



May 2011

Hello to Rebecca and Carol

Having said goodbye to Julie last time it's now hello to Rebecca and Carol.

Rebecca joined to cover Michelina's absence and now the RCE role pending Carol taking over. Carol joins us from Sales.

Moratorium in 2011

The next moratorium is Monday 1st August to Friday 12th August.

Requests for exams up till Sunday 31st July should arrive with 10 clear working days notice and in any case by Friday 15th July.

Requests for exams from Monday 1st August till Tuesday 30th August must also arrive by Friday 15th July. Closure of the system means splitting the 10 clear days notice either side of the moratorium may not be possible. Requests arriving after close of play on the 15th July will be stored in date order and processed in time for exams from 30th August onwards.

Moratoria 2012

February 13th – 24th
September 10th -21st

Advanced Exam dates

2011		Exam Time	Closing Date for Exam Entries
Thu	16 th June	19.00hrs	24 th May 2011
Fri	5 th Aug	19.00hrs	14 th July 2011
Sun	9 th October (Convention)	10.30hrs	16 th September 2011
Mon	5 th Dec	19.00hrs	11 th November 2011
2012			
Tue	Jan 31 st	19.00hrs	9 th Jan 2012
Sat	March 3 rd	14. 00hrs	10 th Feb 2012
Thu	May 31 st	19.00hrs	9 th May 2012
Fri	July 6 th	19.00hrs	14 th June 2012
Mon	Aug 20 th	19.00hrs	27 th July 2012

Sun	Oct 14 th (Convention)	10.30hrs	21 st September 2012
Wed	Dec 5 th	19.00hrs	13 th November 2012
2013			
Wed	Jan 30 th	19.00hrs	8 th Jan 2013
Sat	Mar 2 nd	14.00hrs	8 th Feb 2013
Thu	May 2 nd	19.00hrs	10 th April 2013
Mon	July 1 st	19.00hrs	7 th June 2013
Tue	Aug 20 th	19.00hrs	29 th July 2013
Sun	Oct 13 th (Convention)	10.30hrs	20 th September 2013
Fri	Dec 6 th	19.00hrs	14 th November 2013

Any queries? Please contact Exams Department on 01234 832718 or e-mail rce.dept@rsgb.org.uk

Please also remember the lead time for Foundation and Intermediate examinations.

It is 10 clear working days. If the application arrives on Wednesday 11th then day 1 is Thursday 12th and day 10 is Wednesday 25th. That means papers will arrive in time for an exam on Thursday 26th. This allows time to register candidates on the system, check the venue is registered, check all the officers are named, compile an exam paper, print and mail so it arrives with sufficient time for the club exam secretary to chase a missing paper and get a replacement in time for the original exam date.

Of course Carol will always try to accommodate a late addition, candidates turn up after the club's closing date too and it is uncomfortable to turn them away. However the workload at HQ does peak and there will be times when the answer is sorry no can do. These late changes really must be the exception; dealing with them does increase the risk that that or other exam papers will be late and that inconveniences all candidates, not just the latecomer.

Advanced Pass Mark

The pass mark for the Advanced exam has now remained stable for some time and it is now possible to fix it and advise tutors that it is 60% or 37/62. Candidates will also be advised of their actual mark. It is intended, once the new software is fully operational to provide a feedback sheet similar to that given out by the invigilators at Foundation and Intermediate examinations. Please note that these must be given out, they were initially optional but the RCE Dept received too many calls of what did I get wrong.

There are no negative marks for wrong answers in any of the Radio Communication Examinations. As a reminder, Intermediate is 27/45 and from 1 July Foundation is 19/26.

Pilot Study of the Assessment of Practical Skills

We do need more volunteers for this pilot. Often we do not hear of a course until the exam papers are requested and that is often too late for the practical assessment activities.

Optical marking

Optical marking will be introduced at Advanced level later this year.

It is important to understand how this will work. Please read this carefully.

The tick boxes on the question paper will remain. That is to allow candidates to mark their chosen answer alongside the question for ease of reference.

That tick will NOT count as the answer to the question.

A separate Optical Mark Sheet will be supplied, pre-printed with the candidate's details and coded for automatic optical reading.

It will be numbered 1 to 62 and provide boxes A to D to be shaded in, in HB pencil.

To change your mind, rub out the shaded box and shade in the new chosen box.

Multiple shading is automatically a wrong answer. The system can cope with rubbed out boxes. In the pilot one candidate crossed out a wrong answer, making it even darker; it was set aside for marking by hand. However poor rubbing and shading could result in no mark being awarded for that question.

It will also be necessary to take some care with the OM sheet to avoid scuffs and folds to prevent it getting shredded in the automated reader.

It is suggested tutors do give candidates a mock exam with an optical mark sheet as a practice so they are familiar with the requirement. It will be different from what they met at Foundation and Intermediate.

Invigilators would be well advised to have spare HB pencils, make sure candidates are using HB pencils and circulate round the room to check the answer sheet is being correctly filled in.

For the avoidance of doubt the question paper remains exam board property and must be returned with the mark sheets. They are also checked and are required to enable reading of the optical mark sheet. The question papers and mark sheets are RCF copyright and must not be copied, even by writing out a question. To challenge a question all that is needed is the question bank number printed on the left hand side. Questions that escape into the wild are removed from the bank and a shortage could affect the availability of on-request examinations.

Examination Inspections

Ofcom have advised that they are proposing to start inspecting examinations. That will not mean the reintroduction of the old "RIS" red forms.

So Tutors, exam secretaries and invigilators need to know that inspectors may be working on behalf of Ofcom, the RSGB or the RCF. They will, of course, identify themselves and are entitled to be admitted to the examination room, to inspect the sealed envelope, to confirm the identity of those present and to observe the examination and marking. They will not want to take over the running of the exam but may need to quietly advise of a discrepancy so it can be remedied and the exam able to continue.

Train the Trainers

These events are demand led. If you would like to hold a TtT session in your area or at your club please contact Brian Reay G8OSN at g8osn@yahoo.co.uk. A calendar of events and available dates is at www.g8osn.org.uk. It will be helpful if you also contact your regional representative who can help with venues and alerting other clubs in the area.

Reminder of a Change to Foundation Syllabus in July 2011

The new Foundation Specification comes into use on 1 July 2011. Further details are in the February 2011 newsletter.

Practical Assessments

A few queries to Abbey Court this time so a reminder of the processes.

Registered Assessors (RA) may sign-off the Record of Achievement (RoA) forms and the Instructors Practical Assessment Record Sheet (IPARS) to the level below their own licence but must be registered at the level concerned. An Intermediate licensee who gains a Full Licence and wishes to sign off record cards at Intermediate level needs to get the registration upgraded or the candidates results will be delayed while the situation is sorted out. That might be a week or so since the RCE Department have to notify the Assessor, who then has to apply for upgrading. Meanwhile the candidates are waiting for their Intermediate results to be uploaded to Ofcom allowing them to get their licences.

The RA may appoint others to carry out assessments of each individual line item on the RoA but, in signing the bottom is certifying that all the tasks have been satisfactorily completed.