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Radio Communication Examinations

Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced

These Examinations are recognised by Ofcom as the qualifications 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 must be maintained at all times.

The administration for the Radio Communication Examinations (RCE) will be carried out by the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB), but the responsibility for the overall running of the RCE will be the Radio Communication Foundation (RCF).

The following rules have been approved by the RCF for the conduct of the RCE.

1. Safe Custody of Question Papers and Examination Integrity

The security of examination question papers is paramount in protecting the integrity of the examination.

- 1.1 The Examination Secretary must check the examination paperwork on receipt, and notify the RSGB immediately of any discrepancies.
- 1.2 Question paper packets must be securely locked away until required.
- 1.3 The RSGB must be informed immediately if the security of the question papers is compromised in any way.
- 1.4 Packets containing question papers must not be opened until the appointed examination date and time. Examination papers must be opened in front of the candidates.

1.5 All used and unused papers must be returned to RSGB.

1.6 The examination question papers are protected by copyright therefore any reproduction is strictly prohibited.

2. Timing

2.1 Candidates should be in the examination room at least ten minutes before the start of the examination to complete examination documentation. They should not be allowed into the room until the First Named Invigilator is satisfied that the room is correctly prepared, including the provision of specific seating for the candidates.

2.2 Candidates arriving late but before half of the examination time has elapsed may be admitted and allowed the full time for the examination, this is at the discretion of the First Named Invigilator. A report must be given in the irregular conduct documentation.

2.3 Every effort should be made to start the examination on time. The starting time may be varied only if there are local problems and by up to a maximum of thirty minutes. Varied times must be shown on the seating plan and in the irregular conduct documentation.

3. Calculators and other resources

3.1 Silent, battery powered, non-programmable calculators are permitted. The Invigilators may provide spares.

3.2 Candidates should provide themselves with a blue or black pen. The Invigilators may provide spares.

3.3 No written or printed items are permitted on the candidate's desk. A drink and a mascot are allowed.

4. The Examination Room

4.1 Examination rooms must be registered with the RSGB and are liable to inspection to ensure the conditions below are satisfied.

4.2 Only persons whose presence are required by the examination (i.e. those that have been recorded on the REQ/CATCE and Invigilator Marksheet), should be allowed in the examination room during, immediately before or after the examination.

4.3 The examination room must be a suitably quiet, undisturbed location, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation.

4.4 No display materials that might help the candidates may be visible in the examination room.

4.5 An accurate clock must be visible to each candidate without turning round.

4.6 A notice at the front of the room must show the actual start, half way and finish times of examination.

4.7 The seating arrangements must be such that the minimum distance between candidates, in all directions is 1.5 metres (clear space) and that overlooking between candidates, intentionally or otherwise, is prevented.

4.8 Wherever possible:

a. each candidate should face the same way;

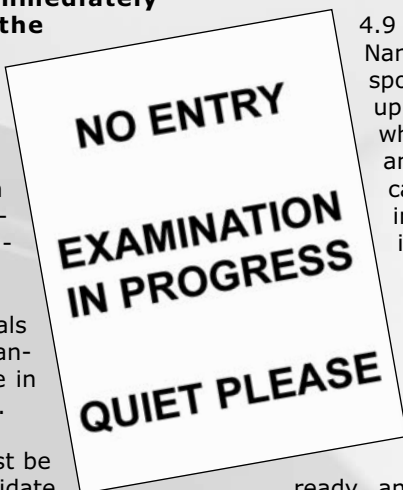
b. each candidate should have a separate desk that must be of sufficient size to accommodate all the papers needed;

c. candidates who are not working at separate desks must be sufficiently far apart to give the 1.5m clear space as outlined above.

4.9 The First Named Invigilator is responsible for the drawing up of a seating plan, which includes the name and location of each candidate, the direction in which they are facing and the position of invigilators and any readers.

4.10 The First Named Invigilator will invite candidates to enter the room when it is ready, and will indicate where each should sit.

4.11 The First Named Invigilator must ensure the rules are available to each assistant Invigilator and that a



a. the identity and status of the First and Second Named Invigilators must be declared when the request for examination papers is made to the RSGB.

b. exceptionally, late substitution of an Invigilator may be permitted but this fact and the substitute's identity must be reported on the Invigilator Mark Sheet when the examination papers are returned to RSGB.

c. Instructors may act as the Second Named Invigilator.

5.5 It is the responsibility of the First Named Invigilator, to ensure that the

a. conduct of the examination is correctly observed

b. candidate question papers (used and unused); the Invigilator Mark Sheet, Tally Sheet and Seating Plan are duly completed and signed, and posted to the RSGB no later than the next working day.

At the beginning of the Examination

6. Identification of Candidates

6.1 The identity of each candidate taking an examination must be established.

6.2 Each candidate should present at the beginning of the examination their completed record of achievement form.

6.3 Each candidate must be identified to the First Named Invigilator by one or more of the following mechanisms

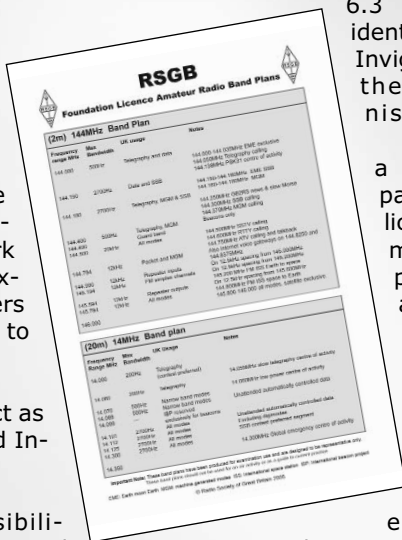
a. by presenting a current passport, photo ID driving licence or other legal document showing their name, photograph, printed name and signature

b. alternatively they may provide two other current legal documents which have their printed name and signature

e.g. driving licence, cheque guarantee card or credit card

c. in the case of candidates under 16 years of age, their Record of Achievement card supported by another means of identification e.g. school bus pass, library card, birth certificate or letter from their educational establishment

d. in the case that the examination is conducted on behalf of a school or college, if the candidate/s are known to the First Named Invigilator (who must be a member of staff), that will suffice.



7. Examination Papers and Other Materials

- 7.1 Each Foundation candidate will be provided with
- the question paper
 - the Schedule to the Foundation Amateur Licence
 - Frequency to Wavelength chart
 - Frequency Allocation Table
 - simplified IARU band plan of the 14MHz and 144MHz bands
- 7.2 Each Intermediate candidate will be provided with:
- the question paper
 - the Schedule to the Intermediate Amateur Licence
- 7.3 Each Advanced candidate will be provided with
- the question paper
 - a clean copy of the Licence terms, Provisions and Limitations Booklet
 - a formula sheet
 - the IARU band plan of the 14MHz and 144MHz bands
- 7.4 No extra paper should be given to the candidates, all calculations etc should be written on the spare space available on the question papers.

8. Special Needs

- 8.1 Clubs/Exam Centres must identify the candidate's needs at an early stage and discuss them with the RCE department at RSGB Abbey Court. This is to identify what provisions can be made to facilitate the candidate in the examination. It will be necessary to have written advice from the candidate's health or educational professional as to the nature of these provisions.
- 8.2 The facility afforded for candidates with disabilities to take the Radio Communications examination in their own homes is provided in order to make the examination available to those who are unable to attend at an Examination Centre.
- 8.3 Whilst Invigilators will wish to put the candidates at ease, they must not allow a sympathetic approach to affect the conduct of the examinations.
- 8.4 Candidates who can read and write should take the examination in the normal way.

8.5 Candidates who cannot read or write may have a reader/writer to read the questions to them and mark their given answer. The reader/writer must not be a radio amateur, relative or peer of the candidate. The identity of the reader/writer MUST be declared to the RSGB in advance.



8.6 A reader may only read the question as written and may not explain or interpret the question.

8.7 When readers/writers are provided a separate Invigilator must also be present.

8.8 Candidates needing special examination requirements are catered for according to their individual requirements; for example:

a. an examination paper without diagrams is produced for the registered blind or partially sighted

b. examination papers printed onto coloured paper for candidates with dyslexia

c. reasonable extra examination time is allocated when a reader/writer is required

9. Starting the Examination

9.1 Before candidates start the examination the First Named Invigilator must

a. inform the candidates of the appropriate action to be taken in the event of an emergency e.g. fire alarm

b. ensure that candidates are seated in accordance with the seating plan

c. read rules out to candidates

d. check that candidates have all the necessary materials to complete the examination

e. check that unauthorised materials are not present on or around the desks

f. open the packet of question papers in front of the candidates and issue the papers to the candidates

g. draw the candidates attention to the instruction on the front of the question paper and remind the candidates that their answers are to be shown by ticking the box at the side of the question and if an error is made to fill in the box

completely and tick another box

h. announce clearly when the candidates may begin writing and the time the examination will finish

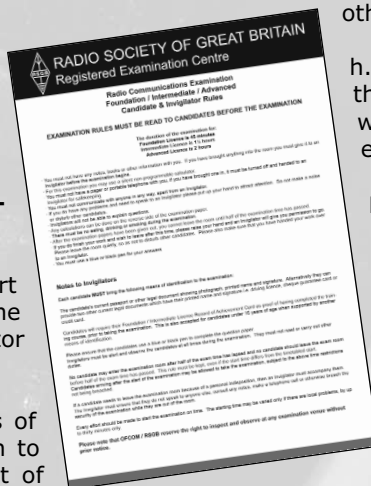
During the Examination

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 The First Named Invigilator should remind candidates that they are forbidden to communi-



cate in any way with, seek assistance from or give assistance to another candidate whilst they are in the examination room.

11. Irregular Conduct

11.1 Cases of irregular conduct must be dealt with as they occur and recorded on the Report of Irregular Conduct. The existence of such a report must be noted on the Invigilator Mark Sheet.

11.2 Wherever practical, the First Named Invigilator should remove and retain any unauthorised material discovered in the possession of the candidate.

11.3 If, after the examination has finished, a candidate (or parent) demands the return of confiscated items, s/he must be warned that this may prejudice any appeal that the examination results be allowed. If the demand is affirmed, the confiscated items must be returned but details recorded.

11.4 The candidate will normally be allowed to complete the examination but their question paper must be annotated "Irregular Conduct" and the candidate warned that acceptance of the question paper is entirely at the discretion of the RCF.

11.5 Such question papers shall not be marked or any indication of a result given. Question papers should be sent, unmarked, to the RSGB to-

gether with a report of the incident. The candidate should, after the examination be given a written note informing them that a report of "Irregular Conduct" will be made and the address of the RSGB. In the case of children, this note should be given to the parent/guardian together with an explanation of what has happened.

11.6 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.

11.7 Where it is considered desirable, the RCF may impose additional requirements to ensure impartial invigilation of the examination

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

- a. whether the examination needs to be abandoned
- b. supervising the candidates as closely as possible so as to ensure there is no collusion
- c. in a phased or delayed evacuation, whether there is merit in candidates taking the examination papers 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 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, papers may be marked and results issued in accordance with these guidelines. If any uncertainty exists, the results should not be issued.



12.6 A full report must be submitted to the RSGB. Any withheld marks will be issued within 10 days (28 days for Advanced).

Ending the Examination

13. Finishing the Examination

13.1 Five minutes before the end of the examination the First Named Invigilator should inform the candidates of the time remaining. At the end of the examination candidates should be told to stop writing.

13.2 Question papers should be collected whilst the candidates are still seated and should be checked for completeness of details at the time of collection. Invigilators should supervise completion by the candidate if discrepancies are found.

13.3 Papers such as the Schedule to the licence, Frequency to Wavelength conversion chart, Frequency Allocation Table, IARU band plans and formula sheet must be returned to the RSGB with the examination papers.

13.4 Once all question papers have been collected the First Named Invigilator may announce that candidates may leave the room.

14. Marking of the Question Papers

14.1 The marking of Foundation and Intermediate papers is carried out by the Invigilators present after all the candidates have left the room. The Advanced papers will continue to be marked by and results issued from RSGB HQ.

14.2 If the candidate has changed his/her mind as to the correct answer but shown this in an incorrect way, the mark will count if it is clear what is intended. The decision of the First Named Invigilator is final.

14.3 Multiple ticks or other irregularities shall be regarded as an incorrect answer to that question.

14.4 Failures and passes by one mark either way must be re-checked by both Invigilators.

14.5 Candidates' answers must be entered on to a Tally Sheet showing the number of each question, the question identification number and the number of times each possible answer, (A, B, C or D) was selected by candidates sitting that paper. This information should be returned to the RSGB where it will be used to analyse the merits of each question in the question bank.

14.6 Once the marking of question papers, the candidate result sheet, invigilator marksheet and tally sheets have been completed the examination question papers must be immediately placed in the return envelope to the RSGB and sealed with the First and Second Named Invigilators signatures across the seal.



14.7 The papers must be sealed BEFORE candidates are re-admitted to the room and given their results

14.8 All examination materials including the question papers, Invigilator Mark Sheet, Tally Sheet and Seating Plan must be posted to the RSGB no later than the next working day.

15. Issuing of Results

15.1 Failure and Passes shall be recorded on the candidates result sheet which shall be signed by First Named Invigilator and Second Named Invigilator and handed to the candidates.

15.2 All candidates shall be informed in private of their mark/results.

15.3 Candidates may be given a mark sheet showing the syllabus item number and whether they answered correctly or not.

16. Re-sits

16.1 Unsuccessful candidates may re-take but will have to apply for examination papers in the same way as originally done, providing a minimum of 10 working days notice and full payment will be required.

17. Dispute Procedures

17.1 The question paper should be marked according to the answer sheet even if the answer is thought to be wrong. In the event of a dispute over the

results, the results should not be issued to the candidate.

17.2 Questions may be appealed and must be made in writing to the RCE Examination Group, via the RSGB when returning the examination papers.

17.3 The RCF Examination Group will collect evidence and rule fairly, in accordance with current educational and legal standards. The decision of the RCF Examination Group is final.

17.4 Candidates may also appeal regarding the conduct of the examination and should do so within 7 days of the examination date, Any undue delay may prejudice the appeal.

18. Examination Spot Checks

18.1 The RCF and Ofcom may appoint local inspectors to scrutinise Examinations, to ensure security is correctly observed at any examination venue without prior notice. Such inspectors must be allowed fair access to ALL examination facilities in order to inspect the following

- a) secure custody of question papers and that the seal is intact immediately prior to the examination;
- b) identification of candidates and Invigilators present;
- c) conduct of the examination;
- d) 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 (such as the examination packet being found prematurely open), then there may be no option but

to suspend the examination. Either the first named invigilator, an instructor (if present) 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 Normally the examination fees paid to the RSGB will be held over 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.