

A guide to RAF careers



AIRCREW
ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL
FORCE PROTECTION
MEDICAL AND MEDICAL SUPPORT

PERSONNEL SUPPORT
AIR OPERATIONS SUPPORT
INTELLIGENCE
LOGISTICS

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WHAT CAN THE RAF OFFER YOU?

The RAF is one of the world's most advanced military forces, offering exciting opportunities to the right people. If you're looking for a responsible job that's challenging and rewarding, we probably have a career for you.

Whether operating at home or overseas, the RAF has important responsibilities. We defend UK airspace and provide support to the wider community in times of need. Around the world, new kinds of crisis mean that we have to respond at a moment's notice; for example, to control the airspace over a combat zone or deliver aid to people in need.



These are tough challenges that demand the best people: those who have initiative and can work under pressure. We're not nine-to-fivers – we do whatever is required to get the job done.

It can be hard work, but you'll get plenty of training and support, a generous pay and benefits package, and six weeks' holiday each year. And if you do well, you'll soon be eligible for promotion.

'Work hard, play hard' is our ethos. We make time for all our people to take part in sports. So whether you're into football or fencing, tennis or target shooting, there'll be something for you. And we'll give you support and training to try things you wouldn't normally get to do – anything from skydiving to potholing.

This leaflet lists all the careers available in the RAF, and each and every one plays a key role in one of the world's leading military forces. You can get more details on each job and on life in the RAF by visiting raf.mod.uk/recruitment.



The RAF encourages people to keep fit. You can choose from more than 50 different sports and over 100 adventurous activities.



To find out more, visit raf.mod.uk/recruitment

LOGISTICS

Our Logistics Branch carries out a diverse range of challenging tasks, from delivering essential supplies around the world to feeding hundreds of troops on operations.



Logistics Officer

You'll be responsible for providing all the logistics support that's necessary to keep our aircraft flying. Leading a team of airmen/women, you'll manage the supply chain from beginning to end, including the purchasing and storage of equipment, the use of complex IT management systems and the distribution of equipment by land, sea and air on a global scale. You'll also deliver catering and hospitality services to RAF personnel both in the UK and overseas.

Supply, Storage and Distribution Specialist

As a Supplier, you'll use the very latest storage methods, material handling equipment and IT accounting systems. You'll be part of a team handling more than a million items of RAF equipment – everything from the smallest component to complete aircraft.

Mover

You'll be part of the team that moves troops and cargo according to RAF operational needs. As well as loading and unloading transport vehicles, you'll operate IT systems to plan transport loads. You could also accompany cargo anywhere in the world.



Driver

It's up to you to get our people and equipment to the right place at the right time. You'll drive everything from cars to articulated lorries, refuelling tankers to mobile cranes. You could chauffeur VIPs or transport hazardous materials from one unit to another.

Chef

Chefs prepare meals for RAF personnel, wherever they're operating. You'll work mainly on an RAF base, preparing food and planning menus for everyday meals and VIP occasions. You could also work out in the field, cooking for hungry troops.

Air and Ground Steward

Cabin Crew will initially operate on the Royal Air Force A330-200 Voyager aircraft of 10 Sqn and 101 Sqn. After your first flying tour you could volunteer to serve with 32(The Royal) Sqn flying on BAe 146 aircraft, work alongside our industry partners in military messes or as part of our specialist field catering Squadron.

AIR OPERATIONS SUPPORT

It takes more than a pilot to get our aircraft off the ground. Without the Air Operations Support team, there would be no air traffic control tower, no flight plans and no aerospace radar support. If you'd like to develop a professional career and be close to the action, then a career in RAF Air Operations Support could be for you.



Air Operations (Control) Officer

The Air Operations (Control) Officer branch has three key employment areas, Terminal Air Traffic Control, Area Control and finally as a Weapons Controller. As a leader, you could also find yourself responsible for teams of controllers who help ensure that aircrew complete their missions.

Air Operation (Systems) Officer

The Air Operations (Systems) Officer branch has three key areas of employment within the Aerospace Surveillance, Space Ops/Control and Airfield Operations domains. Officers within this specialisation will use sophisticated radar and communications technology to provide organisations with the information they need to make operational and time-critical decisions that underpin the operational support functions of the RAF.

Air Operations (Control) Sergeant

The Air Operations (Control) Sergeant trade (also known as Non-Commissioned Controller) has three key employment areas, Terminal Air Traffic Control, Area Control and finally as a Weapons Controller. You will be part of a team of controllers forming the back bone of the control organisation, always at the fore of controlling aircraft and ensuring that aircrew complete their missions.

Air and Space Operations Specialist (Flight Operations)

You'll provide accurate information about RAF and civilian aircraft operations so that aircrew can plan and carry out their missions safely. You could work in a civilian air traffic control centre in the UK or in the operations room of an overseas air base.

Air and Space Operations Specialist (Aerospace Systems)

Doing this job makes you the eyes and ears of the RAF. You'll use advanced radar and communications technology to scan the skies for potential threats. You may get the chance to travel anywhere in the world to support aircrew and ground troops.

Air Cartographer

As an Air Cartographer, you'll work on maps, charts and books used to carry out flying missions safely. Based at RAF Northolt near London, you'll create and edit crucial documents used by the UK Armed Forces, foreign air forces and some civilian airlines.

FORCE PROTECTION

The RAF's force protection team looks after the security of UK military personnel, aircraft and bases at home and overseas.



'There's so much scope for development – the RAF will let you go as far as you're prepared to push yourself.'

RAF Regiment Officer

The RAF Regiment is an elite force responsible for protecting UK military personnel, aircraft and bases from enemy attack. You'll lead your men in a range of environments, from operations in the desert to training in the jungle.

RAF Regiment Gunner

You'll be a specialist in infantry tactics, learning to use a variety of weapons – from grenades to anti-tank missiles. In your role protecting UK forces, you'll have to work in different combat terrains and might even qualify as a parachutist.

RAF Police Officer

It will be your responsibility to co-ordinate RAF security and undertake general policing duties. You might have to investigate and detect crimes, maintain discipline or protect lines of communication on deployments.

RAF Police

You'll help prevent and detect crime and maintain the security of RAF personnel, documents and equipment. You'll also carry out duties such as escorting convoys, patrols and traffic duties, and you could learn to work with patrol and search dogs.

Firefighter

RAF Firefighters save lives and protect the RAF's resources. You might be based at a fire station on the edge of a runway, ready to respond quickly to any incident, or you might be called on to deal with fires in RAF accommodation.

AIRCREW

Whether flying fast jets, helicopters or reconnaissance or transport aircraft, our aircrew play a key role in defending the UK and our allies.



Just 5 per cent of RAF personnel are pilots. There are more than 50 other jobs to choose from, each one playing a vital part in keeping our aircraft in the air.

Pilot

Depending on your skills, you could become a fast-jet pilot, ready for air combat or ground attack. You might fly transport aircraft that offer military support overseas. As a helicopter pilot, you could be transporting troops in to conflict or delivering equipment and supplies .

Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) Pilot

Remotely Piloted Aircraft System Pilots have a unique and challenging role. They provide air power on behalf of the UK by operating the Reaper, a state-of-the-art medium altitude long endurance remotely piloted aircraft.

Weapon Systems Officer

P-8A Poseidon, E-3D Sentry, RC-135W Rivet Joint, Sentinel R1, Shadow R1, MQ-9 Reaper and Protector CPB all require Weapons Systems Officers (WSOs). The roles of our WSOs are as varied as our aircraft with the field of Intelligence, Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) offering the most opportunities.

Weapon Systems Operator

As a Weapons Systems Operator you will manage the sensors and weapons of a particular aircraft operational missions whilst gathering intelligence and supporting forces on the ground. Roles include WSO Crewman (Cmn) on helicopters, WSO Air Loadmaster (ALM) on large aircraft, WSO Mission Systems Operator (MSO) on Voyager and WSO Intelligence, Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) on ISR aircraft.

Weapon Systems Operator (Linguist)

Your role on board reconnaissance aircraft is to monitor and collect foreign language radio transmissions. You will analyse and interpret these transmissions in order to provide military commanders with up-to-the-minute intelligence.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INTELLIGENCE

State-of-the-art technologies help our communications and intelligence personnel stay at the cutting edge, collecting and analysing intelligence with speed and accuracy.



The RAF is involved in all kinds of community and conservation work – from running youth hockey camps around the UK to protecting nesting turtles in Cyprus.



Intelligence Officer

You could work in operational intelligence, preparing threat assessments and providing intelligence support. Or you could find yourself involved in aerial reconnaissance, interpreting enemy troop and equipment movements.

Intelligence Analyst

You'll collect, analyse and disseminate intelligence, helping to generate reports for national and international organisations. This involves intercepting non-voice communications using sophisticated technology.

Intelligence Analyst (Linguist)

The RAF will train you to a high standard in at least one foreign language so that you can monitor, collect and analyse radio signals from overseas. You'll use this information to produce reports on actual or potential enemies and their movements.

PERSONNEL SUPPORT

People are the RAF's most important resource. Members of our personnel team offer guidance and advice as well as looking after everyone's well-being and morale.



'I never wanted a nine-to-five job and I like knowing that what I do really matters.'



Personnel Support Officer You'll manage essential support services at RAF bases at home and overseas, undertaking a range of activities from recruitment and communications to human resources and facilities management. You could also move into specialising in physical education.

Personnel Training Officer The Training Specialisation offers a range of opportunities with a common aim of maximising the potential of RAF Personnel in order to ensure that the Service delivers its operational capabilities. Personnel Training Officers are engaged in a wide variety of roles from training management, through developing programmes that enhance human performance, to operationally vital employment in flying training development or parachute training for the UK's Airborne Forces.

Personnel Support Your responsibilities will include looking after our finances, our bases and, most importantly, our personnel. Administration is key to the efficiency of the RAF but it's no ordinary office job – your professional skills could be required anywhere in the world.

Legal Officer You'll help to ensure that the RAF operates within its rules and regulations and within those of society and the international community. You could undertake a range of legal duties – from gathering evidence to advising personnel on civil legal matters.



'The things you see, the things you do, the laughs you have, the friends you make – there's no other job in the world like it.'

Chaplain

As a Chaplain, you'll play an important role in supporting the RAF community, helping people work through difficult moral issues as they carry out their duties. For most of your career, you'll live and work on RAF bases in the UK, but you could also work overseas.

Physical Training Instructor

You'll help keep everyone in the RAF fit for action. As well as taking classes and conducting fitness tests, you'll organise sports activities and provide health and fitness counselling. You could also qualify to teach parachute jumping or adventurous training.

Musician

As an RAF Musician, you'll represent us at home and abroad. You'll perform at a variety of engagements, from graduation parades to state ceremonies. You'll also receive first aid training, so you can provide vital medical support in times of crisis or war.

ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL

Around one-third of all RAF personnel are engineering and technical specialists, working on everything from aircraft engines to X-ray security machines.

'As soon as work finishes, I can put on my other hat and do more or less any sport I want.'



Engineer Officer

Depending on your skills, you'll work in either Aerosystems or Communications/Electronics. Wherever in the world our aircraft go, our Engineer Officers go too. You'll work with state-of-the-art technology and learn to manage teams of up to 150 technicians.

Aircraft Technician (Mechanical)

You'll carry out important maintenance and repair work on the structure and engines of our aircraft, making sure they are always fit to fly. You could help check aircraft for damage or wear and tear after they return from a flight, or help give them a regular overhaul.

Aircraft Technician (Avionics)

Your role involves maintaining and repairing the sophisticated electronics on board our aircraft. You'll look after communications technology, navigation systems and engine wiring, carrying out anything from last-minute checks to in-depth repairs on our aircraft.

RAF Vehicle & Mechanical Equipment Technician

You'll look after the mechanical equipment used to support aircraft operations. You could service and repair anything from aircraft ground power units and arrestor systems to fire engines and tracked vehicles.

RAF Electrician

You'll be responsible for looking after the electrical equipment on airfields, in workshops and on operational deployments. You'll use advanced test equipment to service and repair everything from generators to vehicle electrical systems.

General Technician Workshops

Working in a specialist workshop or aircraft hangar, you'll make and repair components for our aircraft or other vehicles and equipment. You'll learn to use manually operated machinery as well as computer-controlled equipment.



Weapon Technician

As a Weapon Technician, you'll be responsible for a range of weapons used by the RAF – from the bombs and missiles on our aircraft to the pistols and rifles used by our personnel. You'll also maintain and repair bomb carriers and rocket launchers.

Survival Equipment Specialist

You'll maintain and repair the survival equipment used by aircrew – from flying helmets and respirators to life rafts and parachutes. You could work with an operational flying unit, an air/sea rescue team or an equipment testing unit.

Cyberspace Communications Specialist

You'll have the opportunity to work on equipment from airfield radars to local area networks. It might be your job to set up, operate and maintain satellite links in remote locations, or to support IT users in our bases around the UK.

Communication Infrastructure Technician

In this role, you'll install and maintain the communications equipment that the RAF depends on – everything from fibre optic cables to antennae. You'll sometimes work more than 100 metres above ground, so a good head for heights is essential!

Photographer

Using digital and wet film photography, you'll work on varied projects that could include shooting video for training films, printing target identification images for aircrew and taking aerial shots for mapping and exploration.

MEDICAL AND MEDICAL SUPPORT



RAF bases are like small towns. Some have crèches, post offices, cinemas, shops and even bowling alleys.



The RAF has its own doctors, nurses, dentists and medical support personnel working in NHS hospitals and bases in the UK and overseas.

Medical Officer

You could be a GP in one of our medical centres, looking after our personnel and their families. Or you could become a specialist in one of our NHS hospital units. You'll also work overseas, helping transfer patients back to the UK or providing expertise in the field.

Medical Support Officer

You'll provide our medical services with management and administrative support. Your role could be planning the delivery of resources to deployed operations. Or you could advise on the RAF's primary care provision at one of our medical centres.

Medical Support Officer (Physiotherapist)

You could find yourself in a hospital dealing with acute medical and surgical cases, or in one of our rehabilitation facilities or on a front-line operational base, caring for injured military personnel. It's highly likely you'll be deployed in support of a military campaign.

Radiographer

As an RAF Radiographer, you'll provide clinicians with the images they need to diagnose patients' illnesses or injuries. You'll spend most of your time in NHS hospitals but will also work overseas in a military hospital or in challenging conditions in the field.

RAF Medic

You'll provide administrative support to medical centres on RAF bases, managing patient records or storing medical supplies. You'll also have some emergency care training and could be called on to help look after patients being flown back to the UK.

Operating Department Practitioner

It will be your responsibility to maintain the operating theatre and its equipment and to assist the surgical team during operations. You'll also be trained to provide medical care with limited support during overseas detachments.

Pharmacy Technician

As a Pharmacy Technician, you'll dispense medication, provide pharmaceutical advice and order medical supplies. You'll be based either at a medical centre on one of our UK bases or in a centre that distributes medicines.

Biomedical Scientist

You'll help clinicians make diagnoses by analysing blood, viruses and micro-organisms. You'll develop your skills in all the major disciplines of pathology and, as well as working in an NHS hospital, you could work in a tented lab on detachment.

Environmental Health Technician

In this role, you'll work to ensure the health and safety of RAF personnel, protecting them from hazards in the workplace and accommodation. You might carry out workplace inspections, monitor food hygiene or control toxic substances.

Dental Officer

To join as a Dental Officer, you must be qualified to practise dentistry and be registered with the General Dental Council. You'll undertake at least ten sessions of postgraduate education each year and can work anywhere in the world.

Dental Nurse

Dental Nurses look after the instruments and equipment in the dental surgery and act as a second pair of hands for the dentist. You'll prepare fillings and develop X-rays, book appointments and look after patients during and after their treatment.

Nursing Officer

As a Nursing Officer, you'll provide high standards of nursing care to military personnel and their dependants. You'll spend most of your career working in both NHS and military environments, supervising teams of junior nurses and medical assistants.

Registered Nurse (Adult)

Depending on your specialisation, you'll work within primary or secondary care. You might work in drop-in health clinics on one of our UK bases, in critical care in an NHS hospital or on aeromedical evacuations of casualties from overseas.

Registered Nurse (Mental Health)

You'll work as a community mental health nurse in a multi-disciplinary team. Your focus will be on stress management and health promotion, using modern diagnostic procedures and a combination of drug, cognitive and behaviour therapies.

Student Nurse (Adult)

You'll receive three years' training to qualify as a Registered Nurse (Adult). You could then work in a medical centre, focusing on health education and preventive medicine, or as part of a military team in an NHS hospital. You could also work overseas.

THE RAF VISION

The RAF's role, in conjunction with the Defence organisations, is to deliver the UK Defence vision:

- Defend the UK and its interests.
- Strengthen international peace and stability.
- Be a force for good in the world.

Equal opportunities

The RAF is an equal opportunities employer that recognises the value of an individual's ability regardless of their gender, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, background, religion or belief, sexual orientation or marital status or civil partnership. The RAF believe that harnessing the talents and skills of individuals from different groups enhances operational effectiveness.

Welfare in the RAF

To find out more about the RAF's commitment to the care and welfare of its personnel, visit www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment/about-the-raf/parents-guardians

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Information correct at time of going to press, please visit our website to find out more about each individual role and life in the RAF and eligibility.

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Make an appointment at our Armed Forces Careers Offices and we can talk to you in depth about your career options with us.

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