



# Officer Cadet Survey

# Annual Executive Summary 2022-2023



IFF Research

# Contents page

**03**  
Introduction

**06**  
Key  
Performance  
Indicators

**08**  
Army

**13**  
Royal Navy

**17**  
RAF

**22**  
Methodology

# Introduction

# Introduction

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The Officer Cadet Survey (OCS) was established in 2010 to monitor Officer Cadets' experience of training at all four initial officer training colleges.

The OCS was created following the success of the Recruit Trainee Survey (RTS), a Tri-Service survey administered to gauge Phase 1 recruits' and Phase 2 trainees' experience of training. The RTS was established following an appraisal of initial training by the Defence Operational Capability (DOC) in 2002.

The aims of the survey are to:

- Elicit attitudes towards the quality and benefits of training provided.
- Monitor the fairness of treatment for Recruits and Trainees.

Reported results are aggregated to reflect the experiences of Officer Cadets who attended training at a college under each Service command.



# Notes on reporting

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This Executive Summary compares results for the OCS survey for this current year, 2022/23, against the previous survey year of 2021/22. This report has been produced in addition to monthly and quarterly reports that are shared with the Services throughout the year.

This Executive Summary makes reference to aggregated totals, labelled as '% positive'. This refers to the sum of two answer options that are affirmative to the question or statement (e.g. 'very good' and 'good' or 'strongly agree' and 'agree'). The aggregate score takes into account the rounding which occurs when two figures are presented separately.

All comments and statistically significant differences are based on the aggregated total. Only differences that are statistically significant have been commented upon. A result is statistically significant if it is unlikely to have occurred by chance and it simply means there is statistical evidence that the difference between two figures is as a result of a factor other than chance. It does not mean the difference is necessarily large, important, or significant in the common meaning of the word. A statistically significant difference can still occur if the overall percentage remains the same due to the large base sizes included in the dataset.



# Key Performance Indicators

# Key Performance Indicators - OCS

	Army	Royal Navy	Royal Marines	RAF
Overall satisfaction with training experience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	84%	72%	-	72%
Enough time to eat meals: Always/Often	73%	84%	-	78%
Opportunity to talk privately with training staff: Very good/Good	84%	81%	-	87%
Opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff: Very good/Good	62%	55%	-	66%
Satisfaction with support for general mental resilience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	71%	65%	-	70%
Someone to go to outside of training hours: Yes	78%	79%	-	62%
Opportunity to raise concerns with a person in authority: Yes	82%	79%	-	82%
Complaints are dealt with in a fair manner: Yes	59%	56%	-	47%
I was treated fairly: Always/Most of the time	84%	87%	-	85%
Training was conducted without harassment: Always/Most of the time	93%	93%	-	94%
My injury was properly dealt with: Strongly Agree/Agree	84%	89%	-	91%
Staff/instructors did all they could to help me succeed in training: Strongly Agree/Agree	81%	78%	-	77%

Green shading indicates a statistically significant positive movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23. Size of movement is reported in Service summary.

Red shading indicates a statistically significant negative movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23. Size of movement is reported in Service summary.

A hyphen (-) indicates that data is unavailable due to the low base size.

# Army



# Army: Key Findings

A total of 414 Army Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2022/23, representing a response rate of 70%.

## Key Findings

In 2022/23 there have been gains for 21 measures and falls for two measures when compared to 2021/22. This includes an increase of ten percentage points for overall satisfaction with the training experience (74% to 84%), the highest level recorded since 2018/19. Positive perceptions of morale (64% to 79%) have also recovered to pre-COVID levels.

## Facilities and Amenities

There were 12 gains for facilities and amenities. For nine measures there was a period of improvement pre-COVID, followed by a dip in in 2020/21, that are now showing signs of recovery. However, performance is

still below 2019/20 levels for: standard of living accommodation (37% to 49%), medical care (54% to 72%), dental care (44% to 58%), opportunity for competitive sport (9% to 44%), access to the gym (25% to 68%), provision of free Wi-Fi (65% to 75%), IT support for hardware (15% to 22%), IT support for software (13% to 20%) and leisure and retail facilities (41% to 56%).

For sport facilities (64% to 88%) and standard of training facilities (81% to 87%) levels are now back in line with 2019/20 and earlier performance.

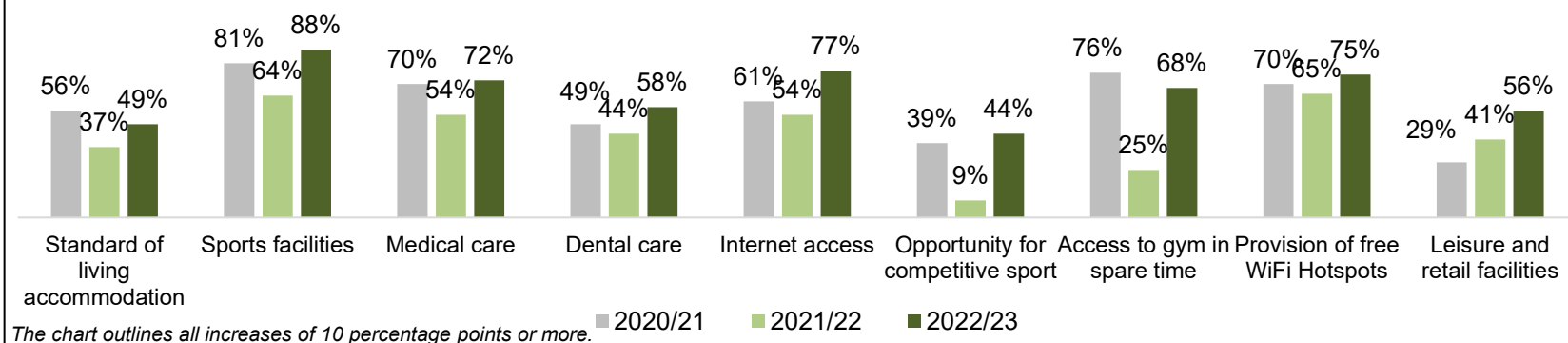
Satisfaction with food dropped following a positive lift last year (51% to 40%), with the exception of 2020/21 this is the lowest level recorded in the last six years.

## Support and Fairness

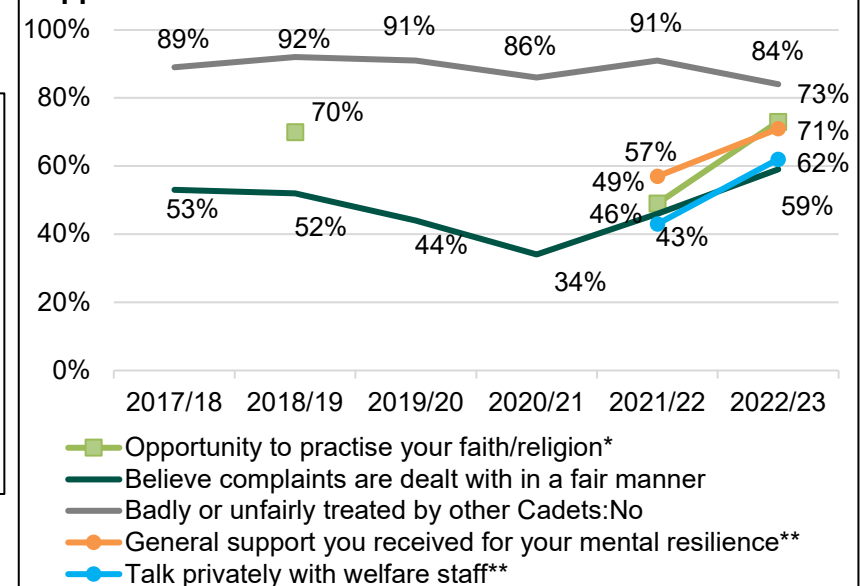
There has been an increase in the proportion of Cadets who believe complaints are dealt with in a fair manner (46% to 59%), reaching the highest level recorded in the last six years. There has also been an increase for opportunity to practice faith/religion (49% to 73%), to talk privately with welfare staff (43% to 62%) and general support for mental resilience (57% to 71%).

However, the proportion of Cadets who did not experience unfair treatment from other Cadets fell from 91% to 84%.

## Facilities and Amenities



## Support and Fairness



\*The question relating to practising your faith/ religion has gaps in the chart due to low base sizes.

\*\*The questions relating to general support they received for their mental resilience and the belief that complaints were dealt with in a fair manner were introduced in 2021/22.

# Army: Areas of positive change

## Gains

- There have been statistically significant gains across 21 measures between 2021/22 and 2022/23, these are outlined across two slides.
- Before the increase in 22/23 there was a dip in 2021/22 for the proportion that felt they had accurate information about what training involved prior to arrival, this increased by 10 percentage points in 2022/23 (54% to 64%).
- For facilities and amenities there were 12 gains achieved. For all measures there was a decline in 2020/21 and, with the exception of leisure and retail facilities, they all declined further in 2021/22.
- Standard of living accommodation (37% to 49%), medical care (54% to 72%), dental care (44% to 58%), opportunity for competitive sport (9% to 44%), access to the gym (25% to 68%), provision of free Wi-Fi (65% to 75%), IT support for hardware (15% to 22%) and for software (13% to 20%) are still some way below pre-COVID levels.

GAINS	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Recruitment and preparing for training</b>						
Information prior to arrival: Accurate information about what training involved: Strongly agree/Agree	72%	59%	60%	59%	54%	64%
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>						
Standard of living accommodation: Very good/Good	55%	53%	63%	56%	37%	49%
Standard of training facilities: Very good/Good	88%	88%	91%	86%	81%	87%
Sports facilities: Very good/Good	91%	94%	89%	81%	64%	88%
Medical care: Very good/Good	87%	92%	94%	70%	54%	72%
Dental care: Very good/Good	78%	87%	80%	49%	44%	58%
Internet access: Very good/Good	70%	72%	84%	61%	54%	77%
Opportunity for competitive sport: Very good/Good	65%	61%	72%	39%	9%	44%
Access to gym in spare time: Very good/Good	83%	85%	87%	76%	25%	68%
Provision of free WiFi Hotspots: Very good/Good	74%	80%	89%	70%	65%	75%
IT support for hardware issues (for issue devices only): Very good/Good	26%	30%	34%	22%	15%	22%
IT support for software issues (for issue devices only): Very good/Good	26%	27%	33%	19%	13%	20%
Leisure and retail facilities: Very good/Good	51%	61%	64%	29%	41%	56%

Green shading indicates a statistically significant positive movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

# Army: Areas of positive change

## Gains

- There have been uplifts across the support measures with opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff (43% to 62%), to practise faith and religion (49% to 73%) and support for mental resilience (57% to 71%) all improving this year.
- Cadets were also more likely to agree that complaints are dealt with fairly (46% to 59%), the highest level recorded in the last six years.
- Cadets were also more likely to agree that they received regular feedback on performance (50% to 60%), back to levels seen in 2020/21 but still not in line with levels seen in earlier years.
- Overall satisfaction with training increased from 74% in 2021/22 to 84%, back in line with 2018/19 levels.
- Perceptions of morale increased (64% to 79%), continuing the recovery in performance following a significant dip in 2020/21.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>GAINS</b>						
<b>Support</b>						
Talk privately with welfare staff: Very good/Good	-	-	-	-	43%	62%
Opportunity to practise your faith/religion: Very good/Good	-	70%	-	-	49%	73%
Satisfaction with the general support you received for your mental resilience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	-	-	-	-	57%	71%
<b>Fairness</b>						
Whether believe complaints are dealt with in a fair manner: Yes, fully	53%	52%	44%	34%	46%	59%
<b>General</b>						
Overall Satisfaction with training experience: Very satisfied/Satisfied	80%	84%	80%	66%	74%	84%
Received regular feedback on my performance: Strongly agree/Agree	83%	67%	77%	60%	50%	60%
Training objectives and aims were explained to me: Strongly agree/Agree	91%	79%	84%	73%	72%	82%
Morale was good on my course: Strongly agree/Agree	82%	77%	77%	54%	64%	79%

Green shading indicates a statistically significant positive movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

A hyphen (-) indicates that data is unavailable due to the question not being asked that year or low base size.

# Army: Areas of negative change

## Falls

- There have been statistically significant falls in two areas between 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- Satisfaction with food reached its second lowest level in the past six years (40%), following a positive uplift in 2021/22.
- The proportion of Cadets who were not badly or unfairly treated by other Cadets reached its lowest level over the past six years (91% to 84%).

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>FALLS</b>						
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>						
Food: Very good/Good	61%	47%	53%	21%	51%	40%
<b>Support</b>						
Badly or unfairly treated by other Cadets: No	89%	92%	91%	86%	91%	84%

*Red shading indicates a statistically significant negative movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.*

# Royal Navy

# Royal Navy: Key Findings

A total of 180 Royal Navy Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2022/23, representing a response rate of 55%.

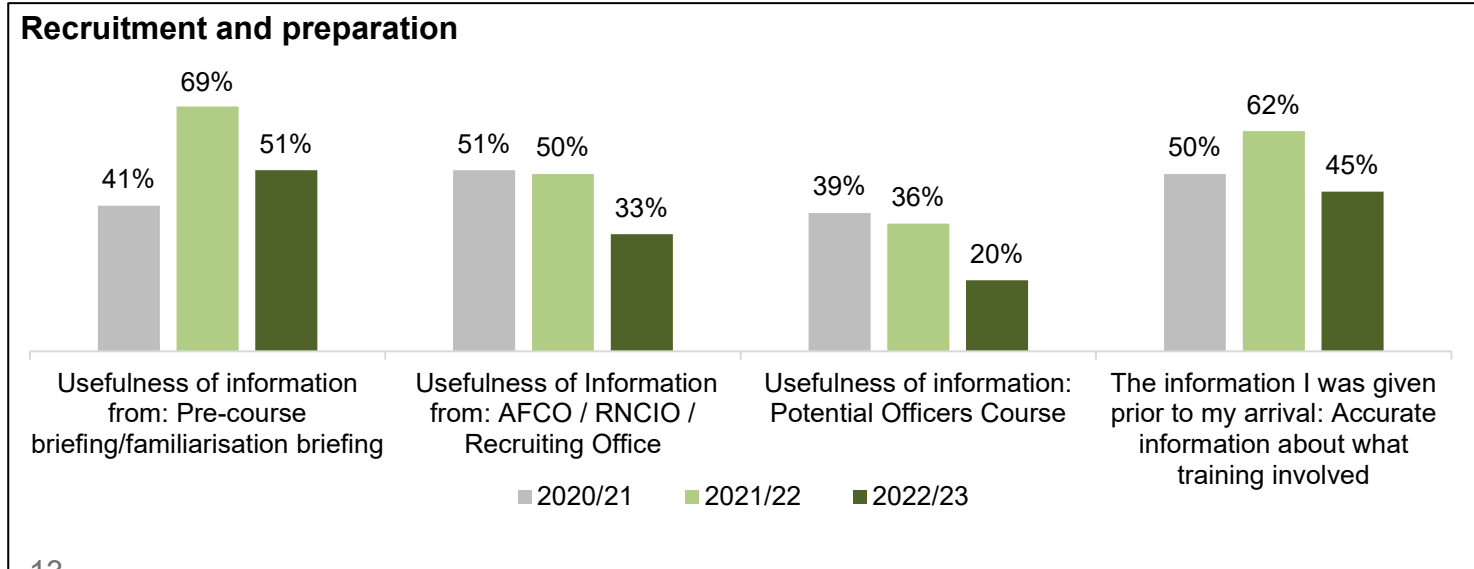
## Key Findings

Compared to 2021/22, there were falls in seven measures and one gain.

## Recruitment and Preparation

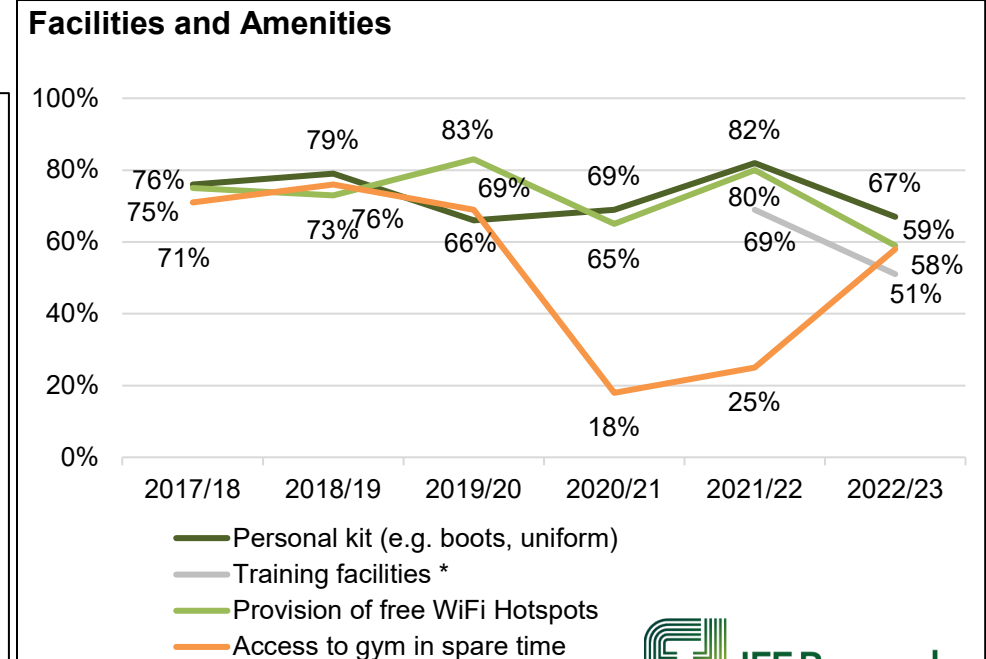
There were four significant declines across recruitment and preparation measures in 2022/23, all of which decreased by at least 15 percentage points.

Satisfaction at the following measures all have seen satisfaction drop to the lowest level recorded in the previous six years: Usefulness of information from Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO) / Royal Navy Careers Information Office (RNCIO) / Recruiting Office (50% to 33%), usefulness of information from Potential Officers Course (36% to 20%) and information given prior to arrival was accurate about what training involved (62% to 45%).



## Facilities and Amenities

There were three significant decreases in satisfaction across facilities and amenities: personal kit (82% to 67%), the training facilities (69% to 51%) and the provision of free WiFi hotspots (80% to 59%). Satisfaction with access to the gym in spare time was the only significant increase in 2022/23 (25% to 58%) and is recovering from a dip in 2020/21 and 2021/22.



\*The question relating to training facilities was introduced in 21/22.

# Royal Navy: Key areas of positive change

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## Gains

- The proportion of Royal Navy Officer Cadets who were satisfied with their ability to access the gym in their spare time is showing signs of recovery following a dip in 2020/21.
- In 2022/23, this measure increased by 33 percentage points (25% to 58%).

GAINS	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>						
Access to gym in spare time: Very good/Good	71%	76%	69%	18%	25%	58%

*Green shading indicates a statistically significant positive movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.*

# Royal Navy: Key areas of negative change

## Falls

- There has been a statistically significant fall for seven measures between 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- Four of these significant declines were seen across recruitment and preparation measures, which all decreased by at least 15 percentage points. This decline in usefulness of information from AFCO/RNCIO/Recruiting Office (50% to 33%), usefulness of Potential Officers Course (36% to 20%) and that there was accurate information about what training involved prior to arrival (62% to 45%) have all seen satisfaction at its lowest level in the past six years.
- Following peaks in 2021/22, satisfaction with personal kit (82% to 67%) and provision of free WiFi hotspots (80% to 59%) saw significant declines in 2022/23.

FALLS	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Recruitment and Preparation</b>						
Usefulness of information: Pre-course briefing/familiarisation briefing: Very useful/useful	39%	46%	38%	41%	69%	51%
Usefulness of information: Information from AFCO / RNCIO / Recruiting Office: Very useful/useful	65%	65%	58%	51%	50%	33%
Usefulness of information: Potential Officers Course: Very useful/useful	33%	37%	41%	39%	36%	20%
Information prior to arrival: Accurate information about what training involved: Strongly agree/Agree	58%	59%	58%	50%	62%	45%
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>						
Personal kit (e.g. boots, uniform): Very good/Good	76%	79%	66%	69%	82%	67%
Training facilities (e.g. ranges, classrooms, urban areas): Very good/Good	-	-	-	-	69%	51%
Provision of free WiFi Hotspots: Very good/Good	75%	73%	83%	65%	80%	59%

Red shading indicates a statistically significant negative movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

A hyphen (-) indicates that data is unavailable due to the question not being asked that year or low base size.



# RAF

# RAF: Key Findings

A total of 319 RAF Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2022/23, representing a response rate of 75%.

## Key Findings

When compared to 2021/22 there has been a decline recorded in 14 measures and a gain achieved in one.

### Recruitment and Preparation

There were falls for information provision prior to joining: joining instructions (77% to 68%), information packs (64% to 51%), Potential Officers Course (27% to 18%) and Pre-Commissioning Course Briefing Course (PCCBC) (20% to 12%), all of which dropped to the lowest satisfaction levels in six years. However, accuracy in the information about what kit and equipment to pack improved (46% to 58%).

### Facilities and amenities

For facilities and amenities there were four significant declines: standard of training facilities (79% to 63%), laundry facilities (38% to 28%), training facilities (85% to 71%) and time given to eat meals (89% to 78%).

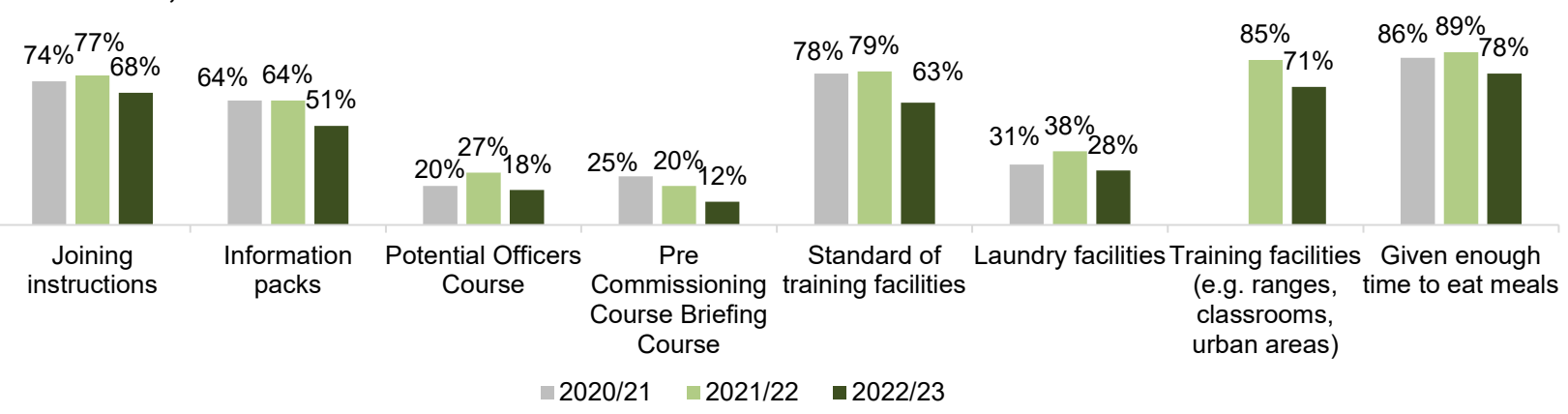
### Support and fairness

In 2022/23 there was a fall in the proportion of Officer Cadets who felt fairly treated (93% to 85%) and those who would have felt comfortable to report ill/injured\* (73% to 61%). There was also a fall for administration problems being adequately dealt with (39% to 26%).

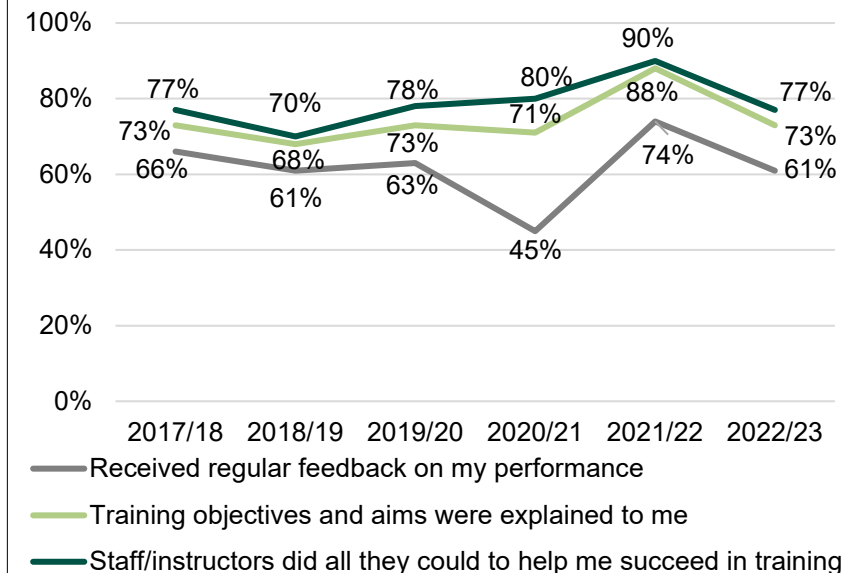
### General measures

In 2022/23 general feedback about training support declined for: provision of regular feedback (74% to 61%), training objectives and aims being explained (88% to 73%) and staff/instructors doing all they could to help Officer Cadets succeed (90% to 77%). These declines all followed peak ratings given in 2021/22 and have returned to level prior to the peak.

### Recruitment, facilities and amenities



### General measures



# RAF:

## Key areas of positive change

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### Gains

- There has been a statistically significant increase for one measure between 2021/22 and 2022/23 which relates to recruitment and preparation. A higher proportion of Officer Cadets agreed that they received accurate information about what kit and equipment to pack (46% to 58%), recovering from a dip in 2021/22, it is now back in line with 2022/23.

GAINS	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Recruitment and Preparation</b>						
Information prior to arrival: Accurate information about what kit and equipment to pack: Strongly agree/Agree	-	50%	62%	58%	46%	58%

*Green shading indicates a statistically significant positive movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.*

*A hyphen (-) indicates that data is unavailable due to the question not being asked that year or low base size.*

# RAF:

## Key areas of negative change

### Falls

- There have been statistically significant falls for 14 measures between 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- Four declines were across the recruitment and preparation measures with perception of the usefulness of information falling for joining instructions (77% to 68%), information packs (64% to 51%), Potential Officers Course (27% to 18%) and Pre Commissioning Course Briefing Course (PCCBC) (20% to 12%). All four of these measures have dropped to the lowest satisfaction levels recorded in the past six years.
- A further four declines were within the facilities and amenities measures. Satisfaction decreased for standard of training facilities (79% to 63%, to the lowest recorded in the past 6 years), laundry facilities (38% to 28%), training facilities (85% to 71%) and time given to eat meals (89% to 78%).

FALLS	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Recruitment and Preparation</b>						
Usefulness of information: Joining instructions: Very useful/useful	80%	72%	85%	74%	77%	68%
Usefulness of information: Information packs: Very useful/useful	68%	62%	73%	64%	64%	51%
Usefulness of information: Potential Officers Course: Very useful/useful	24%	25%	31%	20%	27%	18%
Usefulness of information: Pre Commissioning Course Briefing Course (PCCBC): Very useful/useful	23%	25%	32%	25%	20%	12%
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>						
Standard of training facilities: Very good/Good	78%	74%	72%	78%	79%	63%
Laundry facilities: Very good/Good	19%	14%	8%	31%	38%	28%
Training facilities (e.g. ranges, classrooms, urban areas): Very good/Good	-	-	-	-	85%	71%
Whether given enough time to eat meals: Always/Often	70%	73%	74%	86%	89%	78%

Red shading indicates a statistically significant negative movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

A hyphen (-) indicates that data is unavailable due to the question not being asked that year or low base size.

# RAF:

## Key areas of negative change

### Falls

- A smaller proportion of Officer Cadets felt that problems experienced with administration were dealt with adequately in 2022/23 compared with 21/22 (39% to 26%). This is the lowest satisfaction score for this measure in the previous six years.
- Following two years of improvement, the proportion of Officer Cadets who felt they were treated fairly this year has fallen from 93% in 2021/22 to 85% in 2022/23.
- The proportion of Officer Cadets who would have felt comfortable to report sick if ill or injured fell to 61% from 73% in 2021/22, lower than the past two years but higher than 2019/20 and prior.
- Following peaks in satisfaction in 2021/22 general perceptions of training were less positive, falling back to performance levels similar to 2020/21 or earlier: provision of regular feedback (74% to 61%), training objectives and aims being explained (88% to 73%) and staff/instructors doing all they could to help Officer Cadets succeed (90% to 77%).

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>FALLS</b>						
<b>Support</b>						
Problems with administration were adequately dealt with: Yes	35%	33%	36%	29%	39%	26%
<b>Fairness</b>						
I was treated fairly: Always/Most of the time	87%	85%	87%	90%	93%	85%
<b>Setbacks</b>						
Would have felt comfortable to report sick if had been ill/injured: Yes*	53%	55%	52%	71%	73%	61%
<b>General</b>						
Received regular feedback on my performance: Strongly agree/Agree	66%	61%	63%	45%	74%	61%
Training objectives and aims were explained to me: Strongly agree/Agree	73%	68%	73%	71%	88%	73%
Staff/instructors did all they could to help me succeed in training: Strongly agree/Agree	77%	70%	78%	80%	90%	77%

Red shading indicates a statistically significant negative movement between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

\* This question was only asked of those that were not ill or injured during training

# Methodology

# Survey methodology

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## Survey completion

All Officer Cadets who have completed at least two weeks training should be given the opportunity participate in the online survey which is administered by training units.

All respondents completing the survey are reassured that they will not be asked to record their name anywhere on the survey, and are told how their information will be made available to those at their unit and involved in the training evaluation process.

Survey completion is voluntary and Officer Cadets can opt out of participating at any point.

The data set used for this Executive Summary includes data collected from full survey completes only.

This report is based on data collected from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

## Survey questions

The questionnaire was designed to include all the key questions raised by the Defence Operational Capability Audit and was developed by a Tri-Service group. The survey is reviewed annually by the Tri-Service Steering Group.

Questions are asked of all Cadets unless they are specific to a sub-group of respondents. For example, questions about set-backs during training will only be asked of those who indicated that they were ill or injured and reported this.

# Response rates

Over a twelve-month fieldwork period between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 937 Officer Cadets completed the survey. All training establishments were directed to give all Officer Cadets access to the survey and an opportunity to complete it. Officer Cadets are not mandated to complete the survey and can opt out if they wish. The tables below present the survey response rates for each Command Service.

	Total Responses (21/22)	Total Responses (22/23)	Response Rate (21/22)	Response Rate (22/23)
Army	476	414	49%	70%
Royal Navy	182	180	51%	55%
Royal Marines*	32	24	55%	43%
RAF	376	319	69%	75%
Total	1066	937	55%	67%



# Statistical reliability

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Only a sample of the overall 'population' has completed the survey so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those that would have been found, had everybody been surveyed (the 'true' values). Statistical tests are carried out between various sub-sets of respondents and over time for certain key indicators (full details of the testing applied is included in the Background Quality Report). This includes the following:

- Current vs last year:
  - Army 2022/23 vs Army 2021/22
  - Royal Navy 2022/23 vs 2021/22
  - RAF 2022/23 vs RAF 2021/22

For any percentage given, however, we can estimate 'confidence intervals' within which the true values are likely to fall. For example; if 10% or 90% of our respondents base of 319 RAF Officer Cadets strongly agreed/agreed that the training was what they expected, we can be 99% confident that the 'true' value would be between 7.8% and 12.2% (if 10% strongly agree) and between 87.8% or 92.2% (if 90% strongly agree/agree), i.e. a margin of 2.2% on each side.

Similar margins for other percentages and sub-groups of the respondents are given in table on the following page. It should be remembered that the 'true' finding is much more likely to be towards the centre of the possible range of responses than towards the margins.

For similar reasons, apparent differences in results relating to sub groups may, if small, not necessarily reflect genuine attitudinal differences. We can be 99% confident that differences exceeding those in the table on the next page are genuine or 'statistically significant' differences.

Please note confidence intervals in the table overleaf refer to questions where all respondents are asked. For routed questions where only a sub-set of respondents are asked (e.g. those who were ill or injured during training), confidence intervals will be larger.

# Confidence intervals

The table below shows 99% confidence intervals for data recorded at different percentages.

Size of respondent base on which survey results are based	10% or 90% ±	20% or 80% ±	30% or 70% ±	40% or 60% ±	50% ±
Army (414)	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.5
Royal Navy (180)	3.9	5.2	6.0	6.4	6.5
Royal Marines (24)*	-	-	-	-	-
RAF (319)	2.2	2.9	3.3	3.6	3.6



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