

Army – Officer

Army officers lead and manage teams of soldiers. They are responsible for the training, welfare and discipline of the men and women under their command.

The Work

Officers serve in combat units, for example as platoon commanders, in engineering units, in information technology or in intelligence services.

There are also opportunities in specialist roles such as chaplains, doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists, dentists, environmental health officers, nurses, lawyers and veterinary surgeons.

All army officers must be ready to serve anywhere in the UK and overseas and must be prepared to go into combat zones at any time.

You could be:

- leading your unit in a war zone
- leading your unit in peacetime exercises, to practise for combat
- leading your unit in peacekeeping or humanitarian duties
- organising soldiers and equipment, at home or overseas
- training new recruits
- doing administrative work at your base, in the UK or abroad.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- what job you do.

While you train as an Officer Cadet at Sandhurst, you earn a salary of £27,272 a year. After training, most officers start as a Second Lieutenant on £32,780, before being promoted to Lieutenant on £33,931.

You could expect to be promoted to rank of captain from the end of your fifth year, or third year if you have a degree. Salary for Captains start at £42,009 a year and Major £52,916 a year. You get extra allowances in some jobs and for being overseas.

The army provides subsidised food and accommodation, uniforms and protective clothing, free health care and a pension. If you have already qualified in a trade or profession and are considering bringing those skills to the Army, you may get a 'Golden Hello' payment, worth anything up to £50,000 for medical officers. This can change from year to year.

Conditions

- You would normally join the army for at least four years if you are over 18, although after 28 days service you can opt to leave within the first 3 months, by giving 14 days notice.
- Working conditions vary, depending on where you are and what you are doing.
- If you are single you will live in the Officers' Mess. If you are married you will live in officer family quarters. You will sometimes have to live under field conditions.
- You may be away from home and family for several months at a time.
- You can be sent anywhere in the UK or abroad, sometimes at short notice.
- You might have to work in very hot or very cold weather conditions.
- Although normal hours are Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm, when you are on exercises or on operations, hours will be irregular and may include weekends.
- You will be entitled to 30 days annual leave a year plus public holidays. You will get additional time off mid-tour, and when a tour ends.
- It is not always adventurous and exciting; there is a lot of routine work.

You should be aware that in the army, you will at times be operating in difficult and dangerous conditions and there may be the risk of injury or death.

Getting In

- You must have 4 Highers, plus minimum of 2 subjects at National 5.
- You are more likely to get in if you have a degree – over 80% of entrants have degrees.
- If you agree to serve at least 3 years as an officer in the army, you might be sponsored to take a degree course.
- You must meet residence and nationality requirements – shown on the [Army website](#).
- If you pass the medical screening, you will be appointed a Candidate Support Manager (CSM), and once you take your application to the next level, you will be invited to meet with a Senior Careers Adviser (SCA), allowing you to ask questions you may have, find out more about the joining process, and how to prepare. Following this, you have a medical assessment.
- The first part of the selection process is the 24 hour Army Officer Selection Board (AOSB) Briefing. It involves a series of mental and physical tests as well as a briefing session about how to prepare for the second part of the process.
- If you get through the AOSB Briefing you will go back for the three-and-a-half day AOSB Main Board, a series of tests to assess your suitability for officer training.
- Once you pass the Main Board and received an offer of employment, you will go on a Pre-Commissioning course before starting on the 44 week Commissioning Course for Regular Army Officers.
- You must be aged between 17 years 9 months and 28 years 11 months to apply to become a regular officer, unless you are a serving soldier or applying to enter certain corps or regiments, in which case you can apply up to the age of 28, provided you enter RMAS before your 29th birthday.
- You must be fit and healthy – there is a strict medical examination.

If you are accepted you begin a Short Service Commission (SSC), which lasts from 3 to 8 years. You can then apply for an Intermediate Regular Commission (IRC), which can be done up to the age of 36 and finally you may move to a Regular Commission (Reg C), which can be done up to the age of around 55.

If you are aged between 18 and 25, and have a place at a UK university with at least two years of study left, you can apply to join the [University Officers Training Corps \(UOTC\)](#). If aged between 25 and 32, you are first referred

to the Commanding Officer for approval. The UOTC can give you an insight into army life whilst getting paid with no call-up commitment or obligation to join the military service.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- a good leader, able to take responsibility and inspire confidence
- able to enforce discipline
- courageous and self-disciplined
- resilient and resourceful
- a good organiser and communicator
- able to stay calm and work effectively, even in combat situations
- able to react quickly and take decisions under pressure
- able to deal with complex information
- able to work alone and also as part of a team.

Training

- You will have the opportunity to achieve BSc Leadership and Strategic Studies whilst training at the Academy.
- If you already have a degree you could study for the MSc Leadership and Strategic Studies.
- You will take the 44-week officer training programme at RMAS. The course is split into three 14-week terms, with a two week period of adventurous training between terms 1 and 2. Each term is followed by a period of leave.
- Once you have completed your initial training, you will undertake specialist training.
- You keep up to date by attending training courses throughout your time in the army.
- If you join as a professionally qualified officer (for example, medical, dental or nursing officer, lawyer, veterinary surgeon or chaplain) you will follow a shortened course at RMAS, which includes basic military training, and lasts for four weeks.

Getting On

- You will leave Sandhurst after Commissioning Course as a 2nd Lieutenant.
- There is a clear promotion route from second lieutenant to lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant colonel and beyond.
- You must pass exams to be promoted up to the rank of major, but after that it depends on how well you do.
- Experience in the army can be useful for a variety of jobs after you leave.

More Information

For detailed information about the army, phone 0345 600 8080 or visit the [Army](#) website.

Contacts

Army Careers Centres

Tel: 0345 600 8080

Website: apply.army.mod.uk/army-career-centre-finder

Twitter: @armyjobs

Facebook: www.facebook.com/armyjobs

Army Reserve

Website: www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/the-army-reserve

British Army

Tel: 0345 600 8080

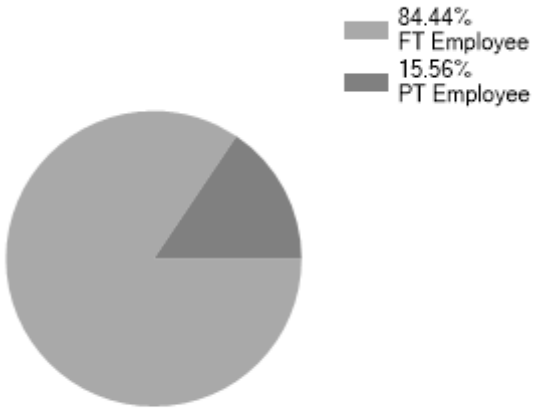
Website: www.army.mod.uk

Twitter: @armyjobs

Facebook: www.facebook.com/armyjobs

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.