



Officer Cadet Survey

Annual Executive Summary 2024-2025



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IFF Research

Introduction

Introduction

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' 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 surveys are to:

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

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



Notes on reporting

This Executive Summary compares results for the OCS survey for this current year, 2024/25, against the previous survey year of 2023/24. While reference is made to data collected between survey years 2019/20 and 2022/23, any statistically significant differences are only relevant between 2023/24 and 2024/25. 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 statistically significant result means the difference between two figures is likely the result of a factor rather 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.

Note: In 2024/25 the Officer Cadet Survey was completed by 32 Royal Marine Officer Cadets. However, in 2023/24 only six Royal Marine Officers Cadets completed the survey, falling below the minimum reporting threshold of 30. Therefore, we are unable to provide comparisons between 2023/24 and 2024/25.



Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators - OCS

	Army	Royal Navy	Royal Marines*	RAF
Overall satisfaction with training experience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	84%	61%↑	97%	76%
Enough time to eat meals: Always/Often	75%	81%	63%	67%
Opportunity to talk privately with training staff: Very good/Good	88%	78%	94%	84%
Opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff: Very good/Good	75% ↓	61%	72%	55%
Satisfaction with support for general mental resilience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	76%	58%	88%	64%
Someone to go to outside of training hours: Yes	76%	73%	81%	67%
Opportunity to raise concerns with a person in authority: Yes	81%	75%	84%	80%
I was treated fairly: Always/Most of the time	88%	82%	94%	85%
Training was conducted without harassment: Always/Most of the time	94%	94%	97%	96%
My injury was properly dealt with: Strongly Agree/Agree	88%	89%	~	71%
Staff/instructors did all they could to help me succeed in training: Strongly Agree/Agree	83%	73%	84%	80%

↑↓ The arrows signify a statistically significant increase or decrease vs. 2023/24 findings

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~

* In 2024/25 the Officer Cadet Survey was completed by 32 Royal Marine Officer Cadets. However, in 2023/24 only six Royal Marine Officers Cadets completed the survey, falling below the minimum reporting threshold of 30. Therefore, we are unable to provide comparisons between the survey years.

Army

Army: Key Findings

A total of 447 Army Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2024/25, representing a response rate of 86%.

Key Findings

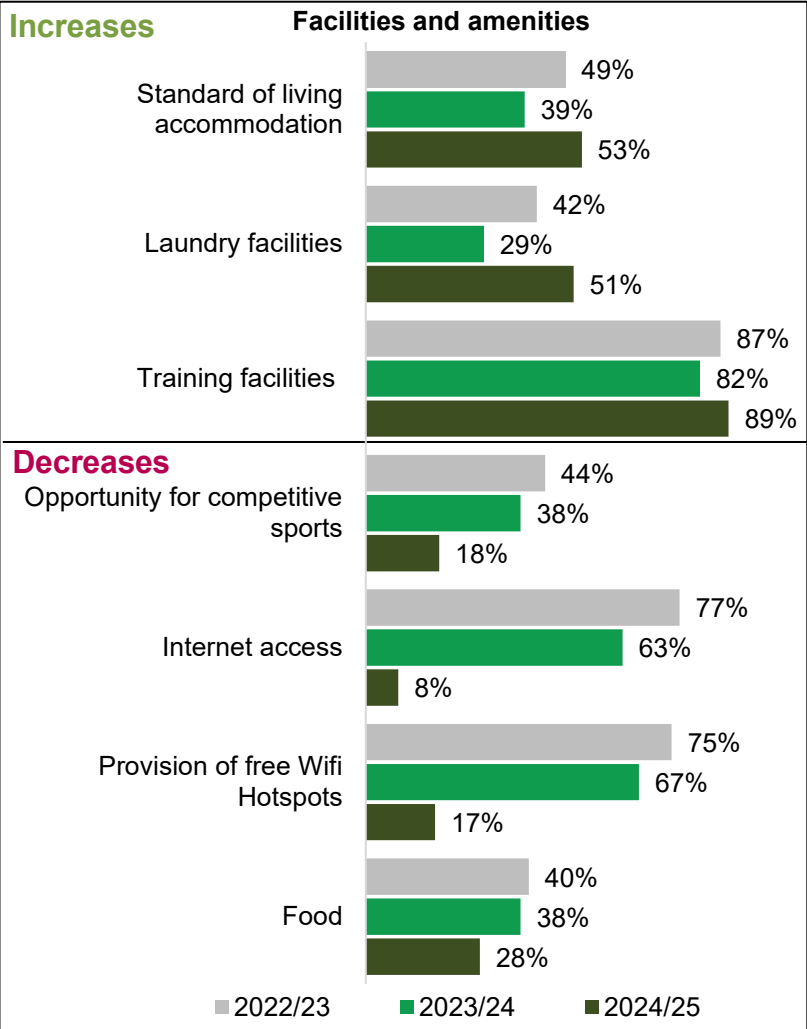
In 2024/25 there were three statistically significant increases and nine statistically significant decreases when compared to 2023/24.

Facilities and amenities

Performance for facilities and amenities was mixed, with three increases and four decreases recorded.

Standard of living accommodation increased to the highest level recorded in four years (39% to 53%), while laundry facilities (29% to 51%) and training facilities (82% to 89%) reached their highest level in six years.

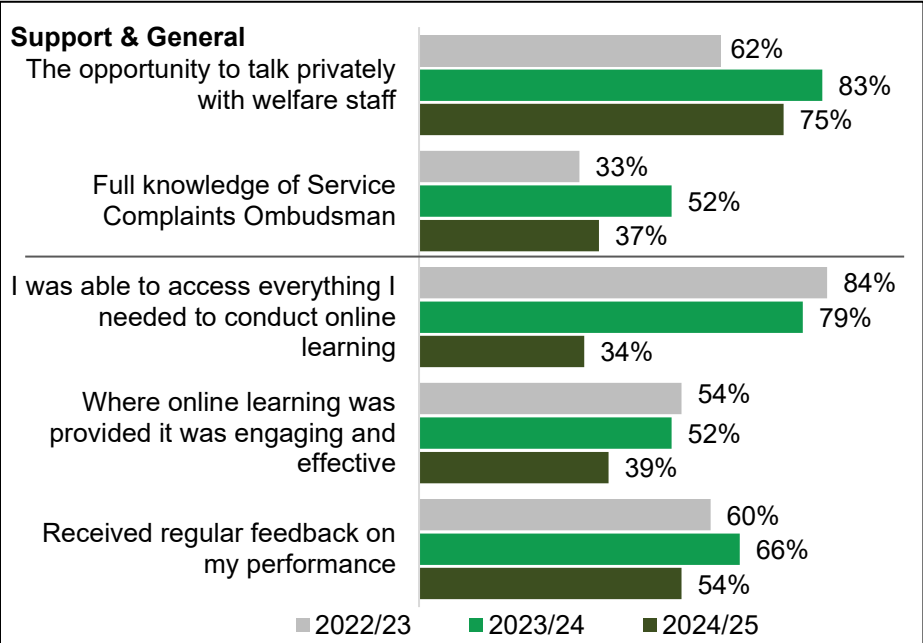
However, decreases were recorded in four areas; opportunity for competitive sports (38% to 18%), internet access (63% to 8%), provision of free WiFi Hotspots (67% to 17%) and food (38% to 28%).



Support & General

Two support measures declined; the opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff (83% to 75%) and full knowledge of Service Complaints Ombudsman (52% to 37%). Both decreased after an upward trend in the previous three years.

Three general measures also decreased; the ability to access everything needed to conduct online learning (79% to 34%), online learning was engaging and effective (52% to 39%) and receiving regular feedback on performance (66% to 54%).



Army: Areas of statistically significant increase

Increases

- There have been increases for three measures between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- Under facilities and amenities, improvements were recorded following decreases last year for standard of living accommodation (39% to 53%), laundry facilities (29% to 51%), and training facilities (82% to 89%).

INCREASES	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Facilities and amenities						
Standard of living accommodation: Very good/Good	63%	56%	37%	49%	39%	53%
Laundry facilities: Very good/Good	30%	31%	43%	42%	29%	51%
Training facilities: Very good/Good	..	..	84%	87%	82%	89%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
Where data is not available, no respondents have answered a question or a sufficient base size was not achieved, this is indicated with ..

Army: Areas of statistically significant decrease

Decreases

- There have been nine decreases between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- There were four decreases recorded for facilities and amenities. The opportunity for competitive sport decreased by 20 percentage points from 38% to 18%.
- Internet access and provision of free WiFi Hotspots fell to the lowest levels recorded in six years, dropping by 55 and 50 percentage points, respectively.
- Food followed a downward trend (38% to 28%), to reach the lowest level since 2021/22.
- Two support measures have decreased; the opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff (83% to 75%) and full knowledge of the Service Complaints Ombudsman (52% to 37%).
- Three general measures decreased, with the ability to access everything needed to conduct online learning (79% to 34%) and where online learning was provided it was engaging and effective (52% to 39%) dropping to their lowest levels recorded since they were first introduced in 2022/23.
- Receiving regular feedback on performance decreased after two years of improving (66% to 54%).

DECREASES	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Facilities and amenities						
Opportunity for competitive sport: Very good/Good	72%	39%	9%	44%	38%	18%
Internet access: Very good/Good	84%	61%	54%	77%	63%	8%
Provision of free WiFi Hotspots: Very good/Good	89%	70%	65%	75%	67%	17%
Food: Very good/Good	53%	21%	51%	40%	38%	28%
Support						
Talk privately with welfare staff: Very good/Good	..	..	43%	62%	83%	75%
Full knowledge of Service Complaints Ombudsman: Yes	38%	14%	31%	33%	52%	37%
General						
I was able to access everything I needed to conduct online learning: Strongly agree/Agree	..	..	..	84%	79%	34%
Where online learning was provided it was engaging and effective: Strongly agree/Agree	..	..	..	54%	52%	39%
Received regular feedback on my performance: Strongly agree/Agree	77%	60%	50%	60%	66%	54%

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Royal Navy

Royal Navy: Key Findings

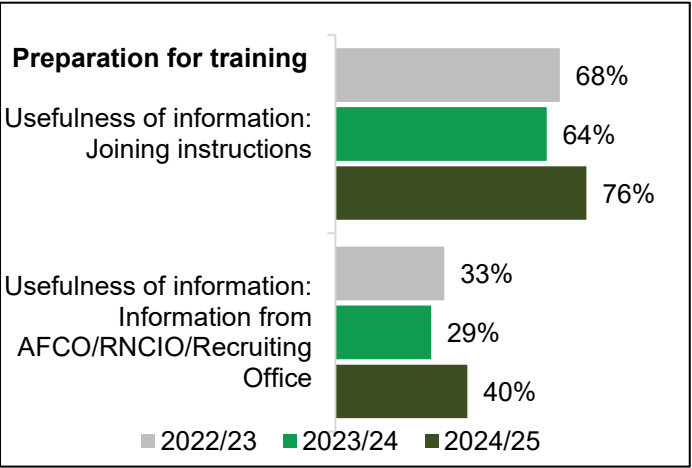
A total of 339 Royal Navy Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2024/25, representing a response rate of 73%.

Key Findings

Compared to 2023/24, there were statistically significant increases for nine measures and a statistically significant decrease for one measure in 2024/25.

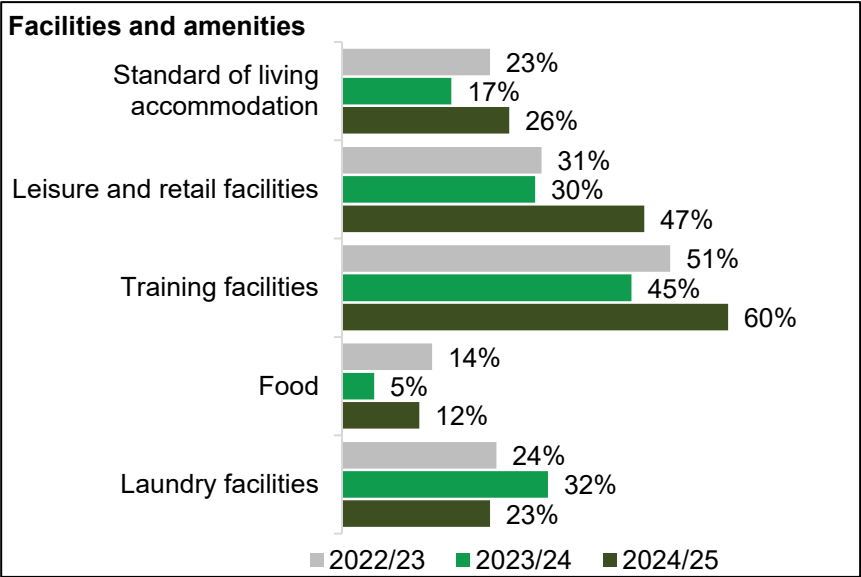
Preparation for training

There were two increases across preparation for training measures, including the usefulness of information from joining instructions (64% to 76%) and for usefulness of information from an AFCO/RNCIO/Recruiting office (29% to 40%).



Facilities and amenities

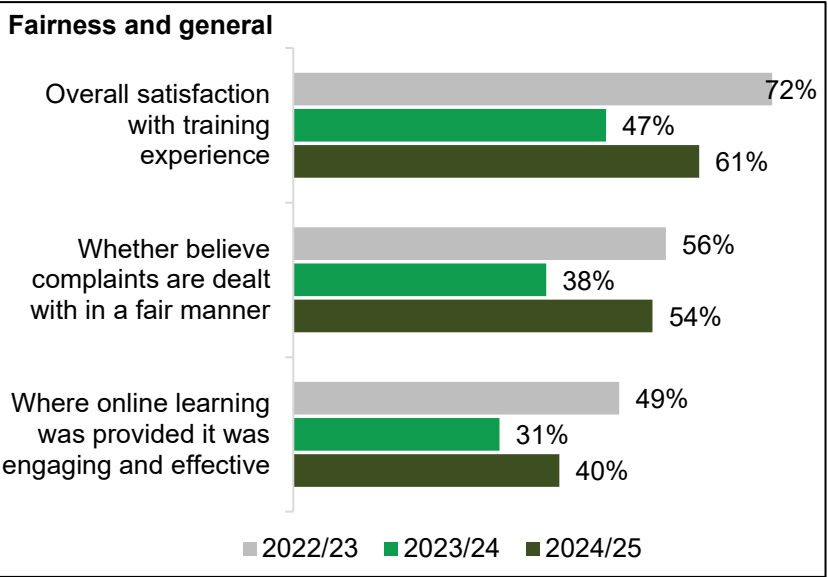
Across facilities and amenities there were four increases and one decrease. Leisure and facilities rose 17 percentage points to a six-year high (30% to 47%). Food rose seven percentage points to 12% and standard of living accommodation rose nine percentage points to 26%. Satisfaction with training facilities also increased 15 percentage points to 60%. In contrast, laundry facilities saw a nine percentage point decrease (32% to 23%).



Fairness and general

There was one increase across fairness measures concerning whether Cadets believe complaints are dealt with in a fair manner (38% in 2023/24 up to 54% in 2024/25).

There were two increases across general measures. Overall satisfaction increased (47% in 2023/24 up to 61% in 2024/25). There was also an increase for online learning being engaging and effective where provided (31% in 2023/24 up to 40% in 2024/25).



Royal Navy: Areas of statistically significant increase

Increases

- There were nine increases between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- There were two increases across preparation for training measures, including the usefulness of information from joining instructions (64% to 76%) and for usefulness of information from an AFCO/RNCIO/Recruiting office (29% to 40%).
- Across facilities and amenities there were four increases. Leisure and retail facilities rose 17 percentage points to a six-year high (30% to 47%). Food rose seven percentage points to 12% and standard of living accommodation rose nine percentage points to 26%, although satisfaction levels remained low for both measures. Training facilities also rose 15 percentage points to 60%.
- There was one increase across fairness measures around whether complaints are dealt with in a fair manner (38% to 54%).
- There were two increases across general measures. Overall satisfaction rose compared to 2023/24 (47% to 61%), although it is still lower than 2022/23. There was also a increase for where online learning was provided it was engaging and effective (31% to 40%).

Increases	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Preparation for training						
Usefulness of information: Joining instructions: Very useful/Useful	75%	71%	79%	68%	64%	76%
Usefulness of information: Information from AFCO/RNCIO/Recruiting Office: Very useful/Useful	58%	51%	50%	33%	29%	40%
Facilities and amenities						
Standard of living accommodation: Very good/Good	24%	39%	31%	23%	17%	26%
Leisure and retail facilities: Very good/Good	32%	27%	31%	31%	30%	47%
Training facilities: Very good/Good	..	..	69%	51%	45%	60%
Food: Very good/Good	18%	25%	8%	14%	5%	12%
Fairness						
Whether believe complaints are dealt with in a fair manner: Yes	45%	31%	51%	56%	38%	54%
General						
Overall satisfaction with training experience: Very satisfied/Satisfied	69%	63%	72%	72%	47%	61%
Where online learning was provided it was engaging and effective: Strongly agree/Agree	..	..	..	49%	31%	40%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
Where data is not available, no respondents have answered a question or a sufficient base size was not achieved, this is indicated with ..

Royal Navy: Areas of statistically significant decrease

Decreases

- There was a decrease for one measure between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- Laundry facilities saw a nine percentage point decrease (32% to 23%), returning to levels seen in 2022/23 and before.

DECREASES	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Facilities and amenities						
Laundry facilities: Very good/Good	24%	22%	21%	24%	32%	23%

RAF

RAF: Key Findings

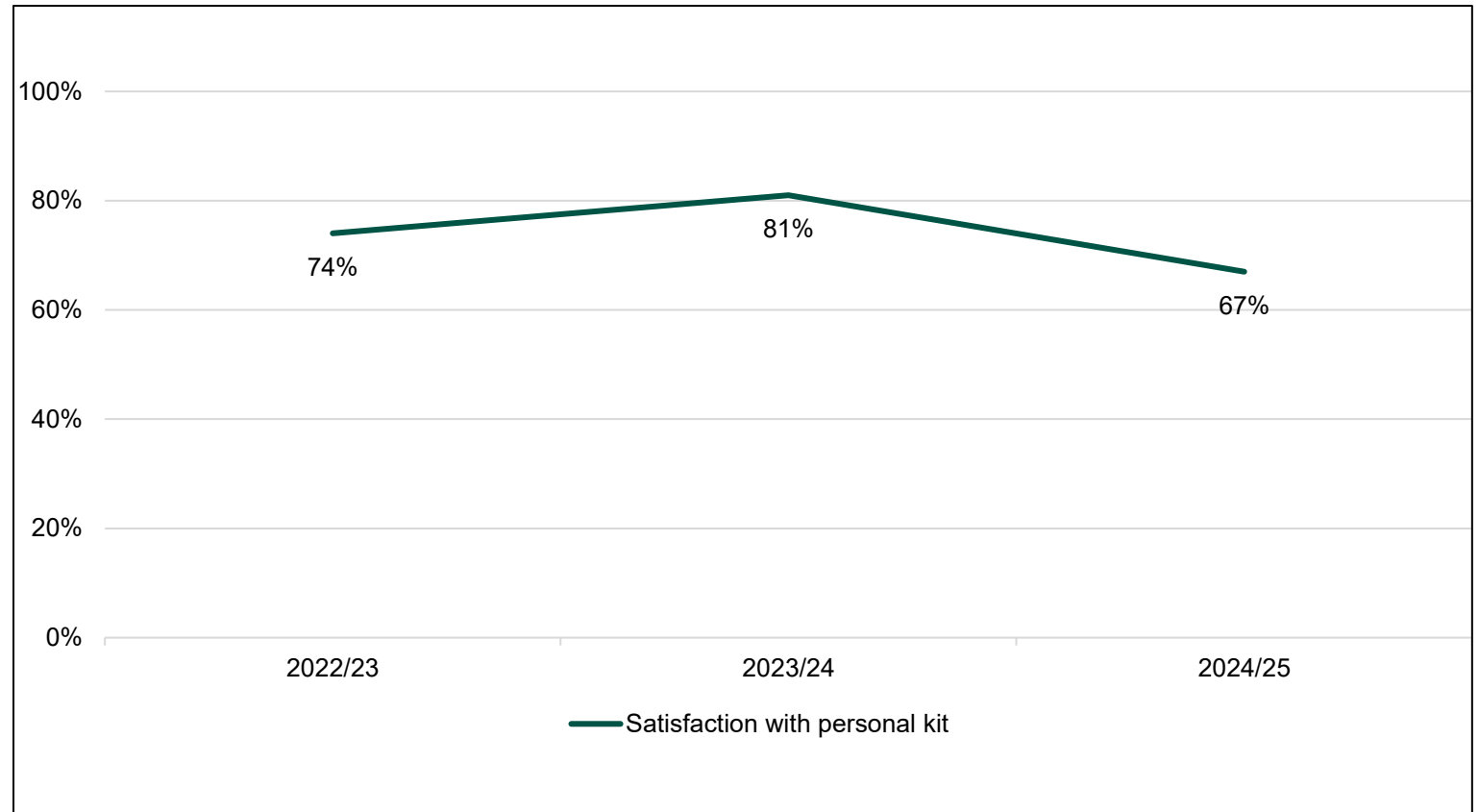
A total of 171 RAF Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2023/24, representing a response rate of 46%.

Key Findings

There were no statistically significant increases between 2023/24 and 2024/25. There was a statistically significant decrease for one measure.

Facilities and amenities

Following an increase last year, satisfaction with personal kit (e.g. boots, uniform) fell by 14 percentage points (81% to 67%), dropping to the lowest level recorded in six years.



RAF: Areas of statistically significant decrease

Decreases

- There was a decrease for one measure between 2023/24 and 2024/25 relating to facilities and amenities.
- Following improvement last year, satisfaction with personal kit (e.g. boots, uniform) fell from 81% to 67%, dropping to the lowest point in six years.

DECREASES	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Facilities and amenities						
Personal kit (e.g. boots, uniform): Very good/Good	77%	83%	80%	74%	81%	67%

Methodology

Survey methodology

Survey completion

All Officer Cadets who have completed at least two weeks training should be given the opportunity to 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 Officer Cadets who completed their training in survey year 2024/25 (1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025) but also includes historical data from Recruits who completed the survey between survey years 2019/20 and 2023/24.

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 Officer 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.

Cognitive interviews

IFF Research periodically conduct cognitive interview sessions with Trainees to review the survey content. The purpose of these sessions is to:

- Ensure and test Trainees' understanding of the questions;
- Ensure and test that the questions feel relevant and Trainees are able to provide a response;
- Test the length of the survey to ensure that Officer Cadets feel comfortable with the time required to complete the survey;
- Explore if there were any areas missing from the questionnaire that Trainees would like to provide feedback on.

Trainees complete the online survey themselves raising thoughts and queries as they go through each question, as well as being asked questions on specific areas to gauge understanding. The most recent cognitive interviews took place between 22nd January 2024 - 5th February 2024.

Response rates

Over a twelve-month fieldwork period between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, 989 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 Service.

	Total Responses (23/24)	Response Rate (23/24)	Total Responses (24/25)	Response Rate (24/25)
Army	408	60%	447	86%
Royal Navy	320	52%	339	73%
Royal Marines*	6*	82%	32	60%
RAF	230	94%	171	46%
Total	964	73%	989	70%

**Note: In 2024/25 the Officer Cadet Survey was completed by 32 Royal Marine Officer Cadets. However, in 2023/24 only six Royal Marine Officers Cadets completed the survey, falling below the minimum reporting threshold of 30. Therefore, we are unable to provide comparisons between the survey years.*

PLEASE NOTE: the response rates provided here are approximations based on available figures.

Statistical reliability and tests

We are confident in the statistical reliability of the survey results based on both the design and execution of the study. The survey has been tested for relevance and understanding. The survey is administered consistently using an online self completion methodology. The sample size achieved was sufficiently large for each Service* to provide reliable feedback on the training experience.

Statistical tests were carried out over time to identify any significant changes compared to the previous year's results at a Service level. This includes the following:

- Army 2024/25 vs Army 2023/24
- Royal Navy 2024/25 vs Royal Navy 2023/24
- RAF 2024/25 vs RAF 2023/24

A statistically significant difference means that there is enough evidence that the change observed is unlikely to be due to chance variation (less than a 1% probability that the difference is the result of chance alone). Full details of the testing applied is included in the Background Quality Report.

As a sample of the overall 'population' has completed the survey, we cannot be certain that the figures obtained match those that would have been found if the entire population had been surveyed (i.e. the 'true' values).

For any percentage given, however, we can estimate 'confidence intervals' within which the 'true' values are likely to fall. For example; if 90% of our respondents' base of 447 Army Officer Cadets strongly agreed/agreed that the training was what they expected, we can be 99% confident that the 'true' value would be between 88.6% or 91.4%, i.e. a margin of 1.4% on each side.

Similar margins for other percentages and sub-groups of the respondents are given in the tables 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.

Please note, the 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 the confidence intervals for each Service at different performance levels. We can be 99% confident that the ‘true’ values fall within the ranges shown in the table below.

Confidence intervals by performance levels

Size of respondent base on which survey results are based	10% or 90% ±	20% or 80% ±	30% or 70% ±	40% or 60% ±	50% ±
Army (447)	1.4	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.3
Royal Navy (339)	2.2	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.7
Royal Marines (32*)	-	-	-	-	-
RAF (171)	4.4	5.8	6.7	7.2	7.3



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