

# GET YOUR FOUNDATION LICENCE FAQ Ver 0.6

So, you've heard about the Foundation Online Training and 'Online Remote Invigilated Exams' but are struggling to put all the pieces together from the advice you're told and reading info that tells you one thing and then you read something else – well this guide is for you!

This guide is divided into two parts. **Part A** will aid you towards getting learning, revising and ready to attempt the Foundation Licence Exam. If you are already confident, have studied and just want to jump straight to the exam, head to **Part B**.

## **PART A: LETS GET LEARNING!**

### THE BOOK:

The first resource you should acquire is the most current '*RSGB Foundation Licence Manual*'. (This has replaced the old 'Foundation Now! Training book')

During the lockdown it has been easiest to get this directly from the RSGB Technical Edition outlet on eBay or via the RSGB Shop:

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/technicaledition/m.html?\\_nkw=&\\_armrs=1&\\_ipg=&\\_from=](https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/technicaledition/m.html?_nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_from=)

[https://www.rsgbshop.org/acatalog/Online\\_Catalogue\\_Training\\_19.html](https://www.rsgbshop.org/acatalog/Online_Catalogue_Training_19.html)

If have the ability to read an e-book or prefer digital format, you can get one from here:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07QS7C68V>

### AVAILABLE ONLINE TRAINING:

*Essex Ham Online* is proving to be the most popular for those who wish to do the online exam and gets 'rave reviews' by successful candidates on Facebook:

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/>

Courses, at present (Spring 2020) seem to be starting every month – check out their info/FAQ page for details of everything:

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/train/foundation-online-faq/>

including information on their 'Fast Track' option.

*Billy – GM6DX* is offering a free, online Foundation course "*Gettin Tae Grips" with the UK Foundation Licence*", based on '56 lessons' – visit his website to enrol:

<https://gm6dx.thinkific.com/>

I've not tried this website nor heard any feedback but it seems up to date for the current Foundation Syllabus. Please let me know if you use this resource!

*Kettering and District Amateur Radio Society (KDARS)* are providing online Foundation training during Lockdown.

They offer an eight-week course which covers all aspects of the course in order to prepare students for examination. Classes take place on a Sunday morning from 9am to 10am. The classes take place via Zoom (a free web conferencing tool).

If you would like to take part please email [M0TZX@yahoo.com](mailto:M0TZX@yahoo.com) and register your interest. In return for this service, KDARS asks that each student becomes a club member. The cost for this is £20 per year.

### LOCAL CLUB:

You should try to find a local club, even if they are unable to host meetings during the lockdown; they may have a Facebook group or other social media option, such as a forum and be offering training online. You will gain valuable knowledge from club members, as most are more than willing to help out fresh blood into the hobby.

You can locate a local club using the RSGB club finder link here:

<https://rsgb.org/main/clubs/club-finder/>

### FACEBOOK:

There are many groups, two which are supported by Leigh are:

UK Amateur Radio Foundation Licence:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/UKfoundationlicence/>

Amateur Radio Study Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/553312508657839/>

YOUTUBE: There is a ton of stuff on YouTube relating to Amateur Radio!

**Make sure you watch content relevant to the UK Licence, not the ARRL/FCC exams as there is a lot of that and also ensure that any videos are up to date – aka post Sept 2019 syllabus, no matter how well produced they may be!**

I recommend watching Callum M0MCX “DX Commander’s” *Foundation Licence Training* playlist. Not only informative, but has his amusing moments as well and he plans to doing his tutoring live. A good alternative way to learn!

He's just updated his 'Foundation Exam Introduction' video – watch it here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7nxQ9DWye4&feature=youtu.be>

(Note from Leigh – I’m looking at other offerings on YouTube – there is a lot to watch but a lot seem based on the old pre Sept 2020 syllabus. Updates soon!)

### REVISION BOOKS:

*Exam Secrets Book* – this is available from the RSGB and I do feel it’s worthwhile as it gives you a summary of each section learnt and also more multiple choice practice questions.

[https://www.rsgbshop.org/acatalog/Online\\_Catalogue\\_Training\\_19.html](https://www.rsgbshop.org/acatalog/Online_Catalogue_Training_19.html)

I (Leigh) recommend buying it as it also covers the Intermediate and Full exam too, so you’re ready for the future and updates/corrections appear on the RSGB website.

Ed O’Neill M0TXZ is a volunteer RSGB Tutor and has produced a Foundation Revision Resource: “*Foundation Radio: Revision Questions: Test your knowledge before taking the UK Foundation Radio examination.*”

It was first made available from Amazon from Dec 2019 for £5.99 plus postage:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/1698135122/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_asin\\_title\\_o00\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/1698135122/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

### MOCK EXAMS:

*RSGB Mocks:* The RSGB website has a couple of Mock Exam papers for the Foundation on their website as well as the ‘Reference Data’ that you will use as part of the exam (you get a copy but it’s worth printing it if you can).

Find these at: <https://rsgb.org/main/clubs-training/training-resources/mock-exams/>

JG Services produce a great mobile phone app of mock exams called 'Amateur Tests' that covers the September 2019 onwards syllabus.

Developer Jon Gibbs is a RSGB Foundation and Intermediate trainer and examiner too and is contactable via the app:

For Android users:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.jgservices.HamTests&hl=en-GB>

or

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.jgservices.HamTestsFoundation&hl=en-GB>

For Apple users:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/uk-amateur-radio-mock-tests/id1205177203?ls=1>

## OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES:

**DO BE AWARE** that there is a lot of old Foundation course information and revision material online that was designed for the old pre September 2020 syllabus and exams.

**You should ONLY be using up to date material to study from for your exam.**

*Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society* have some good slides for revision:

<http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/training/courses/files/foundation/2020/>

This is the link for their new September syllabus slides on their site that are a 'work in progress'.

*Cambridge and District Amateur Radio Club* have a variety of materials on their website, some for Foundation level:

<http://www.cdarc.org.uk/index.php?page=downloads>

*Bredhurst Receiving and Transmitting Society* has a selection of info and training materials on their website, though I fear this is quite dated as the page seems to be dated '2013-14'. I've included only this as it has Intermediate materials that you can look at AFTER you've passed the Foundation!

<http://www.brats-qth.org/training/indexx.htm>

*Bath & District Amateur Radio Club* have previously offered 'distance learning courses' and, from looking at their website, it seems they hope to be up and running with a course soon. I guess 'watch this space': <https://badarc.webs.com/bath-training>.

## OTHER MOCK RESOURCES:

**Please be aware that it is thought that the mock questions on these sites are based on the OLD syllabus and candidates sitting the current exam are at risk of failure after using them despite getting full marks on the mock. Use at your own risk!**

*Radio Tutor* – this seems to have been developed from a former website 'HamTests'. Emails have been sent to try and make contact with the site authors but no responses so far received. (12/05/20). Find them at: <https://radiotutor.uk>

**From screenshots of a few mock questions on this site that I have seen, they do seem to be the old syllabus and should not, in reality, be used for revision.**

## USEFUL HINTS:

I'll pass on this advice as a tutor – you must spread out your learning!

You cannot confidently read the Foundation Licence Manual overnight like a novel and then think you can pass the exam.

You will retain very little and what you have retained will make little sense. Sign up to an online course while clubs are closed to get some formal learning under your belt.

I (Leigh) tutor the classroom based Foundation course over 15 to 18 hours, including revision and breaks and feel that, learning online, you will still need a minimum of 12 hours of learning and 4 hours revision plus getting used to the question format using mocks, etc.

Try using different resources each day, get a family member to ask you questions randomly from your revision books, organise an online video training meetup, etc.

Assuming you have done all the above and studied until the early hours, you should be ready for.....

## **PART B: LETS DO THAT EXAM!**

### APPLY FOR YOUR EXAM:

This step will help you to apply to the RSGB to register for your exam:

Go to this page: <https://rsgb.org/main/clubs-training/exam-faq/>

- and read the two documents below – you must follow each stage of the first one which also tells you of how to pay and what to enter on the form – make a note and keep a copy of your payment details.

[https://rsgb.services/public/exams/documents/online\\_exam\\_remote\\_invigilation\\_faq.pdf](https://rsgb.services/public/exams/documents/online_exam_remote_invigilation_faq.pdf)

- and the following, while covering all exams, may answer some questions:

<https://rsgb.org/main/faq-2/exam-candidates-faq/>

You will need to download the: *EX200 Candidate Application Form*

[https://thersgb.org/services/forms/examinations/general/EX200\\_CAF\\_All\\_levels\\_April\\_2019.docx](https://thersgb.org/services/forms/examinations/general/EX200_CAF_All_levels_April_2019.docx)

Fill this in but leave the exam date blank and send it to: [exams@rsgb.org.uk](mailto:exams@rsgb.org.uk)

Then await a reply from them and you will be instructed what to do next – a member of the invigilation team will contact you for a ‘pre-exam’ meeting.

*Do remember that, during the period of UK lockdown, the RSGB, like most organisations, are working from home so your response may be delayed but they do endeavour to respond as soon as they can.*

### PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessed element of the Foundation Course that is required to apply for the exam has, for the Remote Invigilated Online Exams, been temporarily removed.

### COMPUTER SETUP:

You can speed things up once you’ve applied for your exam by preparing your computer. You will need a PC running Windows 7 or later or a Mac – details are in the Online Remote Exam Remote invigilation link above. (NOTE: Linux is not used.)

Ensure any system updates are done and that your computer is working well.

You will need a webcam of some description, as the online exam will require it plus a microphone and speakers or an optional headset.

## SOFTWARE:

Currently the RSGB are using 'Cisco Webex' as their preferred comms tool. So head over there and get signed up, then download the software and setup so you are ready for the big day:

<https://www.webex.com/downloads.html/>

Download the 'Webex for Meetings' software and install it.

As a candidate you will need to ensure that your computer has the 'TestReach Desktop App' downloaded and it is working. This is where your exam is done.

Download: <http://www.testreach.com/rsgb-download/>

- and set it up on your system. This download is tailored for the RSGB.

## PRE EXAM MEETING:

Around a week before your exam an invigilator will contact you at your registered email address to arrange a pre-exam meeting to iron out any technical issues ahead of the exam time, check you have received everything you need, and to help you get comfortable with the format of the exam.

The invigilators are very friendly and will be more than happy to help you with any questions you might have. They will likely also be able to share good practice tips for the exam itself.

Ahead of the pre-exam meeting you will be sent a link to a Webex video conference. Shortly before the meeting click the link and follow the on-screen instructions. Webex does not require any additional software and runs in your browser, however, if you do have any issues you may wish to download the Webex app.

*(If you followed the 'Computer Setup section above, you'll be one step ahead!)*

If you have technical problems contact the invigilator and they will assist.

Once a connection has been made the invigilator will introduce themselves and give you an overview of the next steps.

They will check:

- You have received an invite to the 'TestReach' platform
- You have downloaded the 'TestReach' app and undertaken the tutorial
- You have received a copy of the "Candidate information" document

- You have downloaded and printed a copy of the latest Exam Reference Booklet – as at the time of writing Feb 2020 [http://rsgb.org/main/files/2020/02/EX307\\_Feb\\_2020.pdf](http://rsgb.org/main/files/2020/02/EX307_Feb_2020.pdf)

They may confirm what its you are allowed in the exam (Pen, Blank Paper, Pencil, Rubber, Ruler, Non Programmable calculator, Mascot, Snacks and Drinks plus a copy of the Reference data) and what is not – such as notes and other materials – a full list is shown in the Exam Rules at the bottom of this document.

They will then give you an overview of what will happen on the day of the exam and inform you that the exam itself is recorded, they may also confirm how many candidate will take part in the session.

**Remember to contact both the invigilator (if possible) and the RSGB if you are unable to do your examination on the agree date to reschedule.**

### EXAM DAY:

The day of the Exam, you will be asked to join a ‘Webex’ video conference around 15 minutes before your exam start time.

The invigilator will ask you to show some form of photo ID to your camera. If you do not have any form of photo ID, you should contact the RSGB directly for further advice.

Once all candidates have ‘arrived’ the invigilator will read out the exam rules - We’ve put them at the bottom of this FAQ.

Shortly before the exam start time the invigilator will ask you to scan the room around you with your camera/webcam. Once done you will be invited to login to the Test Reach app.

Once logged on you will click on the Enter button as instructed and once all candidates are ready, you will be given a pin number to enter to start your exam.

As each candidate completes the exam, the invigilator will provide brief instructions on how to find your results – depending on the number of candidates such contacts maybe brief as to not interrupt other candidates.

At the end of the exam you will click ‘End Test’, and in small font, near the top of the following screen you will see a sentence stating your results, starting with either “Congratulations” or “Unfortunately” – your score is at the bottom of the screen.

If you are successful then between 5 to 10 working days after your exam you will receive a certificate and other documentation by email. This certificate will include details on claiming your callsign.



## ADVICE:

Some advice for those doing the online exam has been passed on to us:

“During the exam, read every question and all answers at least 3 times, before committing to an answer.”

“Also, during the Online Exam if your computer crashes, review the questions again as the answers to the question, may have changed or the order changed.”

## OFCOM REGISTRATION:

Fingers crossed you have been successful – if so you need to register with OFCOM so you can enter details once you have passed and received your pass certificate from the RSGB. You can, of course, register then enter your RSGB details later.

<https://ofcom.force.com/LicensingComSelfReg>

- Follow all steps on the OFCOM site and you'll be on your way to choosing your callsign!

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Hopefully by using this guide, you will be totally prepared and ready to accept the earliest date that the RSGB offer you.

*We'd love to hear from those who have done the exam to share their experience – if this is you – please get in touch.*

**THE VERY BEST OF LUCK!**

## ORIGIN AND REVISIONS:

Posted onto Facebook by Mark S. from Northamptonshire in April 2020 with additions by Leigh M5GWH from May 2020

All feedback welcome – Please contact: [leigh@europe.com](mailto:leigh@europe.com)

TinyURL: <https://tinyurl.com/ukflfaq>

## THE NOT SO SMALL PRINT:

**REMEMBER THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT IS OFFERED ‘IN GOOD FAITH’ AND ‘AS-IS’ SO CLASSES AS ‘ADVICE ONLY’ AND YOU USE IT AS YOU WISH.**

**NOTHING IN THIS DOCUMENT ASSURES YOU OF SUCCESS IN THE EXAM. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING AND PROGRESS.**

## Revisions:

0.1 6th May 2020 – first ever version

0.2 7th May 2020 – additions already appearing – loads added from suggestions!

0.3 8th May 2020 – Kettering Club added. Some revisions and tidying up.

0.4 9th May 2020 – revision re mock exams and old syllabus materials.

0.5 10th May 2020 – Update from JG Services re the Foundation mobile apps.

0.6 12th May 2020 – Addition of the Remote Invigilation Process and a re-order of sections after feedback. Some details added. Update on lack of contact from 'Radio Tutor' website.

## OFCOM/RSGB Examination Rules:

- You must not have any notes, books or other information with you. If you have such things in the room you must ensure they are out of reach before the examination begins.
- Mobile phones, smart watches and other devices with any communication functions (including bluetooth) must be switched off.
- You may use a silent non-programmable calculator.
- Any calculations can be done on a plain piece of paper.
- Sweets and drinks are allowed, please consume quietly and remove excess packaging.
- You must not communicate with anyone in any way, apart from an Invigilator.
- If you do have any problems and need to speak to an Invigilator, please put up your hand to attract attention.
- Your answers must be all your own work and invigilators will not be able to explain questions.
- If you need to use the bathroom during the exam this is allowed but you will not be allowed to go back and look at questions you've already answered. The invigilator can see the question number your working on so if you attempt to go back to those questions it could invalidate the whole exam.
- Breaches of the examination rules may result in disqualification or other sanction.
- If you wish to appeal against the conduct of the examination you should do so within five days of the examination

**Please note that OFCOM / RSGB reserve the right to inspect and observe at any examination venue without prior notice.**