

CLUB/GROUP Amateur Radio Examinations

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Introduction

These Online (and, where a special request is approved, Paper) examinations, to be delivered in a group/club environment, are recognised by Ofcom as the qualification necessary for the issue of Amateur Radio Licences. It is therefore essential that the standards should be the same for all candidates and that the integrity of the examination is maintained at all times.

The administration of the Amateur Radio Examinations is carried out by the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB); who are also the examination awarding body.

It is assumed that all **online examination** candidates will have: -

- via the RSGB, registered with TestReach® and each candidate will have their username and a unique password
- downloaded and launched the TestReach® application and have completed the online tutorial prior to taking their exam. This can be done any time before the exam.
- have access to a computer, desktop or laptop, with 4GB of available memory. The app will not work on mobile phones, chrome books, or iPad/tablets. TestReach® cannot guarantee service on touchscreen devices as some devices might be incompatible with the app [*Windows v7.0+ or Mac 10.10+ operating systems - MacOS Big Sur users need to upgrade to 11.3+*].
- a continuous connection to the internet speed of 2 Mbps or higher.
- mains leads and chargers to ensure that laptops don't run out of battery.

For Paper Examinations; Candidates should provide themselves with a black pen, an HB pencil and a clean, soft eraser. The Invigilators may provide spares but are not required to do so.

Preparing for the Examination

1. Examination Integrity

The security of the of Examination questions is paramount in protecting the integrity of the examination. The Examination questions are protected by copyright. Reproduction in any form is strictly prohibited

1.1. For Online Examinations

- The Examination Secretary must check the examination paperwork on receipt and notify the RSGB Examinations Department immediately of any discrepancies.

1.2. For Paper Examinations

- The Examination Secretary must check the examination paperwork on receipt and notify the RSGB Examinations Department immediately of any discrepancies.
- The internal envelope containing the Examination Papers must NOT be opened and all the paperwork must be securely locked away until required.
- The RSGB must be informed immediately if the security of the Examination Papers is compromised in any way.

- The internal envelope containing Examination Papers must not be opened until the appointed examination date and time. The envelope containing the Examination Papers must be opened in front of the candidates.
- All used and unused papers must be returned to the RSGB after the Examination.
- The Examination Papers are protected by copyright. Reproduction in any form is strictly prohibited.

2. Timing

- 2.1. Candidates should be in the examination room at least fifteen minutes before the start of the examination. They should not be allowed into the room until the First Named Invigilator is satisfied that the room is correctly prepared.
- 2.2. Candidates arriving more than 30 minutes late for examinations should not generally be admitted. The examination fee may be waived only in special circumstances at the discretion of the RSGB. A report must be made on the Report of Irregular Conduct page of the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet (EX306).
- 2.3. Every effort should be made to start the examination on time. The starting time may be varied by up to a maximum of 30 minutes **AFTER** the allotted start time but only if there are local problems.
- 2.4. Should the reason for varying the start of the examination not be resolved within 30 minutes (e.g. continuous disruption by noise) then the examination must be abandoned and a new examination request made for another date and time.

3. Calculators and other resources

- 3.1. Silent, battery powered, non-programmable calculators are permitted. The Invigilators may provide spares but are not required to do so.
- 3.2. All mobile telephones, smart watches and other electronic items (other than a calculator and the device being used to take the exam) must be switched off and deposited in a secure place so as not to be accessible during the examination.
- 3.3. No written or printed items are permitted on the candidate's desk (see 3.4) other than that issued by the exam centre. A mascot is allowed, as are sweets and a drink but excess packaging should be removed before the start of the examination.
- 3.4. A non-electronic translation dictionary is allowed where appropriate (see Section 8).

4. The Examination Room

- 4.1. Examination rooms must be registered with the RSGB before any examinations can be arranged and are liable to inspection to ensure the conditions described below are satisfied. **NB Inspection of new Examination venues may take several weeks to arrange.**
- 4.2. Only persons whose presence is required by the examination i.e. those that have been recorded on the Register and Assessment Sheet (RAS) should be allowed in the examination room immediately before, or during the examination. RSGB appointed inspectors and Ofcom officials also have right of admission, but their attendance should be recorded on the Report of Irregular Conduct. (See also Section 18).
- 4.3. The examination room must be a suitably quiet, undisturbed location, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation. Should the examination be disturbed by any unexpected noise or other distraction then it may be necessary to postpone the examination. (Refer to 2.4).
- 4.4. No display materials that might help the candidates may be visible in the examination room.
- 4.5. The seating arrangements must be such that overlooking between candidates, intentionally or otherwise, is reduced to a minimum.

- 4.6. The First Named Invigilator is responsible for drawing up a seating plan. The seating plan must include the name and location of each candidate, the direction in which they are facing and the position of invigilators and any readers.
- 4.7. Wherever possible:
- each candidate should face the same way.
 - each candidate should have a separate desk that must be of sufficient size to accommodate all the equipment needed.
 - candidates who are not working at separate desks must be sufficiently far apart as outlined above.
- 4.8. The First Named Invigilator must ensure the rules (this booklet) are available to each assistant Invigilator and that a notice is displayed on the outside of every door into the examination room, reading “NO ENTRY EXAMINATION IN PROGRESS - QUIET PLEASE”.
- 4.9. All candidates should normally sit in the same room but see also Section 8 Special Needs.

5. Invigilators

- 5.1. There must be a minimum of two Invigilators present at each examination. Where large numbers of candidates are sitting an examination, it is at the discretion of the First Named Invigilator to provide additional Invigilators. However, if the examination is held in a school and the candidates are all pupils of the school, and the Invigilator is a member of the school staff, then a single Invigilator is permitted in line with normal school procedures.
- 5.2. When readers/writers are provided for candidates with special assessment requirements, an extra Invigilator must also be present. Readers/writers must not also act as Invigilators at any time in that examination. See Section 8 Special Needs.
- 5.3. Invigilators should be responsible people of at least 18 years of age whose integrity may be relied upon for the conduct of the examination. It is the responsibility of the Examination Secretary to ensure that Invigilators meet the standards required and have the necessary experience to correctly and safely conduct the examination. Invigilators must not be related to any of the candidates. In the case of children under 18 years of age a parent or guardian may sit in the examination room in view of, but not in close proximity to, their child/children. Parents/Guardians may not act in any invigilation capacity.
- 5.4. Invigilators must be familiar with the contents of this document prior to the start of the examination.
- 5.5. For all examinations the First Named Invigilator may be an amateur, radio club official or other person of standing in the community. **The First Named Invigilator must NOT have been involved with the training for the examination being taken.** The RSGB reserves the right to centrally appoint invigilators in certain cases.
- 5.6. The identity and status (e.g. Regional Representative, Independent) of the Invigilators must be declared when the request for Examination Papers is made to the RSGB.
- 5.7. Exceptionally, late substitution of an Invigilator may be permitted but this fact and the identity of any substitutes must be reported on the Register and Assessment Sheet (RAS) when the Examination paperwork is returned to RSGB. A report must also be made on the Report of Irregular Conduct page of the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet (EX306).
- 5.8. Instructors who have been involved in the training of candidates may act as the Second Named Invigilator.
- 5.9. It is the responsibility of the First Named Invigilator, to ensure that:
- The conduct of the examination is correctly observed.

- The Examination paperwork, the Register and Assessment Sheet (RAS), and Amateur Radio Examination Booklet (EX306) are duly completed and signed and then scanned or photographed and emailed to the RSGB no later than the next working day.

At the beginning of the Examination

6. Identification of Candidates

- 6.1. The First Named Invigilator will invite candidates to enter the room only when it is ready and will indicate where each candidate should sit.
- 6.2. Each candidate must be identified to the First Named Invigilator by presenting one or more of the following:
 - a current passport, photo ID driving licence or other legal document showing their name, photograph, printed name and signature.
 - two current legal documents that have their printed name and signature e.g. driving licence, or credit card.
 - in the case of candidates under 16 years of age identification by parent, school bus pass, library card, birth certificate, letter from their educational establishment will be sufficient.

7. Other Materials

- 7.1. Each candidate will be provided with: -
 - a sheet of plain paper; all calculations etc. should be done on this paper.
 - a copy of the relevant Reference Data for use in Examinations.
- 7.2. **For Paper Examinations** each candidate will be provided with: -
 - A personalised copy of their Examination Paper, Optical Mark Sheet and relevant Examination Reference Material.
 - Examination Papers and Optical Mark Sheets are personalised and **MUST** be given to the named individual.
 - No extra paper should be given to the candidates; all calculations etc. should be written on the spare space available on the reverse of the Examination Papers.

8. Special Needs

- 8.1. The RSGB's intention is to be inclusive, and we are always keen to test a candidate's knowledge rather than their ability to perform in any specific examination environment.
- 8.2. Clubs, Trainers and Exam Centres **MUST** identify the candidate's needs as soon as possible and discuss them with the RSGB Examinations Department. It will be necessary to have written advice from the candidate's health or educational professional as to the nature of the disability. Suggestions as to how best the examination can be run to help the candidate are to be welcomed. This advice is to allow the RSGB to identify what reasonable adjustments can be made to assist the candidate in the examination. Discussions can take a number of weeks to agree the appropriate actions. Late notification of special needs is likely to result in a delay in arranging the examination.
- 8.3. Candidates who cannot read or write may have a reader and/or writer to read the questions to them and enter their given answer. The reader/writer must not be a

relative or peer of the candidate and must be at least 18 years of age. The identity of the proposed reader/writer MUST be declared to the RSGB in advance. At its discretion, for any examination, the RSGB may appoint a nominated reader/ writer from a central bank of approved & qualified volunteers.

- 8.4. A reader may only read the question and answers as presented on the screen and may not explain or interpret the questions and answers. Each candidate requiring the services of a reader, writer or prompter needs to be in a separate room and an additional Invigilator will be required in that room as well as the two in the main examination room.
- 8.5. Candidates with special examination requirements are catered for according to their individual needs. For example:
- Examination without diagrams can be produced for the registered blind or partially sighted.
 - 25% extra examination time is allowed when a reader/ writer is required.
 - 25% extra examination time is allowed when a candidate whose first language is not English has been in the UK for less than 2 years.
 - a non-electronic translation dictionary is allowed.
- 8.6. Such facilities MUST be requested and authorised before booking the examination.
- 8.7. Only facilities authorised and shown on the Register and Assessment Sheet (RAS) may be provided and unauthorised provision will result in that candidate's examination being invalidated.

9. Starting the Examination

9.1. Before candidates start the examination the First Named Invigilator must:

- Inform the candidates of the appropriate action to be taken in the event of an emergency e.g. fire alarm.
- Ensure that candidates are seated in accordance with the seating plan.
- Read out the rules to the candidates contained in the 'Online Amateur Radio Examination Booklet'. These rules are repeated in Annex 1 to this document.
- Check that candidates have all the necessary materials to complete the examination.
- Check that no unauthorised materials are present on or around the desks.

9.2. For Online Examinations

- Ensure that all candidates have successfully logged in to the TestReach® application.
- Draw the candidates' attention to the instruction on the front screen of the Examination.
- Announce clearly when the candidates may begin and the Pin Code to enter the exam.

9.3. For Paper Examinations

- Open the envelope containing the Examination Papers in front of the candidates and issue the papers to the candidates.
- Draw the candidates' attention to the instruction on the front of the Examination Paper and Instruct candidates to sign their Examination Paper and Optical Marking Sheet.

- Ensure an invigilator compares the signature of those candidates presenting non-photographic identification with the signature on that identification.
- Remind the candidates that their answers should initially be marked in pencil on the Optical Mark Sheet. Errors should be corrected using their eraser. When they are satisfied that their answers are final, they should INK IN the answer box on the Optical Mark Sheet using a black pen. The candidates must also be reminded that the Optical Mark Sheet must be completed in ink within the time allowed for the examination.
- Advise candidates that the Optical Marking Sheet must have no other markings made on it apart from their intended responses.
- Announce clearly when the candidates may begin writing and the time the examination will finish.

During the Examination

10. Supervision of Candidates

- 10.1. Invigilators must be alert and observe the candidates at all times during the examination.
- 10.2. Invigilators must not read or carry out other duties during the examination.
- 10.3. If a candidate needs to leave the examination room because of a personal indisposition an Invigilator must accompany them as far as the door to the toilets, and take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not:
 - speak to anyone else.
 - consult any notes.
 - make a telephone call.
 - breach the security of the examination whilst they are out of the room.

11. Irregular Conduct

- 11.1. Examples of Irregular Conduct include:
 - Varied Start time due to local difficulties.
 - Late entry of candidates due to late arrival.
 - Last minute change of Invigilator.
 - Last minute change of venue.
 - Inspection by RSGB/Ofcom.
 - Candidate misconduct.
 - Candidates report of invalid exam question (invigilators to record the candidates name, the question number and the nature of the challenge).
 - Any act, intentional or otherwise, conferring or appearing to confer an unfair or unpermitted advantage to a candidate or group of candidates.
 - Fire alarm/emergency evacuation.
 - Failure to record relevant details on the Report of Irregular Conduct Page is itself irregular conduct.

- 11.2. Cases of irregular conduct must be dealt with as they occur and recorded in the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet. (See 11.1 for examples of irregular conduct.).
- 11.3. In cases where unauthorised material is discovered, wherever practicable, the First Named Invigilator should remove and retain all such material.
- 11.4. If, after the examination has finished, a candidate (or parent) demands the return of confiscated items, they must be warned that this may prejudice any appeal. Details are to be recorded on the Report of Irregular Conduct page of the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet.
- 11.5. The candidate will normally be allowed to complete the examination, but a note of the incident must be made in the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet. The candidate must be warned that acceptance of the Examination is entirely at the discretion of the RSGB.
- 11.6. The candidate should, after the examination, be given a written note informing them that a report of "Irregular Conduct" will be made together with the address of the RSGB. In the case of children, the note should be given to the parent/guardian together with an explanation of what has happened.
- 11.7. The First Named Invigilator, after consulting with the Second Named Invigilator, has the authority to expel a candidate from the examination room, if their continued presence would be disruptive to the other candidates. Should this occur, children must not be left unsupervised.
- 11.8. Where it is considered desirable, the RSGB may impose additional requirements to ensure impartial invigilation of the exam.
- 11.9. Where evidence of irregular conduct surfaces after the examination the processing of results will be suspended pending resolution.
- 11.10. In all cases the standard of proof of irregular conduct shall be 'beyond reasonable doubt'. It is not necessary to show absolute proof.
- 11.11. Where malpractice such as collusion is suspected any examination result reasonably suspected of being unsafe may be voided and the candidate(s) required to re-sit the examination at their expense.
- 11.12. The 'The Handling of Irregularities and Appeals' document (available from the RSGB website) gives further details on the handling of irregularities and the appeal process.

12. Emergencies

- 12.1. In the event of an emergency affecting a single candidate, the candidate, wherever possible should be assisted to leave the examination room. They should be accompanied at all times, as their welfare requires.
- 12.2. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the examination room/building it should be performed in accordance with local instructions.
- 12.3. If the examination room or building is evacuated, consideration should be given to:
 - whether the examination needs to be abandoned.
 - supervising the candidates as closely as possible so as to ensure there is no collusion.
 - whether there is merit in a phased or delayed evacuation, with candidates, where possible, taking the computer with them so the examination may be completed elsewhere.
- 12.4. If the examination can be resumed, in the examination room or elsewhere, candidates should be given time to compose themselves and be allowed the full time remaining.

- 12.5. If the First Named Invigilator is satisfied that the overall integrity has been maintained and candidates have not been treated adversely, candidates can complete the exam and results issued in accordance with these guidelines. If any uncertainty exists, the results should not be issued.
- 12.6. A full report of the emergency must be recorded as Irregular Conduct in the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet. Any withheld results will be issued within 28 days.

Ending the Examination

13. Finishing the Examination

13.1. **For Online Examinations:**

- Thirty minutes, and again five minutes before the end of the exam each candidate will receive warning messages on their screen that the exam is about to close and should submit their answers by clicking on “End Exam” in the top right corner of the screen.
- At the end of the allowed time, the First Named Invigilator should then announce that any remaining candidates must leave the room.

13.2. **For Paper Examinations:**

- Ten minutes before the end of the examination the First Named Invigilator must inform the candidates of the time remaining and remind them of the need to complete the Optical Mark Sheet in black ink. At the end of the examination candidates should be told to stop writing.
- Optical Mark Sheets and Examination Papers must be collected whilst any remaining candidates are still seated.
- For Foundation and Intermediate Examinations collect the Optical Mark Sheets in preparation for local indicative marking.
- Candidates question papers are to be inserted into the provided envelope – don’t seal at this time.
- For Full and Direct to Full Examinations both the Examination Papers and Optical Mark Sheet must be sealed in front of any remaining candidates.
- The First Named Invigilator should then announce that any remaining candidates must leave the room.

14. Marking of the Examination

14.1. **For Online Examinations:**

- Once submitted the software marks the examination and issues a provisional result.
- The Amateur Radio Examination Booklet (EX306) and Register and Assessment Sheet (RAS) should be scanned or photographed after the First Named Invigilator has had the opportunity to enter any final comments on the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet (e.g. a challenge by a candidate). These documents must be emailed to the RSGB (exams@rsgb.org.uk) no later than the next working day.

14.2. **For Paper Examinations:**

- Invigilators must mark Foundation and Intermediate examinations using the supplied Marking Keys (one for each candidate). The Feedback Sheets should be marked for each question as “correct” or “incorrect” with a tick or cross respectively. Under no circumstances should any marks be made on the Optical Mark Sheet.
- Results within 2 marks of the pass mark must be re-checked.
- The Examination Papers, Marking Keys and Optical Mark Sheets **must** then be sealed in the envelope provided with the First and Second Named Invigilators signatures across the seal. These documents are confidential between the candidate and the RSGB and are **not** to be copied in any way.
- The sealed envelope, together with the Amateur Radio Examination Document (EX306) and RAS should be sealed in the outer return envelope after the First Named Invigilator has had the opportunity to enter any final comments on the Amateur Radio Examination Document (e.g. a challenge by a candidate). This envelope must be posted to the RSGB no later than the next working day.

15. Issuing of Results

15.1. ***For Online Examinations:***

- Candidates should be reminded that the official results are formally issued by the RSGB Examinations Department prior to being uploaded to Ofcom.
- This central verification process will take up to six working days after receipt of the examination documentation at HQ and candidates should not call RSGB Examination Department until at least ten days have elapsed.

15.2. ***For Paper Examinations:***

- If all candidates are indicated as being successful by the indicative marking, they may be informed as a group, otherwise they shall be informed in private of their indicative mark. Candidates should be reminded that the official results are issued by the RSGB Examinations Department based on the Optical Mark Sheets after the results have been uploaded to Ofcom.
- **This central marking process will take up to 10 working days plus postal delays and candidates should not call RSGB Examination Department until at least 14 days have elapsed.**

16. Re-sits

- 16.1. Unsuccessful candidates may re-sit the examination. The normal application process applies, which means that it will normally be at least ten days before a candidate can re-sit the examination.

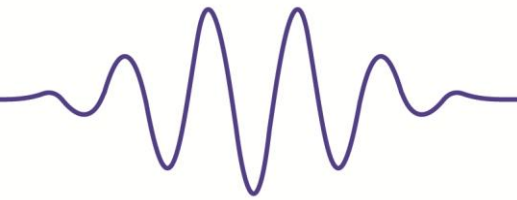
17. Dispute Procedures

- 17.1. In the event of doubt about the validity of a question or the correctness of the answer, the question should be challenged by giving the question number and the reason for the challenge on the Report of Irregular Conduct in the Amateur Radio Examination Booklet.
- 17.2. Candidates may subsequently challenge a question, and this should be made using the online form [here](#) by the next working day after the examination. Any undue delay may prejudice the outcome.

- 17.3. The RSGB Examinations Group will collect evidence and rule fairly concerning challenges to questions, in accordance with current educational and legal standards.
- 17.4. Candidates may also appeal regarding the conduct of the examination and should do so to the RSGB Examinations Department within five days of the examination date. Any undue delay may prejudice the outcome.
- 17.5. The RSGB Examinations Quality Assurance Manager will collect evidence and rule fairly, in accordance with current educational and legal standards.
- 17.6. A decision of the RSGB Examinations Quality Assurance Manager / Examinations Group is final, unless it is appealed on the grounds of unfair or improper procedures. There is a fee for such an appeal, returnable if the appeal is upheld. Further advice is available from the Examinations Department at the RSGB.

18. Examination Spot Checks

- 18.1. The RSGB and Ofcom may appoint local Inspectors to scrutinise the conduct of examinations. These inspections take place without prior notice to ensure security. Appointed Inspectors must be allowed immediate access to ALL examination facilities in order to inspect the following:
 - Identification of candidates and Invigilators present.
 - Conduct of the examination.
 - Examination room.
- 18.2. The purpose of the inspection is to ensure that the proper procedures are being followed and not to interfere or take over the conduct of the examination. Nonetheless, if an irregularity is noted which may prejudice the integrity or validity of the examination, the Inspector may advise the First Named Invigilator immediately so that, if possible, remedial action may be taken and the examination permitted to continue.
- 18.3. If an irregularity is found that cannot be rectified, then there may be no option but to suspend the examination. Either the First Named Invigilator, or the Inspector should inform the candidates. If the examination has started, then it should normally be allowed to continue without disruption unless the safety of the candidates or officials is in jeopardy.
- 18.4. Each examination fee paid to the RSGB will be held over for six months and applied to a future examination by that candidate. Local fees (such as hall hire) are a matter between the club/centre and the candidates.
- 18.5. Failure to immediately admit an inspector or holding the examination at a different time or place without a proven good reason will result in automatic disqualification of that examination.



Annex 1:

Amateur Radio Examination Rules

EXAMINATION RULES MUST BE READ TO CANDIDATES BEFORE THE EXAMINATION

Time allowed for Examinations:

Foundation 60 minutes Intermediate 1 hour 30 minutes Full 2 hours.

Direct to Full 2 hours 30 minutes

- You must not have any notes, books or other information with you. If you have brought anything into the room, you must give it to an Invigilator before the examination begins.
- Mobile phones, smart watches and other devices with any communication functions (including Bluetooth) must be switched off (see previous statement) and deposited with an Invigilator.
- You may use a silent non-programmable calculator.
- Any calculations can be done on the paper provided. This paper must be handed to the invigilator at the end of the exam.
- Sweets and drinks are allowed, please consume quietly and remove excess packaging.
- You must not communicate with anyone in any way, apart from an Invigilator.
- If you do have any problems and need to speak to an Invigilator, please put your hand up to attract attention. Do not make a noise or disturb other candidates.
- Your answers must be all your own work and invigilators will not be able to explain questions.
- If you need to use the bathroom during the examination this is allowed but you will not be able to go back and look at questions you've already answered. The invigilator can see the question number you are working on so if you attempt to go back to those questions it could invalidate your examination. (ONLINE EXAMS)
- If you do finish your work early and wish to leave the room, please raise your hand to attract the Invigilators' attention. Do not forget to 'Submit' your work to TestReach®.
- Please leave the room quietly so as not to disturb other candidates.
- Breaches of the examination rules may result in disqualification or other sanction.
- If you wish to challenge a question you should make a note of the question and the question number before finishing your examination and use the exam Challenges/Queries link on the RSGB web site to submit your challenge withing 24 hours.
- If you wish to appeal against the conduct of the examination, you should do so within five days by writing to the RSGB.

Please note that OFCOM / RSGB reserve the right to inspect and observe at any examination venue without prior notice.