

A Royal Air Force fighter jet is shown in flight against a backdrop of the Earth's horizon. The jet is white with a red and white roundel on its side. The Earth's surface is visible in shades of blue and green, with white clouds. The sky is a mix of orange and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the bottom left corner, the silhouettes of two air traffic controllers are visible, one wearing a headset with a microphone.

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCE**

CATCS



Central Air Traffic Control School

WHERE TO FIND US



RAF Shawbury is near Shrewsbury in the county of Shropshire. The Station provides an ideal location for the Central Air Traffic Control School, and is within easy reach of the International Airports of Manchester and Birmingham.

The recently modernised Station infrastructure provides high quality accommodation and diverse recreational activities.

DIRECTIONS

North: From the M6 take Junction 15 then A53 to Shawbury.

South/East: From the M6 take Junction 10a and M54 to Shrewsbury, A5, A49, A53 to Shawbury.

West: Follow A458 to Shrewsbury, then follow South/East route.

[Central Air Traffic Control School](#)

[RAF Shawbury](#)

[Shrewsbury](#)

[Wem](#)

[Wigmore](#)

[RAF Woodbridge](#)



CATCS Mission Statement

*'To produce graduates
capable of
obtaining operational performance
standard within
the
requisite timescales.'*



FOREWORD

The Central Air Traffic Control School (CATCS) plays an important role in supporting the operational effectiveness of the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Navy (RN) by providing high quality air traffic control officers, flight operation officers and flight operations assistants. CATCS also enjoys close links with foreign and Commonwealth military forces and civilian organisations, whose students attend courses at the School.

The School aims to maintain the highest professional standards, and this is made possible by employing quality people with a shared set of values. All personnel at the CATCS, both military and civilian, are committed to providing students the best possible support throughout their specialist training.

The CATCS will continue to meet the changing needs of our customers and deliver high calibre graduates as efficiently and effectively as possible. To do this we constantly review our methods and procedures, and continue to improve the quality of the computer simulation available to us. Our overwhelming priority is, and will always be, to improve the service that we give our students, and ultimately our customers, within the Military Airfield, Flight Operations and Area Radar environments.

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Central Air Traffic Control School

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INTRODUCTION

The task of the CATCS is to train Ab Initio personnel for employment in Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Operations duties, and to provide post-graduate training to experienced personnel to further their professional development.

ATC training has taken place at RAF Shawbury since 1950, when the Central Navigation School was joined by the School of Air Traffic Control from RAF Watchfield, to form the Central Navigation and Control School (CN&CS).

In 1962 navigation training was moved to RAF Manby, and the CN&CS was renamed the Central Air Traffic Control School.

Today the CATCS has an enviable international reputation. Students from other air forces around the

world regularly attend courses at the CATCS. The School also has links with industry, with close cooperation being maintained in the development of new simulator technology. In addition, the CATCS provides bespoke training packages for civilian organisations and has become an integral part of the Open University scheme.

With an eye firmly focused on the future, the CATCS is continuing to develop and enhance training methodology. With the help of a dedicated and professional staff, state of the art simulation, and the maintenance of the highest teaching standards, the CATCS will remain one of the leading exponents of modern instructional methods.



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Central Air Traffic Control School

CATCS TRAINING COURSES

The CATCS is tasked with training over 550 students per annum. Its staff includes personnel from both the RAF and RN, as well as contracted civilian Flight Systems Operators. The squadrons within the CATCS run a wide range of courses in order to meet its tasks.

Air Traffic Control Training Squadron (ATCTS)

- responsible for:

Ab initio Terminal Controller training on the Joint Air Traffic Control Course (JATCC), training students from RAF, RN and overseas Military Services.

Area Radar Training Course (ARTC).

Refresher Training for both Terminal and Area Radar disciplines.

Terminal Out of Area Training.

Civilian PAR Course.

Training Support and Development Squadron (TSDS)

- responsible for:

ATC Instructors' Course (ATCIC).

Flight Operations Instructors' Course (FOIC).

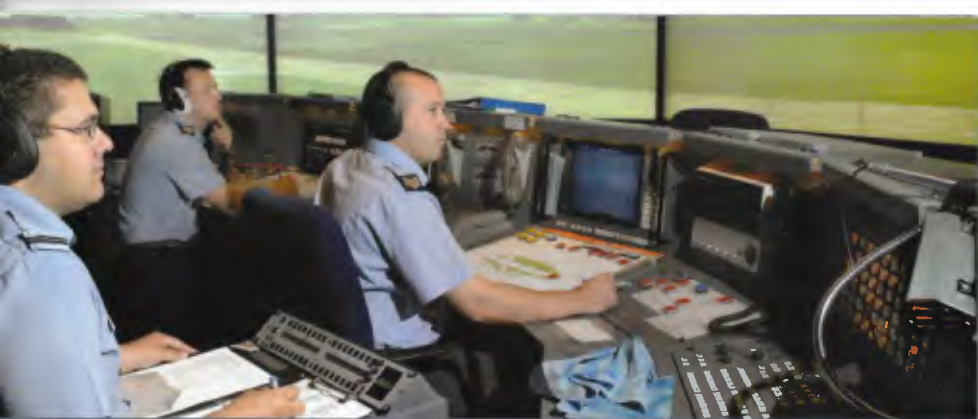
Unit Trainers' Course Modules 1 and 2 (UTC1/2).

JATCC Theory Training.

ARTC Theory Training.

Additionally, TSDS are responsible for the Standardization of Instruction, Course Content Maintenance, Course Design, Future Projects, Syllabi and Documentation, and the production of Statistics and Analysis.





Flight Operations Training Squadron (FOTS)

- responsible for:

Flight Operations Training Course (FOTC).

Flight Operations Assistant Course (FOAC).

Trade Management Training Modules 1 and 2 (TMT1/2).

Unit Training Team Course (UTTC).

Flight Operations Conversion Course (FOCC).

RauxAF Training.

Also within FOTS is the Trade Group 9 NVQ Cell, which offers a recognized program towards a civilian qualification to the students on the FOAC.

CATCS Systems Squadron (CSS) - whilst having no direct training role, CSS is responsible for the provision of vital support for simulation and IT management within CATCS.

Adventurous Training and Career Development

Despite the busy and intensive training undertaken by the CATCS students, time is set aside to further enhance their leadership, team building and overall Service knowledge, through a variety of means. These include adventurous training at one of the main Service training centres, community projects, charity events and presentations on Service related subjects.



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JOINT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

This course is undertaken by RAF, RN and selected overseas students to prepare them for duties as Air Traffic Controllers at military airfields.

The 132-day course uses a building block approach to introduce progressively more complex scenarios as the students' experience and confidence grows. A procedure is first taught in the classroom before it is put into practice using computer-based part-task trainers. Having grasped the basic concepts, the students will then progress to the dynamic and integrated simulators, where they will consolidate their learning, working in teams under one-to-one instruction from experienced controllers.

In order to achieve the primary objectives of safe expeditious control of aircraft, students must master vital skills: the ability to divide their attention effectively between several tasks, to rapidly assimilate information, to assess risk and to formulate plans.

Potential controllers must be able to develop these competencies in the simulator environment, in order to be able to operate effectively in the increasingly complex and challenging conditions that they will face, both in peacetime and operational situations.



AREA RADAR TRAINING



The Area Radar Training Course (ARTC) is a post-graduate training course, which is provided by The Area Training Flight (ATF) and trains controllers as well as civilian, foreign and commonwealth students who have normally served at a terminal ATC unit, in preparation for undertaking area radar duties. The 2 UK air traffic control centres where successful candidates will be employed are located at Prestwick and Swanwick.

The course lasts for 6 weeks and includes application of area radar services, civil/military coordination and co-operation, crossing controlled airspace and upper air routes and air-to-air refuelling. Emphasis is again placed on the safe and expeditious control of aircraft, within the complex myriad of airspace classifications, working closely with the civilian controllers located at the same air traffic control centre, and at adjacent centres.



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TRAINING SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

The training Support and Development Squadron (TSDS) within the CATCS is responsible for the development of training across the CATCS Wing, ATC instructor training and standardisation and for the post-graduate training of all military controllers in their roles as trainers at RAF and RN ATC units. TSDS comprises the Standards and Training Flight (STF), Ground Training Flight (GTF) and Training Development Team (TDT). Courses provided by TSDS include the Air Traffic Control Instructors' Course (ATCIC), Flight Operations Instructors' Course (FOIC), ATC Unit Trainers' Course (UTC) Modules 1 and 2 and the classroom and computer-based training (CBT) elements of both the JATCC and ARTC.

The ATCIC is provided by STF and trains already experienced controllers for ATC instructor duties within the ATCS. This 7-week course teaches ATC instructional and exercise management methods and techniques that can be utilised to instruct students in the many simulated ATC environments within the CATCS.

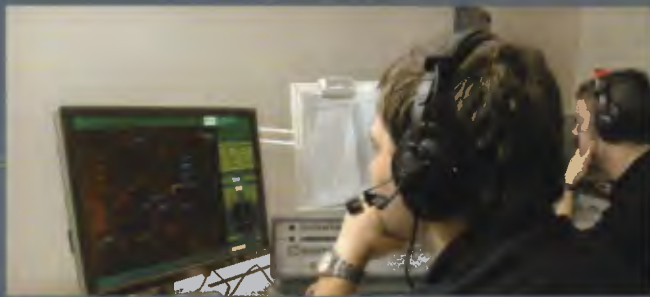
The UTC Modules 1 and 2 are provided by GTF and train prospective members of the unit training teams and prospective unit training officers (UTOs) to enable them to conduct and manage ATC on-the-job training (OJT), respectively. UTC1

provides basic instructional techniques training to assist OJT instructors in their conduct of OJT for new members of the ATC staff. UTC2 assists UTOs in the management of OJT and continuation training and the administrative responsibilities of the UTO.

GTF also conduct the theory instruction to the students throughout the School, employing CBT to further reinforce the knowledge imparted during classroom theory lessons.

The CATCS has also developed links with overseas ATC Schools and provides bespoke training in modern classroom teaching techniques.

It is essential that all of the courses provided by the CATCS are maintained to reflect not only current rules, regulations and working practises but also customer requirements. Equally essential are the design/redesign of courses and the integration of new technology to ensure that the best possible training platform is provided for every student. To facilitate these requirements, the CATCS has recently set-up a Training Development Team, who will manage future projects and look strategically at future training within the School.



FLIGHT OPERATIONS TRAINING SQUADRON



The Flight Operations Training Squadron (FOTS) is responsible for the training of newly commissioned officers to be Flight Operations Officers and newly recruited Airman and Airwomen to be Flight Operations Assistants in the Royal Air Force.

FOTS is also responsible for the training of newly promoted corporals on Trade Management Training 1, newly promoted Sergeants (Flight Operations Managers) on Trade Management Training 2 as well as overseeing the training of RAuxAF Flight Ops personnel at the 3 squadrons, No 602 Sqn Edinburgh, No 606 Sqn Benson and No 600 Sqn Northolt.

Flight Operations students have seen Service in every recent global conflict including Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan.

FOTS has had strong connections, over the years, with the Royal Navy and as such has trained many naval personnel. It has also trained men and women from the Army Air Corps; furthermore over its history it has trained many nationalities from the Commonwealth. Recently it has taken on the responsibility of training civilian assistants who go on to work in RAF control towers in the UK.

Flight Operations

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→ Flight Operations Training Course

The Flight Operations Training Course is 14 weeks long during which students learn about Air Traffic Control, the Station Operations Room, UK Airspace, Eurocontrol, Flight Planning, Mission Planning, Battle Airspace Management, Air Power, Deployed Operations and the delivery of briefings. The course contains both theoretical and practical elements. The students will be given every opportunity to practise those leadership skills learnt at the RAFC Cranwell as well as the new ones learnt at the FOTS. There is also a deployed exercise towards the end of the course to assess the student's ability to work under adverse conditions.

Flight Operations Assistants Course

The basic course is 10 weeks long and students learn about Air Traffic Control, Flight Operations, UK Airspace and Procedures, Flight Planning, NOTAM's and Air Power. The course contains both theoretical and practical elements, therefore students will find themselves practising the theory in a simulated environment.

The Training Development Team (TDT), based in the CATCS HQ, has been in operation for nearly 4 years. The TDT is responsible primarily for maintenance of the CATCS course documentation, co-ordination of internal validation and course design or re-design whilst also providing a myriad of other training support functions across the Wing. The TDT has worked extensively on the development of student laptops to provide a variety of learning packages for JATCC students. OC TDT is also the first point of contact for Special Learning Difficulties (SpLD) queries and provides learning support to any of the CATCS students who require it.



CATCS SYSTEMS SQUADRON



Much of the training at the CATCS relies heavily on the use of computer-based simulators, part-task trainers and teaching aids. The CATCS Systems Squadron (CSS) was established to support and develop these systems.

They are responsible for liaising with industrial partners regarding the software support of commercially supplied simulators; development of in-house computer-based training aids and IT support for classroom teaching aids and report writing systems.

CSS staff developed ATC computer-based training aids to industry standards and have successfully marketed and sold these products to civilian airfields, other ATC colleges and foreign air forces.

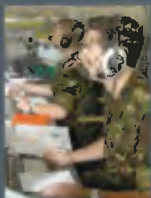


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WHERE TO RELOCATE



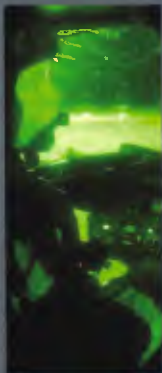
So what can a student expect at the end of one of the demanding training courses he or she will have undertaken at the CATCS?

Life as a military Air Traffic Controller, Flt Ops Officer or Flt Ops Assistant will certainly be challenging!

Students could find themselves working at a busy military aerodrome, either in the UK or overseas; aboard ship, acting as a vital link between Royal Navy and RAF Operations; maintaining a functional airfield in an operational area, after parachuting into theatre with frontline troops; completing flight planning documentation and assisting with the day-to-day organisation of UK airspace.

It will also demand a high level of commitment and dedication. Overall, however, it will be varied, challenging and thoroughly rewarding.





JATCC and ARTC

The Central Air Traffic Control School and the Open University (OU) have joined forces to accredit certain courses offered by the School. This means that credits are awarded after successfully completing a course that counts towards an OU degree. The OU has awarded the JATCC 30 points at Level 1 and the ARTC 10 points at Level 1. These credits can contribute significantly to an OU degree, as 30 credits represent 6 months part-time study. In the future, it is hoped that these courses can be linked to the RAF In-Service Degree Scheme. Studying with the OU is then in parallel with professional training.

FOTS

The RAF offers Modern Apprenticeships (Civilian Qualifications) in the first 2 years of Service to all newly qualified recruited airmen. This consists of Key Skills and NVQ. While at FOTS students complete 3 Key Skills, which contribute towards the Apprenticeship. Should any of the students return to FOTS as instructors they then have the opportunity to gain further civilian accreditations from their training role.

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