



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 25 May in which you requested the following information:

1. *What is the typical length of Artificer training?*
2. *How long is a Soldier typically in the rank of Sergeant for before undertaking their Artificer training?*
3. *What is the average length of service prior to promotion for those who have undertaken the Artificer training?*
4. *How many people who pass their PAAB go on to complete their Artificer training?*

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act gives an applicant the right to access recorded information held by public authorities at the time the request is made and does not require public authorities to answer questions, provide explanations or give opinions, unless this is recorded information held. However, in order to be helpful in accordance with Section 16 of the Act, I have endeavoured to provide information to answer your questions.

To explain, there are five types of artificer; aircraft, avionics, electronics, vehicles and weapons. All five are trained at Lyneham in Wiltshire. Artificers aircraft and avionics within the School of Army Aeronautical Engineering and artificers electronics, vehicles and weapons within the Defence School of Electronic and Mechanical Engineering. The Potential Artificer Assessment Board (PAAB) is the process used for identifying artificers, it does not select them but puts them on an artificer career path. Soldiers will require at least two annual reports recommending them for artificer training following the PAAB.

1. What is the typical length of Artificer training?

The length of training includes technical training, two mandatory military training packages in preparation for on the job employment and annual leave.

Artificer aircraft – 53 weeks
Artificer avionics – 76 weeks
Artificer electronics – 70 weeks
Artificer vehicles – 75 weeks
Artificer weapons – 74 weeks

2. How long is a soldier typically in the rank of Sergeant for before undertaking their Artificer training?

REME selects through the Artificer Selection Course Loading Board (ASCLB), a boarding process conducted in the Army Personnel Centre for both Corporals and Sergeants to attend the artificer course. If Corporals are selected for the course they are promoted to Sergeant on the first day of the course. Sergeants are typically in the rank for one to three years before commencing the artificer course. All personnel attending the artificer course are promoted to Staff Sergeant on successful completion. The table below provides an extract of average time in rank (Sergeant) before attending the artificer course; it is over a two year period.

Trade	ASCLB 2016 (Years in Rank)	ASCLB 2017 (Years in Rank)	Average (Years in Rank)
Electronics	3.1	2.1	2.6
Aircraft	4.5	4.7	4.6
Avionics	2.6	4.0	3.3
Weapons	1.6	1.9	1.7
Vehicles	2.3	2.3	2.3
Average (Years in Rank)	2.8	3.0	2.9

3. What is the average length of service prior to promotion for those who have undertaken the Artificer training?

The figures below provides the length of service (Mean) a snap shot of those soldiers who were selected to commence artificer training during the 2016 and 2017 ASCLB.

Trade	ASCLB 2016 (YoS)	ASCLB 2017 (YoS)	Average (YoS)
Electronics	11.0	10.0	10.5
Aircraft	11.0	11.1	11.0
Avionics	10.0	8.5	9.3
Weapons	10.0	12.5	11.3
Vehicles	13.0	12.6	12.8
Average (YoS)	11.0	11.0	11.0

4. How many people who pass their PAAB go on to complete their Artificer training?

These statistics are not measured. There are more personnel who complete and pass the PAAB when compared to those who subsequently go onto and complete artificer training. Passing PAAB is just the first hurdle which soldiers need to meet. The ASCLB process allows REME to select the very best soldiers; both technically and militarily. All soldiers attending their Class 1 technical upgrading course attend the PAAB. The table below provide a comparison of numbers qualified to be boarded and numbers selected at ASCLB 17.

Trade	Fully Qualified	Selected
Electronics	75	20
Aircraft	30	15
Avionics	10	10
Weapons	25	10
Vehicles	265	45

Please note that the figures provided in answer to your questions are single service estimates which will not necessarily match those Defence Statistics (Army) career progression statistics which are already in the public domain. For example the career data included in the answer to a previous FOI at - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591343/20170125-FOI_12734_12737.pdf . Periods of time in answers 2 and 3 have been rounded to one decimal place. In line with normal statistical convention the numbers of personnel in the answer to question 4 have been rounded to the nearest five to preserve anonymity.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <https://ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

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