
INSTRUCTORS NEWSLETTER

March 2009



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED

Dear Instructor and Examination Secretary

This newsletter contains information about changes to the Foundation and Intermediate Licence Examinations, Advanced Licence examination dates for 2009 /10, and a planned examinations moratorium in May 2009. Please ensure it is circulated to all of those involved in the training and examination process. Please ask your club to mention the newsletter at their club meeting to ensure that every Instructor received and read it.

Syllabuses

Most of you should be aware that the Exam Committee has recommended changes to the syllabus for the Foundation and Intermediate examinations. These have been agreed by the Standards Committee. The changes will take effect on the 1st of June 2009. Versions of the syllabus for both the pre and post 1st June 2009 for both examinations have been available on the RCF web site for some time now.

In preparation for the change we are now announcing a moratorium on all examinations from 1st to 31st May 2009. This will allow the required changes to the question banks to be carried out.

Some of you may have candidates for whom courses are under way, with examinations planned in May 2009. If this is the case you should apply for the examination papers before 17th April 2009, enclosing a copy of the Instructors Practical Assessment Record Sheet. Examination papers will be prepared on or before 30th April 2009 but posted out in line with our normal timescales a few days ahead of actual examination dates.

New Exams Software

The RCF is in the process of purchasing new exams software. Additionally this will provide enhanced reporting facilities allowing data to be gathered with regard to performance of questions, candidates and exam centres. The information gathered will allow fine tuning of our systems plus practices and by this means will afford an even better level of service to our candidates and instructors. Optical marking is also being considered, more on this in the next news letter.

Training Materials

The Foundation course book was updated a few months ago it is fully current and on sale now. Changes from previous edition to this one are set out at <http://www.rsgb.org/books/extra/foundation.htm>

The Intermediate course book has been more extensively re-written, the 5th edition is now on sale.

Also available is the brand new book "Exam Secrets".

Conduct of Examination

The booklet entitled Conduct of Radio Communications Examinations is issued to all RSGB registered instructors. This is a very useful and important document. If you have misplaced yours please contact the RCE Examinations Department for a further copy. Either the instructor or the examination secretary must ensure that the 1st named invigilator is fully up to speed with the requirements of their role, set out in paragraph 5, sections 5.1 through to 5.5 b of the guide.

We will always try and help hard pushed examination secretaries, but it is very important that the **10 working days notice** needed at Foundation and Intermediate level is given.

Irregular Conduct

Clubs are reminded of the importance of correct examination procedures. In particular, examinations should not be held on club evenings. **The only people that should be present during an examination are those that were advised to us in the Request for Examination Papers (REQP).** A sign should be placed outside the door of the examination room during this period. For those of you that do not have a sign, one has been supplied at the back of this newsletter.

Readers:

The Examinations Department is asked frequently about readers being made available for partially sighted / blind candidates or those with other problems. This concession is available at the discretion of the Examinations Department subject to the rules laid out for us. Examinations secretaries are asked to phone HQ to discuss the case and obtain agreement in principle. Confirmation will be granted dependant on the nature of the disability and providing a GP's letter or other suitable documentation is provided.

Deadlines for return of papers:

The majority of examination papers are returned to us promptly. But there have been a few incidences where papers have either been returned late or have been struck by the vagaries of the postal system. In these cases it has caused tremendous consternation to the affected candidates. To avoid this please return the examination papers by the next working day.

Marking:

It has been noted that some Foundation and Intermediate level examination papers have come back unmarked, with not even the Invigilator Mark Sheet (IMS) annotated with a Pass or Fail. We respectfully point out that the local marking requires the 1st named

invigilator to mark the papers, make the appropriate record on the IMS and note the mark on the examination paper as well. The latter may seem like overkill, but a recently returned examination paper showed a pass on the IMS and showed a result on a Foundation level paper which was actually one point below the pass mark. The club concerned was very apologetic and carried out all the remedial action that we requested quickly and efficiently. However the embarrassment to all concerned was plain to be seen. Belt and braces is best!

Advanced RCE

Please make your Advanced level candidates aware that the marking of the Advanced RCE is a lengthy process. The covering letter that goes out with every set of Advanced papers clearly states, results will be issued within 28 days **of receipt of all examination papers**. Since the last newsletter there have been numerous Advanced Examinations but despite the covering letter we are still receiving calls from candidates just 1 week after they have sat their examination!

Dates for the **Advanced Examination during 2009 /10** are as follows:

Examination Date and Time	Closing Date
Thursday 4th June 2009 18.30hrs	Thursday 14 th May 2009
Friday 7th August 2009 18.30hrs	Friday 17 th July 2009
Date t.b.a. October 2009 time t.b.a.	t.b.a.
Monday 7th December 2009 18.30hrs	Monday 16 th November 2009
Tuesday 2 nd February 2010 18.30hrs	Tuesday 12 th January 2010
Wednesday 7 th April 2010 18.30hrs	Wednesday 17 th March 2010
Thursday 3 rd June 2010 18.30hrs	Thursday 13 th May 2010

Any queries please contact Examinations Department.

We can now give candidates feedback on the Advanced exam. This is carried out over the telephone and is invaluable if the candidate is considering quickly making arrangements to sit the next exam. We cannot disclose the candidate's actual mark, however we will give an indication of how many marks they were from the pass mark and a general idea of which syllabus areas they need to brush up on. Please make your candidates aware of this after each examination.

M3 & M6

Following the introduction of the new call sign for Foundation Licence holders the Examinations Department has gone through all three Question Banks to ensure correct answers were not affected by the change.

Train the Trainers

If anyone is interested in taking part or requires further information then please contact the Chairman of the Amateur Radio Development Committee via email ardc.chairman@rsgb.org.uk. Sessions have now been held in most areas and all who have attended have found them useful. The sessions tend to be demand-led, so it is important to flag up requests.

Examinations at the RSGB Convention

The RSGB are offering those wishing to obtain a UK Amateur Radio Licence the opportunity to complete one, or more, of the examinations over the weekend of the RSGB Convention (formerly known as the HFC Convention), Friday 9th to Sunday 11th Oct 2009. These dates have been left out of the schedule for the Advanced exam because the Convention is subject to change.

Candidates must book their examinations prior to the event and must provide evidence they have completed the required practical assessments, although limited facilities to complete assessments at the Convention can be arranged. The contact for further information and for booking examinations is John James, John.James@rsgb.org.uk, or via the RSGB HQ switchboard on 01234 832700 – Option 4.

Candidates for the Foundation & Intermediate RCE must contact the Chairman of the Amateur Radio Development Committee via email ardc.chairman@rsgb.org.uk so that their progress on practical assessments can be verified. If required, the Chairman can also advise on finding a local tutor to complete practical assessments in advance of the Convention or the provision of assessment facilities at the Convention.

The RSGB Tutors Website and Regional Teams

Most of you by now will have visited the **Tutor website**, please make the most of it! We would be interested in publishing short articles about some of your clubs achievements. If you have any ideas or would like to write an article please email it to rce.dept@rsgb.org.uk.

Each region has its own section on the website to advise things happening within the local area. You should let your regional team know when you are running courses so that they can add the dates and contact information to the upcoming events section. A full list of contact details can be found in RadCom, the RSGB Yearbook and on the RSGB website www.rsgb.org/local.

Examination Centre details:

Please do check that your own centre's details are correctly shown on the web pages entitled "training providers", "examination centres" and "local amateur radio clubs", if not please drop us an email. Please do not phone the changes in. The request in writing is for reasons of accuracy.

This information will come in useful for updating the Yearbook as well.

If requesting an examination centre to be registered, please allow plenty of time. Proposed centres must be inspected prior to confirmation of registration being issued;

this work is carried out for us by the RSGB Regional Teams who are staffed on a volunteer basis.

Questions:

We always welcome new questions. If you wish to participate in question writing, a guide is available on the RCF web site along with a schedule of the areas where we have a need.

Publicity of Courses

There are many ways in which you can publicise an up and coming course you can contact **RadCom** on radcom@rsgb.org.uk at least 7 weeks before a course commences or you could contact **GB2RS** on gb2rs@rsgb.org.uk no later than Tuesday lunch time for the week of broadcast, longer notice is preferred though.

You can also contact your local Regional Team and ask them to place details of your course on your regional website (see RSGB Tutors Website and Regional Teams).

Just a small reminder, if you are taking photographs of your club members to produce your own posters or for the use on a website if any of the people are under the age of 16 you must seek permission from the parents before taking those pictures.

It is perfectly permissible for clubs to accept "Examination and Assessment only" candidates.

Examination Tip:

"Several candidates (and even more tutors) are overlooking the fact that 10GHz has been added to the Foundation schedule. Candidates should always look up information of this nature and a course quiz may help candidates appreciate that some topics in the exam are intended to be looked up rather than rely on memory". (Quote from the Chief Examiner)

Examination Fees:

A number of people have commented about the posting in the Tutors Area on this subject. The fees set out in that post are the same as have been in place for some considerable time. The only recent change is the removal of the concession for RSGB members in September 2007 following Ofcom's ruling that they considered the practice unfair to non-members.

Finally a big thank you to all for your ever important hard work, dedication and support.

RCE Department

John James
Examination Supervisor

Julie Venison
Examination Assistant

NO ENTRY

**EXAMINATION
IN PROGRESS**

QUIET PLEASE