

Aircraft maintenance careers

Understand technical work and certification boundaries

Aircraft maintenance combines technical knowledge, careful practical work and accurate records. The field includes mechanical, structural and avionics work, with different job titles and legal privileges across countries. Before choosing a course, distinguish learning to perform work from being authorized to certify particular work. This guide introduces that distinction and helps you investigate a route that matches your interests.

Educational reference. Sources checked 27 October 2026. Verify current requirements with the relevant authority and employer.

What the work contributes

- Help identify and resolve aircraft or component defects within the worker's training, supervision and authorisation.
- Support reliable maintenance records and clear handovers, so colleagues can understand what has been completed and what remains unresolved.
- Work with technicians, certifying personnel, planners and other specialists; raising uncertainty is more valuable than guessing.

An illustrative working day

Original simplified example, not a duty schedule or an operating procedure. Actual work varies by organization, operation and assigned role.

Part of the work	What a beginner should notice
Team briefing	A trainee learns about outstanding work and confirms the tasks they may support.
Assigned work	The trainee assists a qualified colleague, observing how controlled technical information and records shape the task.
An unexpected finding	The team involves the appropriate specialist rather than asking the trainee to improvise outside their scope.
Handover	Learning and work records are clarified. Any certification decision belongs to appropriately authorized personnel, not to the trainee merely because they helped.

Keep the role boundaries clear

Aircraft design, production, maintenance planning and maintenance certification are related but different activities. A person may work in a maintenance organization without holding every certification privilege. Do not assume that a job title or a general engineering degree authorizes release to service. [M1, M3, M4]

Would you enjoy careful technical work and records as well as solving practical problems

Build your learning sequence

Use this sequence to investigate the career before committing to formal training. It is an educational exploration path, not an approved syllabus or a compulsory worldwide route.

1 Choose a technical interest

Choose a jurisdiction and an initial area of interest: airframes, engines, avionics or another specialty. Explore actual job descriptions before treating a course title as a career route.

2 Build foundations you can explain

Build useful foundations in practical mathematics, basic physics, technical reading and clear writing. Practise explaining how you checked an answer, not merely producing one.

3 Compare recognized routes

Compare recognised training and supervised-experience routes. In the United States, examine FAA-certificated schools and acceptable practical experience; in the UK, start with the intended Part-66 category.

4 Check the practical experience plan

Before enrolling, ask how practical placements, experience records, examinations and fees fit together. A school completion document should not be mistaken for the final licence or certificate.

5 Separate learning from authorization

Use the regulator's current application guidance to plan evidence and assessments. After entry, continue role-specific learning and confirm the limits of every assigned task and certification privilege.

A worked exploration decision

Fictional example: Sam finds a course titled aviation engineering and another describing a maintenance-certificate route. Sam compares the documented outcome, assessments and practical experience rather than assuming that the more impressive title provides broader legal privileges. Sam asks who records and accepts the experience, and what qualification still remains after the course.

Try a small learning task

Using a safe everyday object such as a desk lamp, write a non-technical observation note: what you noticed, what you do not know and who should address it. Do not open, repair or test equipment. The aim is clear records and honest uncertainty, not maintenance practice.

My question or learning task and what I will produce

Separate routes from requirements

Country examples illustrate different systems. They do not establish equivalence, transferability or your eligibility. Check the current authority, course and employer requirements for the exact role before acting.

United States example

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) • Regulated certificate example

The FAA Aviation Mechanic certificate can carry Airframe and Powerplant ratings. Applicants must meet applicable eligibility requirements and pass the required knowledge, oral and practical tests; completing a school programme alone does not issue the certificate. [M1]

United Kingdom example

UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) • Category-specific licence example

A UK Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Licence application requires relevant knowledge examinations and acceptable evidence of practical maintenance experience. Requirements depend on the category and route; the licence's release-to-service privileges are category-specific. [M3]

Three labels to use when you compare options

Category	How to interpret the information
Regulated requirements	FAA certificate privileges and UK Part-66 categories are specific. Performing work, holding a qualification and being authorized to certify it are not the same question. Verify the relevant scope and current conditions. [M1, M3, M4]
Employer conditions	An employer may require a certificate or previous experience for a vacancy even where that is not a universal regulatory hiring condition. Ask what is required for this position and why. [M1]
Typical preparation	Technical curiosity, practical mathematics, careful reading and clear records can help you explore. These do not replace required training, examinations, experience or authorization.

Ask the question that changes the decision

Ask the provider to explain the complete route: study, examinations, practical experience, evidence, application and any later organization-specific authorization. Who arranges the experience, and what happens if a placement is unavailable? A vague promise of hands-on learning is not an evidence plan.

My intended country and the authority or employer I will verify with

Medical, age, experience, security and work-permission questions belong with the competent authority or responsible organization. Do not use this guide to decide personal eligibility or share private records.

Plan your next step

Take one manageable action, keep its source and date, and leave unanswered questions visible. None of these exercises grants a licence, qualification, operational authority or job entitlement.

- 1 Choose one technical specialty and identify the country whose certification framework you need to understand.
- 2 Compare the duties of a trainee, a technician and certifying personnel using current official or employer descriptions.
- 3 Ask two providers how their outcome, practical experience and assessment fit the exact certificate or licence route.
- 4 Create a short technical-learning log that records a question, a source, your explanation and what remains unverified.

The most important question I still need answered

My next action and review date

Official sources and scope

All links below were checked at the stated scope on 27 October 2026. Requirements can change. These organizations do not endorse Avi Learner or this guide.

[\[M1\] FAA Become an Aviation Mechanic](#)

Ratings, tests, supervised work, return-to-service distinction and employer certificate policies.

[\[M2\] FAA Experience Requirements to Become an Aircraft Mechanic](#)

Certificated-school and practical-experience routes; school graduation permits testing subject to other eligibility conditions.

[\[M3\] UK CAA Apply for a UK Part 66 Aircraft Maintenance Licence](#)

Knowledge examinations, experience evidence and category-dependent licensing requirements.

[\[M4\] UK CAA UK Part-66 general guidance](#)

Distinction between licence validity and recent experience needed to exercise certification privileges.

Explore related Avi Learner pages

[Maintenance and engineering](#)

[Maintenance technician profile](#)

[Training provider checklist](#)

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