

Uniformed and Security Services

Are you attracted to the idea of being part of a team and doing an important job? Or what about working abroad and challenging yourself mentally and physically? A career in the uniformed and security services can not only offer these opportunities, but you can receive quality training and, in some cases, learn a trade or new skill too.

This career sector contains services that are concerned with security across a broad spectrum, from the country's defence to civil order and protection of private businesses and individuals, to dealing with emergencies at sea or on land.

What areas can I work in?

This career area consists of four sectors:

- **armed services**, whose main purpose is to defend the United Kingdom, its Overseas Territories (like Gibraltar), its people and interests
- **emergency services**, which includes coastguard and firefighting services
- **police and security work**, which includes the investigation of criminal activities, public safety and surveillance, border security and customs and revenue services
- **prison work** involving custodial work and the rehabilitation of prisoners.

What kind of companies can I work for?

Armed services

- Army
- Royal Air Force
- Royal Navy
- Royal Marines.

Emergency Services

- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), a UK government agency
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
- Ministry of Defence (MoD).

Police and Security Work

- Police Scotland
- private security firms
- local authorities
- airports
- retail stores and supermarkets
- Border Force (formerly part of the UK Border Agency)
- UK Visas and Immigration (formerly part of the UK Border Agency)

- Scottish Police Authority (SPA)
- government departments such as Security Service (MI5), Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) or GCHG (Government Communications Headquarters).

Prison Work

- Scottish Prison Service (SPS).

What's the job market like?

Generally the job prospects are good, although entry can be very competitive. It can help if you are able to move around the country in many jobs.

The armed services are a major UK employer, with 144,430 UK Regular Forces personnel as of 31 March 2019 (decrease of 1.5% from 31 March 2018). There has however been an increase of 1,000 personnel since 1 January 2019.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Services employ just under 7,800 staff in uniformed and non-uniformed roles, however entry is very competitive.

There are very few jobs for Coastguards. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency employs around 1,050 people who are supported by 3,500 volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers based across the country. These volunteers are led and supported by over 100 professional Coastguard Officers.

As of 31 March 2019, there were 17,251 police officers in Scotland. Police Scotland have recruitment intakes at various times throughout the year.

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) has 13 publicly managed prisons and 2 privately managed prisons in Scotland and employs around 4,549 staff (1,374 are female) in a variety of roles. There is a growing private security industry in Scotland, providing CCTV surveillance, security patrols and other guarding services as well as private investigation and intelligence services. This sector includes door supervisors and stewards.

Border Force UK employ around 7,700 full time staff. This may increase due to Brexit.

Facts and figures

The RAF offers more than 50 different careers for both men and women. There are jobs in aircrew, air operations and support, logistics and equipment, communications and intelligence, technical and engineering, medical and medical support, catering and hospitality, personnel support as well as security and defence.

- The Army employs over 13,000 women, based in the UK and abroad, and women can now apply to join the Royal Armoured Corps.
- HM Coastguard responded to more than 22,600 incidents in 2018.
- In the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, 4.8% of wholetime firefighters are female.

Want to find out more?

For detailed information about the Army, phone 0345 600 8080 or visit the Army website (www.army.mod.uk).

You can also find information on careers in the armed services at the Ministry of Defence website (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence).

For detailed information about the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, visit their websites at (www.royalnavy.mod.uk) and (www.royalnavy.mod.uk/our-organisation/the-fighting-arms/royal-marines).

For careers in the Royal Air Force, phone 0345 605 5555 and visit its website (www.raf.mod.uk).

Sources

- Scottish Government Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics Scotland (May 2019)
- Scottish Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts (2017-2018)
- National Statistics Publication: UK Armed Forces Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics (1 April 2019)
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Accounts (2017-2018)
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency Business Plan (2019-2020)
- Home Office Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18
- [The Army](#)
- [Royal Air Force](#)
- [Scottish Prison Service](#)