

Leading Firefighter test FAQs

Q1. How does the new selection process work?

Positions on the Leading Firefighter Program will be advertised as and when they arise in Commissioner's Orders, and will remain open for four weeks. To be eligible to apply, Senior Firefighters will need to have taken the relevant online operational and psychometric tests, and to have achieved at least 65% in the operational test.

These operational and psychometric test results will determine the successful applicants for the position(s) advertised.

Q2. Who conducts the tests?

All tests will be conducted online by FRNSW, with support provided by external providers for the psychometric test components.

Q3. What do the tests involve?

The tests will consist of both an operational test and a psychometric test.

The psychometric test's cognitive component will cover verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning and error checking. The test's behavioural component gauges the applicants' likely "fit" for the Leading Firefighter rank by measuring work strengths, work preferences and interpersonal skills.

Q4. How are the tests relevant?

The operational test helps measure a Senior Firefighter's application of current firefighting knowledge and competence.

The psychometric test assesses and measures a Senior Firefighter's suitability for leadership because Leading Firefighters will be required to perform higher duties for absent Station Officers.

Q5. What is the format of the testing?

The operational test will be randomly generated from an established bank of questions that a Senior Firefighter (not Leading Firefighter) could reasonably be expected to answer. The test will be conducted in one or more objective formats including: multiple choice, multiple response, true/false, matching, labeling images, rank ordering, gap filling, numerical and/or visual identification.

The psychometric test's cognitive and behavioural components will both consist of questions with multiple choice answers only.

There will be no free-form answers in either test, nor any face-to-face interviews.

Q6. How long do the tests take to complete?

The entire testing process should take no longer than 2 hours, including breaks.

Q7. Where will the tests be held?

The operational and psychometric tests will both be conducted online and whenever practicable, at the Senior Firefighter's own station/workplace under the observation of an FRNSW assessor or senior officer.

Q8. Will the tests be held on the same day across all locations?

No. Senior Firefighters with 24 or more months' service will individually request to take the tests when they are ready to do so. FRNSW will ordinarily schedule tests within four weeks of a request to take them.

Q9. Can I request to take the tests after a LF Program position has been advertised?

Yes, but whether or not the tests can then be arranged and taken within the four week period that applications are open will depend on numerous factors, including the amount of notice provided and the availability of an observer. While FRNSW will make every reasonable effort to accommodate requests within the preferred 4 week timeframe, the sooner the request is made, the better the chance of this occurring.

The tests can be requested any time and to avoid disappointment, should ideally be submitted before applications are called for, not afterwards.

Q10. Will everybody who takes these tests be asked the same questions?

Tests conducted at different times or at different locations will ask different questions, however the questions will always be at the same standard or level.

Q11. What happens if more than two applicants have an identical score?

It is highly unlikely that two applicants will hold the same test marks and scores however if this does happen, and the successful applicant(s) cannot be determined, then both applicants will be accepted.

Q12. If I am not successful can I apply again in future?

Yes. There is no restriction on the ability of eligible Senior Firefighters to apply whenever applications for Leading Firefighter Program positions are called for.

Q13. Is there a limit to the number of times I can take the tests?

Yes. Test results will be valid for at least twelve months from the date the tests are taken, during which time the tests may not be retaken. Test results will become invalid three years after the testing date or once the tests are retaken, whichever occurs first.

Q14. Do I take the tests on or off shift?

The tests will be conducted on-duty. Senior Firefighters taking the tests will not ordinarily be required to respond, however the tests, which will be timed, may be suspended and resumed later if necessary (eg, in the event of an equipment/computer problem or a critical emergency incident). A suspension that cannot be avoided will be kept to a minimum, and testing will be resumed as soon as possible (including, if necessary, on overtime).

Q15. Is there any study or practice I can do to prepare for the psychometric test?

There is no preparation required for the psychometric test, however Senior Firefighters may like to research psychometric testing to better understand this type of assessment method, including by reviewing the information contained in the following link

<http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/employmentportal/resources/fact-sheets>

Q16. Is there anything I need to bring with me to the test, or that might help me (eg, a pen, or a calculator)?

You will need to bring photo identification, eg FRNSW employee card, motor vehicle license or passport. Everything else required will be provided by FRNSW.

Q17. Is there a benchmark score/pass mark that must be reached to proceed successfully through the test?

Senior Firefighters must achieve 65% or higher in the operational test in order to be eligible to apply for a Leading Firefighter Program position. Senior Firefighters who achieve less than 65% in the operational test will be excluded, and those who achieve less than 50% in the operational test will be prevented from retaking either the operational or psychometric tests for 24 months.

Q18. Will the supporting external provider send my psychometric test results to the Department? What information will the external provider send to the Department? How confidential will my psychometric test results be?

The testing provider will release the psychometric test scores (only) to the Department. Individual test results will remain confidential between the applicant and the external provider unless they are disclosed by the applicant.

Q19. Will I receive feedback following the tests? Can I appeal my results?

There will be no appeal mechanism, however everyone who takes the tests will receive a copy of their operational test results and answers, including confirmation of the correct answers.

Q20. Senior Firefighters in Operational Support can only apply for Leading Firefighter Program positions within the GSA. Will these Operational Support staff be competing with all other Senior Firefighters within the GSA?

The Senior Firefighter applicants in the GSA with the highest aggregate test results will be accepted. The aggregate result achieved by the lowest scoring applicant for

the number of positions available will be the cut-off result for Operational Support applicants. Every Operational Support applicant who achieves a higher aggregate result than that will also be accepted, so that Leading Firefighter Program positions advertised for Sydney are a minimum, not a maximum.

Q21. Do my test results only apply to my application for Leading Firefighter Program positions? If I apply for an Operational Support position, will my test results be used or considered relevant?

The testing conducted for Leading Firefighter Program positions will not be used for any other FRNSW application process or purpose unless you agree.
