Greater Manchester
Fire and Rescue Service

manchesterfire.gov.uk
GMFRS WHOLETIME FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

This document includes as much information as possible, to provide you with a clear overview of the end to end Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process. We have also included within this document information to refer back to and guide you through any upcoming recruitment processes.

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The Role of a Firefighter at Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service

Firefighters respond to a range of emergencies from fire, road, rail or air traffic collisions, chemical spills and floods, whether in home, business or rural settings. Although a key part of the role is to respond to such emergencies and that role is life saving and a core part of the job, Firefighters are also ambassadors within our communities and work with a variety of community groups across Greater Manchester, to raise awareness of fire safety, waterways, highlighting any dangers and minimising the risk of fire.

For more information about the role of a Firefighter or the work we do within Greater Manchester communities, we strongly recommend getting in contact with your local stations and speaking first hand with our front line Firefighters. Alternatively, you can also visit our website (www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/join-us) for further information.

Firefighter Role Map

Role maps describe the national standards expected of a Firefighter – they are similar to Job Descriptions but contain more information.

All operational roles within Fire and Rescue Services have role maps and more information can be found on the Fire Safe Advice Centre’s website: https://www.firesafe.org.uk/role-structure-in-thebritish-fire-service/

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firefighter Rolemap</th>
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The Recruitment Process

To support you we have provided below a flow chart of the full end-to-end recruitment process, from the initial expression of interest form, to the Wholetime Firefighter training course. We have also broken down each stage of the recruitment, with further information for you to read through. This information also includes any useful links or lists any items you may need to begin to prepare prior to any live recruitment campaigns begin.
**STEP 1: Expression of Interest**

Anyone interested in the role of Wholetime Firefighter for Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service can register their interest via the [Greater Jobs website](#).

Once you have submitted your expression of interest form, your details will be entered onto our database and it is from this database that you will receive updates, information and details of any upcoming Taster Days from our recruitment team.

**Please note:** The expression of interest form is not an application form and does not automatically give you eligibility to apply for the Firefighter role as and when the recruitment is live, nor does it provide immediate eligibility for a Taster day.

**STEP 2: Taster Day**

Taster Days dates are emailed out to you once your details are in our expression of interest database and are booked on a first come first served basis.

On a Taster Day, you will have a go at both the functional skills and physical tests involved in the Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process. We will inform you about the Apprenticeship Standard and what you can expect from your apprenticeship and it will be an opportunity to speak first hand with GMFRS front line Firefighters and current Apprentices about their jobs. You will also go through the end-to-end recruitment process with a member of our recruitment team, who will provide you with hints and tips along the way to help steer your home research in the right direction.

The Taster Day is a brilliant opportunity for you to meet with the team and to better your understanding of the expectations involved throughout both the recruitment process and role itself.

**Please note:** For external candidates - only once you have attended a Taster Day, you will be eligible to apply as and when Wholetime Firefighter recruitment is live.
STEP 3: Firefighter Application Form

The Firefighter application form is your first opportunity to tell us about you, who you are, what skills, values and behaviours you have that will make you an asset to our organisation and why you are interested in working for GMFRS as a Firefighter.

After you have inputted all information required into the application form such as your details, education and employment history, the application form will also ask you to complete a series of competency-based questions, created around GMFRS values and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) leadership framework. We recommend when completing this section of the application, that you use the STAR method, to ensure you provide a full and in depth answer to each question.

There is certain criteria that you will need to meet to become eligible to apply for our Firefighter vacancies. Information is as below:

External Candidates:

- You must have attended a Taster Day and have your proof of attendance email to be eligible to apply for the role
- The proof of attendance email will be sent to you after completion on a Taster Day
- When the Wholetime Firefighter role is live, you will be emailed directly with the link to the application form

Internal Candidates:

**Current employees**

- Employees of GMFRS and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Organisation (GMCA), including apprentices are automatically eligible to apply without needing to attend a Taster day

**Current & Active volunteers**

- Current active volunteers for GMFRS and the GMCA are automatically eligible to apply without needing to attend a Taster day
- To be considered an ‘active’ Volunteer, you must of volunteered for GMFRS or GMCA within the last 12 months

**Active GMFRS Resilience Crew Members**

- Current active GMFRS resilience crew members are automatically eligible to apply without needing to attend a Taster day
- To be considered an ‘active’ member, you must of attended one of the recent information Resilience Crew information evenings
**Youth Engagement Participants**

- Participants **must have attended a GMFRS ran programme within the last 12 months of the application closing date** to be automatically eligible to apply without needing to attend a Taster day
- Recognised programmes include:
  - Prince’s Trust
  - Traineeships
  - Firefly
  - Cadets

**Partner organisations:**

- Moss side boxing club is a recognised partner organisation. Current active boxing club members are automatically eligible to apply without needing to attend a Taster day

When the Wholetime Firefighter role is live, the link to the application form will be on InsideGMCA and internal newsletter.

We will also email all internal contacts to share this information to their teams I.E. – Resilience & Volunteer Co-ordinators, Boxing Club team leaders etc.

**DBS Disclosure:**

In your application form, we will ask you:

“**Do you have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not “protected”**”

It is extremely important here that you disclose any convictions that are not defined as protected under the “Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)”

For more information on what is classed as ‘protected’ please see the following advice guides:

- NACRO: [Practical Guidance on DBS Filtering](#)
- GOV: [DBS Filtering Guidance](#)

Any disclosure will be treated in the strictest confidence and be reviewed on a case by case basis. If you fail to disclose at the point of application then this may be seen as dishonesty or breach of trust and could potentially affect your application.

**Please note:** Please ensure when you receive the Wholetime application form, that you read all information provided to you in the advert and links attached carefully and in full prior to completing the application.

**STEP 4: Application Form Shortlisting**

The Firefighter application form is shortlisted as soon as the advert closes, by a large panel of both uniformed and non-uniformed members of staff.
All applications are shortlisted blind, which means personal information, such as below, is removed from all applications prior to being shortlisted:

- Name
- Age
- Gender □ Race
- Religion
- All personal details

The only information the assessor sees when shortlisting, is an 8-10 digit random candidate number and the answers you have provided for the competency questions.

All applications are viewed by two separate assessors and scored individually on each question.

Only those candidates that meet the shortlisting criteria will be invited to continue in the recruitment process and unfortunately, due to the volume of applications we receive for this role, we will be unable to offer feedback to those unsuccessful.

**STEP 5 & 6: Bleep & Functional Skills Test**

If successfully shortlisted, you will be invited to attend both a bleep test and Functional Skills (Maths & English) assessment at our Manchester training and development centre.

You will begin this day with the 20 metre bleep test and will run this under assessment conditions. The minimum pass mark for the bleep is level 8.8.

Those successful in the bleep will (after rest) sit both and Maths & English assessment. These assessments will be for everyone regardless of previous qualifications and helps to understand where your current learning level is at, in comparison to the Firefighter apprenticeship. The minimum pass mark for both the Maths & English assessments is Level 1.

To ensure fairness and consistency, you will only have one attempt at each test and failure to meet the minimum pass marks will unfortunately mean you will not continue in the recruitment process.

**STEP 7: National Firefighter Selection Test**

The National Firefighter Selection Test consists of a series of physical tests that are either timed or marked pass/fail.

On the day of your NFST, you will be provided with a brief of what to expect, including all health and safety information. Prior to beginning the physical tests, you will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE), a numbered bib and scorecard. The scorecard will list all pass marks for each test and will be where the assessors record all your assessment details.

**Selection Tests Included:**

- Ladder Lift
- Ladder Climb
- BA Crawl
- Casualty Evacuation
- Manual Dexterity
- Equipment Carry
To ensure fairness and consistency, you will only have one attempt at each test and failure to meet the minimum pass marks will unfortunately mean you will not continue in the recruitment process from that point.

Please note: Although the day consists of physical tests, please keep in mind that values and behaviours are being assessed right the way through the recruitment process.

STEP 8: Assessment Centre

The assessment centre will consist of different competency based interviews with both operational and non-operational assessors.

The interviews on the day are completed ‘pod style’; each ‘pod’ will have a minimum of two assessors in and a different question in each pod. You will have 10 minutes per pod to answer the question and will continue to move round each pod until you have completed all questions.

Similar to the application form, the competency questions will be based around Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service’s values and the National Fire Chief Council leadership framework. We also recommend to try where possible in the interview, to continue to use the STAR method as much as possible.

We can use a range of assessment methods in our selection process, and which methods we choose will vary. On your invite to assessment, you will be informed about what kind of process you can expect – ordinarily we will use up to two assessment methods.

Please note: we will not assess you in all of the below methods. The below is designed to give you an idea of what you could expect.

Our methods include:

1. Role play assessment

   Like most Emergency Services, Role Play exercises will be included in the recruitment process. The scenarios will relate to situations, which may arise in the role, and will follow the following process on the day of assessment:
   - You receive a briefing document setting the scene and you will have time to prepare.
   - You will then start the Role Play with a team of professionals – assessors will be in the room observing your behaviours and performance.
   - At the end of the exercise you will be scored – this will count towards your overall score for the assessment process.

2. Structured Interview (competency)

   A Structured Interview is a method of assessment designed to measure your previous experience, future potential, key skills, values and behaviours that relate to the role of a Firefighter role at GMFRS.
   - In preparation before your interview, make sure you do your research into the best way to answer competency / structured based questions.
3. Presentation

Presentations come in all sorts of formats, we will assess your communication skills, digital skills, organisational and planning skills, and professional style. The subject of the presentation is normally shared with you in advance of your presentation date.

4. Group Exercise

A Group Exercise is designed to assess your behaviours and how you interact/work with others. Group exercises are usually practical and involve elements of problem solving.

STEP 9, 10 & 11: Offers of Employment & Pre-employment Checks

If you are successful in our shortlisting and assessment process, we will make you a conditional offer of employment to start with us. This offer will remain conditional based on us receiving all satisfactory pre-employment checks back. Once we are satisfied you have met the criteria, we will make you a formal unconditional offer of employment.

These checks include:

- Medical (conducted by our occupational health provider)
- DBS
- Employment references covering a minimum of 5 years work history
- Right to work in the UK

Once all pre-employment checks and on-boarding forms (payroll, pension, and personal information forms) have been completed, and are deemed satisfactory, a course start date confirmed and you will receive an unconditional offer of employment.

Please note: All offers of employment with Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, the GMFRS Programme for Change and course availability.

Medical Checks

The medical checks that a Firefighter goes through are comprehensive. Please see the different checks that we do below:

1. Vision

   a) Distance:
      i. Uncorrected no worse than 6/18 in stronger eye and 6/24 in weaker eye
      ii. Corrected 6/9 in stronger eye and minimum of 6/12 in weaker eye
   b) Near: Uncorrected/Corrected no worse than N12 binocular at 30cms
   c) Normal depth perception, field vision and colour vision.
2. **Lung Function**

No evidence of restrictive, obstructive or combined airways disease on spirometry testing.

3. **Blood Pressure**

Within normal acceptable limits with or without prescribed medication.

4. **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

Acceptable between 18.5 and 30

A medical history will be taken via a Health Questionnaire pre medical, and any pre-existing conditions will be assessed on an individual basis at medical screening with Occupational Health.

**DBS Checks**

This role is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions Order) 1975 and as such it will be necessary for a submission for Disclosure to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly known as CRB) to check for any previous criminal convictions. All applicants are obliged to disclose **any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not “protected”** in their application forms.

Please be assured that any information disclosed will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will be reviewed on an individual basis in relation to the job. This means that you will not necessarily be excluded from the application process if you have a criminal record; this will depend on the circumstances and background to any offence.

For more information on what is classed as ‘protected’ please see the following advice guides:

- NACRO: [Practical Guidance on DBS Filtering](#)
- GOV: [DBS Filtering Guidance](#)

**References**

We will do a series of checks with your current and previous employers. For Safe Recruitment purposes, we ask for References to cover the past 5 years of your work history. Our senior management team will review your records and offers will be subject to these checks being deemed as satisfactory.
Right to Work In the UK

Ordinarily we will check your eligibility to work full time in the UK when you come in for your assessment. To check your right to work we will ask for a form of ID or a specific right to work document such as a UK Passport, Permanent Residence Card, Biometric Residence Card, Birth or Adoption Certificate, Certificate of Application issued by the Home Office.

To see the latest government guidance for Right to Work checks please visit their website: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide

STEP 12: Wholetime Firefighter Training Course

The Wholetime Firefighter initial training course will consist of both theoretical and practical learning and runs over a 16 week period. This training will be the start of your Firefighter apprenticeship, working through a series of modules including:

- Pumps & Ladders
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Trauma Care
- Hazardous Materials
- Specialist Rescue
- Breathing Apparatus and Fire Behaviour

Useful Links

National Fire Chiefs Council Leadership Framework

STAR Method Information Link

Firefighter Medical Information

National Firefighter Recruitment Information

Functional Skills Practice Tests

DBS Guidance

GMFRS YouTube

GMFRS Twitter

GMFRS Facebook
Further Information

Pay

The below table shows 2019 salaries from Trainee Firefighter, to Competent Area Manager:

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>2019 Annual Salary (£)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Firefighter</td>
<td>£23,366.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Firefighter</td>
<td>£24,339.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent Firefighter</td>
<td>£31,144.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Manager - Development</td>
<td>£33,101.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Manager - Competent</td>
<td>£34,528.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch Manager - Development</td>
<td>£35,275.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch Manager - Competent</td>
<td>£38,611.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Manager - Development</td>
<td>£40,161.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Manager - Competent</td>
<td>£44,297.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Manager - Development</td>
<td>£46,254.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Manager - Competent</td>
<td>£51,275.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Manager - Development</td>
<td>£54,303.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Manager - Competent</td>
<td>£59,565.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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GMFRS salaries are paid monthly in twelve equal payments by credit transfer on or around the 15th of each month. Where the 15th is not a normal working day, you will be paid on the last normal working day, prior to the 15th of the month. If you commence employment after the start of the month, or leave employment prior to the end of the month, your salary will be pro-rata’d accordingly.

Rates of pay are based on defined stages of development, leading to demonstration of competence in the role. These stages are:

**Trainee**

For the role of Firefighter, the training stage is the point at which an employee is in full-time training and is not yet performing the role in its appropriate context.

**Development**

The development stage is where an employee is working under supervision in the role and is being assessed against the different functions that make up that role. An employee, at this stage, before demonstrating competence in the full requirements of the role, will receive the development rate of pay.
Competent

After all applicable functions have been assessed as having been achieved, the employee will have demonstrated “competence” in their role and will receive the appropriate competent rate of pay.

Development for all Firefighters is continuous and a record of training and achievements is stored on an in-depth electronic training record. At Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, we value our people and we encourage development.

Hours of Work

Your hours of work are 42 hours per week during the initial training course.

Following completion of the training course, your hours of work will be 42 hours per week on a Shift Duty System (SDS).

Firefighters work a rota system which includes the requirement to work evenings, weekends and National holiday periods. However, for the majority of firefighters, 42 hours are compressed into 2 days and 2 night shifts, which means you receive a good amount of time off duty, to spend with family or personal activities.

Annual Leave

The leave period runs from the 1st April to 31st March.

Upon appointment, you will be entitled to 30 days paid annual leave, which increases to 33 days after 5 years’ service. You must take your annual leave entitlement in line with the SDS system agreement and will be pre planned into your roster line

Pensions

You will automatically be admitted into the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme 2015, unless you advise otherwise. This is a contributory pension scheme. Pension deductions will commence from your date of employment.

Uniform

All new Firefighters are issued with uniform and kit prior to the initial training course starting. The uniform includes ‘working rig’, which is the everyday dress and ‘personal protective equipment’, which is the full firefighting kit including helmet and boots.

No Smoking Policy

The Authority supports the Tobacco Free Greater Manchester campaign for smoke free public places. A No Smoking Policy is in operation and therefore, no facilities will be provided for smokers inside or outside Authority premises. This policy also applies to e-cigarettes.
**Inclusivity**

It is the responsibility of every member of GMFRS staff to understand the Authority’s equality and diversity commitments and statutory obligations under current equality legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and to:

- Act in ways that support equality and diversity and recognise the importance of people’s rights in accordance with legislation, policies, procedures and good practice.
- Value people as individuals and treat everyone with dignity and respect, consideration and without prejudice, respecting diversity and recognising peoples expressed beliefs, preferences and choices in working with others and delivering appropriate services.
- Recognise and report behaviour that undermines equality under the Authority’s values and behaviours.
- Be consciously aware of own behaviour and encourage the appropriate expected levels of behaviour in colleagues.
- Acknowledge others’ different perspectives and recognise the diverse needs and experiences of everyone they come into contact with.
- Support the inclusivity objectives of the Service as a priority.

If you have any further questions please head over to our Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service website at [www.manchesterfire.gov.uk](http://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk) where you will find additional information about the role, apprenticeship and recruitment, including frequently asked questions.