



131 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers Introduction and Questionnaire

131 Commando Squadron is the Army Reserve sub-unit of 24 Commando Royal Engineers. Based in London, Birmingham and Bath, the Squadron offers Reservists a unique range of challenges, experiences and opportunities.

Who are we and what do we do?

- **Sappers.** As Royal Engineers, or 'Sappers', our job is to help our armed forces to fight, move and live. This critical role involves a wide range of specialisations, including bridging, demolition, obstacle crossing, route denial and construction. Sappers also fight as infantry when required.
- **Commandos.** We provide engineer support to the Commando Force: the United Kingdom's very high-readiness specialists in littoral (coastal) operations and mountain and cold weather warfare. Our personnel undergo specialist Commando Training and, on passing the Commando Course, earn the right to wear the coveted Green Beret and Army Commando insignia.
- **Reserves.** Our Commando Sappers balance civilian careers and family lives with part-time service in the Army Reserve. Training is done over weekday evenings, weekends and 1 or 2-week blocks to fit alongside civilian commitments. We welcome the widest diversity of applicants, including those with an engineering, construction or infrastructure background, and those without.
- **Engineer Trades.** We train our Sappers in 5 key trades: combat engineer, plant operator, driver, communicator and logistic specialist. Our personnel gain many additional skills and qualifications, from Physical Training Instructor to 'BV' (over-snow vehicle) Driver.
- **Chefs and Clerks.** We also recruit and train chefs and clerks, who are a critical part of our Commando Sapper team. They routinely deploy with us, alongside our Royal Engineers personnel.
- **Commitment.** Being a Commando Sapper in the Army Reserve is a way of life. Fitness, mental resilience and the ability to work as part of a team are an absolute must. We expect strong commitment and at least 3 years' Reserve service from those joining us.
- **Travel and operational deployments.** In the spirit of the Royal Engineers motto 'Ubique', meaning 'everywhere', 131 is one of the most travelled Reserve sub-units. We have served in more than 60 nations and territories across the globe, and you should expect to follow in this tradition. Since 2000 our overseas operational deployments have included Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and South Sudan.
- **Benefits.** You will be paid for the time you train and get a non-contributory pension, paid leave and free use of our gym. Sports and adventure training opportunities abound and are open to all on completion of initial training. You'll also qualify for a Forces Railcard and discounts on goods and services. Most of all, the transferable skills and mindset you'll develop will set you up for life, with experiences and friendships money just can't buy.

What does the Commando Course involve? The Reserve Forces Commando Course (RFCC) assesses personnel against the Commando Ethos – specifically Mindset¹, Values² and Spirit³ – with a focus on developing core military skills, physical robustness and the mental resilience necessary for extremely and very high readiness Commando and Littoral Strike operations. The RFCC itself is run by the Royal Marines and lasts 2 weeks, but preparation for it is spread over a 9-month period of Reserve service, starting after you pass Phase 1 Training. This includes assault courses, climbing and traversing ropes, vertical assault skills, speed-marching, long-distance ‘yomping’, swimming, navigation, fieldcraft, weapon handling, tactics and communications. Much of it is done against the clock and carrying heavy kit, while cold, wet and tired. To be successful you will need to commit to training regularly in your own time, as well as with 131 Commando Squadron, and demonstrate Commando Spirit throughout.

What happens after I earn the Green Beret? Passing the Commando Course and earning your Green Beret unlocks the rest of your Commando Sapper journey. A whole world of opportunity opens up to you, including trade and specialist training in cold weather, mountain, jungle and littoral environments. You will become a member of one of our four troops, each with its own command team and specific role. We will develop you as a soldier, give you progressively greater leadership responsibility and, when appropriate, promote you and teach you to be an instructor. You will get to serve alongside our regular counterparts and to travel widely. We strive relentlessly for excellence, so you will never stop learning and growing. Those with the right attributes may be selected to become a commissioned officer, in command of one of our troops.

Conditions for joining 131 Commando Squadron. In order to ensure those joining have the best chance of successfully becoming Commando Sappers, these specific conditions apply:

- Age – 18-35 (new joiners), 18-36 (transferees), or potentially older if already Commando-trained, or for chefs or clerks.
- Able to run 2 km at the Assessment Centre in 8 minutes 15 seconds or under.
- Able to carry out at least 5 pull-ups using an overhand grip.
- Be a confident swimmer, with normal colour perception, and free of injury.
- Be committed to at least 3 years’ Reserve service (normal Army Reserve regional terms and conditions of service apply).
- Live a maximum of 50 miles from the nearest 131 location, or potentially further if already Commando-trained.

Questionnaire. If you think you have what it takes to become a Commando Sapper Reservist, please email 3CDOX-131SQNMAILBOX@mod.gov.uk in response to these 9 questions:

1. What is your motivation for joining 131 Commando Squadron?
2. What are your medium-term intentions (1-3 years)?
3. How long do you intend to remain with 131 Commando Squadron?
4. What qualifications do you hold – educational, vocational and any other?
5. What is your age?
6. How many miles away is your closest 131 Commando Squadron location (which one)?
7. Do you have an active application for the Army Reserve, or, if you are already serving, what stage are you at in your Regular Army or Army Reserve career?
8. What is your civilian occupation, and does your employer know of your intent to join the Army Reserve?
9. Finally, how did you hear about us?

¹ The Commando Mindset: Be the First to Understand, Be the First to Adapt and Respond, Be the First to Overcome.

² The Commando Values: Excellence, Self-Discipline, Integrity and Humility.

³ The Commando Spirit: Courage, Determination, Unselfishness and Cheerfulness in the face of adversity.