



ROYAL AIR FORCE

MEDICAL
SUPPORT
OFFICER
(PHYSIOTHERAPIST)



**ROYAL
AIR FORCE**
REGULAR & RESERVE

PHYSIOTHERAPIST OFFICER A VITAL ROLE

The RAF spans the world. We support troops on the front line, fly in aid for the sick and starving, police the skies and defend UK airspace.

Both Regular and Reserve Physiotherapy Officers play a vital part in keeping personnel fit for role in the UK and on deployed operations overseas.

Deployed Physiotherapy Officers provide musculoskeletal outpatient and Secondary Healthcare support to frontline personnel in a variety of challenging environments. Your role is pivotal in maintaining the effectiveness of the

RAF in delivering Air Power by maximising the fitness of personnel for their tasks. You will deliver a high standard of care in sometimes demanding conditions, including the extra challenge of working in a field hospital or a deployed medical treatment facility.

**TO FIND OUT MORE
SEARCH RAF
PHYSIOTHERAPIST
OFFICER**



THE SEVEN STAGES OF THE MEDICAL CARE PATHWAY

The RAF prides itself on providing the best medical service to personnel injured on operations.



1 BATTLEFIELD

Injuries on the battlefield are attended to by a team medic who is specially trained to deliver 'enhanced first aid'. They carry a variety of medical equipment, anything from bandages to morphine. If an evacuation is required, a call for assistance is made to base.



2 EVACUATION

A helicopter races to the scene; on board is the Forward Aeromedical Evacuation Team which could be scaled with an anaesthetist, A&E specialist, medics and force protection soldiers. An armed response unit provides extra protection during the evacuation.



3 FIELD HOSPITAL

Field hospitals often offer an intensive care facility, surgery, ED, physiotherapy, dental and mental health care. They are equipped with CT and X-ray equipment and can even provide blood transfusions.



4 AEROMED FLIGHT TO THE UK

Patients who require further medical care are evacuated to the UK aboard specially equipped RAF aircraft. The aeromed teams are trained to deal with patients and their conditions whilst in the air. This will include the impact of altitude on their condition.



5 UK HOSPITAL

Patients are usually taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, where NHS staff are supported by an additional 120 military personnel. When clinically appropriate, Armed Forces' patients are cared for in a military-managed ward.



6 REHABILITATION

Patients recovering from orthopaedic or neurological problems may be moved to Stanford Hall. This world-class facility hosts a unique limb-fitting and amputee centre, which ensures that prosthetic limbs are fitted correctly. Patients may then be transferred to regional rehabilitation units.



7 RETURN TO DUTY

Our goal is always to return injured personnel to duty. When that isn't possible, we provide continued support to ease their return to civilian life. The majority of military patients, even some amputees, are able to return to duty with the right treatment.

PRIMARY CARE REHABILITATION FACILITY PHYSIOTHERAPIST OFFICER

SQN LDR JO MAGILL RAF PHYSIOTHERAPIST
ON A FAST JET STATION

As Officer Commanding (OC) Primary Care Rehabilitation Facility (PCRF) RAF Lossiemouth, my main role is to lead a small team in treating musculoskeletal injuries on this busy Fast Jet Station.

RAF Lossiemouth is a Main Operating Base; it is particularly special because it is the home of Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) North and very recently the P8 Poseidon Sqn. We have 4 Fast Jet Squadrons on Station and a huge support element contributing to both the QRA effort and preparing for overseas Exercises and Operations throughout the year.



My team's role is to ensure those aircrew and support staff are fit 365 days per year to carry out their tasks, returning them from injury in as short a period as possible providing the highest quality care. A typical week would see us running daily clinics and treating a whole range of musculoskeletal injuries, just as a normal NHS outpatients department would.

Most work involves treating a mixture of back and knee pain associated with the stresses and strains of working long days in the many supporting roles the RAF must fulfil to keep aircraft in the air. We also see a lot of sporting and overuse injuries from the RAF Regiment Field Squadron we have here, as well as from airmen and women from the sports and recreational activities they need to do to let off steam.

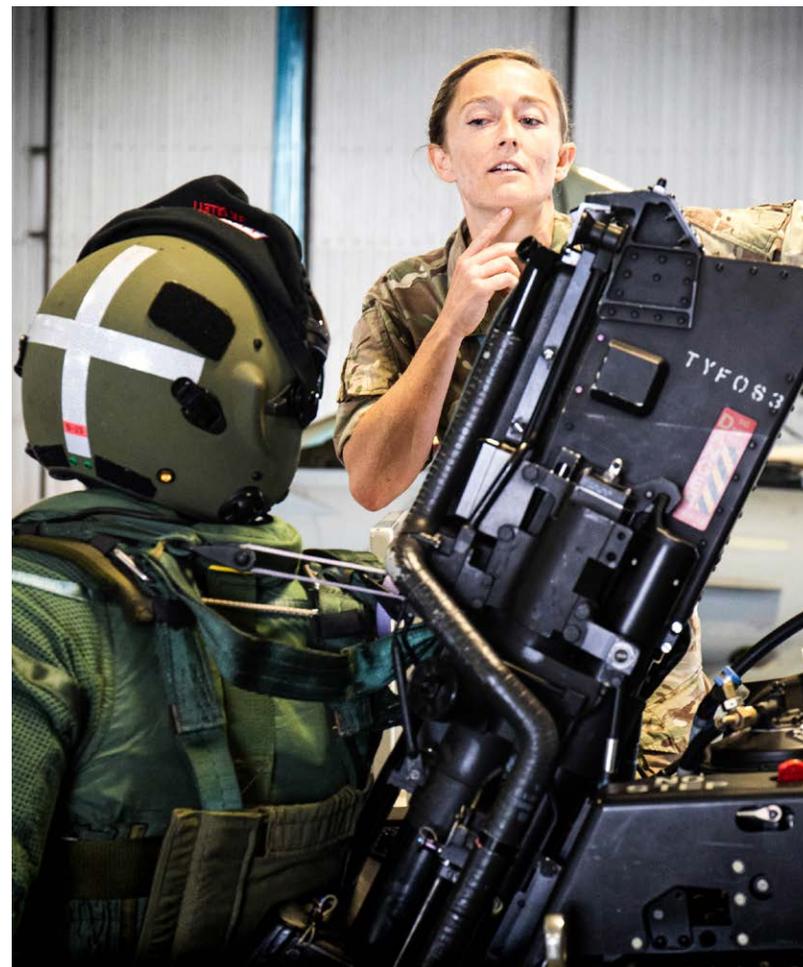
I am lucky enough to be in a unique position in the North of Scotland that means I also lead a 'Group' of PCRFs, providing leadership and governance oversight over two local Army bases, Fort George and Kinloss, which is a great privilege. This means I split my time down into about 80% clinical and 20% managerial to ensure I balance my responsibilities and caseload. Part of the focus for me personally during my posting has been to improve the resources within the team and across the group, by increasing staff numbers, adjusting and expanding infrastructure and even planning a brand-new physiotherapy department to support the increase in personnel on the Station.

The most intriguing and challenging

clinical work comes from the aircrew themselves. A combination of factors, but namely the high G-force induced when manoeuvring Typhoon, or long sorties wearing night vision goggles can add strain to pilots' necks. Working alongside this specialist group of people to rehabilitate their injuries and prevent them re-occurring is a really satisfying element of being an RAF Physiotherapist. I've found deployments are often the most rewarding time to engage closely with the Squadrons in a proactive way, setting up a clinic close to the flight line and offering preventative and walk-in clinics.

I have been lucky enough to deploy on Exercise in Nevada, Malaysia, throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East onboard HMS BULWARK with 3 Commando Brigade and in the desert in Jordan. I've supported the UK Special Forces selection process and in 2017 I served on Operations in the Caribbean on HMS OCEAN to support the hurricane Irma relief efforts.

The RAF has given me the most incredible experiences, from rowing for charity whilst sailing through the Suez Canal, reconnaissance in Wadi Rum of Jordan and cocktails in Love Lane, Penang. It has supported me through a part time MSc in Sport and Exercise Medicine at Cardiff Metropolitan University, which has been extremely useful within my primary roles and during my time as the lead Physiotherapist for RAF Rugby Union. It has supported me to play netball, travelling to Fiji and Australia in the process, which has pushed my ability



beyond belief facing international counterparts annually at the Inter-Services competitions. Mess life and Service sport have delivered the camaraderie I fully expected from this Service and I have friends for life.

The most enjoyable part of being

an RAF Physiotherapist is the fact that you are an Officer, and therefore get to support others to achieve their potential. Although at times so much responsibility can seem daunting, it is also a gift that enables you to build a team around you that can achieve great things.

DEFENCE MEDICAL REHABILITATION CENTRE PHYSIOTHERAPIST



FLT LT
TAMSYN RUTTER
PHYSIOTHERAPY
OFFICER



What role do you have in the RAF?

Physiotherapy Officer in the RAF working at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC), Stanford Hall.

Why did you join the RAF?

I wanted to do more than just a general Physiotherapy job and help treat injured Service personnel in rehabilitating them back to fitness. What also attracted me to the role was all of the extra opportunities on offer from the RAF and being able to represent your Service and Country.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The ability to provide a high standard of clinical care to our Service personnel, with the resources and facilities available at both primary care level and specialist care at our Regional Rehabilitation Units and DMRC Stanford Hall. At Stanford Hall, the military Physiotherapists rotate around the different departments every 6-9 months, covering complex trauma, neurology, upper limbs, spines, lower limbs and specialist rehabilitation. This has allowed me to gain experience within all of the speciality fields relevant to the military during my 3 year posting.

Why is your job so satisfying?

What I like about the job is that everyday is different. One day I could be treating patients, the next I could be on a military course, the day after that studying at university for my Master's degree or representing the RAF in cross-country and athletics. These secondary duties and activities are encouraged within the organisation in addition to your primary Physiotherapy role. The RAF awards you with a healthy amount of leave for holidays, study, force development and adventurous training.

Where have you been with the RAF (Tours)?

Before the Physiotherapy Officer branch was set up, I was lucky enough to start my career in the RAF as a Physical Training Instructor (PTI). I transferred across to the Physiotherapy Branch in 2011 after successfully completing my SOIT course at RAF College Cranwell. As a Physiotherapist, I have been posted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB), Defence Medical Services (DMS) Whittington, RAF Cosford, RAF Leeming, Falkland Islands, DMRC Headley Court/ DMRC Stanford Hall and soon to RAF Odiham.

Outline an average day...

As my current role is very clinical I will have patient assessments and treatments spread throughout the day from 0800 to 1700 depending on where the patient is in their management. I have time in the day for patient administration in between the assessments and treatments.

I have lunch 1200-1300 where I will do some sort of sport or fitness activity.

I will also have clinical meetings throughout the week as well as weekly inservice training.

What is your work life balance like?

My work life balance is very healthy. I have time to undertake fitness training during the working day and I also get time to complete any postgraduate studies and qualifications if needed and relevant to the Service. There are times I may have to work later in the evenings or occasionally on weekends if Service demands, but this is less common.

What are the best experiences you have had?

Getting to be a part of the RAF Guinness World Record breaking team that broke the 100 x 10km relay event at RAF Cosford in 2018. The motivation and determination from everyone involved around the clock was amazing to see and to be a part of and is something I was so proud to be involved in.

Say a bit about life on operations?

Very busy! You tend to work every day in some capacity, but the morale and team ethos is very high to get the job done and to the standard expected.

What operations have you been on?

Falkland Islands, Ex NORDIC PIRATE 15 and 16 and OP WESTLANT 18

What sports do you play?

I have represented the UK Armed Forces (UKAF) at judo and road running and currently represent the RAF at cross country, athletics and surfing.

What education opportunities have you had?

I am currently in my final year of my MSc in Sports Injury Rehabilitation, I have completed a PGDip in Advancing Physiotherapy Practice and a PGCert in Orthopaedic Medicine as well as my acupuncture qualification and my APPI pilates level 1-3.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Royal Air Force is a strong advocate of continuous professional development and as a Physiotherapist Officer, you will have extensive opportunities for further personal and professional development throughout your career. This will include various types of on-going professional training to ensure your continued registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Physiotherapists are strongly encouraged to undertake master's level study in a clinically relevant subject. As an autonomous practitioner, you will have the opportunity to test your clinical and leadership skills in more challenging ways both in the UK and when deployed.



BENEFITS

We look after our people. You'll soon find that, as well as job satisfaction, support and excellent training, there are many other benefits. And with a huge range of sports and adventurous training opportunities available, life outside your primary role will be anything but general.

The RAF offers you the chance to enjoy many sports, including football, rugby, sailing, martial arts and netball. Generous financial investment means you'll have all the facilities, training and equipment on tap.

Adventurous training will take you to remote places around the world where you can test yourself to the limit. We also have several training centres here in the UK, such as the RAF Force Development Training

Centre at Fairbourne in Wales, which offers caving, abseiling, kayaking and hillwalking.

Expeditions - such as snow boarding in the Alps or dog sledding in the Canadian Rockies - are often organised by the RAF at a fraction of the usual cost. While enjoying a wild, beautiful landscape you can gain self-knowledge, sharpen your leadership skills and learn to recognise the personal attributes of others.

7 REASONS TO SIGN UP NOW

1 YOU'LL SAVE MONEY



The RAF pays for your healthcare, your duty travel and your pension. While on operations, you won't pay anything for your overseas accommodation or food – and you could receive an extra allowance for living away from home.

2 GET AHEAD IN YOUR CAREER, FASTER



Join the RAF and you'll be paid from the day you set foot on base to start your officer training. And because RAF salaries are reviewed annually, you're usually guaranteed a pay rise every year.

3 GET FIT AND STAY FIT, FOR FREE



Physical training is a massive part of RAF life, and a great way to meet new people. Every base has free sports facilities, normally including a gym and regular fitness classes, and the RAF's Physical Training Instructors are always on hand to offer training advice.

4 EXPERIENCE TRAINING COURSES WITH A DIFFERENCE



As a Physiotherapist Officer your job requires you to have specialist skills. This will include the RAF Medical Services Phase 2 Training course.

5 LIVE A LOT, PAY A LITTLE



For those living in the Officers' Mess, you'll have a private room, often with an en-suite bathroom, and your rent includes all utility bills. There's even an in-house restaurant and bar. The RAF also has a wide selection of houses exclusively for married personnel or those in a civil partnership, all at subsidised rental costs.

6 MAKE FRIENDS FOR LIFE



Once you've spent a couple of weeks with your unit, you'll start to understand the close bond that RAF personnel develop. Camaraderie in the Forces is second to none – you'll live, work and socialise with your friends, you'll learn to trust them with your life, and you'll know that they trust you with theirs.

7 ONGOING DEVELOPMENT



You will undergo various types of further military and adventurous training to test your skills in more challenging ways. All Physiotherapist Officers receive Command and Staff training to prepare them for senior physiotherapist roles.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

QUALIFICATIONS:

You must be a fully qualified and HCPC registered physiotherapist with a BSc or MSc (preregistration) in Physiotherapy with a minimum of 3 years postgraduate experience. Additionally, you should have completed postgraduate Band 5 rotations; including a respiratory rotation and have a minimum of 12 months experience in a musculoskeletal outpatient setting.

AGE:

The minimum age for applying is when you have completed the professional/education qualifications detailed above. Candidates can be accepted up to age 47; you must have entered the SOITC course before your 48th birthday.

NATIONALITY

To meet RAF nationality requirements, you need to be one of the following:

- ◉ British citizen
- ◉ Commonwealth citizen
- ◉ British national
- ◉ Irish Republic national
- ◉ British/Dual national

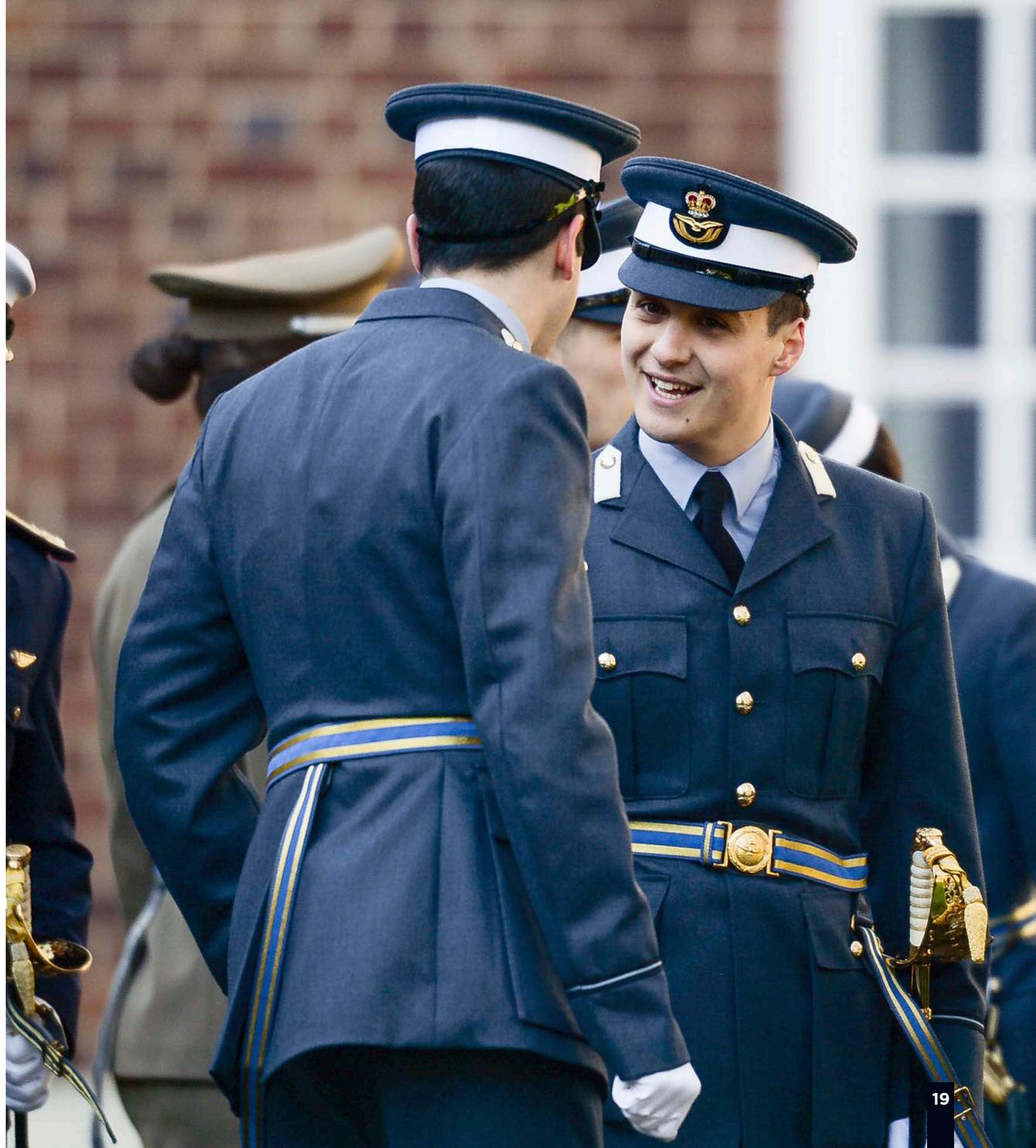
RESIDENCY

To meet RAF residency requirements, you should have been a UK Resident for a minimum of five years immediately preceding application, and have spent no more than 28 days per year outside the UK within those five years. For Commonwealth citizens the residency requirement is 3 years.

UK residents of less than five years, or those who have spent more than 28 days per year outside the UK will require more eligibility checks. If this is you, call us for further advice.

You must be a citizen of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland, holder of dual UK/other nationality or have been a Commonwealth citizen since birth.

You should have resided in the UK for the 5 years immediately preceding your application. In certain circumstances, if your period of residency has been broken, we may still be able to consider your application.



TRAINING

SPECIALIST OFFICER INITIAL TRAINING (SOIT)

The SOIT course is designed for those officer cadets who already have specialist professional skills of use to the RAF. It lasts 12 weeks, compared with the 24 weeks for other MIOT cadets; it will provide an effective grounding in the core skills vital to your future role as officers. It will enable you to develop the leadership potential which was identified at the Officers and Aircrew Selection Centre.

The SOIT course is intensive and demanding, but also rewarding. Throughout the course you will develop your practical military and leadership skills. Physical fitness and self-discipline are important attributes for the course, which sustain the RAF ethos of excellence in all activities. By applying yourself wholeheartedly during the course, you will gain not only personally and professionally, but also benefit from the camaraderie of fellow cadets and take pride in the traditions of RAF College Cranwell.

OFFICER PHASE II COURSE (OPT)

Inducts new entrant RAF Medical and Dental Officers, PMRAFNS Nursing Officers and Medical Support Officers to their respective branches and provide pre-employment training for their first appointment. This course introduces you to Defence Medical Service (DMS) and you will also cover environmental medicine. Delivery of course content is varied: lectures, practical exercises and a number of visits to RAF units to gain an insight and overview of the RAF Medical Services (RAFMS) both in peacetime and deployed operations.



NEXT STEPS: HOW TO JOIN THE RAF

STEP 1

CONTACT US

Contact the careers information line on **0345 605 5555** to check that you're eligible to join the RAF and register your interest. You'll need to visit the RAF careers website to complete an online CV as well. A link to an online application form will be sent to you by email.

STEP 2

GET TO KNOW US BETTER

Once your CV has been approved, you will be invited to attend a mandatory presentation event during which you will have an opportunity to engage with an RAF Physiotherapist Officer.

STEP 3

CONFIRM YOUR APPLICATION

Once you're happy with the facts, complete your online application form. It will be double-checked to make sure that you're eligible to join the RAF and forwarded to your local AFCO. If all goes well, your AFCO will contact you to arrange a presentation.

STEP 4

ATTEND A SPECIALIST INTERVIEW

As a Physiotherapist Officer your job requires you to have specialist skills. You'll have your specialist interview at RAF Cranwell - The interview will last approx 90 minutes.

STEP 5

ATTEND OASC

If you're successful at interview, you'll have a medical and undertake a Pre-joining fitness test prior to going on to the Officers and Aircrew Selection Centre (OASC) for a one-day selection process, which assesses leadership potential.

STEP 6

JOIN UP!

If you've been successful at each stage, we'll make you an offer of service. Once a place becomes available you'll start your training. It's advisable to get as fit as possible before starting. Visit raf.mod.uk/recruitment to set up your personalised training plan or sign up for our text trainer.

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/lifestyle-benefits/life-as-a-regular

CONTACT US

The Medical, Dental and Physiotherapist Recruitment team can be contacted on

01400 266811

or you can email

CRN-RecruitSelect-MDLT-Grp@mod.gov.uk