

Prince William at the DHFS

Prince William started his flying training with the Royal Air Force today, 12th January 2009.

He officially transferred from the British Army into the RAF in the rank of Flight Lieutenant. His training, estimated to cost £800,000, will begin at the Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS) at RAF Shawbury which will form part of his training to become an RAF Search and Rescue pilot. The role of the DHFS is to train and develop, to the highest possible standards, helicopter pilots and crews for Rotary Wing aircraft of all 3 Services.

Though trainee pilots at the Royal Air Force are usually required to have perfect vision, he was allowed to train because he is already an Army officer.

Flight Lieutenant Wales will start his helicopter training on 705 Squadron flying the single-engine Squirrel helicopter. He will complete an initial period of training to refresh his previously learned skills followed by a package of instruction which will enable him to meet the entry standards of

Sixty (R) Squadron where he will fly the Griffin. The Griffin is the RAF's twin-engine Advanced Flying Training helicopter. Flight Lieutenant Wales will complete exactly the same syllabus as his fellow course mates on Sixty (R) Squadron. During this time he will also complete some specialist Search and Rescue training at SARTU at RAF Valley. After completing training at Shawbury with DHFS, Flight Lieutenant Wales will continue his training to become a Search and Rescue pilot on the Sea King based at RAF Valley.

