

Securing a better future

A BSIA guide to careers in the private security industry



The private security industry is an **exciting** and **growing industry** where you can work in a variety of roles throughout your career, or specialise in one area – depending on what suits you. Whether you see yourself working in the **electronics sector** as an **installer** or **manufacturer**, enjoy the idea of a **customer-facing** role or would like to provide security services at **events** or for individuals requiring **special protection**, the **private security industry** has a role for **you**.



Read on to find out more about the perks of joining our industry, and how bodies and initiatives such as the British Security Industry Association, Skills for Security, Jobcentre Plus, Remploy, Bridging the Gap and the Career Transition Partnership can help you make a smooth transition to a career in security.

Why start a career in **security**?

There are many benefits associated with working in the private security industry:

Career progression

It is common for people to be promoted through the ranks in the security industry. Many supervisors and even some managing directors of security companies started as security officers or installers. Whilst at entry level there are limited management positions, if you want to progress in your career, this is an excellent industry to get into!

Variety of roles

You could be a CCTV operator, a security officer, an alarm installer, a security consultant... the list goes on! And people joining the industry can either decide to work in a variety of different roles, or to specialise in one particular area, depending on their preference!

Varied and vibrant nature of security work

No day is the same in the private security industry and many people enjoy the variety and challenges of security work. Depending on the area you choose to enter, you can for example be on the frontline dealing with the public, resolving conflict situations and providing customer service; or using your technical skills to work with the latest security technologies.

Employment benefits

Professional security companies and members of the BSIA take pride in the staff they employ, so they offer a competitive salary and a number of other added benefits to employees, including:

- Continuous training
- Opportunity to work flexible hours
- Company vehicle (for engineers).



Roles and career development pathways

There are a number of roles available within the private security industry, requiring different skills sets and capabilities. To help you gain a better idea of what is on offer, below are some examples roles in our industry, from entry-level to managerial and senior positions. More information can be found on the BSIA's career page of the website, www.bsia.co.uk/careers

Skills for Security has also worked with employer groups to develop career pathways for different sectors. These can be found at www.skillsforsecurity.org.uk/index.php/help/46



CVIT courier – Cash and valuables in transit couriers collect and deliver cash from high street banks and retailers in armoured vehicles. The role involves high levels of responsibility for the significant values of cash being carried as well as awareness of comprehensive security measures.

Electronic technicians – Electronic technicians are responsible for checking that security equipment works without any faults. Some offer technical support to customers and others may get involved in technology research and development. They must adhere to specific standards and ensure that European standards for components such as detectors, sensors and control panels meet the requirements of UK customers and manufacturers.

Fire engineer – This job involves understanding the nature, characteristics and mechanisms of fire. In addition, an engineer requires a detailed understanding of how fire can spread within and outside buildings and structures to protect people and their environments from the destructive effects of fire and smoke. The engineer must also have an understanding of the interactions and integration of fire safety systems and all other systems in buildings.

Mobile patrol officer – Working for a security company, the officer is required to drive company transport, respond to alarm activations, adhere to health and safety procedures, comply with company paperwork, interact with customers and deal with incidents as and when required. The mobile patrol officer must have an SIA license as well as a full driving licence.

Operations director – This role includes overseeing the day-to-day activities of the organisation and will usually focus on the systems and procedures that are required to accomplish the company's mission and goals.

Research and development – This is an important role to fulfill as security manufacturers rely on people working in research and development to discover and research new product ideas and work on progressing them. Working in R&D may also require performing technical reviews of product specifications.

Security manager – This role will involve leading a team of security officers so in-depth knowledge on security and risk and management issues will be necessary. The security manager will also be responsible for the overall service delivery to clients. Keeping up to date with standards and legislations will also be required.



Regulation in the private security industry

Due to the nature of work in the private security industry, regulation is paramount to maintain high levels of professionalism. Depending on which area you work in, some employees will be regulated by the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is the government body responsible for managing the licensing process. To qualify for a licence, front line security operatives now need to be over 18, pass an identity and criminality check, and show that their skills and knowledge meet nationally recognised standards.

Who needs a licence?

People working in the following roles for a private security company in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland need a licence:

- Cash and Valuables in Transit
- Close Protection
- Door Supervision
- Key Holding
- Public Space Surveillance CCTV
- Security Guarding
- Vehicle Immobilisation

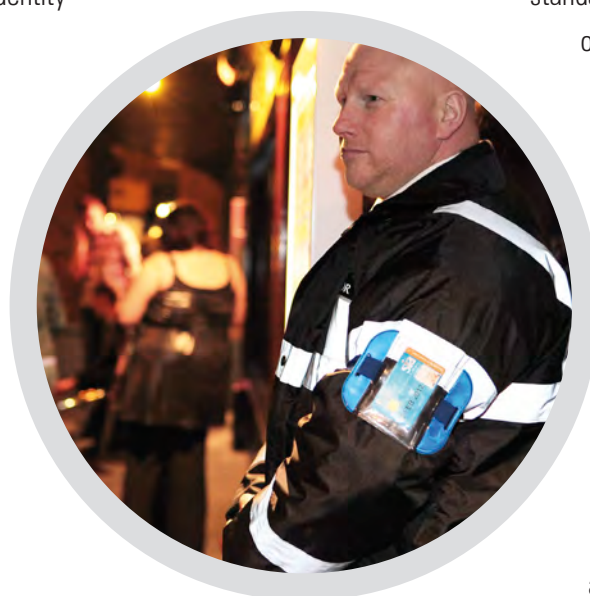
How much does it cost?

The licence costs £220 for three years and requires an individual to undertake training (except for keyholders who only require the identity and criminal record check). The licence belongs to the individual so you can take it with you if you move jobs. Some employers will pay the licence fee for you.

Creating opportunities

As well as raising quality and safety standards, an important part of the licensing process is increasing public trust and creating greater career opportunities within the industry.

Properly trained and licensed security professionals should be more highly regarded and valued by their employers, their customers and the public. As it is the individual who is licensed rather than the supplying company, security professionals will have sought-after skills.



For more detailed information on licensing, visit the SIA website www.the-sia.org.uk or call the SIA helpline on **0844 892 1025**.

Top Tips on what to look for in your security training provider

Paul Tennent, Chairman of the BSIA's Training Providers section, provides some invaluable advice on what to consider when selecting a training provider.

As the development and expansion of the security industry continues to create a wealth of new and exciting career opportunities, it is becoming essential for job seekers - and for those seeking advancement - to prove that they possess the skill sets and underpinning knowledge required to operate successfully in this fast-moving arena.

Employers and commercial clients need reassurance that their installers, operators and managers have been properly trained to deal effectively with the many technical and legal challenges they will encounter on a daily basis. Therefore, selecting a high quality training company is the first step towards providing you with the best possible chance to succeed in our industry!

However, with a number of training companies operating in the market place, how can students be sure that they will receive the necessary standard and level of tuition? Here are 10 top tips to help you.

A reliable training provider will provide:

- A free consultation to discuss your training needs
- Courses specifically designed for different disciplines
- Courses at a range of levels
- Nationally and internationally recognised certification, such as BTEC and City and Guilds
- Clear 'Continuing Professional Development' paths to enhance your career opportunities
- A comprehensive range of 'state of the art' equipment on which to learn
- A professional learning environment with modern teaching aids
- Professionally qualified tutors with 'real world' experience of the industry
- Evidence of endorsement from - or in association with - leading industry bodies
- A track record! Choose a training company that has stood the test of time!

In the first instance, check the training providers' websites. If in doubt, ask to visit their premises as the best companies are proud to show them off.



How do I join the private security industry?

Whether you are still in college, looking for a career change or facing complications as a result of health conditions, there are a number of initiatives or qualifications available to facilitate your entry in the private security industry. The skills required depend on what career path you choose, but you will always get help and advice from quality security companies, as well as a number of industry bodies.

Apprenticeships – hands on work experience

Apprenticeships are open to people of any age and involve blending practical experience gained from working and learning alongside experienced colleagues in the workplace.

The practical training of the apprenticeship is provided by the employer and their progress is assessed from time to time by an industry experienced assessor. The practical training is supported by the college or training centre, usually on a day-release basis during term time so the apprentice receives professional training that is relevant to their work.

To find out more visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Bridging the Gap



The Bridging the Gap (BtG) initiative, conceived by the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) and now led by North Hertfordshire College and supported by over 90 Colleges across the UK, allows students enrolled on its courses to be offered excellent and exciting opportunities to put their skills into practice, by gaining valuable experience in their chosen fields within the private security industry.

To find out more about the work of Bridging the Gap or to become involved visit www.bridging-the-gap.co.uk



British Security Industry Association (BSIA)



The BSIA is the trade association for the professional security industry in the UK. By choosing to start a career with a BSIA member you will gain valuable experience with quality and professional employers that take pride in the high caliber of their staff, and reward talent and hard work, whilst encouraging continued professional development.

To contact the BSIA for information on careers in the private security industry or to find a BSIA member:

Visit www.bsia.co.uk Telephone: **0845 389 388**

Email: info@bsia.co.uk Follow us on Twitter: [@thebsia](https://twitter.com/thebsia)

British Security Industry Association Training providers section

The BSIA recently introduced a dedicated Training Providers section to its membership, representing exclusively companies providing quality training to security industry personnel, and committed to driving quality standards.

To find a BSIA training provider near you:

Visit www.bsia.co.uk/training-providers

Career Transition Partnerships (CTP)

The CTP operates as an intermediary service for employers wishing to hire highly skilled, committed and capable ex-forces personnel. A number of courses are offered including: Security Systems Installation (Foundation); Security Systems Installation (Basic Intruder Alarms); Security Systems Installation (Advanced Intruder Alarms); Security Systems Installation (Access Control and CCTV); Security Management; Close Protection and Certified Security Consultants.

To contact the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) visit www.ctp.org.uk

Jobcentre Plus



Department for
Work and Pensions

Jobcentre Plus is an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions. It is responsible for assisting people of working age find jobs through its network of Jobcentre Plus offices. It is also responsible for administering some benefits for people of working age and for the administration of National Insurance numbers.

To find out more about Jobcentre Plus or to find an office near you visit www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk

Remploy – A helping hand for a career in security



Remploy Employment Services offer a wide range of employment support to disabled people, those with a health condition, the long-term unemployed and ex-service personnel.

By working closely with a wide range of employers in the security sector, they can provide you with detailed specialist advice and information about the types of roles available.

The Remploy Armed Forces and Veterans Service team provide specialist support for wounded, injured and sick service leavers and disabled veterans to move into sustainable careers. This support is provided via the Work Choice programme, in conjunction with the Department for Work and Pensions, Access to Work (Mental Health Provision) and Remploy's Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

To find out if you're eligible for Remploy's support, simply visit: www.remploy.co.uk/jobseekers

Telephone: **0845 601 5878**

Email: RSCenquiries@remploy.co.uk

Join our online communities:

www.facebook.com/Remploy

www.youtube.com/user/Remploytv

www.twitter.com/Remploy

Skills for Security



Skills for Security is the sector skills body and standards setting organisation for the private security industry. It works with employers and other industry stakeholders to raise standards and meet the demand for a more professional, highly trained and qualified workforce in all four countries of the UK.

To contact Skills for Security for information on training for security roles visit www.skillsforsecurity.org.uk

Telephone: **08450 750111**

Email: info@skillsforsecurity.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter: [@skills4security](https://twitter.com/skills4security)

The **rewards** of working in the security industry

The security industry is committed to developing its future talent, and provides a diverse range of opportunities with a real chance of career progression, training and skills development.

From apprentices to career movers, here are a few examples of how professionalism and hard work are recognised and valued within the industry. For even more case studies and examples, visit www.bsia.co.uk/careers

National Awards recognise fresh talent in the industry!



Andrew Poulton is a 34-year-old security officer from a BSIA member company who won the Best Newcomer category in the 2011 BSIA's Security Personnel Awards. New to the operational side of the security industry, after just eight months into his contract, Andrew was recognised for the great impact he had on the mobile key holding operation.

In his role, Andrew implemented a number of measures that resulted in the more efficient running of all mobile operations at a regional level. His success, motivation to learn and leadership skills have earned him a fast-track to the position of Mobile Supervisor, and have won him the respect of fellow staff and clients alike.



Laurence Timmins joined the private security industry in 2009 at 22, and in just two years won a prestigious BSIA's Security Personnel Award, which recognises and rewards excellence in the security industry. Laurence secured his Outstanding Act award, having protected a lone youth from an intimidating and violent group of 50 people. Trained by the BSIA security company in CCTV, Health & Safety, Fire procedures, Customer Service, Physical Intervention and Counter Terrorism, Laurence is keen to progress his career within the private security industry and the BSIA's member company, and will continue to be supported in doing so.

Elton John, summer festivals and more training opportunities with Bridging the Gap

The Bridging the Gap (BtG) initiative, conceived by the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) and now led by North Hertfordshire College and supported by over 90 Colleges across the UK, allows students enrolled on its courses to be offered excellent and exciting opportunities to put their skills into practice, by gaining valuable experience in their chosen fields within the private security industry.

Members of the BSIA's Crowd Management section have allowed recently qualified or qualifying Bridging the Gap students the opportunity to be introduced to the industry by working as stewards and crowd management officers at various events across the UK. In 2011 alone, one BSIA Crowd Management member company has employed students to work in high profile events such as the Royal Wedding and Royal Visits, the Isle of Wight Festival, T4 on the Beach, Elton John's concert at Sussex Cricket Ground and Foo Fighters in Milton Keynes.

Adam Gale, Uniformed Public Services Lecturer at Fareham College, is enthusiastic about the excellent results achieved and the opportunities that the industry is making available to his students through the BtG scheme: "We will continue to train our students for as long as possible with this qualification and other supporting ones because this is where they are finding employment. In the times of public service cuts, we seem to have found a chink in a new market for our students. They earn money, have fun, and gain valuable experience in lots of personal fields."

Remploy secure a brighter future for industry newcomers



Two talented industry newcomers who were facing an uncertain employment future, were given the chance to explore a career in security thanks to the help of Remploy, whose specialist services are tailored to support people with disabilities and other health conditions into sustainable work.



Andrew Ruson, a 31-year-old from Warrington and with a health condition, turned to Remploy for support when he lost his last job. "The help Remploy provided really helped to turn around my life," said Andrew, who secured a job as a security officer with a BSIA member company.

His determination combined with his successful entry in the industry meant Andrew celebrated a promotion just three months after joining the BSIA member company.

"My confidence was dented by unemployment," added Andrew. "Now, I am enjoying being back in work again – and being promoted to supervisor is the icing on the cake."

After spending almost 10 years in the army, **Graham Sorley** too faced an uncertain future when he was medically discharged in 2010 because of debilitating arthritis in his left arm.

However, the outlook soon became brighter for the 30-year-old from Edinburgh when he was referred to Remploy by Career Transition Partnership (CTP).

Having initially expressed an interest in a driving job, Graham was persuaded to apply for a position with a BSIA member.

Three months into his new role as a security guard at Edinburgh Airport, Graham was delighted he took Remploy's advice. "I was worried because I wasn't sure I was fit enough for security work due to my arthritis. But I love what I am doing now and I can't thank Remploy enough for their support."

Apprentices get a real chance to build a career in the industry

Young people working in the security industry are increasingly emerging on long-term careers, gaining skills along the way, thanks to the industry's wholehearted support of its young apprentices.



In 2011, the BSIA supported Skills for Security's '100 in 100' challenge, an initiative aimed at employing 100 apprentices in the industry in just 100 days. Moreover, the BSIA has since appointed its own Business Administration Apprentice, 18-year-old **Rhian Brown**.

After leaving school with 12 good GCSEs, Rhian – still unsure on what career path she wanted to pursue – embarked on a college course, which, it soon became apparent, was not for her. She explains:

"I explored going to University but very quickly came to the conclusion that even if I had a degree I couldn't guarantee finding a job, and the thought of having to pay back a massive debt was very daunting. I then explored Apprenticeship schemes and the opportunity to learn on the job whilst earning a wage was very attractive."

Working from the ground up, Rhian's apprenticeship will take her around the business, giving her a broad base of experience and business knowledge from different departments, all while she works towards NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in Business Administration.

Rhian adds: "As part of my course, I will explore how a business runs, spending time in different departments, so that once my apprenticeship is over, I will be in a better position to make an informed decision about my future career path."

The BSIA's support of young people in the security industry extends even further, with the Association's annual Apprentice Installer Awards recognising the achievements of second and third-year apprentices involved in the installation of alarms, CCTV, access control or a combination of these.



2011's winner, **Mathew Pickles**, joined the industry following a successful work placement while in school with a BSIA member company, which led to an immediate job offer upon completion of his studies. Mathew is now on the right path to achieving his objective of becoming Installations Director by his early 30s.



Want to be a part of it? **Find out more!**

Do **you** have what it takes to make a real difference in our industry? If so, find out more by visiting www.bsia.co.uk/careers



This guide was written in association with:



Department for
Work and Pensions

