



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Decision title

## Firefighter recruitment – qualification requirements

Recommendation by  
Assistant Director – People Services

Decision Number  
LFC-0014-D

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

### Summary

This decision enables applicants for trainee firefighter positions to demonstrate the required competence in English and Maths by means of GCSE examinations passes or certified achievement of Functional Skills Level 2 in these subjects. Where such evidence is not available, candidates will continue to be required to pass the Brigade's ability tests in English and Maths.

### Decision

The London Fire Commissioner approves the required competence in English and Maths for trainee firefighter positions can in future be satisfied by one of the following: GCSE examinations passes in English and Maths at grades A – C (or grades 9 – 4); certified achievement of Functional Skills Level 2 in these subjects; or successful completion of the Brigade's ability tests in English and Maths.

Dany Cotton QFSM  
London Fire Commissioner

Date 17-5-2018

#### Access to Information – Contact Officer

<b>Name</b>	Steven Adams
<b>Telephone</b>	020 8555 1200
<b>Email</b>	steven.adams@london-fire.gov.uk



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

---

## Firefighter recruitment – qualification requirements

---

Report to

London Fire Commissioner

Date

9 May 2018

Report by

Assistant Director – People Services

Report number

LFC-0014

---

### NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

---

#### Summary

This report seeks to enable applicants for trainee firefighter positions to demonstrate the required competence in English and Maths by means of GCSE examinations passes or certified achievement of Functional Skills level 2 in these subjects. Where such evidence is not available, candidates will continue to be required to pass the Brigade's ability tests in English and Maths.

#### Recommendation

The London Fire Commissioner approves the required competence in English and Maths for trainee firefighter positions can in future be satisfied by one of the following: GCSE examinations passes in English and Maths at grades A – C (or grades 9 – 4); certified achievement of Functional Skills level 2 in these subjects; or successful completion of the Brigade's ability tests in English and Maths.

#### Background

1. A major review of the firefighter recruitment process was undertaken in 2016 and reported to the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) Resources Committee in January 2017 (FEP 2686)
2. This recommended the replacement of the academic qualifications eligibility criteria with online aptitude testing in English and Maths. The reasons for the change included that formal qualifications excluded candidates with excellent work experience but a poor educational history; and that some candidates, including older candidates and those from overseas, could have difficulty in obtaining evidence of their qualifications or proving their equivalency. The Brigade therefore exclusively adopted aptitude tests for literacy and numeracy to the standard required for the firefighter role i.e. within the competent average range as compared to the general population.
3. In the future, the firefighter development process will become an accredited apprenticeship programme from the autumn. The apprenticeship requires trainees to achieve competence at Functional Skills Level 2 in numeracy and literacy, which is equivalent to GCSE pass level or the

Brigade's aptitude test. It is therefore possible that in future applicants will be able to demonstrate competence at Functional Skills Level 2 achieved in another training programme or apprenticeship.

4. Officers would wish to adopt an approach by which candidates can demonstrate competence in English and Maths either by successfully completing the aptitude tests or by providing evidence of GCSE passes or attainment of Functional Skills Level 2 in the relevant subjects.
5. The reintroduction of qualifications while maintaining the option of completing an aptitude test will help to both streamline the recruitment process, as candidates who can demonstrate competence in this way can progress directly to the assessment centre, as well as providing alternate methods of demonstrating the required skill levels. All applicants who meet the required level of competence will progress to the assessment centre and have an equal chance of success.

### **Conclusion**

6. The extension of the aptitude firefighter requirements to include formal qualifications has several benefits. This change is intended to help to streamline the recruitment process, allow candidates with formal qualifications to progress, maintain a wide prospective pool of candidates to select from and uphold the required recruitment standards. If the change is approved it will be applied to candidates from the most recent recruitment campaign which closed in April.

### **Finance comments**

7. The Chief Finance Officer has reviewed this report and has no comments.

### **Workforce comments**

8. These proposals relate to potential employees and therefore no formal consultation was undertaken.

### **Legal comments**

9. General Counsel has reviewed this report and has no comments.

### **Sustainability Implications**

10. There are no direct sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

### **Equalities Implications**

11. There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.