

**TERMS & CONDITIONS
AND GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING**

**OFFICER CADETSHIPS (NAVAL SERVICE) IN THE
DEFENCE FORCES 2026**

IMPORTANT NOTE

A person who wishes to apply for these competitions should read this document carefully prior to completing the application form. An application should only be submitted if the applicant is satisfied that they fulfil all the governing conditions detailed in this document.

The acceptance by the Chief of Staff - Defence Forces, of an application form from a person desiring to be a Defence Forces officer should not be regarded as an admission by the Chief of Staff that such a person satisfies all or any of these conditions or that they are not disqualified by law from becoming an officer of the Defence Forces.

Everything contained in these conditions, notes and annexes is subject to the overriding authority of the governing statutes, regulations and schemes, including the Defence Act, 1954 (as amended and extended) and statutory provisions made, or to be made, thereunder, and any other relevant provisions, agreements, legislation, public service policy, circulars and/or instructions and any errors which may appear herein are subject to correction at any time.

In addition, all terms and conditions outlined in this document are subject to change under the Defence Forces conciliation and arbitration scheme and public service agreements as may be concluded from time to time.

Appointments are open to all eligible candidates, on an equal basis.

Exceptions to the governing conditions cannot be made in individual circumstances.

Candidates, when completing their application form, will be required to confirm that they have not:

- *knowingly or recklessly provided false information*
- *canvassed any person with or without inducements*
- *impersonated a candidate at any stage of the process*
- *interfered with or compromised the process in any way*

CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY

NOTE FOR FUTURE COMPETITIONS

These conditions apply for the 2026 Cadetship Competition only and are due for review in advance of any future competition.

This document is divided into two sections. Section 1 details the governing conditions, rules and qualifications required for the award of Cadetships in the Defence Forces. Section 2 contains general information on the various Cadetships on offer, together with details of pay and conditions of Cadets and Officers.

Cadetships are available in the following:

NAVAL SERVICE (Operations Branch)

NAVAL SERVICE (Marine Engineering)

NAVAL SERVICE (Electrical Engineering)

Subject to the specific criteria being fulfilled as outlined below, applications may be made by the following:

GRADUATES

SCHOOL LEAVERS/NON-GRADUATES

SERVING PERSONNEL

SECTION 1

CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE AWARD OF CADETSHIPS IN THE PERMANENT DEFENCE FORCE

1. GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify for the award of a Cadetship, a candidate shall:

a. at the time of application be-

(i) a citizen of the State,

or

be any other person who has a lawful entitlement to reside and work within the State for the period of enlistment required for the course of training as a cadet and, if subsequently commissioned as an officer, for the additional period that is required for the purpose of any such appointment.

(ii) Be of good character and satisfy any security clearance requirement.

b. Be 18 years of age or above and under 39 years of age on the closing date for applications i.e. 8th March 2026.

2. MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

(a) Naval Service – Operations Branch

School Leaver or Non-Graduate Candidates

Must possess a minimum of Grade H5 in 3 Higher Level papers, and Grade 04 in 3 Ordinary Level Papers or Grade H7 in 3 Higher level papers.

Candidates must have obtained these grades in a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate examination for CAO computation purposes.

AND

A candidate's educational qualifications must include a minimum of Grade 06 at Ordinary level or H6 at Higher Level in the following subjects:

- (i) Mathematics.
- (ii) Irish. NUI matriculation exemptions apply.
- (iii) English. Candidates whose first language is not English must satisfy the English language requirements in accordance with NUI Matriculations Regulations.

Candidates must also have obtained a minimum of Grade H4 in 4 Higher Level papers, and Grade O2 in 2 Ordinary level papers or Grade H7 in 2 Higher level papers, a candidate may use the results of another sitting of the Leaving Certificate for the minimum educational requirements in (i) to (iii) above.

Where a school Leaver applicant is undertaking a field of study in Nautical Science at Level 7 (or below) of the NFQ, they may be facilitated in continuing their training to complete their field of study in Nautical Science at Level 7 of the NFQ in a college nominated by the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service.

Where a School Leaver applicant has undertaken / is undertaking a Level 8 (or below) NFQ qualification not specified above, they may seek a determination that the course of study meets the requirements subject to submitting suitable evidence of equivalence to **Defence Forces Recruitment Section, Defence Forces Headquarters, Department of Defence, Station Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, W12 AD93**, for the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service's determination.

Graduate Candidates

Must have successfully completed a bachelor's degree programme at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

OR

Have successfully completed a bachelor's degree programme at Level 7 of the National Framework of Qualifications, from a recognised institution, in Nautical Science.

(b) Naval Service – Marine Engineering

School Leaver or Non-Graduate Candidates

Must possess a minimum of H5 in 3 Higher Level papers, and a minimum of Grade O4 in 3 Ordinary Level papers or Grade H6 in 3 Higher Level papers.

Candidates must have obtained these grades in a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate examination for CAO computation purposes.

AND

A candidate's educational qualifications must include:

- (i) Mathematics. Minimum of Grade H4 Higher Level Paper OR a H4 in applied Maths plus a H5 in Maths.
- (ii) Irish. Minimum Grade O6 in an Ordinary Level paper or Grade H6 in a Higher-Level paper. NUI matriculation exemptions apply.
- (iii) English. Minimum Grade O6 in an Ordinary Level paper or Grade H6 in a Higher-Level paper. Candidates whose first language is not English must satisfy the English language requirements in accordance with NUI Matriculations Regulations.

Candidates must have achieved the minimum requirements to commence Marine Engineering in the NMCI (e.g. 227 CAO Points in 2026). Candidates who have achieved the minimum requirements to commence Mechanical Engineering in MTU (e.g. 466 CAO Points in 2026) will commence this course of training instead.

Candidates must also have attained a minimum of Grade H5 in 3 Higher Level papers, and a minimum of Grade O4 in 3 Ordinary Level or Grade H6 in 3 Higher Level papers, a candidate may use the results of another sitting of the Leaving Certificate for the minimum educational requirements in (i) to (iii) above.

A School Leaver applicant who has undertaken / is undertaking a Marine Engineering Level 7 of the NHQ, may be facilitated in continuing their training to complete an engineering programme in Marine Engineering at Level 7 of the NFQ in a college nominated by the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service.

Where a School Leaver applicant has undertaken / is undertaking a Level 8 NFQ qualification not specified above, they may seek a determination that the course of study meets the requirements subject to submitting suitable evidence of equivalence to **Defence Forces Recruitment Section, Defence Forces Headquarters, Department of Defence, Station Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, W12 AD93**, for the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service's determination.

Graduate Candidates

Must have successfully completed a bachelor's degree programme at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

OR

Have successfully completed a bachelor's degree programme at Level 7 of the National Framework of Qualifications, from a recognised institution, in Marine Engineering.

(c) Naval Service - Electrical Engineering

School Leaver or Non – Graduate Candidates

Must possess a minimum of Grade H4 in 4 Higher Level papers, and a minimum of Grade O2 in 2 Ordinary Level papers or Grade H7 in 2 Higher Level papers.

Candidates must have obtained these grades in a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate examination for CAO computation purposes,

AND

A candidate's educational qualifications must include the following:

- (i) Mathematics. Minimum of Grade H4 in a Higher-Level paper.
- (ii) Irish. Minimum Grade O6 in an Ordinary Level paper or Grade H6 in a Higher-Level paper. NUI matriculation exemptions apply.
- (iii) English. Minimum Grade O6 in an Ordinary Level paper or Grade H6 in a Higher-Level paper. Candidates whose first language is not English must satisfy the English language requirements in accordance with NUI Matriculations Regulations.

Candidates must have achieved the minimum requirements to commence a Level 8 Degree in Electrical Engineering in MTU (e.g. 380 CAO Points in 2026) or Electronic Engineering in MTU (e.g. 347 CAO Points in 2026)

Candidates must also have attained a minimum of Grade H4 in 4 Higher Level papers, and a minimum of Grade O2 in 2 Ordinary Level papers or Grade H7 in 2 Higher Level papers, a candidate may use the results of another sitting of the Leaving Certificate for the minimum educational requirements in (i) to (iii) above.

Where a school Leaver applicant is undertaking an engineering programme in Electrical / Electronic Engineering at Level 8 of the NFQ, they may be facilitated in continuing their training to complete an engineering programme in Electrical / Electronic Engineering at Level 8 of the NFQ in a college nominated by the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service.

Where a School Leaver applicant has undertaken / is undertaking a Level 8 NFQ qualification not specified above, they may seek a determination that the course of study meets the requirements subject to submitting, suitable evidence of equivalence, **to Defence Forces Recruitment Section, Defence Forces Headquarters, Department of Defence, Station Road, Newbridge, Co.**

Kildare, W12 AD93, for the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Service's determination.

Graduate Candidates

Graduate Candidates must have successfully completed a bachelor's degree programme at Level 8 or higher of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Leaving Certificate Applied does not qualify for the Cadetship competitions.**
- **Where applicable, applications for Cadetships are invited from persons who are sitting examinations in the competition year, which would enable them to satisfy the Minimum Educational Qualifications criteria for each cadetship category. Original documentary evidence that a candidate meets the minimum educational qualifications, as outlined above, must be presented to the relevant Interview Board Secretary. Applicants will be notified of a date via email when this evidence must be provided.**
- **Candidates must provide documentary proof from the National University of Ireland, at Stage 1 of the selection procedure, for any educational exemptions. Further information is available on www.nui.ie**
- **To be eligible to apply for a Cadetship, holders of European and International qualifications must satisfy the Matriculation Registration requirements as outlined in the current "NUI Matriculation Regulations available on www.nui.ie.**

The equivalent grades required for those candidates who sat the Leaving Certificate Examination prior to 2017 can be found at Annex E.

1. MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL STANDARDS

Candidates must be in good mental and bodily health and free from any physical defect, abnormality, physiological condition or history of serious illness likely to interfere with the efficient performance of their duties. See Annex C and D (Laser Eye Surgery and Fitness Testing)

The following are the minimum physical requirements:

a. Height

A candidates' height will be determined at the Medical Examination – see Para. 8. Weight and chest measurements must be in keeping with height and age.

Min. height: 157.48cm

Note: BMI will be determined at Stage 2, the Assessment Phase of competition.

b. Vision

Colour vision must be normal. Both eyes must be free from disfiguring or incapacitating abnormality and free from acute or chronic disease. There must be no evidence of squint or latent squint.

The eligibility of applicants who have had previous incisional or laser treatment to correct visual acuity will be determined at the Medical Examination. Please see Annex C for further information.

- Marine Branch:**

Vision not less than 6/9 in one eye and not less than 6/12 in the other eye with normal night vision, without the use of corrective lenses.

- Electrical Engineering Branch:**

Not less than 6/18 in each eye, corrected to not less than 6/6 in one eye and 6/9 in the other.

c. Dental

Candidates must be free from any serious periodontal disease and possess teeth to a specific standard, which is not less than the equivalent of eleven over eleven natural teeth functionally opposed. In certain circumstances, artificial teeth may be acceptable.

d. Hearing

A good standard of unaided hearing is essential. Candidates will be required to undergo an audiometric test at which:

- (1) The sum of the hearing threshold at 1,2,3, 4 and 6 kHz should not exceed the age and gender related warning levels contained in the "Guidelines on Hearing Checks and Audiometry Regulations 2007", issued by the Health and Safety Authority.
- (2) Candidates under 25 years of age must be able to hear all measured pure tones up to and including 8 kHz at 20dB in each ear. Candidates aged 25 and older must be able to hear all measured pure tones up to and including 8 kHz at 25dB in each ear. Candidates must also be free from acute or chronic ear disorders.

Candidates are advised to avoid all sources of loud noise or music for a period of 48 hours prior to this audiometric test, as exposure to such noise may adversely affect the results of the test.

N.B.: Candidates must satisfy these various medical and physical standards and requirements to remain in the Competition. In addition, successful Candidates will be required to undertake compulsory random drug testing throughout their career in the Defence Force in accordance with Defence Force Regulation A7.

2. APPLICATION FOR CADETSHIP

Candidates must apply online at www.military.ie. Candidates wishing to undertake the assessments through Irish must make this request known to the Defence Forces Recruitment Section at recruitment@defenceforces.ie

All correspondence with candidates will be done by e-mail for the duration of the competition. Candidates should ensure the e-mail address given is accurate and correct.

Each application is acknowledged automatically by the system within 24 hours. If an acknowledgement is not received within 48 hours of applying, candidates should immediately contact the Defence Forces Recruitment Section at 045 492553 or at recruitment@defenceforces.ie

Likewise, if an applicant's email address should change, the onus is on the applicant to contact the Defence Forces Recruitment Section immediately advising them of the change of email.

Serving members of the Permanent Defence Force will be required to include their Service Number on the application form.

All Candidates who are invited to attend for the 'Assessment' phase of the competition, as outlined under Selection Procedure below, will be required to bring valid identification, i.e. Passport or Driving Licence as proof of identity.

In addition, graduate candidates and candidates who have sat their Leaving Certificate examination prior to 2026 will be required to bring original documentary evidence that they meet the minimum educational qualifications, as outlined above.

Candidates called to Stage 3 - the Interview - will be required to bring their long form Birth Certificate (Photocopies are not acceptable).

SELECTION PROCEDURE - NAVAL SERVICE (Operations Branch), NAVAL SERVICE (Engineering)

The following competencies have been identified as being essential for a Naval Service Cadet. These competencies will be assessed throughout the various stages of the competition.

Competency	What the candidate will have to display
Planning and Organising	The ability to plan, prioritise and organise people and other resources.
Decision Making and Problem Solving	An ability to carefully analyse problems, to generate appropriate solutions. A preparedness to stand by a decision and to accept responsibility for its consequences.
Information Handling	The aptitude for absorbing information; to be able to identify relevant information.
Working with Others	An aptitude for working within a team environment; to be supportive of others.
Communication	Clear, concise and effective communication skills.
Leadership and Supervising	The ability and motivation to take responsibility for others; to co-ordinate and to delegate to others.
Personal Motivation and Discipline	A commitment to the Naval Service as a career. An ability to act on own initiative.
Resilience	Calmness when faced with conflicting demands and when working under pressure.
Physical capacity	To meet the standards set for the Naval Service Cadet.

Candidates, if selected, will be required to attend for the various stages of the selection procedure on the dates and times as notified by email. Candidates who fail to attend for any stage of the selection procedure will be disqualified from participation in any further stages of that competition.

Stage 1 – Online Psychometric Testing

Stage 1 of the selection procedure involves tests that measure a range of skills and qualities that are necessary in the job. These tests provide a consistent and suitable way of screening candidates at the initial stage of the selection campaign. These tests are designed to identify the most suitable people to go forward to the next stage of the Cadetship Competition. The tests have been designed so that they are fair to all applicants and are objectively scored.

Candidates will be required to complete an unsupervised psychometric test online within the timeframe specified by the Defence Forces. Candidates will be supplied with psychometric test familiarisation material to introduce them to the format of the tests.

Candidates who have attained the requisite score in the unsupervised online psychometric test, at Stage 1 will be required to attend for a subsequent supervised online psychometric test at Stage 2. If a candidate's performance at a supervised test is outside the expected scoring range from their unsupervised test at Stage 1, they may be excluded from subsequent stages of the selection process.

Candidates should pay particular attention to ensuring that the contact details specified on their application are correct.

Note: If a candidate fails to meet the minimum standard at Stage 1, they will not be permitted to proceed to the next stage of the competition.

Stage 2 – Assessment Phase

Naval Service candidates, who have attained the requisite score at Stage 1 of the competition, will be required to attend at the Defence Force Training Centre, Curragh Camp, Co Kildare, for the Assessment phase of the competition.

The Assessment Phase will consist of the following:

Physical Fitness Test.

To qualify for a Cadetship, candidates will be required to pass a physical fitness test, which is designed to assess their potential to undergo the rigours of military training. Candidates must attain the standard laid down to proceed in the competition. A candidate must complete this test as part of their Naval Service Cadetship application; this test is not valid for any other Cadetship applications or other Defence Force competitions. (See Annex 'D' for details of the test and suggested training programme. (See Annex 'D' for details of the test and suggested training programme).

Group Assessment: Candidates will be required to participate in a group assessment.

The Realistic Job Preview: This involves a briefing from Naval Service personnel during Stage 2 assessment phase, followed by a familiarisation visit to the Naval College, Haulbowline, Cork during Stage 3, the interview Stage through informal interaction with instructional staff and Cadets.

All components will be conducted on the one occasion.

Note: If a candidate fails to meet minimum standards of the Group Assessment Test, they will not be permitted to proceed to the next stage of the competition.

Online Personality Questionnaire.

Candidates who have attained the requisite score at Stage 2 of the competition will be sent an online personality questionnaire to be completed within the time frame specified by the Defence Force prior to attending for interview.

Stage 3 – The Interview

Successful candidates will be invited to attend a competency-based interview where they will be required to demonstrate competency in a selection of the following areas:

- Planning and Organising
- Decision Making and Problem Solving
- Information Handling
- Working with Others
- Communication
- Leadership and Supervising
- Personal Motivation and Discipline
- Resilience

In the competency-based interview candidates will be asked to give examples from their own experiences of life, school, university, hobbies, work, pastimes etc., to demonstrate evidence in several of the above areas. Candidates who fail any of the competencies at Interview will be deemed unsuccessful in the competition.

Feedback is available upon request. All requests for feedback must be received within 3 months of issuance of the individual's results.

3. BONUS MARKS.

Candidates who are members of the Defence Forces and who satisfy the requirements at paragraph 7(a) or 7(b) of these conditions will receive a % bonus mark of the total marks at the final interview. These bonus marks are as follows:

Serving NCO in the Permanent Defence Force	8%
Serving Private (holding the rank of Private 3* or Equivalent) in the Permanent Defence Force	6%
Serving Officer or NCO in the Reserve Defence Force	3%
Serving Private in the Reserve Defence Force	2%

The process of awarding bonus marks may be the subject of review in advance of future Cadet Competitions.

4. PROVISIONS FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

The following personnel of the Permanent Defence Forces will be eligible for the award of additional marks as specified in paragraph 4 of these conditions:

- a. They should hold the rank specified on the date of interview

Note: Before entering upon the prescribed course of Cadet training successful candidates who are Non-Commissioned Officers of the Permanent Defence Force will revert to the rank Able Seaman / Private Three Star.

- b. Members of the Army Reserve or the Naval Service Reserve who have been on the effective strength of their Units from 1 January, of the year previous to the competition year, and who continue to remain on such effective strength up to the date of commencement of interviews by the Final Interview Board, and—who have Completed a course(s) of training or instruction amounting to a minimum total period of fourteen days, as prescribed in paragraph 40 of Defence Force Regulations R.5.

Note: Successful candidates who are members of the Army Reserve (AR) or Naval Service Reserve (NSR) must, before entering upon the prescribed course of Cadet training, tender the resignation of their commissions if they are Officers or be discharged from the AR or NSR if they are Non-Commissioned personnel.

5. EMPLOYEE VETTING BY AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA.

Candidates who are invited to attend before an Interview Board will be required to complete and sign a Garda Vetting Application Form. This will, pursuant to the Data Protection Act 2018, authorise An Garda Síochána to furnish to the Military Authorities, a statement that there are no convictions recorded against the candidate, or if applicable, a statement of convictions.

6. MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

A panel will be formed from Candidates who are successful at interview. Candidates on this panel will be required to undergo and pass a detailed medical examination, which includes an audiometric test and pulmonary function tests, blood tests, an electrocardiograph and full ophthalmology review.

Candidates who do not pass the medical examination owing to a medical condition that, in the opinion of the Examining Medical Officer, is capable of being remedied by treatment, may be afforded the opportunity of having the condition rectified ***within one week of their examination***. Such candidates will be required to submit medical evidence indicating that the condition has been remedied. They may be required to undergo further medical examination, by another Medical Officer. Medical fitness will not be confirmed until the results of all tests are available to the Medical Officer.

7. AWARD OF CADETSHIPS

The Minister for Defence, whose decision is final, awards Cadetships to successful candidates. The award of Cadetships will be subject to successful candidates passing a pre-enlistment medical examination that is in addition to the detailed medical examination as outlined at paragraph 9.

A candidate who is awarded a Cadetship must report for enlistment at the required time and place. Failure to report for enlistment will result in the Cadetship being forfeited. The closing date for inducting applicants from the 2026 Cadetship competition will be confirmed later.

8. EXPENSES

Candidates, other than a member of the Permanent Defence Forces are liable for all expenses incurred in connection with their participation in the Cadetship competition and on reporting for enlistment.

9. TERMS OF ENLISTMENT

Candidates to whom Cadetships have been awarded, except for candidates who are already serving in the Permanent Defence Forces, are enlisted for such periods as are necessary to complete the prescribed course of training.

10. OVERSEAS SERVICE

Under the terms of the Defence Amendment Act 2006, all Defence Force personnel, , are liable to be selected for overseas service.

11. WITHDRAWAL OF CADETSHIP

A Cadetship will be withdrawn from a Cadet if:

- a. on completion of the prescribed course of training, they do not qualify for nomination by the Chief of Staff for appointment to be an officer and is not permitted to repeat any of the stages of the course or to extend the period of training; or
- b. they fail to show satisfactory progress at any time during training or fail to develop the qualities requisite for the satisfactory completion of the course or if their conduct or service is unsatisfactory; or
- c. as a result of examination by a Medical Board, appointed by the Director, Medical Branch, they are, at any time, found to be in a medical category lower than that prescribed; or
- d. at their own written request: or
- e. in the interests of the service.

A Cadet from whom a Cadetship has been withdrawn (except because of c. and e. above) may, if they were a member of the Defence Forces before being awarded the Cadetship, be permitted to revert to their previous service engagement and rank or be discharged from the Defence Forces.

SECTION 2

CADETSHIPS IN THE DEFENCE FORCES

12. THE ROLES OF THE PERMANENT DEFENCE FORCES

- To provide for the military defence of the State from armed aggression;
- To participate in multi-national peace support, crisis management and humanitarian relief operations in accordance with Government direction and legislative provision;
- To aid the civil power – meaning in practice to assist, when requested, An Garda Síochána, who have primary responsibility for law and order, including the protection of the internal security of the State;
- To contribute to maritime security encompassing the delivery of a fishery protection service and the operation of the State’s Fishery Monitoring Centre, and in co-operation with other agencies with responsibilities in the maritime domain, to contribute to a shared common maritime operational picture;
- To participate in the Joint Taskforce on Drugs interdiction;
- To contribute to national resilience through the provision of specified defence aid to the civil authority (ATCA) supports to lead agencies in response to major emergencies, including cyber security emergencies, and in the maintenance of essential services, as set out in MOUs and SLAs agreed by the Department of Defence;
- To provide a Ministerial air transport service (MATS);
- To provide ceremonial services on behalf of Government;
- To provide a range of other supports to government departments and agencies in line with MOUs and SLAs agreed by the Department of Defence e.g. search and rescue and air ambulance services;
- To contribute to Ireland’s economic wellbeing through engagement with industry, research and development and job initiatives, in support of government policy;
- To fulfil any other tasks that Government may assign from time to time.

The Defence Forces have a proud record of participation in Peacekeeping Missions and members of the Defence Forces are currently serving with approximately fourteen missions throughout the world.

13. THE NAVAL SERVICE

The Naval Service (NS) is a component of the Irish Defence Forces of which the President of Ireland is the Commander and Chief. The NS is commanded by Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service (FOCNS) who is based in Naval HQ at the Naval Base, Haulbowline in Cork Harbour.

The NS currently operates eight modern ships, as outlined below. The prefix L.É. stands for Long Éireannach.

- L.É. Niamh
- L.É. Róisín
- L.É. Samuel Beckett
- L.É. James Joyce
- L.É. WB Yeats
- L.É. George Bernard Shaw

- L.É. Aoibhinn
- L.É. Gobnait. The prefix L.É. stands for Long Éireannach.

The NS is the principal sea going agency of the state and is charged with Maritime Defence, Fishery protection, Contraband Interdiction Duties, Search and Rescue (SAR) and enforcing Irish and EU laws/ legislation with the Irish Economic Zone. This zone currently extends to 450,000 square km. This area is approximately 10 times the size of Ireland.

The Naval Service offers three types of Cadetships open to all applicants who meet the educational and general criteria, namely, an Operations Branch Cadetship, a Marine Engineering Cadetship and an Electrical Engineer Cadetship. Candidates may apply for any or all classes of Cadetship.

The Operations Branch Cadet

Officers of the Operations Branch of the Naval Service are responsible for the efficient running of the ship. It is only from within this Branch that an officer may become Captain of a ship. The Operations Branch Officer's responsibilities include Bridge Watch keeping, where they are responsible for the safe navigation of the ship and the safety of the ship's company along with the weapons and communications systems on-board. Operations Branch Officers also lead boarding teams in fishery protection and anti-drug running boarding operations and are therefore prime leaders and motivators of the ship's company.

The Operations Branch Cadet will undergo a course of training of approximately twenty-one months duration, divided into different stages. Initial training takes place in the Cadet School, Military College, DFTC, Curragh Camp and is of approximately three months duration. Subsequent training takes place in the Naval Base, Haulbowline, Co Cork and aboard ship. This training encompasses both the theory and practical application of the skills required for the officer to take their place as a fully functional member of the ship's command team. Subjects covered include Navigation, Seamanship, Gunnery, Leadership and Management.

An Operations Branch Cadet shall, on successful completion of the relevant course of training and provided that the Cadet's medical classification is not lower than – year of birth – 11 – 311 – as defined in Defence Force Regulations A.12, be commissioned on a 3 year Short Service Commission in the rank of Ensign or Sub-Lieutenant in accordance with paragraph 17 below. After commissioning, training continues both at sea and ashore until the Officer is fully qualified to take an appointment on board ship.

When fully qualified as an Operations Branch Officer, they shall, on being recommended by the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service and the Chief of Staff, be offered a full Commission without limitation as to time.

The fully trained Junior Officer spends the following years on sea/shore rotations. The primary sea duties involve watchkeeping and navigation while shore duties involve training or administrative appointments. The Naval Service Officer can avail of opportunities of further education as well as participating in professional sub-specialisation courses such as Tactical and Naval Warfare Courses at home and abroad.

The Marine Engineering Cadet

The Marine Engineering Cadet will be trained to a level whereby they can fill an appointment as a ship's Marine Engineering Officer. The Engineering Officer is responsible for everything that keeps a ship afloat, moving and habitable. This includes the hull and general structures of the ship, its main engines and all auxiliary machinery, the main electrical generators, the electrical distribution system, the air conditioning, ventilation, heating systems and cold rooms as well as all fuel and water systems, including the control systems.

The Marine Engineering Cadet will undergo a course of training of approximately twenty-one months duration. Initial training takes place in the Cadet School, Military College, DFTC, Curragh Camp and is of approximately three months duration. This initial training is similar to, and shared with, Operations Branch Cadets. Subsequent training takes place in the Naval Base, Haulbowline, Co Cork and on aboard ship. This training encompasses both the theory and practical application of the skills required for the officer to take their place as a fully functional member of the ships command team. Subjects covered include Navigation, Seamanship, Gunnery, Leadership and Management.

A Marine Engineering Cadet shall, on successful completion of the relevant course of training and provided that the Cadet's medical classification is not lower than – year of birth – 11 – 311 – as defined in Defence Force Regulations A.12, be commissioned on a 3 year Short Service Commission in the rank of Ensign or Sub-Lieutenant in accordance with paragraph 17 below. After commissioning, training continues both at sea and ashore until the Officer is fully qualified to take an appointment as a Marine Engineer Officer on-board ship.

When fully qualified as a Marine Engineering Officer, they shall, subject to satisfying certain criteria and on being recommended by the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service and the Chief of Staff, be offered a full Commission without limitation as to time.

The fully trained Junior Officer spends the following years on sea/shore rotations. When at sea, they will be appointed as the ship's Engineering Officer, while shore duties involve training or technical/administrative appointments. The Engineering Officer can avail of opportunities of further education as well as participating in a range of specialist courses applicable to the Marine Engineering profession at home or abroad.

The Electrical Engineering Cadet

The Electrical/Electronic Department is responsible for the technical specification, selection, installation, overhaul and maintenance for all electrical, electronic, communications, ordnance equipment and systems fitted to Naval Service ships.

An Electrical Engineering Officer, will be rotated, as required, between appointments, allowing them to gain experience in a wide range of disciplines ranging from power generation, communications, and information technology to advanced weapon fire control systems.

The appointments available range from, 'officer in charge' of workshops, planning of new installations, inspection of existing installations, technical instructor in the NMCI to an appointment as an electrical officer at sea on one of our patrol vessels.

An Electrical Engineering Cadet in the Naval Service will be required to undergo a course of training of approximately twenty-one months duration and provided that the Cadet's medical classification is not lower than – year of birth – 11 – 311 – as defined in Defence Force Regulations A.12, be commissioned on a 3 year Short Service Commission in the rank of Ensign or Sub-Lieutenant in accordance with paragraph 17 below. The training course of the Cadet is physically and academically demanding and requires total dedication and commitment to be successful.

Initial training involves Basic Military and Naval Training at the Cadet School, Military College, DFTC, Curragh Camp and later at the Naval Base, Haulbowline, Co. Cork and aboard ship. The initial training is similar to and shared with the Operations Branch and Marine Engineering Cadets. In year two (2), the Graduate Electrical Engineering Cadet will undertake short modules in the National Maritime College Ireland (NMCI) in Ringaskiddy, Cork. NMCI is a partnership between the Cork Institute of Technology and the Naval Service. The modules will introduce the Cadet to naval electrical equipment and systems. During the year, the Cadet will spend a period at sea to familiarise them with the equipment in an operational environment.

While in year two (2) the non-Graduate Cadet will commence studies in either a Level 8 degree in Electrical Engineering or Electronic Engineering in Cork Institute of Technology, followed by short modules in the National Maritime College Ireland (NMCI) in Ringaskiddy, Cork.

When fully qualified as an Electrical Engineering Officer, they shall, on being recommended by the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service and the Chief of Staff, be offered a full Commission without limitation as to time.

The Naval Service is fully committed to Continuous Professional Development. Subject to the exigencies of the service, Officers will be actively encouraged and facilitated to advance their studies in order to become chartered.

Profiles of Naval Service Cadets and Officers are available at www.military.ie

14. APPOINTMENT TO COMMISSIONED RANK

A non-graduate Cadet who satisfactorily completes the prescribed course of military training and who passes such examinations and tests as may be laid down will be eligible for appointment as a commissioned officer in the Naval Service rank of Ensign.

A graduate Cadet who satisfactorily completes the prescribed course of military training and who passes such examinations and tests as may be laid down will be eligible for appointment as a commissioned officer in the Naval Service rank of Sub Lieutenant.

15. THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION/UNDERTAKINGS/FEES

Tuition and examination fees in respect of Cadets/Officers attending 3rd Level Institution will be met from public funds. Textbooks, instruments etc., will be made

available without charge but will remain the property of the Minister for Defence. During attendance at college, Cadets/Officers will normally be accommodated in Military Barracks and will be in receipt of normal pay and allowances.

Personnel of the Naval Service, other than those who already hold a relevant third level qualification in Nautical Science or Engineering, and who are considered suitable may, subject to the exigencies of the service and the requirements of the Defence Force, be assigned to a course of study leading to a degree at the Cork Institute of Technology or a course of study leading to a degree at some other third level college of education, as approved by the Director of Defence Force Training & Education.

In addition, Commissioned Officers who undertake certain courses at public expense will be required to subscribe to an undertaking (or undertakings), copies of which are available on request, that, on being granted permission to retire from the Permanent Defence Force at any time after they have commenced the course and before they have served in the Defence Force for a minimum number of years reckoned from the date of completion of their third level training, they will refund the cost of such training to the Minister for Defence including the cost of pay and allowances paid to them during the period of attendance at the course.

Payment of the amount involved, including the cost of any pay and allowances paid to them during the attendance at the course, must be made in full and up-front i.e. before the actual date of their retirement. However, in every case, the granting of permission to a Commissioned Officer to retire or resign from the Defence Force is a matter for the appropriate authority in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Defence Act.

16. PAY, ALLOWANCES & PRSI

a) Pay and Allowances, see Annex A

It should be noted that the payment including the rate of payment of these allowances are subject to review and adjustment on an ongoing basis under Government policy.

b) On enlistment to the PDF (see paragraph 12) Cadets are generally liable initially to pay PRSI contributions at the Class H rate. On appointment as an Officer (see paragraph 17), they generally pay PRSI at the Class A rate. In both cases, they are covered for the range of benefits under the Social Insurance code including the State Pension (Contributory), subject to meeting the qualifying criteria under the Social Welfare Acts – see paragraph 20 and Annex B.

c) Method of Pay

Cadets and Officers are paid monthly by means of electronic funds transfer to a designated financial institution.

17. RETIREMENT BENEFITS

This should be read in conjunction with **Paragraph 19 (Pay, Allowances and PRSI)** and **Annex A and B**.

Members of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) may qualify for retirement benefits (also called *superannuation benefits*), provided they meet certain terms and conditions. The superannuation arrangements for members of the PDF are *defined benefit* pension schemes.

The main benefits are:

- **a retirement pension,**
- **a retirement lump sum (gratuity) or death in service lump sum, and**
- **spouses'/civil partner's and children's contributory pensions.**

Pension contributions are payable by the scheme members from their Defence Force salary towards their retirement and dependents benefits.

In general, Cadets joining the PDF and who are commissioned as Officers may, subject to certain conditions, qualify for payment of retirement benefits from age 50 (*minimum pension age*).

Membership of the relevant pension scheme is compulsory. The specific pension scheme that applies to PDF personnel depends primarily on the date the person joins the PDF and on whether the person is joining the Public Service for the first time.

In general, anyone joining pensionable public service employment on or after 1 January 2013 is a member of the **Single Public Service Pension Scheme**. This scheme applies to all military personnel who join the PDF from **1 January 2013 onwards** as first-time new entrants to the public service. Those arrangements are provided under the *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* ('the Single Scheme').

For those who are not eligible for membership of the Single Scheme the following arrangements apply:

- (i) For personnel who join the PDF as *new entrants* on or after 1 April 2004 and before 1 January 2013, they will be members of the DF Post-2004 Scheme. Their arrangements are generally governed by the *Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004* (the 2004 Act).
- (ii) Where a person joining the PDF is not a new entrant as defined:
 - under the 2012 Act (see paragraph (a) above); or
 - under the 2004 Act (see paragraph (b)(i) above),

the Pre-April 2004 Defence Forces superannuation scheme and arrangements apply.

Annex B below gives more detail on the different pension schemes and their terms.

18. ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual leave to the extent of 31 days may be granted to Cadets and Junior Officers.

Officers, non-commissioned officers and seamen of the Naval Service serving afloat may be granted annual leave for periods not exceeding 43 days in the aggregate in any one leave year.

Senior Officers (Lieutenant Commander and higher ranks) may be granted 43 days leave.

The provision of annual leave must be in accordance with the provisions of Defence Forces Regulation (DFR) A.11.

It should be noted that this annual leave provision is currently calculated on a 7-day basis.

Leave entitlements may be subject to review and adjustment.

19. SICK LEAVE

Sick Leave may be granted in accordance with the provisions of Defence Force Regulation A.12 (Medical Treatment) and Defence Force Regulation S.3 (Pay and Allowances). Sick Leave entitlements may be subject to review and adjustment.

20. PROMOTION AND RETIREMENT

Subject to the terms of Defence Force Regulations, Officers are eligible for consideration for promotion through the commissioned ranks.

The age for retirement of Officers ranges from 62 years of age (Ensign/Second Lieutenant) to 63 years of age (Vice Admiral/Lieutenant General), depending on rank and is subject to review.

Rank	Retirement Age
Ensign / Sub Lieutenant	62
Lieutenant NS	62
Lt Commander	62
Commander	62
Captain	62
Commodore	62
Major General / Rear Admiral	62
Lieutenant General / Vice Admiral	63

21. UNIFORMS AND ACCOMMODATION

A Cadet is issued uniforms and accessories. Commissioned Officers receive a grant, in accordance with the scales laid down, to assist towards the cost of providing themselves with uniform and equipment. An allowance is currently paid to a Commissioned Officer towards the purpose of replenishing their kit.

It should be noted that the allowance provided for on commissioning, shall be paid based on a submission by the officer of certified receipts up to but not exceeding the value of the initial allowance to the Finance Branch, Department of Defence, Renmore, Galway. The initial allowance is exempt from taxation, while the replenishment allowance paid in subsequent years is subject to taxation under the taxation arrangements in place at the time, currently 40% is taxable and 60% not taxable.

A Cadet is entitled to accommodation and meals without charge subject to the terms of Defence Force Regulations. Single Living-In Commissioned Officers may be provided with official accommodation, in respect of which a deduction may be made from pay.

22. MEDICAL ATTENDANCE AND HOSPITAL TREATMENT

Primary health care i.e. medical attendance at and treatment by a doctor or primary care medical team in the Defence Force, including e.g. physiotherapy, routine dental treatment etc., some limited in-house secondary care and the provision of medication prescribed by a Medical Officer, are provided without charge, subject to any limitations as required by law.

In accordance with Defence Force Administrative Instructions, cadets who develop a medical condition preventing them from continuing or competing their cadetship, may be referred by the Defence Force Medical Officer or the attending doctor for secondary treatment as a private patient to a consultant or for private treatment in hospital subject to financial sanction and any other limitations as required by law. The medical service provided to members of the Defence Force is by nature an occupational medical service and as such, services such as cosmetic surgery (where such does not arise from occupational injury), etc. are not provided.

23. PAY AND ALLOWANCE - BENEFIT IN KIND

The tax status and taxation of any benefit, payment or allowance paid to members of the Defence Forces is a matter between the individual taxpayer and the Revenue Commissioners and must be disclosed by the individual to the Revenue Commissioners. The Department will not be liable for the financial impact, positive or negative, of any change in the tax status of any current payment, allowance or benefit paid or made available to members of the Defence Forces, or any determination of their tax status, as may be directed by the Revenue Commissioners from time to time.

Pay and Allowances etc.

1. In line with Department of Finance instructions of 23 December 2010, starting pay will be at the minimum of the scale. The rate of remuneration may, be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.
2. The following are the current rates of pay **that apply to Cadets with effect from 1 February 2026.**

Cadets	Current Rates of Pay with effect from 1 February 2026
Point	Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) scale Full PRSI (Class H)
1 st	€26,248
2 nd	€28,817
3 rd	€32,094
4 th	€35,044
5 th	€39,026

Where enlisted personnel take up a cadetship and where the 1st point of the scale is lower than the current value of the soldier pay plus any continuous allowances then the cadet will be placed on an off-point rate. On commissioning the officer will be placed on the appropriate point of that pay scale or will continue the off-point rate, whichever is greater. This off-point rate will continue to be paid until incremental progression allows for convergence with the established pay scale rates.

3. On enlistment to the Permanent Defence Force (see paragraph 12) Cadets are initially liable to pay PRSI contributions at the Class H rate. On appointment as an Officer (see paragraph 17), they are generally liable for the Class A PRSI rate. In both cases, they are covered for the range of benefits under the Social Insurance code, including the State Pension (Contributory) – see also paragraph 20 and Annex B.

4. In general, persons commissioned as Officers following completion of a Cadetship under this competition, will qualify for the following rates of pay and allowances:

Current rates of pay with effect from 01 February 2026				
Ranks	Service	Basic Salary	Military Service Allowance	Total Pay
Rank				
Ensign	On appointment after 1 year.	€39,858 €43,766	€6,501 €6,501	€46,359 €50,267
Sub Lieutenant	On appointment after 1 year after 2 years after 3 years after 4 years after 5 years after 6 years after 7 years after 8 years after 9 years	53,283 54,043 56,254 57,970 59,843 61,581 63,015 64,294 65,742 67,194	€7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020 €7,020	€60,303 €61,063 €63,274 €64,990 €66,863 €68,601 €70,035 €71,314 €72,762 €74,214

Military Service Allowance

In addition to basic pay, Military Service Allowance is payable to Officers holding the commissioned ranks of Ensign/Sub Lieutenant (Naval Service).

Patrol Duty Allowance

Patrol Duty Allowance is payable to all personnel serving aboard ship on duty, i.e. for each day spent on patrol which last an average of 20 days at a time.

The current daily rate of the patrol duty allowance for naval service personnel (e.g. for an Officer €90.20, and for a Cadet €66.95) from day 1 – day 10 will be maintained. Thereafter, the daily rate of the allowance will be doubled (e.g. to €140.40 for an Officer and €133.90 for a Cadet) from day 11 up to the maximum number of sea-going days that can be served in a calendar year.

Please note the rate of these allowances are payable from 01 February 2026

It should be noted that the payment including the rate of payment of these allowances are subject to review and adjustment on an ongoing basis in accordance with changes applicable as per Government policy.

ANNEX B

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Members of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) may qualify for occupational pension and retirement gratuity (i.e. superannuation benefits) subject to certain terms and conditions. The specific defined benefit superannuation arrangements that apply to PDF personnel depend primarily on when the person joins the public service for the first time. Further details are set out below, and these should be read in conjunction with Paragraphs 19 and 20, and Annex A.

The main benefits under the PDF superannuation schemes are:

- **an occupational pension,**
- **a retirement gratuity (lump sum) or death in service gratuity, and**
- **spouses'/civil partner's and children's contributory pensions.**

(a) **The new Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”) applies to all military personnel joining the PDF as first-time new entrants to the public service on or after 1 January 2013.**

This is provided for under the *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act). This new scheme applies to:

- Persons joining the public service as first-time new entrants from 1st January 2013 onwards; and
- Where appropriate, former public servants returning to the public service from 1 January 2013 onwards, after a break of more than 26 weeks and not under the same contract of employment.

Retirement benefits are based on ‘career average earnings’ (not final salary). For PDF personnel, a minimum pension age of 50 applies. This means that occupational pension and gratuity (lump sum) will not normally be payable immediately on discharge/retirement unless the person serves to age 50. Where leaving the PDF before age 50, benefits are preserved and generally payable in line with, and linked to, the social welfare State Pension age (currently age 66). Retirement benefits under the Single Scheme are contributory. A 7.5% employee superannuation contribution applies to PDF personnel (see Note 1 below); and occupational pension is subject to *integration* with the Social Insurance system.

Single Scheme – summary of main elements for PDF members

- It is a *defined benefit* scheme based on *Career-Average Earnings*.
- Retirement benefits – pension and lump sum – are primarily based on % of *pensionable earnings* throughout your public service career as a Single Scheme member.
- PDF members pay a 7.5% employee contribution from salary towards their Single Scheme benefits, as well as an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC) – see **Notes 1 and 2 below**.
- Each year, you build up money amounts on a *fast accrual* basis towards your Single Scheme retirement benefits. The total of these amounts at retirement, with some adjustments for increases in inflation, determines what your retirement benefits will be.
- Single Scheme retirement benefits are payable immediately on retirement from the PDF only if you serve to the *minimum pension age* of 50 and have the *vesting period of 2 years*¹.
- If you finish employment with the PDF before age 50 and have the vesting period, payment of your retirement benefits is normally *deferred* to the qualifying age for *Contributory State Pension* (CSP)² from the Department of Social Protection.
- Retirement pension (but not lump sum) is *integrated* with the Social Insurance system – see paragraph (b) below.
- There is no cap on the length of time over which members can build pension benefits under the Single Scheme.
- Transferring retirement benefits to Single Scheme from other employments:
 - The option for a member of the Single Scheme to transfer-in benefits from private sector pension schemes is generally available, subject to certain terms and conditions.
 - If, before joining the Single Scheme, you hold deferred retirement benefits from previous employments under a 'pre-2013' Public Service pension scheme, you cannot transfer those benefits to the Single Scheme. Those benefits remain to be administered under your earlier pre-2013 pension scheme.

¹ The *vesting period* for the Single Scheme is 2 years; the minimum length of time you must pay employee contributions into the scheme before becoming eligible for retirement benefits.

² The current qualifying age for all State Pensions is 66.

- If you hold deferred benefits under the Single Scheme from an earlier Single Scheme employment, you do not need to arrange for their “transfer” because it is the same Single Scheme in place across the Public Service.
- There is provision for immediate retirement benefits if compulsorily retired on medical grounds, and for death in service benefits (dependents pensions and death lump sum).
- Following retirement, increases to Single Scheme pension are linked to inflation.

(b) **For those who are not eligible for membership of the Single Scheme the following arrangements apply:**

(iii) For personnel who join the PDF as *new entrants* on or after 1 April 2004 and before 1 January 2013, their arrangements are governed by *the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004* (the 2004 Act). Their pension scheme provides for a ‘minimum pension age’ of 50. This means pension and gratuity (lump sum) will not normally be payable immediately on discharge/retirement from the PDF unless the person serves to age 50. Maximum retirement benefits generally accrue over 30 years. Where leaving the PDF before age 50, benefits are not payable immediately but are preserved and payable from age 60. Benefits are based on total pensionable service (subject to a maximum of 30 reckonable years) and pensionable pay at discharge/retirement date. Occupational pension is subject to *integration* with the Social Insurance system. In the case of commissioned officers, a 6.5% employee superannuation contribution is payable (see Note 2 below).

(iv) **Where a person joining the PDF is not a new entrant as defined:**

- **under the 2012 Act (see paragraph (a) above); or**
- **under the 2004 Act (see paragraph (b)(i) above),**

the pre-April 2004 Defence Forces superannuation arrangements apply.

For commissioned officers who are new joiners to the public service **on or after 6 April 1995 but before April 2004**, and who are subject to PPC pay scales and full PRSI (Class A), a gratuity is payable on retirement after 5 years’ qualifying service, while pension and gratuity are payable after 12 years service. * There is no preservation. Benefits, which are payable immediately on retirement, and regardless of age, are based

on retiring rank, service and other factors such as pensionable pay. A 6.5% employee superannuation contribution is payable (see Note 2 below); and occupational pension is subject to *integration* with the Social Insurance system.

*For commissioned officers who join **prior to 6 April 1995**, apart from pension contributions and integration, the same general occupational pension scheme terms apply as for post-April 1995 officers. However, **pre-6 April 1995** officers are on non-PPC pay scales. Therefore, they do not pay 'main scheme' pension contribution towards occupational pension and gratuity but pay a dependants' benefit contribution only (see Note 3 below). They are insured for modified PRSI (Class C) and their occupational pension is not subject to integration.

PRSI status, integration with Social Insurance system, pension contributions etc.

New entrants to the public service on or after 6 April 1995, including commissioned officers in the PDF, are insurable for full PRSI. Both employers and employees make PRSI contributions, which in turn entitle scheme members to Social Insurance benefits.

On that basis, their occupational (or spouse's / civil partner's) pension is subject to *integration* with the State Social Insurance system in accordance with standard public service arrangements. This means that their entitlement to the range of Social Insurance benefits (including the State Pension Contributory (SPC)) is taken into account when calculating the amount of occupational pension payable. In an integrated pension scheme, the State Pension etc. is viewed as part of the total pension package payable to the individual. Integration therefore results in a lower rate of occupational pension than would otherwise be the case. However, the combined benefit from both sources – the occupational pension plus State Pension etc. – makes up the person's 'total pension'. As a result, integration begins from the time the occupational pension comes into payment. Integration applies to occupational pension benefits and employee contributions, but not to gratuity.

As stated above, all successful candidates from this competition will be required to pay appropriate employee pension contributions from monthly pay towards their superannuation benefits at standard public service rates.

Note 1 – The 7.5% Single Scheme contribution is comprised of 4.2% of *net pensionable remuneration* (which means pensionable remuneration less twice the maximum rate of State Pension Contributory payable from time to time to a person who has no adult or child dependants) plus 3.3% of pensionable remuneration.

Note 2 – The 6.5% contribution for 'pre-Single Scheme' members who join the public service from 6 April 1995 onwards is 3.5% of *net pensionable remuneration* (towards personal pension) plus 1.5% of pensionable

remuneration (towards retirement gratuity) plus 1.5% of pensionable remuneration (towards spouses / civil partner's and children's pensions).

Note 3 – A contribution of 1.5% of pensionable remuneration is payable by pre-6 April 1995 officers towards spouses / civil partner's and children's pensions.

(a) Integration of retirement pension with the Social Insurance system:

New entrants to the Public Service on or after 6 April 1995, including Commissioned Officers in the PDF, are insurable for full PRSI. For this reason, public service retirement (or spouse's / civil partner's) pensions are subject to **integration** with the State Social Insurance system in accordance with standard Public Service arrangements.

This means that a person's entitlement to the range of Social Insurance benefits (including the Contributory State Pension) is taken into account when calculating the amount of retirement pension payable. In an integrated pension scheme, the Contributory State Pension (CSP) is regarded as part of the employee's total pension package. Under standard Public Service arrangements, this integration of retirement pension with the Social Insurance system applies from the time the retirement (or spouse's / civil partner's) pension commences payment.

This means the retirement pension is adjusted (reduced) from the start by a Social Insurance State Pension *offset*³, regardless of whether the person has reached Contributory State Pension age. Integration applies to retirement pension and to employee contributions, but not to retirement lump sum.

A Contributory State Pension becomes payable upon reaching the qualifying age. The *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act) does not provide for the payment under the Single Scheme of a 'supplementary retirement pension' in the period between Defence Forces mandatory retirement age and State Pension qualifying age.

(b) Employee pension contributions:

Note 1 – As outlined above employee pension contributions are payable in accordance with the relevant superannuation scheme of which a person is a member.

- **Note 2** – Subject to certain exemption thresholds, all Public Servants who are in pensionable employment – including members of the PDF – are also liable to pay an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC). The ASC is separate from the standard employee pension contributions mentioned above. No additional superannuation benefits are earned because of the

³ The current value (in January 2026) of the Contributory State Pension (CSP) reduction is €299.30 per week

ASC. The ASC applies to pensionable earnings above certain thresholds at different bands and % rates depending on the pension scheme applicable to the member. From 1 January 2020, the ASC bands / rates are as follows:

Additional Superannuation Contribution	
All Public Servants who are members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme	<i>Fast Accrual</i> members of pre-2013 Public Service Pension Schemes
First €34,500 of pensionable earnings – exempt	First €28,750 of pensionable earnings - exempt
Next €25,500 @ 3.33%	Next €31,250 @ 10%
Balance @ 3.5%	Balance @ 10.5%

(c) Declarations:

Under the *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act), candidates are required to declare:

- any prior Public Service employment, or
- any pre-existing entitlements to a Public Service retirement benefit (whether already paid, in payment or deferred), or
- any existing remuneration from any other Public Service employment, or
- any such employment in which they received a payment-in-lieu of pension for that service.

(d) Pension abatement:

The following pension(s) will be immediately **subject to abatement*** in accordance with the relevant Defence Forces pension scheme rules and/or Section 52 of the *Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act):

- i) any Defence Forces occupational pension that is currently in payment to the applicant, or that comes into payment to him/her during the period of re-employment, and
- ii) any other civil or public service occupational pension already in payment to the applicant, or that comes into payment to him/her during the period of re-employment.

**Suspension, reduction or otherwise as the case may be.*

The abatement outcome will depend on factors such as a person's ongoing overall earnings from the public service by way of salary plus pension.

(e) Pension accrual:

In addition, if the candidate was previously employed in the public service, the 2012 Act also limits the amount of qualifying service which can be accrued in existing (pre-2013) pension schemes to a maximum of 40 years' service across all Public Service employments. This may have implications for any new recruit/appointee who has already acquired pension rights in a previous Public Service employment.

(f) Further information:

Further information on pension arrangements for officers of the Defence Forces can be found on the Department of Defence website at;
<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/f65fb1-defence-forces-pension-information/>
and
<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/2a3969-pension-schemes/> - see officers booklets

See also the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform website at;
<https://singlepensionscheme.gov.ie/> and,
<https://singlepensionscheme.gov.ie/for-members/scheme-information/scheme-booklet/#> - see booklet for Fast Accrual (Uniformed) Members

ANNEX C

Laser Eye Surgery

Applicants, for whom any one or more of the following criteria apply, will be deemed unfit to join the Permanent Defence Force:

- (a) Applicants who have had their visual acuity corrected by non-laser surgery or laser surgery involving the raising of a corneal flap
- (b) Applicants who have had corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, within 12 months of the advertised closing date for receipt of applications
- (c) Where there continues to exist, beyond one year of corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, significant visual impairment or side effects related to the surgery, or both
- (d) Where, following corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, the residual corneal stromal thickness is less than 300 microns.

PHYSICAL FITNESS ETC.**PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST**

The physical fitness assessment is designed to test the candidate's current level of physical fitness and their capacity to undergo the rigours of military training. It is composed of two aspects:

- a. Components of physical fitness, consisting of body composition assessment
- b. Local muscular endurance and aerobic endurance

FORMAT OF THE DEFENCE FORCE INDUCTION FITNESS TEST (DFIFT)**BODY COMPOSITION ASSESSMENT**

This assesses the candidate's body composition. The candidate will undergo a body mass index (BMI) test and an assessment of body fat % will be assessed using skin calliper test (if necessary). Candidates who score > or equal to 30 on the BMI test must undergo a skinfold calliper test. Candidates who score in excess of 70mm (Males) or 80mm (Females) on the skinfold calliper test will not be permitted to continue with the test.

All tests are conducted in sports gear. Candidates are advised to bring the following should they be requested to attend tracksuit, shorts, singlet or t-shirt, training shoes, towel, and wash gear etc.

Candidates who wish to prepare for the above tests should do so under the guidance of a qualified instructor.

AEROBIC ENDURANCE

Candidates will be required to run one and a half miles (2.4kms) within the time limit below: (This is a pass or fail test).

Remarks	Males	Females	Distance
Green: test pass	<11 mins 40 sec	<13 mins 10 sec	2.4km
Amber: test pass	<12 mins 45 secs	<13 mins 50 sec	2.4km
Red: test fail	>12 mins 45 secs	>13 mins 50 sec	2.4km

A 'Green' grading reflects the candidate passing the DFIFT and results in the candidate progressing to the next stage of the competition.

An '**Amber**' grading reflects a reduced aerobic capacity. An applicant inducted with an amber grading will be required to pass the Defence Force Fitness Test (part 2/run) during stage 1 of the Cadet Training Course (initial 12 weeks). Cadets must pass the Defence Force's fitness test to be approved and recommended for commissioning as an officer of the Permanent Defence Force.

A '**Red**' grading reflects the candidate has failed the DFIFT.

An applicant who achieves an '**amber**' result in their aerobic capacity (run) test may be considered for induction into the Defence Force, should the HR demand exist. Applicants inducted under these circumstances will be required to pass the Defence Force Fitness Test (part 2/run) during stage 1 of the Cadet Training Course (initial 12 weeks).

LOCAL MUSCULAR ENDURANCE

This will be assessed using push-ups and sit-ups. The time allowed is 60 seconds (This is a pass or fail test).

	Males	Females
Push-ups: (Minimum requirement)	20	20 (modified)
Sit-ups: (Minimum requirement)	20	20

If a candidate fails to meet any of the above minimum requirements, they will not be permitted to proceed to the next stage of the competition.

Suggested 4 Week Training Programme for Cadetship Applicants.

Week	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
1	15 min Warm up. Steady Run for 20 Mins. Record your distance. 15 min Cool down. Push Ups 5 sets x 5 reps. Sit Ups 5 sets x 5 reps. Stretch.	15 min Warm up. Tempo Training. 4 x 5 min runs with 2 min recovery. Record your distance. 15min Cool down Stretch.	15 min Warm up. Steady Run for 20 Mins. Record your distance. 15 min Cool down. Push Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Sit Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Stretch.
2	15 min Warm up. Tempo Training. 3 x 6 min runs with 2 min recovery. Record your distance. 15min Cool down. Push Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Sit Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Stretch.	15 mins Warm up. Steady Run for 25 Mins. Record your distance. 15 min Cool down. Push Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Sit Ups 4 sets x 7 reps. Stretch.	15mins warm up Tempo Training. 2 x 10 Min runs with 2 min recovery. 15mins Cool down. Push Ups 3 sets x 10 reps. Sit Ups 3 sets x 10 reps. Stretch.
3	15 mins Warm up. Steady Run for 30 Mins. Record your distance. 15 min Cool down. Push Ups 3 sets x 12 reps. Sit Ups 3 sets x 12 reps. Stretch.	15mins warm up Tempo Training. 2 x 1 mile/1600 m runs with 2 min recovery. Record your time. 15mins Cool down. Push Ups 3 sets x 15 reps. Sit Ups 3 sets x 15 reps. Stretch.	15 mins Warm up. Steady Run for 2 Miles. Record your time. 15 min Cool down. Push Ups 2 sets x 17 reps. Sit Ups 2 sets x 17 reps. Stretch.
4	15mins warm up Tempo Training. 2 x 1 mile/1600 m runs with 2 min recovery. Record your time. 15mins Cool down. Push Ups 2 sets x 20 reps. Sit Ups 2 sets x 20 reps. Stretch.	Pre-Test Rehearsal. Push Ups-20 Repetitions/1 Min. Sit Ups-20 Repetitions/1 Min. 1.5 mile run-Timed. Males-11 min 40 sec. Females-13 min 10 sec.	Recovery session. Allow sufficient recovery time between this session and your test date.
5.	20 push-ups (1 Min) 20 sit-ups (1 Min) 1.5mile run (Males - 11 min 40 sec, Females - 13 min 10 sec)		

Points to Note

This Programme is a suggested training programme. You are under no obligation to undertake it. You do so at your own risk.

- a. This programme presupposes a certain level of fitness. **If in doubt talk to your GP.**
- b. **Step 1**-Invest in proper training equipment particularly a good pair of runners.
- c. **Step 2**-Talk to a Defence Force PTI (Physical Training Instructor) or a fitness expert. Get them to help you to tailor this generic programme to suit your ability/lifestyle. Get them to help you with your technique with Push ups and Sit Ups. Videos of correct push ups and sit up technique are available online at www.military.ie
- d. **Step 3**-Mark out a safe route of 1.5 miles/2.4kms.
- e. **Step 4**-Get a stopwatch to time your runs.
- f. **Step 5**-Set your goals.
 - o **Run**-11 min 40 sec Males/13 min 10 sec Females to achieve a green result.
 - o **Push Ups**-20 Repetitions in One Minute.
 - o **Sit Ups**-20 Repetitions in One Minute.
- g. **Warm Up**
 - o Warm up properly before every session.
 - o Exercises: Jogging, fast feet, high heels, high knees and high knee skip.
 - o Try to keep warm up specific to the activity you are doing.
- h. **Heart Rate Intensity**: To achieve the required intensity of exercise, use the simple formula.
 - o Example.
 - $220 - \text{your age} = 220 - 20 = 200$.
 - $75\% \text{ of } 200 = 150$ Beats per minute.
 - This is your target Heart Rate to improve your Cardio-Vascular Endurance) *(Required Intensity).
 - Check your HR pre and post exercise.
- i. **Cool Down**:

- Just a general reduction in pace to decrease blood flow to the activated muscles.

j. Stretching:

- Stretching is very important pre and post exercise.
- Stretch all major muscle groups and show particular attention to the muscles that are involved in the activity.

k. On the Day:

- Arrive on time at the test centre.
- Eat 2/3 Hours prior to the Test.
- Bring a snack to the Test Centre to stay refuelled.
- STAY HYDRATED. Sip water all day.

I. If you are in any doubt about your fitness levels to undertake this programme, see your doctor first.

PRE 2017 EQUIVALENT LEAVING CERTIFICATE GRADES

The following table details the equivalent grades required for those candidates who sat the Leaving Certificate Examination prior to 2017, to meet the Minimum Educational Qualifications as detailed in Paragraph 2:

Pre- 2017 Leaving Certificate Grading Scale	Current Leaving Certificate Grading Scale
A1	H1/O1
A2	H2/O2
B1	
B2	H3/O3
B3	
C1	H4/O4
C2	
C3	H5/O5
D1	
D2	H6/O6
D3	
E	H7/O7
F	H8/O8