

Border Force officer

Border Force officers are on the frontline for protecting the UK's borders, carrying out crucial immigration and customs checks.

As a Border Force officer you're tasked with the responsibility of making sure the UK's borders are safe and secure. This involves protecting from a range of threats including: terrorism, smuggling, fraud, organised crime, human trafficking, illegal trade of items such as narcotics, weapons, tobacco and alcohol. It's likely you'll work in a frontline role within airports and seaports where you'll enforce customs and immigration regulations.

Skills:

You'll need:

- strong observational skills, to spot suspicious or unusual behaviours
- excellent communication skills for gathering information
- to work flexibly, as priorities can change rapidly
- to enjoy interacting with colleagues, members of the public and external stakeholders
- an eye for detail and a thorough approach
- an ability to analyse information, solve problems and make decisions
- interpersonal skills, to confidently deal with the public who may be deliberately deceitful, or presenting in various emotional states, for example feeling anxious, stressed or aggressive
- the ability to remain calm, use tact and be respectful in stressful situations, including those where people are distressed or antagonistic



Qualifications:

You don't need to have a degree to become a Border Force officer. Instead, the Home Office asks for five GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A-C, or equivalent) including English and maths. Some roles may also ask for two A-levels at grade E or equivalent. Experience that shows relevant skills, such as in security, regulatory or investigatory work may also be taken into consideration alongside qualifications. It's also possible to join as a Border Force assistant officer and progress into an officer role. Alternatively, you could join as a Border Force Apprentice, working, learning and earning on the job. It typically lasts for 18 months and upon successful completion you'll be offered a permanent role at an administrative officer grade. Although a degree is not an essential requirement to become a Border Force officer, the following subjects may be helpful: criminology, psychology, public services and law.

Working hours:

The Border Force is a 24 hours a day, 365 days a year operation, which means you'll work a variety of shifts. This will include early mornings, nights, weekends and public holidays on a rotating basis. You will typically work 38 to 42 hours a week. Shifts can be up to 12 hours long.

Salary:

- Salaries for entry level and apprenticeship Border Force roles are typically in the region of £22,400 per year.
- As a Border Force officer, you could earn £25,750 to £31,950, depending on your location in the UK.
- Senior Border Force officers can earn between £37,500 and £42,000.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/border-force-officer>

