

Handbook for inspecting initial training for the Armed Forces, with reference to care and welfare

Based on the education inspection framework applied to further education and skills

For use from September 2023

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Part 1. Guide to the inspection process

Introduction

1. Ofsted inspects the measures taken to secure the care and welfare of trainees¹ undergoing initial training in the UK Armed Forces.² The inspections are commissioned by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces and administered through the Chief of Defence People's Talent, Skills, Learning and Development team (TSLD) at the Ministry of Defence (MoD). This commission and its terms are set out in a memorandum of understanding agreed between the MoD and Ofsted.
2. Initial training includes phase 1 and phase 2 of Regular and Reserve personnel training in each of the Services. Phase 1 provides basic military training and phase 2 provides specific trade/professional training. At TSLD's request, the scope of an annual cycle of inspection can include separate inspections or reviews on related aspects, such as recruitment and selection, or training of trainers.
3. During commissioned inspections, we do not inspect training or care and welfare arrangements for cadets other than officer cadets, for those in Field or active Service settings, training beyond phase 2, training for those under age 16 or welfare, care and training arrangements for those completing apprenticeships in phase 3. Inspectors will evaluate the availability and accessibility of dental and medical resources, but not the quality of medical or dental care or provision.
4. This handbook is a guide for inspectors on how to carry out inspections of Armed Forces training establishments, or of units that provide training within operational military establishments. The term 'establishment' used in this handbook applies to both. The handbook is available to Armed Forces personnel involved in initial training to inform them about inspection processes and procedures. It balances the need for consistent inspections with the need to respond to each establishment's individual circumstances. This handbook is aligned with the Ofsted education inspection framework where practicable but is contextualised for the inspection of care, welfare and training of MoD Armed Forces initial training.

¹ The term 'trainee' is defined in the MoD Joint Services Publication (JSP) 822 as including all those in training across Defence. It encompasses such terms as 'recruit', 'student', 'learner' and 'officer cadet'.

² The definition of this is given in the MoD JSP 822 as the MoD's legal and moral obligation to care for the well-being of trainees. This document states that 'as an employer, the MoD has care and welfare obligations for all the trainees in its charge; this duty has legal, moral and presentational components'.

Privacy notice

5. During an inspection, inspectors will collect information about staff and personnel by talking to them, by looking at documents, records and survey responses and other recorded information and by observing everyday life at the establishment. Inspectors may also meet with employers where appropriate. Ofsted uses this information to prepare its report and for the purposes set out in its privacy policy.³ We will not record names, but some of the information may make it possible to identify an individual.

Aims of inspection

6. The aim of inspection is to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of arrangements to provide for the welfare of and care for trainees. Inspectors use four **key judgements** to evaluate welfare and duty of care:
 - **quality of training and support** – the intent, implementation and impact of these on the care and welfare of trainees
 - **professional and personal development of trainees** – the extent to which they develop and apply the expected personal and professional values and skills
 - **quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources** – the impact of these on the experience of the trainees
 - **effectiveness of leadership and management** – the ways senior staff plan and oversee systems for care and welfare during training and their capacity for making improvements.
7. Inspectors consider the evidence and evaluate it against the grade descriptors for each of the four key judgements contained in Part 2 of this document. Under these key judgements, we report on relevant aspects that are within and outside of training establishments' direct control.
8. We use our common four-point grading scale to reflect the quality of care and welfare in training:
 - **grade 1:** outstanding
 - **grade 2:** good
 - **grade 3:** requires improvement
 - **grade 4:** inadequate.
9. Five grades are given in total. First, inspectors grade each of the four key judgements outlined above. They then take account of the key judgement

³ 'Further education and skills: Ofsted privacy notice', Ofsted, updated March 2022; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-privacy-notices/further-education-and-skills-ofsted-privacy-notice>.

grades to give a graded summary judgement of the **overall effectiveness of welfare and duty of care** at the establishment.

Selecting the establishments to be inspected

10. Staff at Ofsted and TSLD communicate about the selection of establishments to be inspected during each cycle of inspection. The final decisions for selection and scheduling rest with Ofsted. The establishments to be inspected are selected by considering a range of factors, which include but are not limited to:
 - an assessment of the available evidence about each establishment from previous Ofsted inspection reports
 - Ofsted outcome grades from an establishment's previous inspection
 - the length of time since an establishment's previous inspection
 - any re-inspection following a previous overall effectiveness grade of requires improvement or inadequate
 - the outcomes of an establishment's internal self-assessment
 - the outcomes of an establishment's internal Service audit/inspection
 - changes in senior command or an establishment moving to another chain of command
 - changes in the way that training is done or a move of training to another location
 - resource concerns
 - other concerns raised by the MoD.
11. A greater number of Army establishments are likely to be inspected each year than establishments from other Services, reflecting the greater size of the Army and the higher numbers of personnel in training.

Re-inspection following a requires improvement or inadequate grade

12. Establishments judged to require improvement for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection will normally receive a full re-inspection within 12 to 24 months of their previous inspection. Establishments judged inadequate will normally receive a full re-inspection within 15 months of their previous inspection.
13. These establishments may be subject to a monitoring visit by TSLD or single-Service audit teams before their full inspection. Monitoring visits may also be carried out by Ofsted at TSLD's request.
14. An Ofsted monitoring visit is an interim type of inspection that explores one or more specific themes. The purpose of a monitoring visit is to assess progress against such themes to encourage improvement, assess risk and measure

progress. Monitoring visits do not change the inspection grades. Ofsted may carry out a monitoring visit at any establishment at any reasonable time at TSLD's request. Establishments will normally receive two working days' notice of a monitoring visit, although they may be unannounced. They will normally last up to two days on site. They will normally result in a report, which will outline progress made on each theme inspected. Concerns arising from monitoring visits may lead to an earlier full re-inspection.

15. Inspectors use one of the following progress judgements to sum up the outcomes of monitoring visits:
 - **insufficient progress:** progress has been either slow or insubstantial or both, and the demonstrable impact on trainees has been negligible
 - **reasonable progress:** the establishment's actions are already having a beneficial impact on trainees, and improvements are sustainable and are based on the establishment's thorough quality assurance procedures
 - **significant progress:** progress has been rapid and is already having considerable beneficial impact on trainees.
16. Inspectors will usually base the themes for re-inspection monitoring visits on the main areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. Through their work on the monitoring visit, inspectors will challenge the establishment to improve. The report from the visit will set out what progress the establishment has made since the previous inspection. Inspectors will make a progress judgement against each theme, as set out above. Monitoring visit reports will be published in the annual report with other full inspection reports.

Inspection methodology

17. Ofsted inspectors of initial military training use the same fundamental approaches to inspection as they would in any remit. These include the triangulation of evidence that underpins each key finding.
18. To achieve this triangulation, inspectors will talk to trainees, interview military and civilian staff, examine resources and infrastructure, and review documents and records. They may observe training and other activities involving trainees. Inspectors may review confidential files and records, but evidence records will not normally contain information that can be used to identify individuals.
19. Each cycle of inspection usually starts in September and ends during the following May. Ofsted holds annual briefing events for the Armed Forces' designated points of contact (nominees) and other personnel who will be involved in training Regular and Reserve trainees during the coming year.

Before the inspection

Regular training establishments

20. Each establishment that trains Regular Service personnel will normally receive no more than two working days' notice of inspection. However, Ofsted reserves the right to carry out unannounced visits in circumstances to be agreed with the Head of TSLD. The lead inspector will contact the nominee, the commanding officer or the nearest senior rank available in each establishment by telephone.
21. The lead inspector will use the documents requested in the notification call to prepare a short pre-inspection briefing identifying the main areas of focus that the inspection team will investigate while on site. The pre-inspection briefing will be sent to the nominee and the inspection team before the inspection starts. You can find a generic example of this at [Annex A](#).
22. Some inspections may take place outside of normal working hours. Establishments may be visited more than once during an inspection cycle.

Reserve training establishments

23. In the Reserve training environment and the Ofsted lead inspector will inform the Ofsted contact in the training headquarters for each Service of the decision to inspect. The Service contact will then inform the Reserve headquarters.
24. The lead inspector will normally make direct contact with Reserve headquarters around 10 working days before the inspection. A designated nominee from the headquarters will liaise with the Ofsted lead inspector to finalise the details of the inspection and will supply the requested documentation.

University Service Units

25. The Ofsted lead inspector will inform the Ofsted contact in the training headquarters for each Service of the decision to inspect. The Service contact will then inform the USU headquarters.

USUs include University Royal Navy Units (URNUs), University Officers Training Corps (UOTCs) and University Air Squadrons (UASs). University Service Units (USUs) will be inspected in selected groups, along with a visit to the relevant single-Service headquarters responsible for those USUs. The lead inspector will select up to 6 individual units to be included. Inspectors will visit these units, during drill nights over the period of one week. The lead inspector will review the findings from these visits prior to a visit to the headquarters responsible for the USUs.

This headquarters visit will occur the week following the unit visits.

During the inspection

26. Inspection of a Regular training establishment normally lasts two or three days and usually involves a team of two or three inspectors. The inspection team will arrive on site at around 8.45am each day. Inspectors will depart when they have completed the evidence-gathering required for the day. They will find their own overnight accommodation off site.
27. Inspections of Reserve units will take place when the unit meets, which may be during the evening or on a weekend. However, when longer training courses are being completed, the inspection may cover two or more days of these. When Reserve personnel attend weekend or week-long courses at single-Service training centres, inspectors will initially make contact directly with the training centre.
28. Inspectors require a short briefing, of no more than 20 minutes, at the start of the inspection. This should concentrate on the establishment's progress since the previous inspection and be referenced to the four key inspection judgements. Inspectors do not require a detailed brief, for example, on the history of the site or the purpose and span of military training.
29. Inspectors focus on the experience of trainees. They visit recruit/trainee dining areas, welfare and sports facilities, and accommodation but do not visit accommodation or messing facilities for permanent staff unless they are shared with trainees.
30. During inspections, inspectors require unrestricted access to relevant military and civilian staff, recruits, trainees and locations. Each inspector has appropriate security clearance, so they should have unrestricted passes. We recognise that some establishments' staff will not be available, and staff should not be recalled for an inspection. Trainees are selected for interview by inspectors from nominal rolls provided by the unit.
31. Inspectors will take account of the views of trainees, staff and the nominee. Staff and trainees must be able to speak to inspectors in private to ensure that the presence of the nominee or senior staff does not influence their responses. Meetings during the inspection may include those with samples of trainees selected by inspectors and open-invitation meetings.
32. Each inspector determines their own schedule for inspection and decides who they wish to interview and where interviews will take place. During the inspection, the nominee will provide the link between the establishment's staff and inspectors.
33. At the end of each day of inspection, inspectors will feed back their findings in a face-to-face meeting with the senior nominee.

34. Inspectors will hold a final feedback meeting on the last day of inspection. Provisional findings and grades will be given to the nominee and commanding officer and/or head of establishment by the inspection team. These provisional findings are subject to change and should not be shared outside of the chain of command.
35. In a Reserve establishment when the inspection has lasted less than one day, the feedback will take place at the end of the inspection. Welfare and duty of care for Reserve training, including training that takes place at Army Reserve parent units, will be graded in the same way as Regular establishments.
36. For USUs, a single set of judgement grades will be given for each respective Service.
37. Lead inspectors must ensure that inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles of inspection and Ofsted's code of conduct.

Providing feedback

38. Before leaving, the lead inspector should ensure that the establishment's senior staff and nominee are clear:
 - about the grades given for each key judgement⁴
 - that the grades awarded are provisional and, although unlikely to change, may be subject to change through moderation and quality assurance
 - that the points provided in the feedback, subject to any change, will be generally reflected in the report, although the text of the report may differ slightly from the oral feedback about the main findings and areas for improvement.
39. The team may include an additional His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), whose role will be to quality assure the inspection process. This inspector will wish to talk to the commanding officer and nominee about the establishment's experience of the inspection. The lead inspector will inform the establishment of this in advance.
40. If the establishment provides more than one phase of training, trains officers and/or trainees on the same site, or has multiple training schools, the inspection may include all training streams. In these cases, an overall effectiveness grade will be given for each stream of training and the report text will refer to all streams of training.
41. During the inspection, inspectors will collect, analyse and record evidence and their judgements on paper or electronic evidence forms, which are retained by Ofsted. It is essential that the evidence accurately reflects the discussions.

⁴ For monitoring visits, when grades are referred to, these should be understood to refer to progress judgements.

Inspectors should identify clearly information that was provided in confidence. The evidence forms, together with any briefings, plans or instructions prepared by the lead inspector, and responses from trainees (in hard copy, online or other formats), contribute to the evidence base. The lead inspector is responsible for assuring the quality of evidence.

The role of the nominees

42. It is recommended that establishments have two nominees involved in inspections. The senior nominee should :

- be a senior member of the chain of command
- have a thorough understanding of the workings of the establishment
- ensure an effective link between inspectors and the establishment's staff
- provide inspectors with relevant documentation and information as required
- be the primary contact for inspectors before, during and after the inspection
- provide additional evidence as required for inspectors
- coordinate or plan meetings with staff and recruits or trainees
- attend feedback and grading meetings
- provide comments to Ofsted on the factual accuracy of the draft report.

Units should have a second nominee as well as their senior nominee. This is for staff developmental purposes. The second nominee may only act as an observer and support for the unit and the senior nominee. They may not contribute to discussions with inspectors in team meetings. They can support with the planning and administration of the inspection. This does not affect the role of the senior nominee as set out above and how inspection team meetings are managed.

Planning for the inspection

43. We do not expect the establishment to spend undue time preparing specifically for the inspection. There are usually certain people inspectors would like to interview, but personnel should not be recalled from leave or other duties to support or prepare for the inspection. Where necessary or helpful, personnel may be interviewed by telephone or online, rather than face to face. Similarly, staff should not suspend or move scheduled training activities because of an inspection.

44. Ofsted inspectors will normally meet:

- trainees (one-to-one or in small groups)
- junior/senior non-commissioned officers in training/support teams (one-to-one or in a small group)

- commanding officers/officers commanding training units and sub-units (one-to-one)
 - key staff involved in care and welfare, including the unit welfare staff, Royal Voluntary Service, SSAFA – the armed Forces charity – padre/chaplain, gymnasium and healthcare (one-to-one or in a small group)
 - other key staff involved in the welfare and well-being of trainees.
45. The nominee will provide information on the availability of key staff using the pre-inspection briefing form provided by the lead inspector, an example of which is in [Annex A](#). Inspectors use this information to plan their schedule. Most interviews will take place during the working day. In almost all cases, inspectors will spend much of the early stage of the inspection meeting with trainees selected from nominal rolls.
46. Inspectors may require some or all the following documentation to be available by the beginning of the inspection. Other documentation, such as records of meetings and logs, may be requested. The lead inspector will provide guidance on how and by when these are to be provided:
- a map of the establishment
 - trainee nominal rolls by sub-unit
 - self-assessment report (and any associated reports) if not already sent
 - quality improvement plan (open and closed actions) if not already sent
 - commander’s supervisory care directive and risk assessment
 - details of any complaints reported
 - trainee survey outcomes from the previous two surveys⁵
 - details of the courses/programmes being taught and their mode of teaching
 - timetables for lessons/sessions/workshops or other learning activities during the week
 - records of mandatory training for staff and trainees
 - documents relating to the ‘Prevent’ duty
 - at-risk registers (on site only)
 - a diagram or outline of the establishment structure
 - the geographical spread of training premises and trainees
 - contact information for key staff
 - the current number of trainees and their stage of training.
47. The information below is required for the current training year and the previous two training years. The establishment can provide this in any format, including

⁵ Surveys are administered by an external organisation commissioned by the MoD, and internal surveys are administered by the training establishment or unit.

training administration and financial management information system reports. This information should demonstrate how the duty to promote equality across all groups with protected characteristics is being discharged. The information should show how recruitment, training and support ensure the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It should also demonstrate the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The following is required by the start of the inspection:

- annual training targets and throughput for this year and the previous two years
 - total number of trainees on site, including those who may have previously been in local authority care
 - overall pass rates and first-time pass rates
 - Trainees
 - numbers of back-classed⁶ trainees and subsequent completions
 - numbers of back-classed trainees still in training at the time of the inspection
 - numbers of trainees on holdover⁷ at the time of the inspection and total numbers over the current and previous two training years
 - total amount of unprogrammed time within each course, regardless of reason
 - early leavers, including medical and non-medical, by category
 - numbers of military and civilian staff at the time of the inspection, including the proportion who have completed mandatory training and relevant safeguarding checks.
48. Inspectors are not to be escorted while on the establishment's premises unless an inspector specifically requests an escort.
49. There are a very limited number of circumstances when Ofsted and the MoD may decide that an inspection or visit should not go ahead on the planned dates. Should an establishment wish to ask for a deferral, Ofsted will consult with the MoD before making a decision. There are no automatic grounds for a deferral and requests may be denied. We will consider each case separately and on its own merits.

Reporting

50. At the end of each inspection, the establishment receives oral feedback on the provisional findings from the inspection. This includes a provisional grade for each of the four key judgements and for overall effectiveness, and includes the

⁶ Recruits, trainees or Ocdts who are moved from their original class or cohort into one that started training later.

⁷ Trainees on holdover are temporarily not being trained alongside their peers. This could be due to a number of factors, including injury or awaiting their next course.

strengths and weaknesses found. TSLD staff may attend the final feedback session, usually remotely.

51. A written draft report of the main and detailed findings is sent to the nominee via TSLD approximately three weeks after the inspection. The draft reports are subject to internal moderation and quality assurance by Ofsted. The nominee and/or commanding officer are invited to comment only on the factual accuracy of the reports. Reports must be treated as confidential to the establishment or unit and must not be communicated outside the establishment and the immediate chain of command. These reports will be included in the Ofsted annual report to the Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans and should be treated as confidential and provisional until this report is published.
52. Following receipt of the written feedback, we will ask the nominee to complete a post-inspection evaluation, so that their views can contribute to the development of the inspection process.
53. The establishment will need to respond to any requests from TSLD, or single-Service headquarters, as part of the development of an action plan for addressing Ofsted's recommendations.
54. At the end of each inspection year, we will produce a detailed annual report to the Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans. This will summarise the findings of all inspections carried out in that year's cycle. It includes a summary judgement about the quality of care and welfare in training. This judgement uses Ofsted's grade descriptors. The main findings of each establishment's report will appear as appendices to the annual report, which is a published, publicly accessible document.⁸

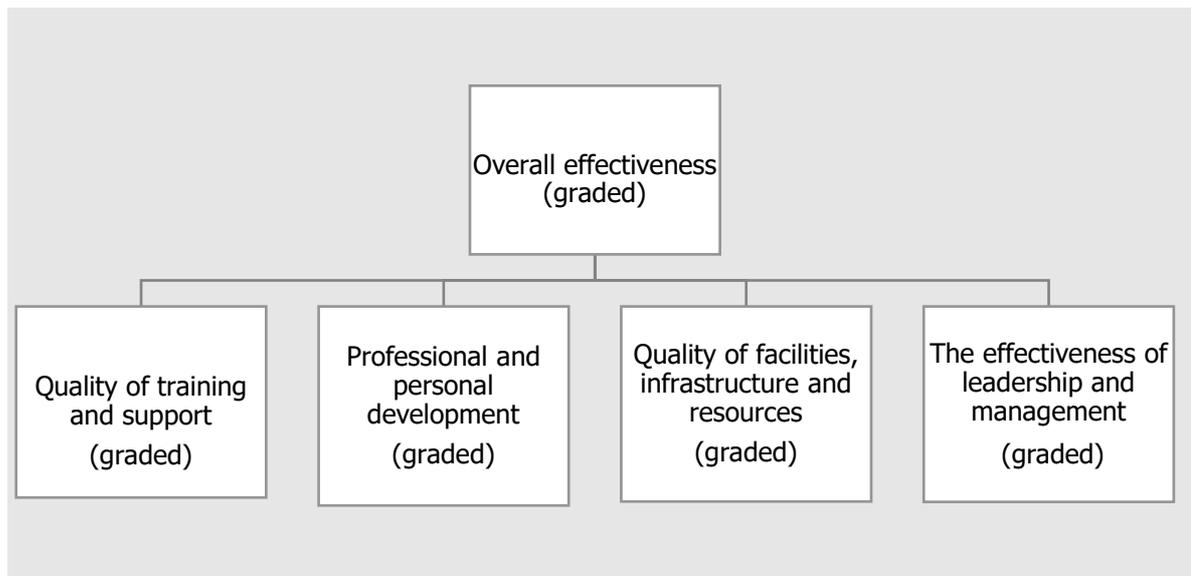
Complaints

55. If an establishment nominee or commanding officer wishes to complain about any aspect of the inspection, they should raise any immediate concerns directly with the lead inspector.
56. Matters that cannot be resolved during the inspection should be communicated through the establishment's chain of command and initially to the relevant Training Headquarters. The Training Headquarters will raise the matter with TSLD, which will liaise with Ofsted to seek a resolution.

⁸ 'Welfare and duty of care in Armed Forces initial training reports', Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-and-duty-of-care-in-armed-forces-initial-training.

Part 2. The framework: making judgements

57. The effectiveness of care and welfare in training is based on the four key judgements, summarised in the overall effectiveness judgement, as illustrated in the diagram below. In reaching these judgements, inspectors will evaluate a range of evidence.



Grade descriptors for overall effectiveness

Outstanding (1)

- All key judgements are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the key judgements may be good, if there is convincing evidence that the establishment is improving this area rapidly and securely towards it being outstanding.

58. To judge whether an establishment is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)

- All key judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the key judgement areas may require improvement, if there is convincing evidence that the establishment is improving it rapidly and securely towards it being good.

Requires improvement (3)

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, it is likely that, when the establishment requires improvement in any of the key judgements, the overall effectiveness will be requires improvement.

Inadequate (4)

- The judgement on overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate when any one of the key judgements is inadequate.

The quality of training and support

59. Inspectors will take a rounded view of the quality of training and support, and their impact on the welfare, care and morale of Trainees.
60. Inspectors recognise that there are some limited circumstances in which trainees may need to learn remotely. Where remote training remains in place, inspectors may observe remote training and review materials.
61. Inspectors will consider the decisions that the senior command of each establishment or unit makes about the knowledge, skills and behaviours trainees need, and the welfare and support they require, to become successful members of the Armed Forces.
62. They will also consider the way staff support recruits or trainees to develop and build their knowledge, apply that knowledge as military skills, and improve their physical fitness and well-being.
63. Finally, inspectors will consider the outcomes that trainees achieve because of their training and support.

Intent

64. In evaluating the intent that shapes the provision of training and support, inspectors will consider the impact of training and support on recruits' and trainees' well-being and progress.
65. Inspectors will consider:
 - the ways that commanders have selected and developed a course structure and pipeline that develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that trainees need to prepare them for their next stage
 - the structure, balance and coordination of the training programme, including recruits' and trainees' opportunities for study, revision, physical training and leisure

- the extent to which commanders and trainers have planned and sequenced courses so that new knowledge and skills build on previous teaching and learning, and ensure that trainees develop the new knowledge and skills they need in each phase of training
- the extent to which planning of training and welfare considers the needs of the field units to which Trainees will move
- the extent to which commanders have high expectations for the care and support of trainees from all staff
- the extent to which commanders consider the importance of welfare and the support needed by trainees throughout their training and ensure that these are reflected in the design of the training programme
- the extent to which commanders and staff have a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of recruits' and trainees' needs and potential problems and the assessment and monitoring of trainees judged to be at risk are thorough and detailed
- the extent and effectiveness with which commanders and staff communicate with the parents and/or carers of trainees under the age of 18 when they have concerns about their welfare.

Implementation

66. In evaluating how effectively training and support are implemented, inspectors will focus on how the course is run and managed, and how trainees experience it.
67. Inspectors will determine whether:
- trainers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach and, if they do not, whether commanders support them to fill knowledge gaps so that trainees are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching
 - trainers enable trainees to understand key concepts, presenting information clearly and promoting constructive discussion to aid understanding
 - trainers check trainees' understanding effectively, identifying and correcting misunderstandings or errors
 - trainers ensure that trainees embed key concepts in their long-term memory and apply them fluently and consistently, including in pressured and stressful situations
 - commanders and trainers design and run courses in a way that allows trainees to consolidate and transfer key knowledge to long-term memory, and build on what they know and can do so that they make good progress towards defined end points
 - trainers use assessment to help trainees embed and use knowledge fluently, develop their understanding, and gain, extend and improve their skills

- staff closely monitor trainees who are judged to be at risk and provide a rapid and strong response to any indication that may suggest a recruit or trainee is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm
 - trainers, welfare and support staff work closely together to integrate the most appropriate and timely support for trainees and recruits during their training courses
 - staff are aware of and meet the diverse needs of trainees, including in their health and well-being, and their physical, emotional and developmental needs
 - selection and continuing development activities for trainers ensure that training, coaching and mentoring inspire and challenge trainees
 - support programmes for those in need of additional help with military skills, course work, physical fitness or rehabilitation from injury provide effective help and solutions to problems
 - staff support Trainees to use productively any time not spent in training.
68. To triangulate evidence effectively, inspectors will ensure that they gather a variety of types of evidence in relation to the same sample of trainees. They will also ensure that the samples of trainees they choose are sufficient to allow them to reach a valid and sufficiently reliable judgement on the quality of training and support.

Impact

69. When inspectors evaluate the impact of the training and support, they will focus on the skills trainees have gained and can apply, and the impact of support on their well-being.
70. Inspection will determine whether:
- the establishment ensures that all trainees, including those with additional educational needs, gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in training and military life
 - coaching and support arrangements are supportive, accessible and coherent
 - at each stage of recruits' and trainees' training, they are prepared well for their next steps
 - trainees who require back-classing receive effective coaching/mentoring to help them pass their course at the next attempt
 - all trainees achieve and make progress relative to their starting points and learning goals, including, where appropriate, in English and mathematics
 - achievement gaps are narrowing between different groups of trainees.

Sources of evidence specific to the impact of training and support

71. Inspectors will gather evidence of the impact of training and support from the following sources:

- evaluation of recruits' and trainees' progress in relation to their starting points, based on their rate of learning, acquisition of knowledge, mastery of skills and behaviours and whether they have achieved their individual, challenging targets
 - first-hand evidence of the progress trainees are making, drawn from evidence gathered during interviews, observations and document reviews
 - evaluation and analysis of withdrawal rates, types and rates of injuries, the extent of back-classing, and overall and first-time pass rates in the context of each phase of training
 - analysis of the achievement of different groups of trainees and consideration of trends over time.
72. Inspectors will not grade intent, implementation and impact separately. Instead, they will reach a single graded judgement for the quality of training and support, drawing on all the evidence they have gathered, using their professional judgement.

Grade descriptors for the quality of training and support

Outstanding

- The establishment meets **all** the criteria for good training and support securely and consistently.
- The quality of training and support is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- Commanders provide substantial evidence of highly effective or innovative practice that makes a significant contribution to ensuring high-quality care and welfare for trainees.
- The integration of welfare and support arrangements with training courses and the training pipeline leads to exceptional care and welfare for trainees.
- Supervision and oversight by relevant staff at all levels are highly effective. The assessment and monitoring of trainees judged to be at risk are particularly thorough and detailed.
- Overall and first-time pass rates have been very high over a prolonged period.
- trainees who require back-classing receive exceptionally effective coaching and/or mentoring, and the vast majority pass their course at the next attempt.
- Almost all trainees make rapid progress and are very well prepared for their next steps.
- The quality and timeliness of care, advice and guidance lead to very high levels of personal and professional development.

73. To judge whether the quality of training and support is good, requires improvement or inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the weight of evidence and the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good

- Almost all elements of training combine well to support recruits' and trainees' progress. Training is structured and sequenced effectively so that it develops recruits' and trainees' knowledge, skill and understanding well.
- Trainers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They teach key concepts and information clearly to help trainees understand and remember their learning. A high proportion of trainees pass their courses
- Staff in the welfare chain have a good understanding and knowledge of recruits' and trainees' needs and potential problems.
- Staff ensure that trainees receive appropriate and timely support to develop their academic and professional skills and overcome any personal barriers to achievement.
- The quality and timeliness of care, advice and guidance, and any other support provided for trainees in and outside the chain of command, safeguard recruits' and trainees' welfare and promote personal and professional development.
- The assessment and monitoring of trainees who are judged to be at any form of risk are thorough.
- Staff provide a strong response to any indicators that may suggest a recruit or trainee is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.
- Supervision and oversight by relevant staff at all levels are proven to be effective.
- trainees are informed appropriately about the action staff are taking to protect them and ensure their welfare.
- Parents and/or carers of trainees under the age of 18 are aware of concerns and their consent is sought unless doing so would increase the risk of or result in actual harm to a recruit or trainee.

Requires improvement

- The quality of training and support is not yet good.

Inadequate

The judgement is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following apply.

- Training has little or no structure or coherence. It has not been sequenced appropriately. Consequently, recruits and/or trainees do not build their knowledge, skills or understanding.
- Assessment does not help trainees develop their understanding, and gain, extend and improve their skills.
- Resources, including staffing, are insufficient to provide consistent levels of welfare and duty of care cover and support.
- The systems for the supervision and monitoring of welfare and duty of care are weak and ineffective.
- Connections between training and welfare are indistinct or ineffective.
- The systems in place are not used effectively to safeguard trainees.

Personal and professional development

74. This judgement evaluates the effectiveness of arrangements to provide for recruits' and trainees' personal and professional development. The judgement focuses on the most significant dimensions of recruits' and trainees' personal and professional development.
75. When forming judgements about personal and professional development, inspectors will seek to understand what took place in recent years, what the establishment has in place currently and what future plans are. .
76. Inspectors will normally meet groups of Trainees, in particular single-sex groups and those who are under 18.
77. Inspectors will evaluate the ways that staff:
 - develop responsible, respectful and active members of the Armed Forces who can play their part and know how to become involved in military and public life
 - develop and deepen recruits' and trainees' understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance
 - promote equality of opportunity so that all trainees can thrive together and understand that difference is a positive, not a negative, and that individual characteristics make people unique
 - promote an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all trainees, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or relationship status

- develop trainees’ character in line with military standards and values to inform their motivation and guide their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate well with others
- foster in trainees the qualities they need to flourish in the Armed Forces
- develop recruits’ and trainees’ confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy
- develop recruits’ and trainees’ understanding of how to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle including through a healthy diet
- ensure that trainees have been matched to the right Service, trade/branch or level, enjoy their courses and complete training in the time frames expected
- develop appropriate military skills and values which will help trainees become valued members of their chosen Service
- provide effective contact and communication with relevant branches and/or trades to help trainees to succeed in their chosen career
- support trainees to prepare for the next phase of training or employment
- where relevant, develop trainees’ English and mathematics skills
- meet trainees’ emotional needs associated with being away from their homes and families and ensure that they can maintain contact with families/carers and friendship groups
- ensure that, trainees and staff understand and can use the formal complaints system, particularly for allegations of bullying or harassment
- ensure that trainees feel safe and are safe from harm, abuse and unfair treatment, including those relating to sexual harassment and violence and online sexual abuse.

Grade descriptors for personal and professional development

Outstanding

- The establishment meets **all** the criteria for good personal and professional development securely and consistently.
- Personal and professional development are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- The establishment consistently and extensively promotes the personal and professional development of trainees.
- The establishment goes beyond the expected, so that trainees have access to a wide, rich set of experiences that teach them why it is important to contribute actively to society and the Armed Forces.
- Opportunities for trainees to develop their skills, talents and interests are of exceptional quality.

- trainees are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps in training or Service.

78. To judge whether personal and professional development are good, require improvement or are inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the weight of evidence and the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good

- Trainees' attitudes to their training are positive. They improve their attitudes over time and are supported well to learn and live away from home. They understand their rights and responsibilities as members of the Armed Forces and know how to conduct themselves as such. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively, work well with others, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.
- Relationships among trainees and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture where the principles of equality and diversity are promoted.
- Trainees feel safe and rarely experience bullying, harassment or discrimination. If incidents occur, Trainees feel safe and confident to report them, knowing staff will take swift and appropriate action.
- Trainees understand how to improve and develop their health, physical and mental fitness and well-being because of the support of staff
- Training extends beyond the academic/technical/vocational and provides for recruits' and trainees' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents.
- Training, and the establishment's wider work, supports trainees to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and helps them know how to maintain a diet appropriate to their training needs and keep physically and mentally healthy. The establishment prepares trainees for future success by:
 - developing recruits' and trainees' English and mathematics skills
 - providing information about possible next steps, including provision of high-quality, up-to-date and relevant careers guidance in relevant trades and branches and opportunities for encounters with field units.
- Most trainees are placed in their chosen trade, Service or branch at a level that matches their ability. Those who wish to transfer between branches are well informed about how to do so.
- The establishment prepares trainees for life in modern Britain and the Armed Forces by:
 - teaching them how to protect themselves from radicalisation and extremist views

- helping to equip them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society
- developing their understanding of British values
- developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity
- celebrating what we have in common
- promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.

Requires improvement

- Personal and professional development are not yet good.

Inadequate

Personal and professional development are likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies.

- Recruits' and trainees' lack of engagement, motivation or enthusiasm inhibits their progress and development. Too many wish to leave the branch or trade they are joining.
- A significant minority of trainees show a lack of respect and self-discipline. trainees ignore or reject requests to moderate their conduct and are not ready to move on to their next stage.
- Incidents of bullying, harassment or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent.
- Trainees have little confidence in the establishment's ability to deal with bullying, harassment or discrimination successfully.
- Trainees are not safe, or do not feel safe.
- A significant minority of trainees do not understand how to live healthy, positive lives and do not understand why they should.
- Commanders, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity.
- Commanders do not protect trainees from radicalisation and extremist views when trainees are vulnerable to these. Policy and practice are poor, which means trainees are at risk.

The quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources

79. Inspectors will evaluate the quality and availability of facilities, infrastructure and resources and their impact on the welfare, development and morale of trainees.
80. This judgement focuses on the impact of the facilities and infrastructure used by trainees on their training experience. Inspectors will look at the condition and accessibility of facilities, infrastructure and resources. They will also consider the impact of maintenance and repair, how swiftly defects are rectified, and whether the quality of the facilities, infrastructure and resources has improved or deteriorated since previous inspections.
81. Inspectors will consider the resources available to keep trainees fit and healthy. They will explore the quality and quantity of food provided to trainees, including the availability of healthy menu options. Inspectors will evaluate the availability and quality of sports, fitness and leisure facilities. They will also evaluate trainees' access to medical and dental resources.
82. The evaluation will consider whether:
 - trainees' accommodation is properly maintained, safe, dry, well heated and ventilated
 - trainees have enough space to sleep and relax
 - trainees can clean, dry and store their military and personal clothing and equipment appropriately
 - female and male accommodation is separated appropriately
 - bathroom and toilet facilities are hygienic and trainees have sufficient hot water to clean themselves
 - sufficient laundry facilities are provided for the number of trainees using them and are properly maintained
 - trainees have access to sufficient and hygienic storage facilities in kitchen areas
 - classrooms and training spaces, including sports facilities, are fully functioning and well maintained, and equipment used for training works properly
 - correctly fitting uniforms and specialist military equipment are provided for trainees when they need it
 - trainees have good access to physical training and leisure facilities in and out of working hours
 - trainees have access to a range of food that ensures they can consume the number of calories they need
 - trainees can easily access food outlets out of working hours

- trainees can access high-quality medical and dental resources in and out of working hours
- trainees can access pastoral and spiritual support in and out of working hours
- the maintenance of infrastructure is drawing personnel and management time away from other key areas of training and welfare.

Grade descriptors for the quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources

Outstanding

- The establishment meets **all** the criteria for good quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources securely and consistently.
- Trainees benefit from exceptional facilities, infrastructure and resources which provide them with a very high-quality training experience.

83. To judge whether the quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources is good, requires improvement or inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the weight of evidence and the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good

- Trainees benefit from secure, safe and well maintained accommodation.
- Trainees can store their personal belongings securely.
- Trainees have enough space to clean, dry and store military kit and equipment.
- Trainees can be warm and comfortable in their accommodation blocks. They have access to enough hot water to shower or bathe when they need to.
- Accommodation facilities, including bathrooms and toilets, are well maintained and hygienic.
- Male and female trainees have enough privacy without being excluded from social activities with their peers.
- Trainees are issued with properly fitting military uniform and equipment that supports or enhances their training experience.
- Trainees use high-quality training resources that support their learning experiences. Classrooms, workshops, ranges and other facilities used for training are well maintained. Equipment used by recruits, trainees and permanent staff works as it should.
- Trainees have access to well-equipped sports and leisure facilities, which enable them to develop their physical, emotional and mental well-being with their peers. A wide choice of sports and leisure options are available.

- Trainees can access these in and out of working hours and are supervised accordingly.
- Trainees are provided with a reasonable range of food outlets outside of working hours.
- Trainees have access to high-quality medical and dental care when they need it. They know how to access these facilities and can do so in and out of working hours. These facilities are resourced appropriately and put recruits' and trainees' needs as a high priority.
- Trainees have access to pastoral and spiritual support in and out of working hours.

Requires improvement

- The quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources is not yet good.

Inadequate

The quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources is likely to be judged inadequate if any one of the following applies.

- Accommodation and infrastructure are poor quality or so badly maintained that trainees' morale and well-being suffer.
- Trainees do not feel safe or comfortable in their accommodation or training environment.
- Trainees' accommodation or training facilities have deteriorated since the previous inspection, are condemned or are out of use for health and safety reasons.
- Trainees are wearing or using ill-fitting or poorly maintained clothing and equipment.
- Trainees are unable to maintain their clothing and equipment appropriately because of a lack of facilities.
- Trainees do not have access to a range of sport or leisure facilities, or their use of these is unreasonably restricted.
- Trainees cannot access appropriate medical, dental or pastoral care when they need it, or it is difficult for them to do so.
- Leisure and/or dining facilities are poor.
- The food provided is poor.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

84. This section outlines the main criteria for judging the effectiveness of leadership and management to ensure that the arrangements for care and welfare in training meet recruits' and trainees' needs.
85. Inspectors will focus on whether appropriate leadership practices, including self-assessment and quality improvement action planning, lead to improving standards or to maintaining exceptionally high standards.
86. Inspectors will consider how establishments handle concerns about harmful sexual behaviour towards or between trainees (including sexual harassment and violence and online sexual abuse). They will consider the steps taken by commanders to ensure that personnel understand that all harmful sexual behaviour is unacceptable.
87. In making judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:
- commanders demonstrate an ambitious vision for the training, care and welfare of trainees
 - the ethos and culture of the unit or establishment are based on high expectations for what trainees can achieve
 - staff in and outside the chain of command promote high standards for care and welfare in training
 - care and welfare in training are improved through rigorous performance management and appropriate professional development for staff
 - the quality of care and welfare in training is evaluated through thorough self-assessment, taking account of users' views
 - commanders use the findings from self-assessment to promote and develop capacity for sustainable improvement
 - commanders promote equality and diversity, deal with bullying and discrimination, and narrow any achievement gaps
 - staff always ensure the safeguarding of trainees.
88. In gathering evidence, inspectors will consider all or some of the following:
- the extent to which care and welfare are demonstrable priorities for senior commanders of the establishment and how effectively actions are taken to identify and respond to trainees' welfare concerns
 - whether links to training headquarters support care and welfare, and benefit trainees
 - the culture promoted by commanders and their effectiveness at implementing policies to support care and welfare

- the management of resources and infrastructure, including staff, accommodation, facilities and learning technologies, to support trainees
- the findings of internal and external reviews and the impact of any actions taken
- how commanders analyse and use data to monitor the effectiveness of care and welfare and act to eliminate underperformance
- how well self-assessment reflects the views of a wide range of users, including staff and trainees
- how well self-assessment contributes to continuity of process after command handover(s)
- whether quality/continuous improvement action plans arising from self-assessment are well structured and have clear, ambitious and realistic targets that are implemented and monitored effectively
- the formal arrangements for promoting equality and diversity in the establishment
- the recording and management of informal and formal complaints, including sexual abuse
- trainees' and the staff's awareness of what constitutes bullying, harassment and abuse, and how they should act to prevent these
- the effectiveness and impact of trainee 'at-risk' monitoring arrangements
- records of bullying and harassment, and the outcomes of interventions
- analysis and use of surveys of trainees
- the timely completion of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all relevant staff and appropriate arrangements for trainees aged under 18 years
- the effectiveness of commanders' actions in the event of any safeguarding incidents or disclosures
- whether the expectations of the 'Prevent' duty are met.

Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The establishment meets **all** the criteria for good leadership and management securely and consistently.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- There is substantial evidence of highly effective or innovative practice that makes a significant contribution to ensuring the welfare of and duty of care for trainees.
- Self-assessment and continuous improvement form a set of coherent, coordinated quality improvement arrangements that improve the quality of welfare and duty of care year-on-year.
- Senior staff have dealt with all the areas for improvement identified at previous inspections.
- The promotion and maintenance of equality and diversity and the management of anti-bullying and anti-discrimination measures are exemplary.
- There are no significant achievement gaps between identifiable groups of trainees.

89. To judge whether the effectiveness of leadership and management is good, requires improvement or inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the weight of evidence and the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good

- Some aspects of improvement may still be in progress, but there is strong evidence that recruits' and trainees' care and welfare have improved.
- Links with training headquarters and/or other organisations actively promote the skills development and well-being of trainees.
- Coordination and handover of command at all levels is smooth and entails little disruption to key training, welfare and support processes and systems.
- Resources are of sufficient quality to meet trainees' needs, and are well managed.
- The establishment's staff are clear about their role in securing improvements to care, welfare, training, resources and infrastructure.
- If trainees express concerns about their treatment, safety or welfare, investigation is rapid and impartial.
- Self-assessment is largely accurate and identifies key areas for improvement relating to trainees' care and welfare.
- The views of staff and trainees are considered to secure improvements to training, care and welfare.
- Establishment staff know which trainees may be vulnerable or at risk, and implement plans to support them effectively
- Commanders have high expectations and inspire all trainees to achieve high standards.

- All staff who require it are DBS-checked. Staff have received appropriate training.
- The support provided for trainees ensures that there are few incidents of bullying or other unacceptable behaviours. When incidents have occurred, they have been dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Requires improvement

- The effectiveness of commanders' actions to secure and improve care and welfare is not yet good.

Inadequate

The judgement is likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.

- Commanders have not dealt with poor-quality training.
- Senior staff have poor oversight of trainees' personal and professional problems.
- The establishment has made insufficient progress or slipped back in one or more key areas of care and welfare since previous inspections.
- There is no rigour in the gathering and evaluation of evidence for self-assessment or improvement action-planning.
- Safeguarding practice, including DBS-checking for those staff who require it, is poor and the monitoring of trainees who are at risk is weak.
- The arrangements for monitoring trainees aged under 18 are insufficiently rigorous.
- There is little promotion of equality and/or diversity and little evidence of bullying and discrimination being appropriately managed.
- Commanders are not protecting trainees from radicalisation and extremist views. Policy and practice are poor, which means that trainees are at risk.

Additional contributory factors to inadequacy may include the following.

- The establishment's record in setting and meeting targets for improvement is consistently poor over time.
- Handover of command is not well coordinated; systems and processes are disrupted.
- Self-assessment does not identify the establishment's strengths and areas for improvement; staff have little or no idea how to identify what needs to be done to secure improvement.
- Data is not used well to bring about improvements or inform self-assessment.

- Commanders do not deal effectively with formal and informal complaints.
- Links with training headquarters are weak, providing little practical support or resources for improving trainees' care and welfare.

Annex A: MoD inspections of welfare and duty of care pre-inspection briefing

Section 1 is completed by the lead inspector and Section 2 by the nominee.

Section 1

This pre-inspection briefing (PIB) identifies the main lines of enquiry (LoE) for the inspection. These are based on the lead inspector's summary analysis of the information available in advance of the inspection. These LoE are not exclusive.

Training establishment/unit:	
Dates of inspection:	
Lead inspector:	
Team inspector/s:	

Provision covered by this inspection

The inspector will provide a brief description of the scope/focus of the inspection, including which Armed Service, for example Army, Royal Navy or Royal Air Force, and which phase(s) are on site.

The establishment

The inspector will provide a brief description of the establishment and what it does.

Grades from previous reports post-September 2012:

	Date	Grade
Effectiveness of leadership and management		
Outcomes for trainees		
Quality of welfare and duty of care		

Grades from previous reports post September 2020

	Date	Grade
Overall effectiveness		
Quality of training and support		
Personal and professional development		
Quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources		
Effectiveness of leadership and management		

Recommendations from previous report:

(Where relevant, and only the most recent)

Lines of enquiry

Bulleted list of LoE.

These are likely to reference the previous recommendations and any key issues identified from the self-assessment report. They may include aspects discussed with the nominee during the planning call.

The LoEs do not have to be cross-referenced against all key judgement areas below.

Section 2 – to be completed by the nominee

Key and sub-judgement areas	Name of main contact(s)	Location during inspection	Day(s)/time(s) available
Quality of training and support			
Intent			
Commanders'/staff's/trainers' influence on and planning for the quality of training and support			
Implementation			
Course structure and sequencing			
The quality of instruction, training and assessment			
Instructor training and on-going development			
The quality and availability of welfare support			
Physical training arrangements			
Rehabilitation from injury			
Arrangements for trainees not in training or between courses			
Impact			
Overall and first-time pass rates, including differences between groups			
Re-classing, coaching and mentoring			

Progress and preparation for the next phase(s)			
Professional and personal development			
Military values and standards			
Trade, branch and military skills			
Personal and social skills			
Arrangements for trainees to contact family and friends and carry out research, including access to Wi-Fi			
Healthy living			
'Prevent' and safety			
Equality			
Diversity and inclusion			
Preparation for next phase			
Management and arrangements for early leavers			
Management of information between phases of training			
Quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources			
Accommodation			
Heating and water supply			
Food and messing arrangements			
Training and learning resources			
Gymnasium and sports facilities			
Welfare and leisure facilities			
Medical/dental facilities and resources			
Leadership and management			
Vision, ethos and expectations			
Risk management and supervisory care			
Facilities, infrastructure and resources management			
Staff performance, development and morale			
Trainee voice			
Self-evaluation and improvement planning			

Discipline recording systems and remedial training			
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