Information for Commonwealth Nationals

Commonwealth nationals who meet all the eligibility requirements may now apply to join the British Army from this website. Applications will be assessed and those that meet the full eligibility requirements will be given further information to start the recruitment process. The Overseas Cell has closed. The additional checks conducted by staff on overseas applications, is no longer available.

All eligible Commonwealth nationals will be required to travel to the UK to complete the application process. The following notes are designed to help applicants from outside the UK determine their basic eligibility to join the British Army prior to paying for visas (if you require one. Check the UKBA website www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) and air tickets for the UK. Once in the UK, applicants will have further checks, including attendance at one of our Army Development and Selection Centres (ADSCs) where they will be required to undergo a day and a half of physical and mental tests and a full medical examination. Full details of the Army Recruitment and Selection process are held on the Army website at www.army.mod.uk

Applicants should read carefully the following notes to help them assess their own eligibility. Further information can be found in the AFCO 5 Form on our website at http://www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/AFCO_5_Army_01_Sep_11.pdf Those who still have unanswered questions may e-mail our online office at Army Chat

**Nationality.** Non-UK Applicants must be an Irish, Commonwealth, British Protected Citizen, British Overseas Citizen, British Overseas Territory Citizen, British National Overseas Citizen or a dual national with second nationality that is either British, Irish or Commonwealth.

**Passport Validity.** Applicants must hold a valid passport with a minimum of 4 years and 6 months validity on it from when they first attend an Army Careers Office in the UK. In most cases 6 months is adequate for an applicant to get through the selection process, leaving 4 years left on enlistment. Junior Entry applicants must be able to renew their passports from within UK as their passports are likely to expire before the soldier has completed their 4 year minimum engagement which begins from the age of 18 yrs.

**Visas.** Applicants must hold a valid UK visa with minimum of 4 months left to run on it from when they first make an application at an Army Careers Office in UK. 4 months is the minimum amount of time required to get a committed applicant through the selection process and into training but it can take up to 6 months – see above. Applicants MUST NOT DELAY IN APPLYING once they arrive in UK otherwise they risk not meeting this requirement. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they have permission to be in the UK for the whole time it takes to complete the selection process and enlist. The British Army cannot assist you in this process.

**Age.** Applicants must check the upper and lower age limits on our website at http://www.army.mod.uk/join/20145.aspx. Applicants cannot be enlisted (that means start Day One of Phase One Training) before the age of 16 or after the age of 33. Applicants should allow at least an additional 6 months for time spent in the selection process, e.g. an applicant over 32 yrs and 6 months is unlikely to enlist before they reach the upper age limit of 33 yrs and may be turned away. Parental consent is required for applicants under the age of 18 and therefore only applicants over the age of 18 can apply online. Original documentation proof of age will be required.

**Education.** You must have completed a secondary level of education to age 16 with certification to prove it and you must have a good standard of spoken and written English. This will be tested throughout the recruitment and selection process.
**Birth Certificate.** You will be required to show your original Birth Certificate or a Government stamped official copy when you first apply at an Army Careers Office. Please note that a birth certificate is not proof of nationality.

**Medical Requirements.** A full medical examination is required for each applicant in UK at the Army Development and Selection Centre (ADSC). All applicants must be medically, dentally and physically fit in accordance with the British Army standards and meet the requirements specified at [http://www.army.mod.uk/join/20157.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/join/20157.aspx). You are strongly advised to consider whether you meet all of these specific requirements. All applicants must download and complete the British Army Medical Questionnaire [www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk). Go to [How to join – Can I Join - Joining from Overseas](#). The Downloads are on the right of the page. This must be brought to the UK completed by you and your medical doctor. We also suggest that overseas applicants are in possession of a copy of their medical records when they report to an Army Careers Office in the UK.

**Height.** The minimum height requirement is 148cm except for employments which involve driving, when the minimum height is 158cm.

**Body Mass Index (BMI).** Your weight should be in proportion to your height. You should ask for professional assistance to measure your BMI. Alternatively, there is help available at many sites on the internet to help you calculate your BMI accurately if you know your exact height and weight measurements.

Adult entry (male): BMI must be between 18 and 32, normally 28 or below. If your BMI is between 28 and 32 you will need further assessment. Male applicants with a BMI between 28 to 32 must have a waistline measurement of below 94cm.

Adult entry (female): BMI must be between 18 and 30, normally 28 or below. If your BMI is between 28 and 30 you will need further assessment. Female applicants with a BMI between 28 to 30 must have a waistline measurement of below 80cm.

Junior Entry: BMI measurement must be between 17 and 27.

**Eye Sight.** You will need to have a copy of your prescription from your optician with you when you go for your medical examination at ADSC. The minimum standards for both uncorrected and corrected vision are determined by service medical staff and are dependent on the proposed employment and branch/trade group. Spectacle or contact lens corrections must not be greater then -7 dioptres or +8 dioptres in any meridian. Impaired colour perception (colour blindness) is not a bar to service, but may limit your career choices. Your eye sight is checked over a distance of 6 metres.

**Police Record Checks.** Applicants must provide an original national police records check from their home country dated within 3 months of application and show this when the first apply at an Army Careers Office in the UK. If you have not been resident in your home country for at least five years, you must also provide an original police record check from your previous country of residence. Photocopies are not acceptable. Applicants with criminal records may still be eligible to join but you are advised to ask the online office ([Army Chat](#)) whether your criminal record might make you ineligible to join. They will ask you to provide details of your convictions and the sentences you received, so make sure you have those details to hand and can provide them accurately.

**Tattoos.** Tattoos which are offensive, obscene or racist will be a bar to enlistment regardless of where they are on the body. Recruiting authorities can only act on those tattoos seen or declared by the applicant. Any undeclared tattoos, particularly those that are offensive, obscene or racist, which are observed either during or subsequent to enlistment, will result in the end of the selection process or discharge.
Head and Neck: Tattoos which are visible above the collar-line of an open collared shirt may be a bar to enlistment depending on size and nature.

Hands: Tattoos which are visible below the cuff-line of a long-sleeved shirt may be a bar to enlistment, depending on size and nature.
Small, non-offensive Tattoos: Small and non-offensive tattoos that are visible on the back of the neck, behind the ears, or on the hands are not a bar to enlistment.

**Service Liability Letters.**

Some countries require their nationals to carry out compulsory Military Service or Government Work. Applicants who are still liable for such service in their home countries are ineligible to join the British Army. Some applicants will require a letter confirming they are free of such service liability and that they have permission from their Government to join the British Army. Those countries are:

- Bermuda
- Botswana
- Cyprus (SBA, Republic)
- Malaysia
- Mozambique
- Singapore

**Character References.** All applicants must provide an original written character reference when the first apply at an Army Careers Office in UK, so bring one with you. Full guidance on references in given in the AFCO Form 5 at the following link: [http://www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/AFCO_5_Army_01_Sep_11.pdf](http://www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/AFCO_5_Army_01_Sep_11.pdf) and you are advised to read this to ensure you know what is required but please note:

The reference must be dated within the last 12 months and signed by the author.

References must not be written by a relative.

Photocopies are not acceptable.

**Disclaimer:** All applications are subject to Ministry Of Defence approval. The Armed Forces cannot guarantee that your application to serve in the Army will be accepted. The Armed Forces can refuse an application without giving any reason. You may cancel the application process at any time up to entry (Day One of Phase One Training) into your chosen Service. Any travel to the UK is entirely at the applicant’s own cost, irrespective of their selection for service in the British Army. Potential applicants should consider the risk that they will not be selected when deciding whether to pay the costs of travelling to the UK.