should allow approximately 30 minutes to complete all three parts.

It is important to note that you can complete this or any of the online elements at any time during the timescales highlighted (i.e. day or night). You will need to have your National Insurance number available to be able to register as well as your e-mail address. It is important that you check that you know your correct e-mail address. The system will communicate with you using the e-mail address that you provide during the registration. If you provide an incorrect e-mail address, the system will be unable to provide you with updates. If you do not complete the Online Registration, you will not be able to access the subsequent elements and progress within the campaign. You will only be able to register with us once per recruitment campaign.

Online Registration opens – 09:00 on Monday 14th October 2019
Online Registration closes – 23:59 on Tuesday 15th October 2019

You will be able to access the Online Registration system from:

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
www.southwales-fire.gov.uk

Please note that CVs or any other form of application will not be accepted.

Application Form

Providing you meet the eligibility criteria the next stage of the process is completion of an application form. This will be used for shortlisting onto the next stage of the process.

Ability Tests

If you are shortlisted, you will be invited to attend the Ability Tests. You will be sent information to assist you in your preparation, including some practice questions. These tests are available in both English and Welsh.

This stage involves completing a series of tests which are detailed below:-

Numerical Reasoning
This test measures your ability to understand, interpret and logically evaluate numerical information. You will be presented with graphs, charts and numerical details and required to make calculations on the information presented.

Understanding Information Test
This test measures your ability to evaluate, reason and conceptualise with words and sentences. You will receive a series of passages and you will be required to answer questions that highlight your understanding of what is being communicated within the passages.

Physical and Practical Assessment (P&P)

If successful at the Ability Tests, you will be invited to attend the Physical and Practical Assessment day (P&P). The tests on this day are designed to assess your level of physical fitness in line with requirements of the role. Details of the physical fitness and healthy weight requirements, along with the physical and practical tests are given below.

Physical Fitness
Firefighting can be a physically demanding and hazardous activity with potential for exposure to high physiological and environmental thermal loads. To ensure effective and safe operational performance an appropriate level of physical fitness is essential.

Your level of physical fitness will be determined by measuring your performance during a number of physical and practical firefighting tasks. In addition you will be required to perform an 'aerobic' fitness test to predict your aerobic capacity (in mlsO_2/kg/min). This allows us to assess your ability to perform exercise for longer periods which is important for safe firefighting. The minimum requirement for candidates at recruitment is **42.3** mls/O_2/kg/min (equivalent to level 8 shuttle 8 on a bleep test). If you progress to medical you may be required to demonstrate this level of fitness again on a treadmill walk test to ensure that you have maintained the appropriate level of fitness.

The components of the Physical and Practical Assessment are:

Enclosed Space Test

You will need to combine confidence, agility and flexibility while negotiating a crawl-way to pass the test successfully. There is only one way through the crawl-way, forward, right, left, up or down and there are no doors to open. You will start the test wearing a face mask which allows clear vision. However, on completion of the test, your mask will be obscured and you will be required to return along the same route. You should be able to complete these tests without jeopardising your safety and well-being within a specified timeframe.

Equipment Assembly Test

This test is designed to assess manual dexterity. You will need to assemble and then disassemble a piece of equipment. Before you commence the test, an Instructor will demonstrate the correct assembly of the equipment. You will also have a diagram illustrating correct assembly. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

Equipment Carry Test

You will be required to carry standard firefighting equipment over a set 25 metre course for a total distance of 550 metres. You will need to combine aerobic endurance, upper and lower body strength and muscular endurance. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

Ladder Climb

You will be shown how to climb the ladder and how to apply a ‘leg lock’. You will then be allowed to practice the leg lock. You will climb the ladder to the specified height. At that point, you will use the leg lock to secure yourself to the ladder, remove your hands from the ladder and lean back, looking over your shoulder to identify an object which is being held by the instructor at ground level. When you have identified the object, you will be told to put your hands back on the ladder and release the leg lock. You will then be instructed to descend the ladder. You will need to show confidence and apply the correct technique to climb the ladder.

Casualty Evacuation Test

You will be required to drag a 55kg mannequin/dummy simulating a casualty evacuation for a distance of 30 metres. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

Ladder Lift Simulator Test

You will need to combine upper and lower body strength and co-ordination to lift a ladder over your head to the required height and lower it safely and under control. The approximate weight of the ladder is 26-30kg.

Ladder Extension

You will carry out a test that simulates extending a standard 13.5 metre Fire and Rescue Service ladder from the first to the second floor of a building. This will be performed by pulling down on a rope. To complete this test successfully, you will need to combine upper body strength, grip strength and co-ordination. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

Fitness Test

A fitness assessment will be carried out to determine aerobic fitness. The minimum requirement for candidates at recruitment is **42.3** mls/O_2/kg/min (equivalent to level 8 shuttle 8 on a bleep test).

If you require more information on how to prepare for the Physical and Practical Assessments safely, you can view all of the operational tests as well as download a Preparatory Physical Training Programme from:-

Selection

If successful at the Physical and Practical Assessment day, you will be invited to attend the Selection Stage. This stage involves an Interview and a role play. You will be sent a Selection Guidance Booklet to support you in your preparation for this stage. You will be assessed on the following personal qualities and attributes that are essential to the role of the Firefighter:-

Commitment to Diversity and Integrity – assessing your approach to issues of diversity and how you adopt a fair and ethical approach to others

Openness to Change – the extent to which you are open to change and actively seek to support it.

Confidence and Resilience – the extent to which you are confident in your own ability to meet and cope with challenging situations and how you maintain effectiveness when faced with highly challenging situations

Effective Communication - You will be assessed throughout the interview on how effectively you communicate

Working with Others – assessing your approach to working with others, whether as part of a team or on a one to one basis

Commitment to Development – assessing your approach to developing yourself

Problem Solving - the extent that you understand and apply relevant information in an organised, safe and systematic way

Commitment to Excellence – assessing how conscientious and proactive you are in achieving and maintain excellent standards

The Medical

Firefighters may be exposed to extreme physical and psychological demands in hostile and dangerous environments. In order to comply with relevant statutory provisions, the medical screening for Firefighters is rigorous. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Fire and Rescue Service must reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable. This means a medical condition giving rise to reasonably foreseeable occupational risk would not be acceptable.

Medical suitability is determined by an individual assessment. For practical reasons, this cannot be undertaken until the later stages of the recruitment process. The nature and effect of medical conditions may vary. It is therefore not possible to confirm medical conditions that would be unacceptable prior to an individual medical assessment. However, if you have a medical condition or a history of a medical condition which might present problems, the following general guidance should help you consider your medical suitability before applying.

A medical condition or functional limitation which, despite any reasonable adjustments, gives rise to significantly increased occupational risk of the following is unacceptable:

- Sudden collapse or sudden incapacitation;
- Impaired judgement;
- Altered awareness;
- Substantial physical or psychological injury/ill health;
- Any other effect which would pose a substantial health and safety risk to yourself and others.

The individual assessment will involve due consideration of any opinions or medical reports you may wish to submit. However, the decision on the significance of any risks identified will rest with the Fire and Rescue Services.

Please note that the Medical involves both drug and alcohol tests.

Eye Sight Test

During the course of the Recruitment process, possibly at the same time at which you sit the Ability Tests, your capacity to meet the appropriate eyesight standards will need to be evidenced. You will be advised of when and how this will be assessed.

The visual requirement for Firefighters is of a high standard.

Operational Firefighters must have an appropriate level of colour perception. Individuals with either normal colour vision or slightly abnormal green colour vision are suitable for appointment to the Fire and Rescue Service.

The main requirements are:

- An ***unaided*** distance visual acuity of 6.9 or better using both eyes;
- ***Normal Colour Vision*** (Ishihara test – if 2 errors are made, further tests will be needed)

If you are unsure whether you meet these requirements, you are advised to seek advice from a qualified optometrist. In addition to any preliminary eye sight assessments, detailed eyesight tests may be taken during the medical stage of the process.

If laser eye surgery has been performed, applications will not be considered for a minimum of 12 months after the date of the procedure but you may still apply.

The eyesight standards being applied are in line with Chief Fire Officer's Association (CFOA) Guidance and are non-negotiable.

Appointment

If you are successful at all stages of the recruitment process. Offers of employment will be made as vacancies arise. Any offer of employment is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and vetting checks. Should an unsatisfactory reference or vetting check be received, the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

If you have not secured a position within the timescales set by the recruiting Service, you will be required to apply through a subsequent recruitment process.

We would like to take the opportunity to wish you every success throughout the Recruitment Process.

If you have any queries, you are invited to e-mail:-

wds@southwales-fire.gov.uk