CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

BE THE DIFFERENCE.

Online assessment guide

PREVENT
PROTECT
RESPOND

Introduction

As part of your application to become a Wholetime Firefighter you'll complete a series of online assessments. These help us fairly and consistently assess each application, ensuring everyone gets an opportunity to show their potential.

We know that behind every application is a person - with experiences, values and goals. While we use technology to support our process, you will always be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. We're committed to making sure everyone has the chance to succeed.

The online assessments are carefully designed to reflect the skills and behaviours needed to succeed in the role. They'll include tasks like understanding situations, solving problems, and responding to different scenarios - things you might not associate with firefighting now, but will soon become second nature.

Using technology is an important part of modern firefighting. From online learning, mobile data terminals to incident reporting systems - so it makes sense that technology plays a part in our recruitment process.

This guide will help you prepare for each stage of the online process and if you need support at any point, we're here to help.



When you see this symbol, make a note of the key dates and instructions for your online assessments — don't miss your window to complete them.

Registration

Before you can start the online assessments, you'll need to complete the registration and eligibility screening. This is the first step in the application process and takes less than 15 minutes.

What you'll need to register:

- Your full name
- Address
- Contact number
- A valid and regularly checked email address
- Your National Insurance number

Equality and Diversity

You'll also be asked to complete some optional equality and diversity questions. This helps us understand the diversity of our candidates and improve our processes. Your responses are confidential and are kept separate from your application and have no impact on your application.



Dates
14 July
14 August

- Make sure you enter your personal information correctly when registering - you won't be able to go back and correct it.
- Use the same email address throughout the process and check it regularly- including your junk folder.
- We'll send you an email with outcomes at each stage of the process.
- Due to high number of applications, unfortunately we're not able to provide individual feedback.

Entry criteria

Before starting any of the tests, you'll also be asked to confirm that you meet the key entry criteria.

- You live within 20 miles of the Cambridgeshire boundary (as defined by our mapping system)
- You have the right to live and work in the UK without restrictions
- You will be at least 18 years old by 1 January 2026
- You hold (or will hold by the time employment starts) a full, unrestricted UK driving licence
- You have five GCSEs (A–C / 4–9) including Maths and English, or equivalent
- You do not have any unspent criminal convictions
- You are a competent swimmer

What Happens Next?

Once submitted, you'll immediately be told one of the following outcomes:



- You've passed and will move on to the first assessment stage
- Our recruitment team may need some more information
- Based on the information you've provided, unfortunately you have not met the criteria
- If at any stage it is found you don't meet the entry criteria, your application will be withdrawn from the process

Firefighter ability tests

If you pass the earlier stages of the process, you'll be asked to complete the Firefighter Ability Tests. These are short, timed assessments designed to measure how you think and solve problems — key skills for any firefighter! For more information about the tests click here.

Verbal Reasoning

These tests assess your ability to work with written information.

Numerical Reasoning

The numerical tests measure how you interpret and perform basic calculations.

Mechanical Reasoning

These tests assess your ability to think logically and recognise patterns.

Practice tests

click to practice the tests

Dates
18 August
24 August

- **You'll receive a link from Test Partnership to complete the ability tests (no-reply@testpartnership.com)**
- The tests must be done alone, on a computer, laptop or tablet (not a smartphone), by the deadline.
- Choose a quiet space with a good internet connection and enough time to complete all the tests in one go.

Behavioural Styles Questionnaire

The Behavioural Styles Questionnaire is part of the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service recruitment process. It is designed to understand how you typically behave at work - your values, preferences, and attitudes - and how these align with the qualities we look for in a firefighter.

This test does not require any prior firefighting knowledge or experience. It is about who you are and how you work with others - not what you know.

Why are you being asked to complete this?

We're looking for people who:

- Align with our Service values (Welcoming, Respectful, Professional)
- Show the right behaviours to thrive in a role that protects, prevents and responds
- Are self-aware, honest, and team-focused

Using a behavioural questionnaire helps us assess everyone fairly and consistently, based on job-relevant traits that are important to success in the role.

What will the test involve?

You'll be shown blocks of four statements at a time about workplace behaviour.

You'll rate how much you agree or disagree with each one on a scale from "Completely Disagree" to "Completely Agree."

In some sections, you might also be asked to rank statements in order of how well they describe you.

Example statements may include:

- "I don't leave tasks unfinished."
- "I ensure that I do things to the highest standard."
- "I stay true to my beliefs, even when it's easier not to."

How long will it take?

The questionnaire takes around 20–25 minutes. There's no time limit, so take your time and find a quiet space where you can concentrate.

What we're looking for

- working with others
- discpline
- problem solving
- professionalism
- effective communication
- confidence
- resilience
- dedication
- commitment to development
- Commitment to diversity
- open to change
- Commitment to High standards

- **For the behavioural questions, you'll receive an email from the Apollo system - (noreply-apl@talogytech.com)**
- You must complete this assessment before the deadline to progress to the next stage - which are the situational judgment tests.

Dates
26 August
1 September

Situational judgement tests

Situational Judgment Tests (SJT) is part of the recruitment process designed to assess your ability to make sound decisions in challenging, job-related situations - ones you may realistically face in the role.
The test presents realistic scenarios and asks you to evaluate how effective certain actions would be in each situation.

Why are you being asked to complete this?

We're looking for candidates who:

- Show sound judgment under pressure
- Understand the values and expectations of a public-facing role
- Can consider safety, fairness, and responsibility when making decisions

Situational Judgment Tests are widely used because they offer a fair and objective way to assess the behavioural qualities we know are important for success.

What will the test involve?

You will be shown a series of realistic scenarios based on what firefighters may encounter on the job.
Each scenario will include four possible actions.
Your task is to rate each action independently using this scale:

Counterproductive	An unacceptable action that could make the situation worse
Ineffective	A poor action that won't help resolve the situation
Fairly Effective	A reasonable action that could help in some way
Effective	A good action that would help resolve the situation well

Situational judgement tests

How long will it take?

The test is not timed, but most people complete it in 30–35 minutes. Take your time, read each scenario carefully, and stay focused.

NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED

You do not need any previous experience as a firefighter to complete an SJT. The scenarios are based on situations that could arise in the role, but you'll be able to use your own judgement, values, and life experience to decide what you think is the most effective response.

We're not testing technical knowledge — we're looking at how you think, how you work with others, and how you handle everyday challenges.



Dates
4 September
10 September

- **For the situational judgment questions, you'll receive an email from the Apollo system - (noreply-apl@talogytech.com)**
- This is the final online assessment and must be successfully completed in order to progress to the next stage.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
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We understand that taking online assessments can feel daunting - especially when so much depends on the outcome. That's why we've created this guide: to help you feel prepared, informed, and confident as you complete each stage.

Please remember, these assessments aren't designed to catch you out. They're here to help us understand how you naturally work with others, make decisions, and approach challenges — and whether the role of a firefighter would be a good fit for you.

The most important thing you can do is be yourself. There are no trick questions, and you don't need any previous fire and rescue experience to succeed. What matters most is honesty, focus, and a genuine willingness to do your best.

It's important that you complete all assessments independently. As part of a formal selection process, we may ask you to retake some elements later to verify your results. This helps ensure the process is fair and consistent for everyone.

If you have questions or need support related to neurodiversity, religious observance, and accessibility needs our ED&I team is here to help. Any information you share will be treated in confidence and will not affect your application in any way.

For general recruitment queries - such as entry criteria, timelines, or assessment details - please contact our recruitment team.

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