

UNIVERSITY OF
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THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

SOLDIERS OF CHARACTER

RESEARCH REPORT

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Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is a unique and leading centre for the examination of how character and virtues impact on individuals and society. The Centre was founded in 2012 by Professor James Arthur. Based at the University of Birmingham, it has a dedicated team of 30 academics from a range of disciplines, including: philosophy, psychology, education, theology and sociology.

With its focus on excellence, the Centre has a robust and rigorous research and evidence-based approach that is objective and non-political. It offers world class research on the importance of developing good character and virtues and the benefits they bring to individuals and society. In undertaking its own innovative research, the Centre also seeks to partner with leading academics from other universities around the world and to develop strong strategic partnerships.

A key conviction underlying the existence of the Centre is that the virtues that make up good character can be learnt and taught. We believe these have largely been neglected in schools and in the professions. It is also a key conviction that the more people exhibit good character and virtues, the healthier our society. As such, the Centre undertakes development projects seeking to promote the practical applications of its research evidence.

This report was launched at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London, on 3rd October 2018.



Soldiers of Character

Research Report

CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Executive Summary	5
Purpose of the Report	6
Background	7
Historical Background	7
Problem Statement and Conceptual Clarifications	12
Overall Evaluative Goals	13
Methodology	15
Methods	15
Limitations of the Research	17
Ethical Considerations and Permissions	17
Findings	18
Data From All Three Methods	18
Discussion and Interpretation of Findings	29
Research Question 1	29
Research Question 2	31
Research Question 3	31
Research Question 4	32
Conclusion	33
Research Team	34
Acknowledgements	34
References	35
Appendices	39

Foreword

Sir Nick Parker

This is a meticulously conducted body of research which provides unique insights into the challenges facing our young officers in the complex contemporary security environment. It looks at the moral framework we provide through our core values, and the impact that these have on the behaviour of young leaders in the most difficult situations. It provides an evidence-based approach to a subject area that is so often dominated by emotion and opinion and it is worth some careful consideration. There are some caveats: the sample size is relatively small, a section of the chain of command has been studied in isolation and the context of some of the dilemmas may be debated; but the legitimacy of the recommendations is beyond doubt. At a time when we should do everything we can to ensure that our young commanders are properly prepared for the challenges that they will face - this report deserves careful study.

Sir Nick Parker
General (Retired)



'THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH VERY GOOD DEGREES OUT THERE – BUT WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IS CHARACTER. THAT IS ONE THING THE ARMY DEVELOPS VERY WELL.'

General Paul Nanson, Commandant of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

Executive Summary

Conditions of modern warfare bring new challenges to military professions that place increased moral pressure on personnel. In these new conditions of war, good Army character and ethical leadership are more important than ever.

Complementing work by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues about virtues in professional practice and public service, this is a rare empirical study of over 240 junior British Army officers from twelve branches of service.

In addition to developing a measure of ethical reasoning in a British Army context, the report explores the following with respect to three levels of junior Army officers:

- ethical reasoning involving British Army values of courage, respect for others, integrity, and loyalty;
- self-reports of the officers' most and least dominant character strengths; and
- the relationship between the officers' responses to military moral dilemmas and their self-reported character strengths, as well as to questions asked during interview about British Army values.

Key Findings

Overall, these junior officers were well aligned with stated British Army Values and Standards; the values of integrity, discipline, courage, selfless commitment, loyalty, and respect for others (Army, 2018).

Gender differences for this study were less marked than generally found in other studies using moral dilemmas. These junior officers, regardless of gender, were found to embrace the British Army values.

Participants performed 'better' when responding to dilemmas that were not aggressive towards prisoners and did not involve covering up failings of soldiers under pressure from higher command; this was in comparison to dilemmas that asked participants to balance compassion for others with mission objectives, and the appropriate application of Army fraternisation policy.

Responses to the dilemmas showed higher scores for identifying worst action choices, suggestive of a possible overemphasis on avoiding risk. Scores for identifying reasons for actions also lagged slightly behind scores for choosing appropriate actions to take.

Results showed that moral dilemma scores were lowest in the period following professional training and education at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst¹ (RMAS) for infantry and artillery officers as compared to other branches of service. This finding suggests that the nature of an officer's early experience may influence the application of Army values at the onset of one's career.

The new measure of ethical reasoning – developed as part of this research – has support, but findings need now to be corroborated by a larger representative sample.

¹ Royal Military Academy Sandhurst is subsequently referred to as 'RMAS' or 'Sandhurst'.

1 Purpose of the Report

The British Army is a unique profession that places extreme demands on personnel, especially leaders.

Together with other qualities, the British Army² explicitly prizes six values that are required of all personnel. These are the values of integrity, discipline, courage, selfless commitment, loyalty and respect for others; together these values underpin ethical standards for the profession.

Junior Army officers are senior leaders of tomorrow and in the context of modern warfare, good Army character and ethical leadership are more important than ever. The research, discussed in this report, explored the extent to which junior Army officers display and aspire to attitudes and personal characteristics in line with those six values that are set out in the Army Values and Standards Guide (Army, 2018).

The work forms part of the Jubilee Centre's wider programme of research that examines virtue in the professions and addresses several overarching research questions concerning virtue in public service; this has so far included the professions of law, teaching, medicine, business and nursing (see Arthur *et al.*, 2014; 2015a; 2015b; Kristjánsson *et al.*, 2017a; 2017b). The theoretical assumptions behind these studies are set out in the Jubilee Centre's *Statement on Character, Virtue and Practical Wisdom in Professional Practice* (Jubilee Centre, 2016).

The research, highlighted in this report, is underpinned by a philosophy of Aristotelian virtue ethics, and adopts a research design that is interdisciplinary by drawing on the disciplines of philosophy, psychology and sociology. More specifically, the research is based on three different methods (moral dilemmas, self-reports of character strengths and semi-structured interviews) that are used to investigate Army values and ethical judgement from the perspective of the officers themselves and in terms of the officers' responses to specific military dilemmas.

Two hundred and forty-two junior Army officers took part in the research. The officers belonged to many different cap badges and a variety of roles and units or regiments from across the British Army. Twelve different branches of Army service were represented: Infantry, Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, Army Air Corps, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Adjutant General's Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps, Intelligence Corps, Royal Military Police, Royal Logistic Corps and Royal Army Veterinary Corps. Forty of the officers also took part in semi-structured interviews.

Participants were recruited in roughly equal numbers from three main career stages: officer cadets at RMAS; junior officers with 0 to 5 years' experience, and junior officers with 6 to 10 years' experience.

The research involved the use and development of a bespoke method designed to assess cognitive components of the application of Army values (or virtues) by assessing responses to four dilemmas of relevance to junior Army officers. Taken together, the four dilemmas form a new research measure called the Army Intermediate Concept Measure (AICM) which was developed as part of the research and is described in subsequent sections. Although this central measure has good support prior to and after the research, some further testing will be necessary before AICM may be considered fully validated.

The work was guided by four overarching research questions that are set out in the next Section. In summary, the aim of the study was to investigate character and Army values among junior leaders in an Army that for more than two decades has been at the forefront of operations such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the modern era of warfare, demands on Army personnel are varied and challenging with increased ethical pressure on all personnel owing to changing roles and the need to face enemies that do not adhere to the traditional rules of war.

This research makes a rare empirical contribution to existing writing in the field of military ethics where work with an empirical foundation is scarce. It is also intended that the AICM and data generated from its use will contribute towards the cultivation and assessment of character and virtues in the British Army.

² Hereafter referred to as 'the Army' unless specific clarification is required.

2 Background

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An underpinning requirement to be ready to use appropriate force in the air, at sea, or on land makes military roles unique, justifying an institutional difference that is grounded on the supremacy of the mission and team over the individual. More recently, however, this distinctiveness has been brought into question in what has been called 'a post-modern military' (Moskos, Williams and Segal, 2000), characterised by international missions involving non-war fighting roles, such as peacekeeping, and increased civilian reach into military space (Caforio, 2006; Forster, 2006). The extent to which the military is – or ought to be (Dandeker, 2002) – set apart and different from wider society has important implications for the kinds of individual characters that are desired and expected of military personnel, as does the changing nature of warfare and rapid technological advancements.

The proper relationship between the armed forces and society has been a topic of considerable academic interest over the years, especially in UK and US contexts (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960; Morgan, 1994; Moskos, Williams and Segal, 2000; Dandeker and Freedman, 2002; Strachan, 2003; Forster 2006). Key debates continue about how precisely the military should be defined: is, for example, military service 'more than just a job?' (Moskos and Wood, 1988); is it really a profession, and if so does this apply to all ranks? Answers to these questions have important implications for ethical requirements of the military, as well as for character and virtue (eg, Army values) among military personnel – a key concern of this report.

2.1.1 British Armed Forces – An Organisation, Institution or Profession?

Three classic theses address how far the military ought to be considered an organisation, institution or profession (see Table 1). In the first, Huntington (1957) argues that the military is a distinct profession in which a unique role to deliver appropriate force for 'socially approved purposes' (Caforio, 2006: 16) gives the officer corps autonomy. On the contrary, Janowitz's (1960) classic thesis looks to convergence, rather than divergence, for political control of the armed forces. In other words, the military should adopt some of the changes taking place in wider society. For Janowitz, this means that a proper balance between the retention of some military difference together with the adoption of changes in society is needed. For example, the reduced dominance of the traditional 'heroic' (Caforio, 2006: 17) type of service person, for Janowitz, made way for more (civilian) modern, managerial and technical forms of military experience characterised by less authoritative internal control.

These dynamics of both convergence (Janowitz) and divergence (Huntington) are brought together in a third approach. This is Institutional/Occupational thesis (I/O) (Moskos, 1976; Moskos and Wood, 1988) that claims the armed forces contain a coexistence of contradictory relations that are both institutional and occupational in nature, such that at times the military may operate in ways quite similar to civilian occupations and society, but at other times can be extremely institutional and at odds with wider society. This latter institutional possibility may even relate to Goffman's concept of the 'total institution' (1968) since there are times when military personnel are completely separated from wider society, such as during some operational tours and in periods of initial training.

Notwithstanding contrary tendencies, it is accurate to conceive of the military officer corps as a profession³ and to think of Army officers as engaged in professional practices, although these professional practices coexist with institutional ones and are therefore, to some extent, precarious (Walker, 2018). The military profession 'embodies a number of characteristics such as a theoretical and practical body of theory, a high degree of autonomy and control over the exercise of the activity, an ethic particular to the professional group and a sense of corporateness linking together the professional practitioners' (Nuciari, 2006: 69). This military definition complies also with the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues' *Statement on Character, Virtue and Practical Wisdom in Professional Practice* (Jubilee Centre, 2016). Central to any profession, of course, is its code of ethics and the requirement that it contributes to a societal good – this is discussed further in Section 2.1.3 as a central aspect of this report.

³ All military ranks face ever more challenging and contradictory situations (Aronovitch, 2001; Broesder *et al.*, 2014) and each soldier, sailor, airmen and marine – who is often highly trained – adds more unique value to collective effort than before (Shaw, 2005). In smaller professional forces, junior ranks no longer take their place in large structures where each individual is replaceable by the next, but instead a high degree of professionalism and responsibility is expected much further down the ranks, prompting the concept of the 'strategic corporal': a term based on a junior marine, who, in isolation from command, has to make crucial judgements under changing and challenging conditions (Krulak, 1997). Even so, significant reasons remain for omitting non-commissioned officers from professional status (cf. Caforio, 1988).

Table 1: Civil-Military Relations – Three Classic Theses

Military as distinct from society	Military as needing to converge with society	Coexistence of contradictory relations
Huntington (1957)	Janowitz (1960)	Moskos (1976)
A unique role gives the officer corps autonomy	The military needs to incorporate civilian ways but retain some difference	Contradictory forces of institutionalisation and occupation coexist

2.1.2 New Wars, Asymmetry and International Law

Driven by external threats, much has changed for armed forces in recent times and this has implications for the personal qualities, characters and kinds of ethical judgement required of military personnel. In the UK, during World Wars I and II, National Service meant that 'whole societies were at war' (Dandeker, 1990: 101). Serving in the armed forces was a feature of citizenship and military service involved being part of a large bureaucratic system. This is dubbed the modern era – a period from 1900 to 1945 – during which the overriding military role was 'combat leader' whose job it was to defend the homeland. In the late modern era (from 1945 to 1990), personnel became defined more as managers, or technicians, and as participants in a still large, but now professional, military force concerned with the threat of the Cold-war and engaged in maintaining alliances. After 1960, members of British Armed forces were all volunteers – an important development that enhanced professional identities at both individual and institutional levels. In the postmodern era (from 1990 to 2001), the end of the Cold-war led to new missions such as peacekeeping and humanitarian aid. Smaller professional forces were a dominant feature of this period and the military professional became a 'soldier-statesman' or 'soldier-scholar'. Recently, a mixture of complex roles has placed heavy and complicated demands on personnel. This is the hybrid era, and since 2001 roles, such as soldier-warrior, soldier-manager, soldier-statesman, soldier-scholar, and soldier-constable, have coexisted (cf. Hajjar, 2014).

Although some question it (Goulding, 2000; Shaw, 2005), most agree that we are in an era of new wars that often involves conflict between unmatched sides (Kaldor, 1999). World military power is overwhelmingly concentrated in the US and this fact shapes the kinds of military action that can be realistically successful against this world power (Wolfendale, 2012). This most powerful

legitimate military force and its government have defined new wars since September 11 2001 as a global war on terrorism (Kaldor, 2006; Roxborough, 2006; Wolfendale, 2012). New wars are fought less for sound political gain bounded by state lines and more for identity reasons. A moral asymmetry between opposing forces is a key feature of contemporary warfare in which western forces attempt to adhere, for the most part, to traditional rules of war, whereas their opponents often do not. Unmatched sides usually involve conflict between state and non-state forces. Non-state forces may be semi-legitimate in terms of their representation of a large population, but they can also be nothing more than bandits, criminals and rebels fighting for obscure and unsupported aims (Fisher, 2011). Another notable driver of change in warfare is a so-called 'Revolution in Military Affairs' that includes precision bombing and advanced communication and intelligence systems (see Kirkpatrick, 2015a; 2015b; Sparrow, 2015 for a recent discussion of this in relation to virtues).

Of course, despite these changes and challenges to the way that war is conducted there is a continuous requirement for military personnel to develop and display exemplary standards of moral integrity, moral character and moral judgement even under the most difficult circumstances. However, modern wars bring extra moral pressure for soldiers (de Vries, 2013: 4) who may need to make rapid transitions between roles (cf. Krulak, 1997 and the 'three block war') or take part in 'war among the people', where people are the battlefield (Smith, 2007: 719). At times, the moral pressure has been too much to bear, as was the case for Royal Marine Sergeant Alexander Blackman. Blackman killed a wounded Afghan man in 2011 when he should have taken him prisoner. He and a small group of men had been operating in isolation for some time and had witnessed Taliban soldiers hanging the limbs of maimed British soldiers from trees as 'trophies' to taunt the marines.

Other incidents suggest that transitioning from hard warfighting roles to more sensitive duties is extremely difficult. Olsthoorn (2014) draws on the US examples of Abu Ghraib (the torture of Iraqi prisoners) and Haditha (the killing of 24 unarmed Iraqi men, women and children by a group of marines) to argue that such failures of character will ultimately hinder the achievement of the mission. But, by far the most notorious incident for the British Army, involved Baha Mousa, an Iraqi hotel worker, who died in custody because of ill-treatment by seven members of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment in Basra in 2003. An internal military report known as the 'Aitkin Report' openly admitted that not only did these soldiers show moral failure but so did others around them, including commanders, by directing their loyalty towards the protection of their colleagues rather than the protection of honesty, courage and respect (Fisher, 2011: 126). The general picture from this Section is that contemporary battlefields are 'messy' often involving much more than military activities, including working alongside non-military professionals on roles that do not involve the delivery of military force (eg, social or economic tasks). Making the transition from roles associated with other activities such as these to the core military role to deliver extreme and decisive force is very challenging indeed for military personnel. These multifaceted expectations for officers on the modern battlefield support a common view in the literature; that military personnel today are faced with dilemmas of far greater complexity than their forebears.

The conduct of war takes place under the governance of many rules (Walzer, 1977; Sherman, 2005: 173). Since Aquinas in the 13th-century, there have been at least two moral considerations for governments and armed forces to resolve in the dominant theory of war: 'Just War Theory', which has it that first, war should be just ('Jus ad bellum') and second, if just, be conducted well ('Jus in bello'). These conditions must be met for the military profession to uphold its purpose and to operate in the interests of public good.

International humanitarian law is related to this theory and regulates armed conflict. Its chief concern is to protect people, property and to minimise suffering. Martin Shaw (2005), however, states that new western ways of war are in crisis. He highlights a blurring between combatants and civilians and argues that risks have shifted disproportionately towards civilian populations. Rodin (2006) cannot reconcile Just War Theory with asymmetric warfare⁴ and its normative framework has been found incompatible with the defeat of terrorism (Margolis, 2004) and technological advancements such as unmanned weapons systems (Killmister, 2008; Wolfendale, 2012). British military practitioners are, however, most familiar with 'The Law of Armed Conflict' (another name for International Humanitarian Law) that is based on direct military experience. Its principles are practical and intended to achieve a balance between humanity and military necessity. Formal rules and laws, such as these, offer political and top military leaders guidance in decisions about war, but they also offer guidance to ordinary service people, who 'may be faced in war with decisions of far greater moment than they would have encountered in civilian life' (Fisher, 2011: 84).

2.1.3 Military Ethics and Education

An important aspect of any profession is its code of ethics. A profession's distinctive moral status stems from the societal good it performs (Bayles, 1988; Oakley and Cocking, 2002; Wolfendale, 2009) and ethical codes are derived from such performance. Again, the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues' *Statement on Character, Virtue and Practical Wisdom in Professional Practice* (2016) is relevant, as is important work by David Carr (2011). Although military culture and ethos contribute much to individual motivation, ethical decision-making and character (Robinson, 2007), most armed forces also have an ethical code and moral education programmes, many of which are informed by virtue ethics (Robinson, 2008). Virtue ethics here refers to a distinctive moral theory that foregrounds the role of moral character virtues as foundational (developmentally, motivationally and ethically) to proper moral functioning, as distinct from mere compliance with rules (deontology) or the maximisation of happiness (consequentialism) (Kristjánsson, 2015). Despite the prominence of virtue ethical assumptions, lists of the most highly valued virtues differ between different armed forces. However, after reviewing 12 lists

of military values and virtues, involving eight countries, Robinson notes the prominence of loyalty or comradeship, courage, self-sacrifice and discipline. He concludes that this prominence is limiting in terms of modern military roles, especially operations other than war that require more diverse personal qualities. Moreover, for Robinson, many approaches to military ethical training, incorporating such lists of values and virtues 'ignore the fact that the purpose of military ethics is not solely to produce soldiers who will be efficient, but also to limit the use of force and to protect others from the power that soldiers wield' (2008: 8). Wolfendale (2008) finds a similar tension in military ethics education between getting military personnel to behave correctly and enhancing their moral thinking and characters. There is often a tension in military contexts between the need to develop individual moral character such that personnel can arrive at their own ethical decisions to guide their behaviour, compared to simply following ethical codes of behaviour. In the Army context, ethical codes are relatively non-prescriptive and as such place a strong emphasis on the judgement of officers and soldiers in relation to specific circumstances.



⁴ This term is used to define wars in which there is a moral imbalance between opposing sides where one side does not comply with widely agreed ethical standards and rules of war.

In the British system, an aspirational moral approach for officers dominates. This approach is motivated by a conception of good Army character and, though preferable to a functional approach that emphasises role-based behaviour alone, does not entirely replace it. This approach is evident in the Army Leadership Code, according to which, values are 'specific beliefs that people have about what is important and unimportant, good and bad, right and wrong' (Army, 2015: 6) and standards are 'the way in which we put our Values into practice, ensuring that everything we do is **Appropriate, Lawful and Totally Professional**' (Army, 2015: 10). Six values are listed and described; these are courage, discipline, respect for others, integrity, loyalty and selfless commitment. These, rather than standards, are the focus of this report and are intended to inspire good character as the basis for virtuous intention and action – the hallmark of virtue ethics philosophy.

Much of the empirical literature in this Section, together with accepted military doctrine, suggests that realistic accounts of Army character and virtue should incorporate both dispositional and contextual factors. Undoubtedly, military contexts represent some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable for character and ethical decision-making. For example, Robinson (2015) describes how in Afghanistan there were often no good options for personnel to take and, similarly, the existence of ethically insoluble dilemmas in war lead Schulzke (2013) to conclude that rule-based ethical reasoning alone is insufficient for individual military personnel.

The risk of moral corruption is also high in the military profession (French, 2005). This is one reason why, from the earliest days of basic and officer training, soldiers learn that they cannot succeed without collective effort and so individual character, though vital, is not a lone force (Robinson, 2007; Sandin, 2007), being further enhanced by sound leadership and appropriate ethical climates such that wavering individuals are bolstered and supported. Some writers, however, stress the impact of the *circumstances* of war over individual virtues and dispositions (Flanagan, 1991; Ross and Nisbett 1991; Tripodi, 2012) to argue that ordinary soldiers are regularly at risk of entering the 'evil zone' to commit atrocities⁵. This is a counter to what is known as the fundamental attribution error (Ross and Nisbett, 1991), described by Flanagan as: 'an inclination to overestimate the impact of dispositional factors (individual traits) and underestimate situational ones' (Flanagan, 1991: 306).

Tripodi (2012) warns that a gradual decline in moral standards can start when soldiers dehumanise and brutalise the enemy or civilians. Of course, 'most virtue-based approaches and theories 'acknowledge(s) that life often presents us with circumstances so challenging that few individuals possess the strength of character to overcome them, through their own resources' (Olson, 2014: 91), and this fact, together with the significant contextual challenges discussed above, ought to reinforce the need to cultivate sound military character and ethical judgement as part of a wider group effort to ensure that soldiers are

as prepared as possible for the challenges they will face. This preparation is especially important for leaders and the emphasis of this report is junior Army leaders as key upholders of professional ethical standards.

2.1.4 Officer Training Academies

Army officer training and development differs from training and development for soldiers throughout Army careers. Efforts to cultivate character and virtue among junior Army officers are most intense during initial education and training at military academies.

For the British Army, initial Army officer training takes place at the RMAS in Camberley, Surrey. In the US, however, potential Army officers are more likely to join the Reserve Officer Training Corps, but the most prestigious method of entry into the US Army as a potential officer is via a four-year programme at the United States Military Academy, West Point, 50 miles north of New York on the Hudson River. In preparation for the research discussed in this report, members of the research team visited both British and US military academies in summer and autumn 2016 and visited the Royal Military Academy of the Netherlands at Breda Castle in the summer of 2016. All three institutions prioritise certain stated military values which are listed in Table 2. In the Netherlands, although there is a plurality of options in terms of sources for military values, the warrior code has been reproduced in Table 2 as most pertinent for the Dutch Army.

Table 2: Military Values at Military Academies in the US, UK and the Netherlands

Netherlands Army Values	US Army Values	British Army Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Warrior Code: We the Infantry are big and strong with fighting power. ■ Our mission comes first. ■ Our allegiance is to the Unit and to our values. I take the initiative to fight and have the will to defeat my opponent, even at my own cost. I will act honourably, deserve respect, trust and awe. ■ My discipline is firm. I am physically strong and mentally hardened. I work hard in everything I do. I am professionally skilled. I never give up and never let down my comrades. ■ My pride is my Unit, the Regiment and our fighting power. Without us there can be no success on the ground. I will always honour those who have gone before. I give way to nothing because I am an infantryman! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Duty ■ Respect ■ Selfless Service ■ Honour ■ Integrity ■ Personal courage ■ Loyalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrity ■ Discipline ■ Courage ■ Selfless commitment ■ Loyalty ■ Respect for others

⁵ For example, in Somalia in 1993 a Canadian Airborne Regiment used excessive force, including the baiting and killing of thieves and the beating to death of a prisoner in custody.



Since 1997, when the compulsory military draft ended, the Dutch military has been an all-volunteer professional force similar to British and US forces. At Breda, cadets are prepared for service as officers in the Dutch Air Force, Army or Marechaussee (a gendarmerie or Royal Military Constabulary) and the broader Netherlands Defence Academy provides an 'integrated program consisting of military training, personal development and academic education' that is delivered by a mixture of military (officers and soldiers) and civilian staff.

At the Netherlands Royal Military Academy, some Army cadets pursue only short military careers by taking a 'short track' training model of 1 or 2 years' duration, whereas cadets pursuing a full career begin a 3 year educational model. Officers taking the longer course generally have a high school degree, whereas short track officers arrive at the Academy already in possession of a degree. The longer course lasts for 48 weeks and leads to military competence and an academic bachelor degree.

It is much the same at the US West Point Military Academy, where military training is combined with undergraduate academic study. This professional formation is designed to develop cadets in four key ways: academic, military, physical and character-wise. The duration of the West Point programme is 47 months and involves five facets of character cultivation: moral, civic, social, performance and leadership. West Point cadets, as individuals beginning in a profession, will also

earn a Bachelor of Science degree. The US Military Academy declares that its mission is to:

... educate, train and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army⁶.

Unlike most of their Dutch and American counterparts, potential Army officers arriving at the RMAS (UK) will probably have at least an undergraduate degree, but may sometimes have higher degrees or, exceptionally, no degree at all. Potential British officers undergo an intensive 44-week programme of education and training and among their numbers there is usually a small group of paying foreign cadets from all over the world. Sandhurst entrants are trained by senior non-commissioned officers (soldiers) who are selected for this prestigious role based on outstanding performance as well as by officers and civilian staff; most of these soldiers will have significant operational experience. The first five weeks at Sandhurst are intensive and represent a kind of institutional shock also experienced by British soldiers during basic training. Emphasis during this early period of officer training is on basic military skills such as navigation and physical testing and development. After covering basic skills, more complex military competencies are introduced such as infantry tactics, expeditions and in the final term,

peacekeeping and counter-insurgency. Traditional and modern methods are used during the 44-week long course to develop leadership, character and military competence. According to the British Academy:

...newly-commissioned Officer will be qualified to lead and manage soldiers while at the same time upholding the British Army's core values of selfless commitment, respect for others, loyalty, integrity, discipline and courage.

Male and female cadets are trained together in integrated platoons and the majority come from state-funded education, with around 90% holding university degrees.

Military training is infantry-based so that everyone, no matter what their eventual regiment or corps, will have mastered the core essentials before they go on to more specialised training after Sandhurst⁷.

All three countries take seriously the development of character among potential junior officers. In the US context, The Army's Framework for Character Development was published in 2017 (US Army, 2017). This document provides the Army Leader Development Strategy in line with the Army Ethic and is relevant to all military personnel and civilians. This significant piece of work develops an extremely detailed approach to character and its development in the US Army.

⁶ See: United States Military Academy West Point (n.d) Welcome to the United States Military Academy, [Online] Available at: www.usma.edu/SitePages/Home.aspx [Accessed 4 October 2017].

⁷ See: The British Army (2017) Commissioning Course, [Online] Available at: www.army.mod.uk/training_education/25498.aspx [Accessed 4 October 2017].

2.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

The British Army officer corps is a heterogeneous group of approximately 13,200 officers in nine different ranks (MOD, 2014). Being a relatively youthful and unique profession, the Army needs regularly to reproduce itself over time by training and developing its new officer entrants who are recruited from a rapidly changing wider society.

The intensity and duration of recent military operations have been accompanied by changing roles and some serious military moral failures among international forces. Army officers are key upholders of ethical and professional standards and the research focusses on a generation of leaders – the senior leaders of tomorrow – who are now lieutenants and junior and senior captains. The total population for these junior officer ranks is 6,650 officers (MOD, 2014) which is nearly half of all British Army officers. Although many junior officers have not yet had operational experience, increasing complexities of the military role mean that this study of character, Army values, and ethical reasoning among British Army officers, is timely and justified.

Probably the most extensive existing research on military ethics is the Defence Ethics Survey, administered in Canada in 1999⁸, 2003, 2007 and 2010 to the Department of National Defence. Four indicators are used to assess ethical decision-making and these are; organisational climate (nine types are assessed), individual values (same nine types are assessed at an individual level), individual ethical ideals (six types – eg, rule based) and situational moral intensity (contextual factors divided into six characteristics). Out of detailed results, five key points can be made. In terms of discrepancies between individually expected and experienced ethical climates, there was an overall improvement between 2003 and 2010. Higher ranks and better education were associated with smaller discrepancies. Second, officers were more likely than junior non-commissioned officers to approach ethical decisions from a rule-based perspective rather than any of the other five types of ethical approach that were assessed in the study. Third, senior officers were more likely to judge situations unethical than junior non-commissioned officers. Fourth, in terms of moral intensity, ethical decision-making was

related to 'social consensus' and 'probability of effect', meaning that the more that harm was a possible outcome, the more situations were judged unethical, and implying that judgements were more likely to correspond to contextualised consensus. In short, situational factors were found to have an important impact on decisions. Finally, this Canadian study shows that training and education can improve ethical decision-making – an encouraging result for a study such as the one discussed in this report (see also Yi-Ming, 2015 for a comparison of moral education models).

The relationship between moral intensity and ethical decision-making was further investigated using many of the same Canadian methods in a US study (Lincoln and Holmes, 2011). Eight hundred and twelve student officers, aged 18 to 24 years, at a service academy were surveyed. Again, moral intensity and social consensus were both significantly associated with moral awareness (sensitivity), judgement and intention (motivation). Proximity (if the 'other' is closer physically, socially, culturally or psychologically to them) was shown also to matter for moral awareness. Moral judgements were affected by 'magnitude of consequences' and 'probability of effect', and findings also showed that moral judgement was affected more by moral intensity than were moral awareness and intention. Overall, ethical decision-making was found to be influenced by 'interpersonal relationships in the dimensions of moral intensity' (Lincoln and Holmes, 2011: 67).

A variety of other topics are covered in the literature. These include; recommendations for achieving the warrior ethos (Riccio *et al.*, 2004); the promotion of character strengths in general (Boe, 2015a; 2015b; Boe, Bang and Nilsen, 2015); support for a correlation between trust and subordinates 'going the extra mile' in their duties (Deluga, 1995); notions of operational identity as a predictor of better military performance (Johansen, Laberg and Martinussen, 2014); suggestions that military risk can lead to moral disengagement (Duzan and Clervoy, 2014); and there are hopes for a new measure of wisdom in the military context (Zacher *et al.*, 2015). Teamwork has also been highlighted (Han and Lee, 2013; Boermans *et al.*, 2014) and two studies used the Values in Action (VIA) character strengths survey in interesting ways (Mathews *et al.*, 2006; Gayton and Kehoe, 2015). However, other findings are less encouraging. In a rare moral assessment

of initial military training for non-commissioned officers, Williams (2010) used the Defining Issue Test to argue that only limited and superficial change had occurred during this training with soldiers often responding to the test in amoral and pragmatic ways. Five troublesome factors were singled out: too much emphasis on rules; inconsistent leader actions; lack of moral challenge; ineffective training methods, and poor moral climate. More positively, drill sergeants (as the prominent leaders) were identified as morally impactful; a finding that seems to advocate role modelling. Another problem was identified by Baarle and colleagues in the form of a tension between being a human being and being a soldier. Using moral dilemmas Baarle and colleagues investigated a train-the-trainer course on military ethics and claim that the view of oneself as a political asset (ie, as a soldier who is acting on behalf of the Army and society) may hinder personal responsibility (Baarle *et al.*, 2015).

Specific military qualities are also discussed in the literature and resilience has been afforded a good deal of attention (cf. Jarrett, 2008; Boe, 2015b). Derived from a philosophy of Stoicism, resilience champions the capacity of individuals for having virtue despite what is happening to them. The US Army introduced a resilience programme based on positive psychology and the US Army Global Assessment Tool is a method for assessing factors that contribute to soldiers' resilience (Seligman, 2011). A systematic review of resilience in military settings was also conducted by RAND (Research and Development) (Meredith *et al.*, 2011) and Nancy Sherman promotes a lesser version of Stoicism that is 'moderate and mild' (Sherman, 2005: 12).

⁸ See cf. Catano, Kelloway and Adams-Roy (2000) for a baseline assessment.

Courage, too, is an obvious military quality (Kateb, 2004; Zavaliy and Aristidou, 2014), but not always as a virtue if, for example, it is an uncultivated response to danger by conscript soldiers (Gray, 1970 (1959)). Zavaliy (2014), like Aristotle, argues that most people in a population are incapable of true courage understood as a dispositional capacity to find balance between an excess of rashness and a deficit of cowardice towards a worthy cause. Military courage classically involves steadfastness in the face of death on the battlefield, and war offers opportunity to express this virtue. Without diminishing its horror, Glenn Gray has some appreciation for the 'delights' of war since there can be no moral equivalent to battlefield courage. Olsthoorn (2007) prefers a 'scientific' perspective to soften courage's demand, and notes accepted modern reasons for individual retreat from military danger such as psychological illness. This treatment of courage helps to pinpoint threats known to diminish courage such as prolonged exposure to danger and lack of trust to minimise them by policies of rotating troops, and attempts to improve levels of trust in equipment and leadership. Cohesion has long been thought the best way to stimulate courage in military contexts (Gray, 1970 (1959); Kateb, 2004), although Olsthoorn and others worry that this is a risky dependence since moral courage may be discouraged if it involves the expression of views contrary to those in the group with which one needs to cohere.

Connections between courage and comradeship are regularly linked to the will to fight (Shils and Janowitz, 1975; Shields, 1991; French, 2005; Verweij, 2007; Biggar, 2013) and the British Army Regimental System is based on the motivating forces of comrades and small fighting units that have long been championed as military motivators (Shils and Janowitz, 1975; Woodward, 2007). The exclusionary military 'we' that can come from loyalty and comradeship is a double-edged sword requiring careful management. For example, comradeship can be problematic in military settings when it denies difference (Arendt, 1968; Verweij, 2007), privileges obedience (French, 2005; Wolfendale, 2009; Olson, 2014) or reinforces patriarchy (Derrida, 1994). O'Brien (2003) even dubbed it 'evil'. Complaints about excesses of loyalty and comradeship are usually made because its moral status is conditionally influenced (Kateb, 2004; Olsthoorn, 2011; Olson, 2014).

Respect, honour and integrity are military qualities also discussed in the literature. There has been recent appeal to honour which is often viewed as a means to developing other virtues in its name (Osiel, 2002; Olsthoorn, 2005; Robinson, 2007). For French (2005: 5), honour is vital because 'warriors need a way to distinguish what they must do out of a sense of duty from what a serial killer does'. Robinson finds in honour an opportunity to incorporate broader human concerns into military ethics, especially respect for human life and respect for human dignity, which he believes should have equal standing with courage and loyalty (2007: 268). Respect for others is described in the British Army Values and Standards pamphlet as a 'duty to put others first...'. It also 'extends to the treatment of all human beings, especially the victims of conflict, the dead, the wounded, prisoners and civilians, particularly those we have deployed to help' (Army, 2008: 7–8).

In the introductory sections to this report, military service is presented as ethically demanding and more so as military roles have changed, including pressures associated with the conditions of modern warfare and new challenges such as dealing with enemies that routinely ignore traditional rules of war. There are also signs that traditional rules of war themselves may be inadequate for aspects of modern warfare, especially involving a revolution of military affairs (technological advancements) and terrorism for example. For over two decades, the British Army has been involved in intense operations and fighting and is currently undergoing a reduction in size and a reorientation towards future roles. In this context, Army Values and Standards have been under scrutiny from within Army command and a new leadership code has been produced. A reinvigorated professional emphasis on the development of character in the British Army is clear among Army leadership (including facilitating this research study) as is a renewed hunger for empirical and theoretical work to inform these efforts. Naturally, a lot of work on Army leadership and character is taking place internally alongside other studies being conducted in the wider academic community, including the empirical and theoretical contributions discussed in the Section immediately preceding this one. In some sense, despite all the changes taking place in modern warfare discussed in this Section, the message overall from the literature is that a timeless military quandary persists; the need to find

balance between developing and sustaining good individual military character in the contexts of significant and unique role pressures (eg, circumstances of war), and in the context of pressure to conform to certain group forces (eg, institutional/professional habits and routines). This last contextual point is worth dwelling on for a moment since it also relates to a key feature of all armed forces, namely the chain of command that has powerful influence on lives and decisions for all junior officers. Although this study focusses on only one level of this command (junior), it needs to be acknowledged that the ways in which superiors exercise command over junior officers also matters for the development of their character.

In the current literature on military ethics and character, there are many theoretical contributions, some of which apply virtue-based perspectives to the perennial military challenges discussed above, but few studies have gathered empirical data from this viewpoint; the present study aims to contribute to this body of literature by doing so.

2.3 OVERALL EVALUATIVE GOALS

The research presented and discussed in this report makes its contribution to this body of literature by investigating the extent to which junior British Army officers⁹ display and aspire to virtues, attitudes and personal characteristics in line with those set out in the Army Values and Standards Guide, both from the perspective of the officers themselves and in terms of their responses to specific military dilemmas. This involves the use and development of new methods to assess character strengths and moral reasoning.

Although by no means the final word for character and virtue in the British Army, the research is focussed on stated Army values as key qualities of professional Army officers. This decision was taken after consulting the extended literature and after extensive liaison with the British Army. The broad aim of the work was to consider how these values feature among the officers in response to specific military contexts, as represented by the dilemmas, and in the descriptions of the officers' own experiences of Army life.

⁹ Officer Cadets at RMAS are also included in this definition, although technically they are not yet junior Army officers.

Against this background, the research was guided by the research questions below:

1. To what extent do junior officers show ethical reasoning in line with standards of excellence described in the British Army Values and Standards Guide, especially regarding strengths of courage, respect for others, integrity, and loyalty?
2. How do junior officers rate their own character strengths? What are their most and least dominant strengths?
3. How do responses to moral dilemmas relate to the junior officers' self-reported character strengths and to questions asked during interview about Army values?
4. How do high and low performing (AICM) junior officers relate to values of selfless commitment and discipline? What routine and key professional challenges have these officers faced and what lessons (if any) were learnt? What qualities of an 'ideal' junior officer are admired and aspired to? To what extent do officers believe that Army values transfer across professional and personal lives?



3 Methodology

A combination of three methods was used: Moral dilemmas (AICM), self-report of character strengths (VIA-IS-E1) and semi-structured interviews. All participants completed the first two methods, together with demographic questions; collectively these make up 'the survey'. A sub-sample of participants also took part in semi-structured interviews.

The study pinpointed three different experience levels among junior Army officers: officer cadets at RMAS, early lieutenants and captains (1–5 years' service), and experienced captains and a few junior majors (6–10 years' experience).

In this Section each method is described, including the rationale behind it, and how data were collected and analysed. AICM was the predominant research method. Interviews and the self-report measure were used to corroborate AICM results.

3.1 METHODS

3.1.1 Moral Dilemmas – AICM

3.1.1.1 Rationale

Moral dilemmas have been used with individuals and other professional groups, for example with adolescents (Walker *et al.*, 2017), and dentists (Bebeau and Thoma, 1999), as part of the Intermediate Concept approach developed by Rest *et al.* (1999). Responses to dilemmas are expected to reveal information about 'Intermediate Concepts' which are assumed to lie between so called 'bedrock' schemas of moral reasoning (self-interests; maintaining norms; and post-conventional schemas) and specific contextual norms (such as professional codes). Intermediate Concepts (IC) are considered specific to daily life, and as being related to similar virtue-based concepts (Thoma, Derryberry and Crowson, 2013). In this research, they are being related to Army values.

AICM is a measure that bridges neo-Kohlbergian (a psychological approach to moral development) and neo-Aristotelian (a traditional philosophical theory of moral and character development) approaches by asking respondents to make moral judgments about a story in which a virtue (Army value) is at stake. The question of how this measure and the four-component model¹⁰ that underpins it relate to the Aristotelian notion of 'character' is, however, a complex one (Kristjánsson, 2015: chap 3). The idea of Intermediate Concept Measure (ICM) dilemma tests is that patterns of ratings and rankings in response to the dilemmas reveal information about the extent to which participants' application of virtue concepts match expert views. Although AICM is not designed to assess 'moral schemas' directly, they are nevertheless implicated in the kinds of choices that participants are able to make. The moral schemas in question are often understood exclusively as schemas of moral reasoning (Thoma, 2006), although ICM scores have been significantly correlated with behavioural and decision-making variables (Thoma, Derryberry and Crowson, 2013). This suggests that the AICM, perhaps, may be a measure of moral functioning in general, with an emphasis on the cognitive aspects of virtuous character. This assumption is bolstered by the neo-Kohlbergians' understanding of ICMs, as focussed on the mastery of virtue concepts. Although this may be the case, the measure, like others, cannot *directly* assess the entirety of the officers' characters.

An Army ICM was first developed at the University of Alabama for junior US Army officers at West Point called ALERT (Army Leadership Ethical Reasoning Test) by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Turner. The development of ALERT involved a panel of senior experts in ethical judgment in US military contexts. This extensive vetting process was used to create the target dilemmas and associated items in the original version.

A general account of the methodological process for expert panels in the IC tradition is available in Thoma, Derryberry and Crowson (2013). Specific to the Army measure, the Jubilee Centre research team reduced ALERT from seven to four dilemmas and adjusted it for the British Army context. The remaining four dilemmas target dominant British Army values (may also be described as virtues or Intermediate Concepts), including integrity, courage, loyalty and respect for others. A brief overview of the dilemmas is shown below:

Dilemma 1 (Metcalfe) – Injured local Somali – requires a decision about responding to this injured man who is surrounded by a volatile crowd.

Dilemma 2 (Smith) – Torture/aggressive methods – requires a decision about how to respond to the capture of two soldiers.

Dilemma 3 (Milgram) – Curfew/river in Iraq – concerns soldiers' use of non-authorised tactics and how to respond to inquiries from the Army chain of command about this.

Dilemma 4 (Jacobs) – Fraternalisation – how to respond to a fellow male officer and friend who is fraternising with a female soldier contrary to Army rules.

The process of adjusting ALERT for the British Army involved five substantial phases: **Phase 1** – consultation with British Army experts in ethics, psychology and law.

Phase 2 – an expert panel in a British Army garrison consisting of 11 lieutenants and captains with varying lengths of experience checked and adjusted the dilemmas for the British Army in July 2015. They changed terminology and removed and added a small number of items.

Phase 3 – an expert panel in another British Army garrison consisting of 12 lieutenants and captains with varying lengths of experience assessed the dilemmas as amended by phases 1 and 2 after also completing the whole survey individually. This took place in September 2015.

¹⁰ The idea that moral maturity develops in four distinct ways, involving moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral behaviour.

Phase 4 – all three expert panels were compared (two UK panels, plus the original US expert panel for ALERT). The aim of this phase was to finalise the four dilemmas so that they were credible, realistic and believable for British Army officers and to develop a key based on agreement across panels. There was much agreement across the panels and a structured process was applied for dealing with a small number of discrepancies (reported separately to Army Scientific Advisory Committee and Ministry of Defence Research Ethics committee).

3.1.1.2 Collection of Data

Supervised by researchers, junior Army officers completed AICM. Officers rated action choices and reasons on a scale from 1 (*I strongly believe that this is a GOOD choice/reason*) to 5 (*I strongly believe that this is a BAD choice/reason*). They then selected and ranked best/most important (first, second and third) and worst/least important (first, second and third) options for actions and reasons. Demographic questions were asked before officers completed the measure.

3.1.1.3 Analysis of Data

Results from AICM were subjected to basic automated analysis to produce results relating to expert panel judgements. Each possible response to a moral dilemma (choices and justifications) had been previously labelled and then scored as 'acceptable', 'neutral' or 'unacceptable' by the expert panel process. This code underpins all calculated scores. For example, *best/most important* and *worst/least important* scores for choices and reasons can be calculated to achieve a 'total good' and 'total bad' score that represents the extent to which judgements correspond or contrast with the expert panel. A total ICM score was also calculated, which indicates the overall convergence of judgement with the expert panel for all variations (such as the selection in the moral dilemmas of 'appropriate' good and poor reasons, together with 'appropriate' good and poor choices).

Importantly, there is no 'right' or 'wrong' single answer to the dilemmas because for each dilemma, there is more than one 'acceptable', 'unacceptable', or 'neutral' option. Always selecting 'acceptable' options as good and 'unacceptable' options as bad will produce

a score fully compatible with the expert panel (100%); selecting appropriate choices in this way for half of the required choices will produce a score of about 50%; and selecting 'neutral' options will not raise or lower the score. Poor scores (even negative ones) occur when the individual consistently selects 'acceptable' items as 'bad' and 'unacceptable' items as 'good'. Typically, participants select most choices in the 'appropriate' direction, so a few misidentifications can be absorbed and the summary score remains positive.

3.1.2 Self-Reporting Measure – VIA-IS-E1

3.1.2.1 Rationale

The development of the Values in Action (VIA) Classification of Strengths and Virtues (Peterson and Seligman, 2004) was an important event for the scientific study of character. The Classification models the domain of positive personal characteristics in terms of 24 character strengths that reflect six cross-culturally valid virtues: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. The strengths were originally identified through a lengthy process involving input from more than 50 scholars and clinicians, extensive mind-mapping, reviews of historical lists of virtues, and examination of popular literature and media. In contrast, the virtues were the product of a lengthy review of key moral texts from eight cultural traditions: Confucianism and Taoism in China; Buddhism and Hinduism in South Asia; and Athenian philosophy, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the West (Dahlsgaard, Peterson and Seligman, 2005; Peterson *et al.*, 2005).

From this lineage, the second method used was the VIA-IS-E1. This is the new Inventory of Strengths measures that has been developed from the original VIA. It was used in this study to provide a broad inventory of the officers' (character) strengths. It involves 24 questions and assesses character strengths, some of which are typically more important to individuals than other strengths. Groups of 'more important' strengths represent those strengths that the individual considers an essential part of who they are in the world. This measure has been adapted for the junior officer population to avoid a positive skew. The VIA-IS-E1 has not yet undergone research to gauge the instrument's comparability to the original VIA-IS (its predecessor) and so it is still in that sense

experimental, although it is relevant to several studies (Furnham and Lester, 2012; Ruch *et al.*, 2014; McGrath, 2015). For example, McGrath (2015) discusses its factorial consistency with a larger VIA measure and the other two papers focus on variants.

3.1.2.2 Collection of Data

In the survey, officers transitioned from AICM to VIA-IS-E1 questions. For the VIA-IS-E1, they responded to the statement: 'This strength is an essential part of who I am in the world' in relation to 24 specific character strengths (eg, perseverance) by choosing from six options (*strongly agree* (5), *definitely agree* (4), *slightly agree* (3), *neutral* (2), *disagree* (1)).

3.1.2.3 Analysis of Data

Overall results were averaged to determine how groups of officers differed in relation to the 24 character strengths. Particular attention was given to those strengths close to the stated Army Values and Standards, such as courage, perseverance, honesty, and self-regulation. Other character strengths covered by this measure map more loosely to Army values such as wisdom, teamwork, fairness, leadership and humour.

3.1.3 Interviews

3.1.3.1 Rationale

Soldiering is a unique and physical profession where learning takes place at conscious and subconscious levels. An Army 'habitus' is developed within a variety of 'fields' (eg, Army Engineering, Army Logistics) that are also similar. As a system of dispositions, habitus is constantly subjected to experiences that reinforce or modify its structure. Army officers require an appropriate habitus or dispositional state of character to fit in with their environment that allows also for individual innovation. This is a notoriously difficult area to access in research studies and within the scope of the current project, in-depth interviews provide the best opportunity where officers were, to some extent at least, invited to tell us about their world and their place in it to the extent that individuals are able to do this. The interview design repeatedly asked the officers to give examples from real experience to overcome at least some of the limitations of accessing habitus through these methods. This part of the research involved a paradigm change to include a qualitative methodology. More specifically, the semi-structured interviews were designed to understand the officers' own experiences of Army values in relation to their AICM scores.

3.1.3.2 Collection of Data

A sub-sample of officers was interviewed comprising a mix of all three officer experience levels; fewer officer cadets were interviewed owing to their limited military experience. Purposive sampling informed the research design (Becker, 1998).

3.1.3.3 Analysis of Data

Interviews were audio-recorded (with permission) and later transcribed. For the purposes of this report, thematic analysis was carried out for the top and bottom ten scoring officers, based on their total AICM scores (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Data pertaining to the highlighted questions (see Appendix 1 for interview plan) were coded, using Nvivo software, especially as they related to Army values.

3.1.4 Recruitment and Access

Data collection and recruitment occurred at three key Army courses in 2016 where representative participants clustered. These were: Sandhurst for officer cadets, JOTAC (Junior Officer Tactical Awareness Course) for junior Lieutenants/Captains and the CWC (Captain's Warfare Course) for senior Captains. A small number of participants were also recruited from a British Army garrison. Necessary sample sizes were calculated in relation to the dominant ICM method. A total sample size of 242 was achieved. This fills the cells demographically because of the focus on three distinct levels of experience (entry, inexperienced and experienced). A sample of this magnitude provides large enough samples in demographic groups, especially gender. Additionally, this sample offers a good chance of detecting true differences between groups with an assumption of a moderate effect (i.e., a power analysis indicates a required sample size of, say, 220 to detect the expected effect at a .85% probability level within the anticipated analysis strategy).

A stratified random sampling approach was used within the three levels of Army experience. Given that women have been found to consistently outperform their male peers in moral dilemma measures such as the ICM, women were oversampled in order to assess the possibility of gender differences for AICM. Many kinds of junior officer attend these three courses from service all over the world thus providing a varied sample.

3.1.5 Describing and Testing the Psychometric Properties of the AICM

All three methods above were used to test the AICM; results for this process can be found in Appendix 2. The approach to testing the AICM was to ask three main questions: does the AICM provide sufficient range in scores to be a useful measure of Army Values and Standards and then can the measure differentiate groups of participants who ought to be different on the measure. Secondly, we asked whether there is a correspondence between scores on the AICM and interview responses to similar issues. Finally, we assessed whether AICM scores related to an established measure within the moral domain in theoretically consistent ways.

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study ought to be considered a pilot study because an integral part of the research design involves the use and testing of a new measure. AICM as a measure of ethical reasoning has good support prior to and following this research, but some further testing will be necessary before it may be considered fully validated.

The study is also limited because interview data has only been subject to analysis regarding a limited number of research questions and for two specific groups. Further work is required to fully analyse interview data.

Finally, it should be emphasised that the research looks at one level of the chain of command – junior officers - and it is likely that interactions with upper levels of the chain of command are highly influential in shaping character and values among the officers. Further work will be needed to investigate experiences and interactions between junior and more senior officers in relation to AICM scores.

3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PERMISSIONS

Ethical approval was granted for the research by the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent was also obtained from all participants.

There were a number of ethical concerns unique to Army environments that needed to be managed. An important consideration was whether participants might be suffering from PTSD or other mental health disorders which may have become apparent during the conducting of interviews. Careful plans for dealing with this were agreed with the Army. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and could withdraw up to a given date.

'I DON'T MEASURE A MAN'S SUCCESS BY HOW HIGH HE CLIMBS BUT BY HOW HIGH HE BOUNCES WHEN HE HITS BOTTOM.'

General George S. Patton

4 Findings

4.1 DATA FROM ALL THREE METHODS

4.1.1 Demographics

Although almost 97% of the sample was white, the sample was diverse in other key categories such as regiment or corps/branch of service, gender, rank and length of service, and so on. A description of demographic categories can be found in Appendix 3. The distribution on gender and branch of service across rank and experience is shown in Table 3. The authors acknowledge that the British Army divides branches of service into Combat Arms, Combat Support, and Combat Service Support, however, for the purposes of this report officers have been divided into two groups: those who belong by cap badge to artillery or infantry regiments and those who do not. This is because this distinction is associated with the most noticeable differences for AICM results.

4.1.2 Moral Dilemmas – AICM

Mean percentages for the primary ICM indices are presented in Table 4. These findings show that, on average, officers (and officer cadets) scored well over 50% ($M=.65$)¹², suggesting that as a group, they were quite close to expert panel judgements in their responses to the four dilemmas. This includes judgements about what should be done in each scenario and justifications or reasons for acting. Results were evenly distributed across percentiles (25th = .57; 50th = .68; 75th = .76).

Further inspection of the means and associated standard errors indicates that officers found it easier to select best action ($M=.66$) and worst action ($M=.73$) than best justification ($M=.62$) and worst justification ($M=.60$) choices.

In other words, participants could identify more easily, what should be done rather than explaining why, and were particularly adept at identifying what not to do in the specific scenarios presented to them. Nevertheless, scores were also well over 50% for best and worst justification selections and so, it **cannot** be concluded that officers were especially weak in identifying justifications for acting, particularly good justifications. These within-subject differences on the four subscales of the AICM were tested using a repeated measures ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). Results indicated a significant main subscale effect using the Greenhouse-Geisser correction for absence of sphericity ($F(2.63, 620.17) = 24.44; p < .001; \eta^2 = .094$)¹³. All subsequent repeated measure ANOVAs were subject to the same procedures to test and correct for the absence of sphericity. Inspection of the individual contrast between means confirmed that action choices had higher means than justification choices.

Table 3: Gender and Branch of Service by Rank/Experience

		Cadet	Lieutenant and Junior Captain	Senior Captain and Major	Total
Gender by rank and experience	Male	57 (75%)	71 (76%)	62 (85%)	190 (79%)
	Female	19 (25%)	22 (24%)	11 (15%)	52 (21%)
	Total	76	93	73	242
Branch of service by rank/experience	Infantry/artillery	23 (45%)	32 (35%)	32 (44%)	87 (40%)
	Non-infantry/artillery	28 (55%)	59 (65%)	41 (56%)	128 (60%)
	Total	51 ¹¹	91	73	215

Note: Percentage within rank is shown in brackets.

¹¹ Some officer cadets did not know to which branch of service they would be allocated.

¹² $M=.65$ represents 65% agreement with expert panel judgements about acceptable and unacceptable options, including both action and justification selections – see the methods section for a full explanation.

¹³ It is standard practice to interpret partial eta squared (η^2) in the following way: 0.01 = small; 0.06 = medium; and, 0.14 = large.

Table 4: AICM Scores for Main Sample by Gender

Variable	Categories	Sample size	Total ICM	Subscales			
				Action choices		Justification choices	
				Best	Worst	Best	Worst
		238	0.65 (0.14)	0.66 (0.22)	0.73 (0.17)	0.62 (0.23)	0.60 (0.17)
Gender	Male	187	0.64 (0.14)	0.64 (0.22)	0.71(0.18)	0.62 (0.23)	0.60 (0.17)
	Female	51	0.69 (0.11)	0.71 (0.21)	0.78(0.17)	0.64 (0.23)	0.63 (0.17)

Note: Standard deviations are shown in parenthesis.

4.1.2.1 Gender Differences

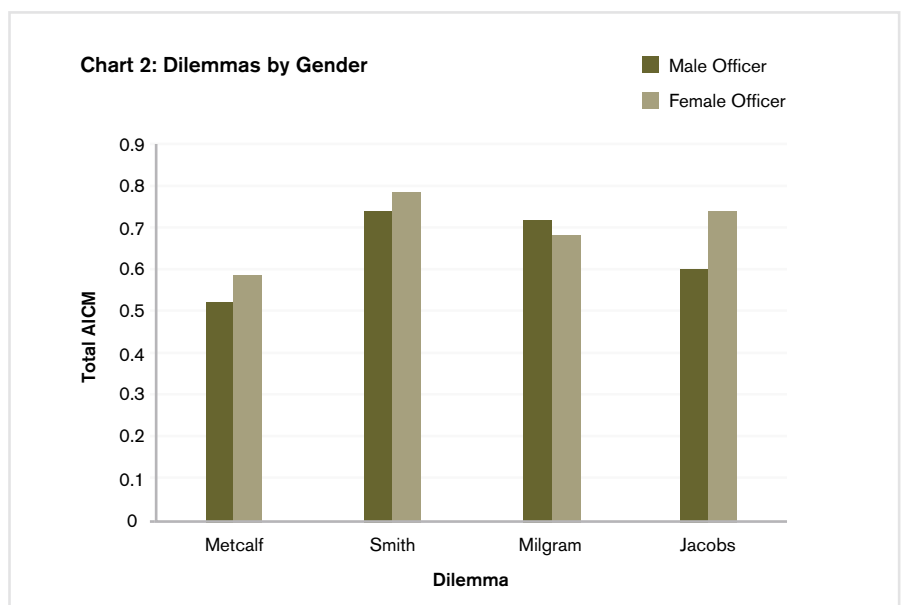
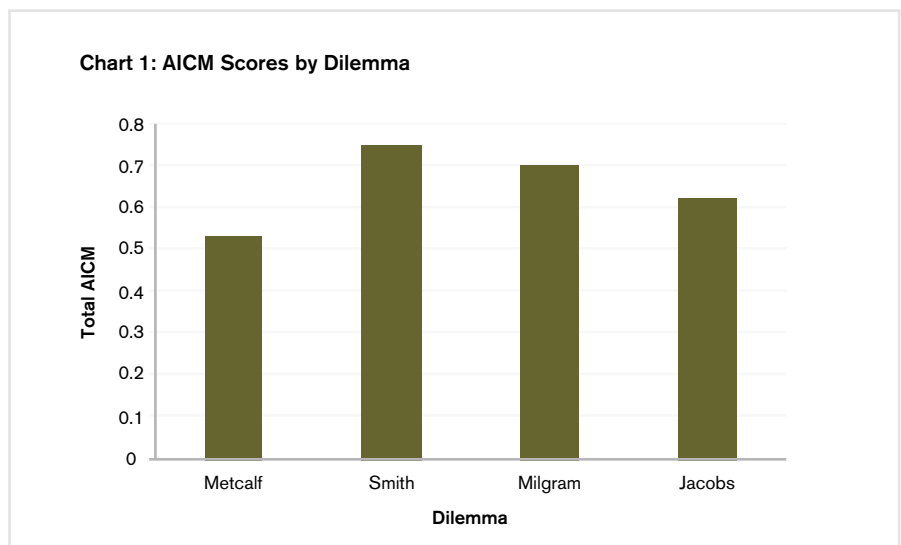
Table 4 also provides information on AICM findings by gender. Overall, female participants moderately outperformed males ($M=.69$ versus $M=.64$) ($F(1,235)=4.85$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2 = .020$). If anything, these gender differences are smaller than for other populations taking moral dilemma tests or ICMs, where females tend more conclusively to outperform males (Walker, 2006; Thoma, 1986; Thoma, Derryberry and Crowson, 2013).

Extending analysis to the four AICM subscales again revealed a moderate between-subject main effect for gender ($F(1,235)=4.85$, $p<.005$, $\eta^2 = .020$). These subscale findings highlighted modest differences between male and female officers. For instance, for detecting action choices (best and worst), female AICM scores were 7 percentage points higher than male scores ($M=.71$ and $M=.78$ versus $M=.64$ and $M=.71$), whereas for justification scores (best and worst) there was an insignificant gender difference ($M=.64$ and $M=.63$ versus males $M=.62$ and $M=.60$). This suggests female officers were slightly better than males in identifying appropriate (action) choices, but that both genders were equally matched identifying appropriate justifications (for action).

4.1.2.2 Performance by Dilemma.

Each dilemma covers a different military situation requiring judgement involving Army values. By way of a brief reminder, officers were asked to consider four situations which are shown in Chart 1.

Overall scores, shown in Chart 1, were highest for Smith ($M=.74$), dropping slightly for Milgram ($M=.70$), and further for Jacobs ($M=.61$), with lowest scores achieved for Metcalf ($M=.53$) as indicated by a significant repeated measures ANOVA with dilemma as the within-subjects factor $F(3,705)=30.030$; $p<001$, $\eta^2 = .11$. This main effect was conditioned by a gender by dilemma interaction effect $F(3,705)=2.857$; $p<05$, $\eta^2 = .012$. Scores per dilemma and gender are shown in Chart 2.



Female respondents scored high consistently for dilemmas 2 to 4 (Smith, Milgram and Jacobs), dropping lower for dilemma 1 (Metcalf), whereas male officers scored higher for dilemmas 2 and 3 (Smith and Milgram), dropping lower for 1 and 4 (Metcalf and Jacobs). Overall, it is similarity rather than difference by gender that is most striking for these results, except for dilemma 4 (Jacobs).

4.1.2.4 AICM Differences by Rank, Experience, Career Course and Branch of Service

4.1.2.4.1 Held Army Rank Differences

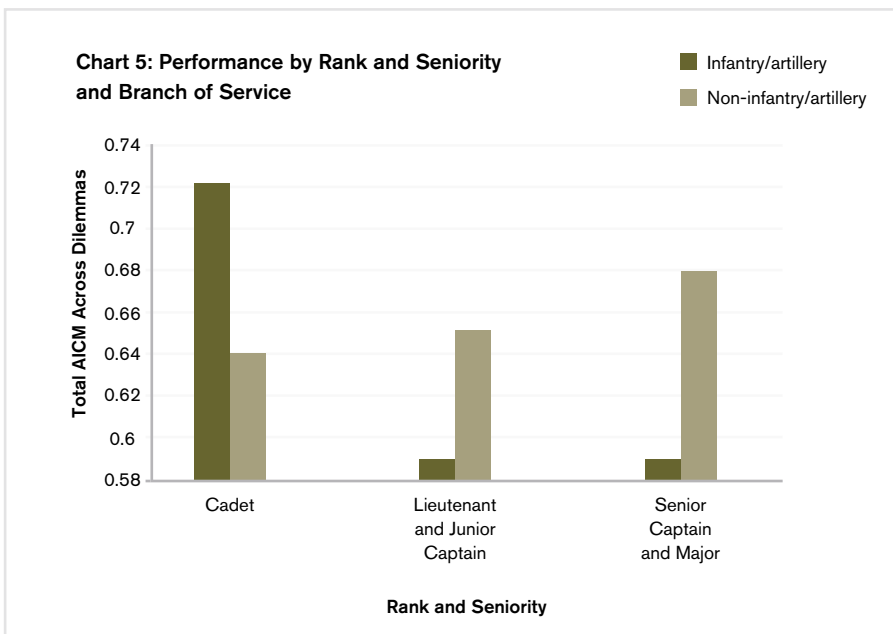
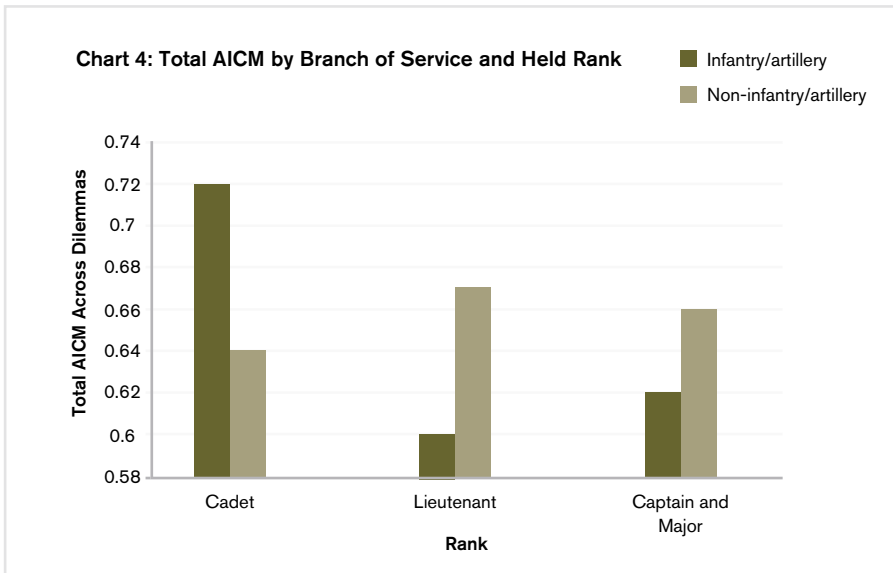
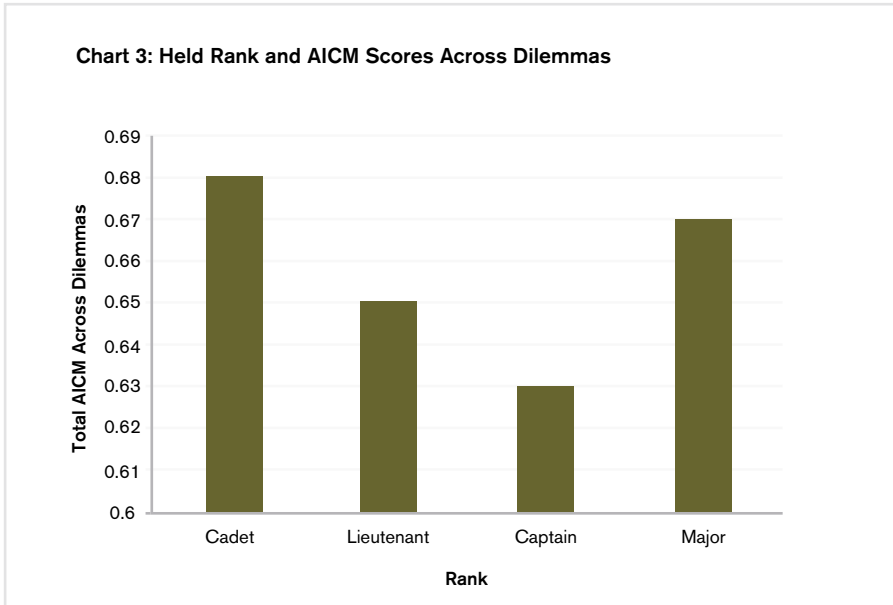
Overall, majors (M=.67) and cadets (M=.68) scored higher than lieutenants (M=.65) and captains (M=.63); however, these descriptive differences were not statistically significant. Results are presented in Chart 3.

4.1.2.4.2 Held Rank and Branch of Service Groups

Separating the officers into infantry and artillery and all other branches of service, and comparing total AICM scores for these groupings created a significant interaction effect ($F(2,205)=3.088$ $p<.05$, $\eta p^2 = .036$). As illustrated in Chart 4, this interaction effect showed that non-infantry/artillery officers outperformed infantry/artillery officers, except at the officer cadet level where this pattern was reversed (captains and majors were combined in one group to achieve adequate sample size). Other than these differences, total AICM scores followed similar patterns by rank for infantry/artillery officers versus other branches of service.

4.1.2.4.3 Three Rank Groupings by Branch of Service

The interaction effect was further explored by dividing the sample into three rather than four rank groups: cadets (n=76); lieutenants and junior captains (n=93); and, senior captains and majors (n=73). Rank and length of service variables were used to achieve this by dividing the captain rank group into senior (6 or more years' service) and junior holders of this rank (1 to 5 years' service). The significant interaction effect ($F(2,205)=4.022$ $p<.05$, $\eta p^2 = .038$) persisted for this revised grouping showing a dip in total AICM scores for infantry/artillery officers, see Chart 5: as cadets, these officers scored well but as junior officers had much lower average scores, which only partially improved for senior captains and majors. In comparison, non-infantry/artillery officers as cadets scored well below their infantry/artillery counterparts, but improved with seniority.



4.1.2.4.4 Career Course and Branch of Service

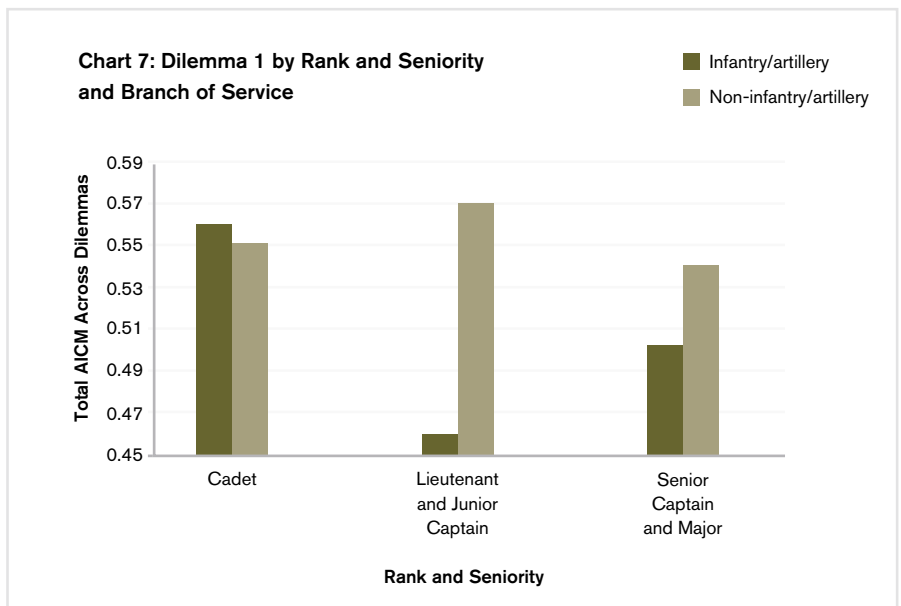
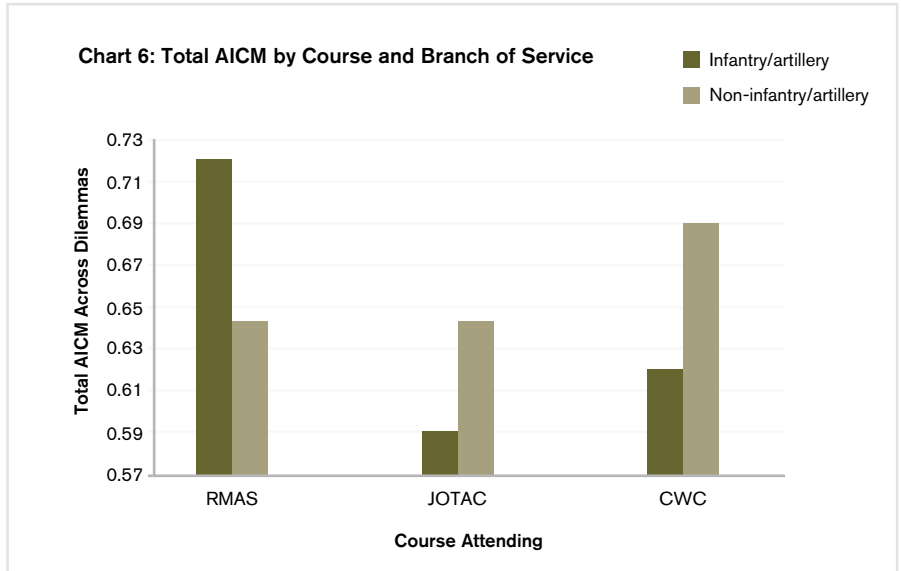
Given that data were collected at specific career courses, officers were also grouped in this way for analysis to see if this generated different scoring patterns. The groups were: RMAS (n=49¹⁴); JOTAC (n=81); and, CWC (n=81). Like previous rank-based groups, there was a significant interaction effect between ‘course’ and infantry/artillery and non-infantry/artillery distinctions ($F(2,205)=4.559$ $p<.05$, $\eta p^2=.043$). However, what was different was that this created a lower average result for JOTAC officers from cap badges other than infantry and artillery, such that they scored more closely to cadets from the same cap badge grouping (M=.64) than did lieutenants and junior captains.

4.1.2.5 AICM Differences by Dilemma and Branch of Service

While seniority by course produced a slightly stronger interaction effect, rank and seniority are more familiar military criteria and as such form the basis of the following analysis which explores each dilemma by the two branch of service groups.

4.1.2.5.1 Dilemma 1 – Metcalf

Participants were asked to select responses to an injured Somali surrounded by a large and unpredictable crowd during a resupply task. This dilemma was associated with the lowest results overall (M=.54) and within this, non-infantry/artillery officers outperformed remaining officers except at the cadet level, in keeping with broader scoring patterns. As can be seen in Chart 7, non-infantry/artillery officer scores were quite even across rank groups with highest results for lieutenants and junior captains (cadet (M=.55), lt. and jnr. capt.¹⁵ (M=.57), snr. capt. and maj. (M=.54)) in contrast to infantry/artillery officers who dipped noticeably at the middle rank group, partially recovering with experience (cadet (M=.56), lt. and jnr. capt. (M=.46), snr. capt. and maj. (M=.50)).



‘FOR MANY PEOPLE...THE IDEA OF ‘MILITARY ETHICS’ OR ‘THE LAW OF WAR’ APPEARS SOMEWHAT OF AN OXYMORON. HOWEVER... [WAR] HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN ONE OF THE MOST RULE-BOUND ACTIVITIES THAT MANKIND CONDUCTS.’
Professor David Wetham

¹⁴ The lower sample size is because of cadets who did not yet know their future branch of service.

¹⁵ Abbreviations used here refer to: lieutenant and junior captain (lt. and jnr. capt.); senior captain and major (snr. capt. and maj.).

4.1.2.5.2 Dilemma 2 – Smith

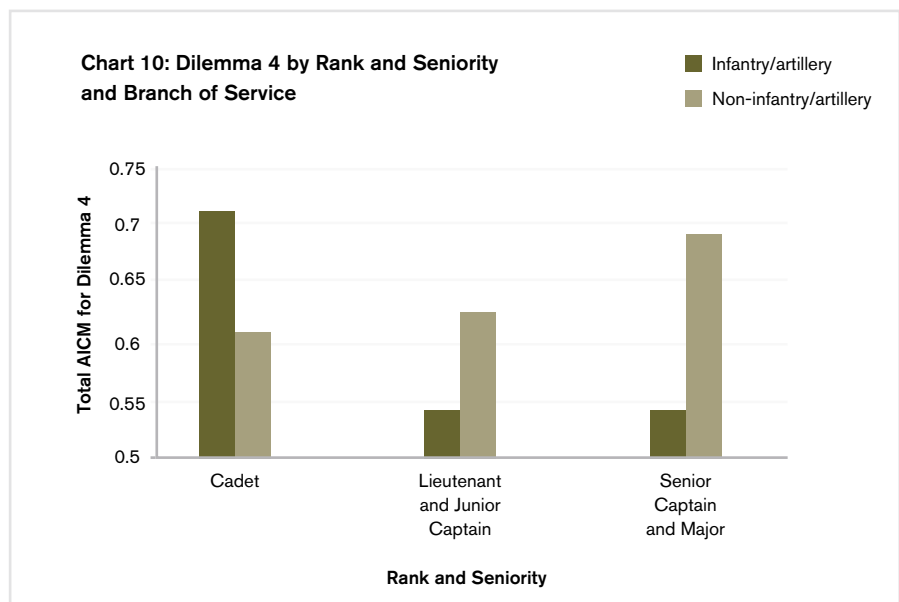
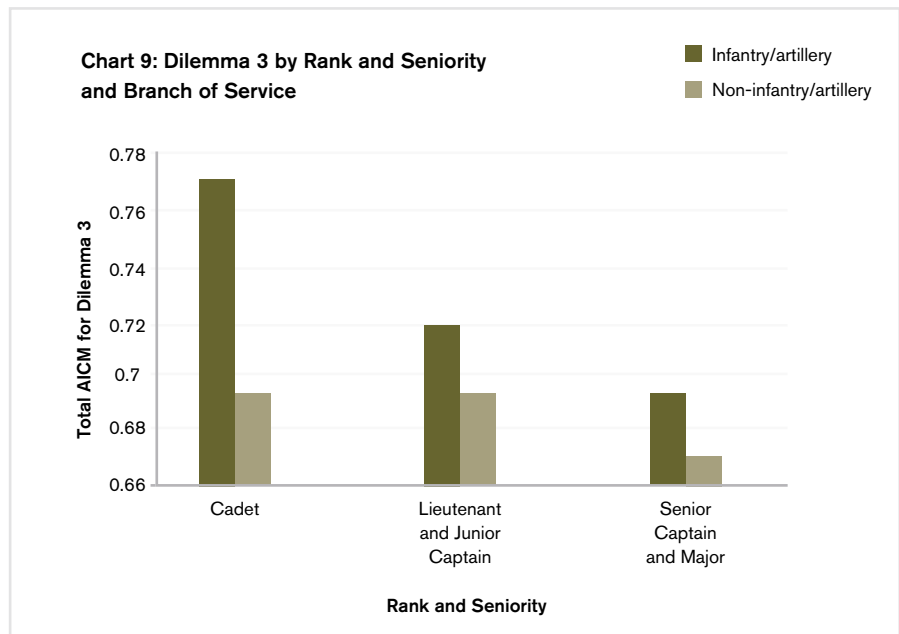
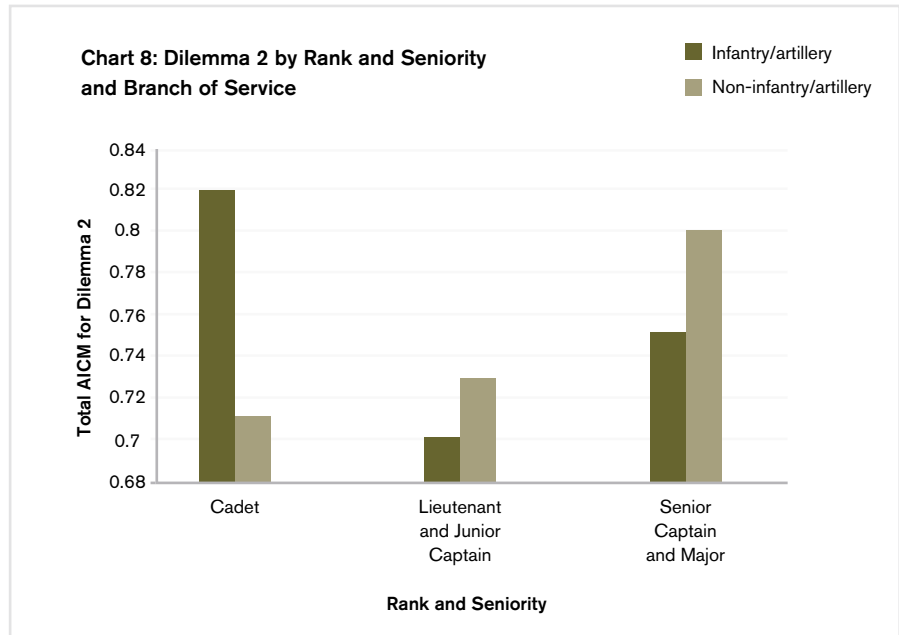
In the second dilemma, participants responded to time critical pressure from a sergeant major to get information about missing soldiers. Highest overall results were for this dilemma (M=.75). Again, non-infantry/artillery officers outperformed other officers except at cadet levels where infantry/artillery scores were much higher (M=.82 versus M=.71). Infantry/artillery officers again dipped at middle ranks (M=.70) recovering a little with seniority (M=.75), whereas non-infantry/artillery officers improved at each rank level (lt. and jnr. capt. (M=.73), snr. capt. and maj. (M=.80)). Chart 8 illustrates the results for this dilemma.

4.1.2.5.3 Dilemma 3 – Milgram

In dilemma 3, officers were asked to respond to a possible criminal investigation about the use of non-authorized tactics by soldiers. Overall, high average results were achieved for this dilemma (M=.70). As shown in Chart 9, infantry/artillery outperformed other officers across all ranks, but their scores reduced slightly with seniority (cadet (M=.77), lt. and jnr. capt. (M=.72), snr. capt. and maj (M=.69)). Though lower, non-infantry/artillery officer scores were quite consistent across rank groups (cadet (M=.69), lt. and jnr. capt. (M=.69), snr. capt. and maj. (M=.67)).

4.1.2.5.4 Dilemma 4 – Jacobs

This dilemma asked for participants to respond to a friend and fellow male officer who is having a relationship with a female soldier. Overall, results were third lowest (M=.62) for this dilemma which also separated officers by branch of service. As is the general pattern, infantry/artillery cadets had higher average scores than non-infantry/artillery cadets (M=.71 versus M=.61) but this dropped for lieutenants and junior captains (M=.54), hardly recovering with experience (M=.54). In contrast, non-infantry/artillery officer scores were similar for the first two rank groups (M=.61 and M=.62) but increased for senior captains and majors (M=.69), as shown in Chart 10.



4.1.2.6 Demographic Categories and ICM Performance

From many factors asked of officers completing the survey, intentions to stay or leave the Army produced an interaction effect in combination with their stage of career. Specifically, this interaction shows that junior officers attending JOTAC, who had also signalled an intention to leave the Army, performed less well than others; on the other hand, CWC officers who were also leaving the Army were associated with high scores. This interaction between career time and desire to leave approached statistical significance ($F(1,153)=3.48$; $p < .06$, $\eta p^2 = .022$). Early decisions to leave the Army seemed more likely to reflect an incompatibility with Army values that was not present in higher ranks.

Another factor of significance is the relationship between officers' assessment of themselves against their peers and AICM scores. For example, participants who rated themselves as 'mostly better' ($M=.68$) than their peers scored higher than those who said they were 'better' ($M=.61$) or 'about the same' ($M=.64$) as their peers. A very small number of officers claiming

to be 'below the standards' of their peers were excluded from analysis ($F(1,227) = 3.411$; $p < .05$, $\eta p^2 = .029$). The main effect was not conditioned by gender. Statistical differences, however, were not found for other categories, such as education, religion, number of operational tours etc. A full list of demographic categories by AICM can be found in Appendix 4.

4.1.3 Self-Reporting Measure – VIA-IS-E1

4.1.3.1 Overview of Self-Reported Character Strengths

In addition to responding to moral dilemmas, officers were asked about their own character strengths using a self-report survey (VIA-IS-E1). This survey required participants to indicate the extent to which 24 listed character strengths are part of their own character; this indicated their most and least dominant character strengths. Average results for all officers are shown in Table 5 and are split by gender. Dominant strengths are at the top of the table and least dominant strengths are at the bottom. Ranked mean (average) scores and standard deviations for the officers are included.

These data show that the top five reported strengths for the entire sample were:

- teamwork
- honesty
- curiosity
- fairness
- perseverance

At the other end, least dominant strengths for this group were:

- spirituality
- prudence
- self-regulation
- appreciation of beauty
- forgiveness

Though there were only small average gender differences (Table 5) *kindness* made it into the top five reported strengths for females, compared to men where *kindness* ranked above half way in the list of 24 strengths.



Table 5: Values In Action Character Strengths

All (n=226)	Men (n=176)	Women (n=50)
Teamwork (4.12, 0.78)	Teamwork (4.14, 0.79)	Perseverance (4.12,0.90)
Honesty (4.12, 0.83)	Curiosity (4.13, 0.79)	Honesty (4.12, 0.80)
Curiosity (4.08, 0.80)	Honesty (4.12, 0.84)	Kindness (4.10, 0.93)
Fairness (4.07, 0.94)	Fairness (4.06, 0.94)	Fairness (4.10, 0.95)
Perseverance (4.04, 0.92)	Perseverance (4.02, 0.92)	Teamwork (4.08, 0.78)
Leadership (3.93, 0.82)	Leadership (3.98, 0.83)	Curiosity (3.94, 0.84)
Bravery (3.88, 0.88)	Bravery (3.90, 0.87)	Zest (3.88, 0.96)
Judgment (3.87, 1.02)	Judgment (3.89, 1.03)	Humility (3.86, 1.01)
Humour (3.84, 1.01)	Humour (3.85, 1.04)	Social Intelligence (3.84, 0.96)
Kindness (3.83, 0.89)	Perspective (3.82, 0.91)	Love of Learning (3.82, 1.02)
Perspective (3.81, 0.94)	Kindness (3.75, 0.86)	Bravery (3.80, 0.93)
Humility (3.84, 1.01)	Humility (3.71, 1.02)	Humour (3.78, 0.91)
Social Intelligence (3.63, 1.12)	Love of Learning (3.57, 1.09)	Leadership (3.78, 0.76)
Love of Learning (3.63, 1.08)	Social Intelligence (3.57, 1.09)	Judgment (3.78, 1.00)
Zest (3.55, 1.04)	Creativity (3.46, 0.97)	Perspective (3.76, 1.04)
Gratitude (3.41, 1.04)	Zest (3.46, 1.05)	Love (3.72, 1.03)
Love (3.40, 1.13)	Gratitude (3.39, 1.01)	Gratitude (3.48, 1.15)
Creativity (3.39, 1.02)	Love (3.30, 1.15)	Hope (3.34, 1.27)
Hope (3.07, 1.16)	Forgiveness (3.02,1.20)	Creativity (3.16, 1.15)
Forgiveness (3.01,1.21)	Hope (2.99, 1.12)	Appreciation of Beauty (3.14, 1.26)
Appreciation of Beauty (2.98, 1.26)	Appreciation of Beauty (2.94, 1.27)	Forgiveness (2.96, 1.52)
Self-regulation (2.87, 1.11)	Self-regulation (2.87, 1.11)	Spirituality (2.96, 1.52)
Prudence (2.87, 1.20)	Prudence (2.86, 1.22)	Prudence (2.90, 1.13)
Spirituality (2.82, 1.48)	Spirituality (2.78, 1.47)	Self-regulation (2.86, 1.11)

Note: scores correspond to the following scale: 'strongly agree' (5), 'definitely agree' (4), 'slightly agree' (3), 'neutral' (2), 'disagree' (1).

4.1.3.2 Comparing Moral Dilemma (AICM) and Self-Report (VIA-IS-E1) Results

Total AICM scores were compared to self-report results for character strengths in order to explore specifically the research question: How do self-reports of character strengths relate to the dilemma scores? Performance for the military dilemmas was significantly and positively correlated with officers' self-reports of character strengths for the following:

- judgement, $r=.168$ [.043, .295]
- honesty, $r=.238$ [.103, .377]
- bravery, $r=.152$ [-.013, .294]
- perseverance, $r=.152$ [.027, .285]
- fairness, $r=.253$ [.119, .393]
- leadership, $r=.191$ [.041, .326]
- prudence, $r=.170$ [.032, .295]
- self-regulation. $r=.210$ [.088, .329];

and negatively correlated for creativity, $r=-.149$ [-.269, -.023]. (All p 's < .005).

The relationships between AICM results and the above strengths were mainly positive in that self-reported increases for the strengths corresponded to higher total AICM scores. This correlation, however, was not the case for *creativity* where higher averages for this strength correlated with lower total AICM results.

Further details about how character strengths combine in their relationship to AICM is available in Appendix 2.

4.1.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

Forty officers also took part in semi-structured interviews. These are described in this section in as much as they relate to the dominant AICM measure¹⁶ for two distinct scoring groups: a) the 10 lowest scoring officers; and b) the 10 highest scoring officers. Tests show that these were not atypical groups in other respects and a list of characteristics associated with these individuals can be found in Appendix 5. This Section relates to the research question as set out in Section 2.3 that was concerned with exploring AICM scores in relation to interview questions about Army values, especially those two values not assessed by AICM (selfless commitment and discipline). If performance on AICM reflects meaningful differences then this should be seen in responses to questions asked during the interviews about Army values,

including the officers' own experiences of those values. These questions are paraphrased below¹⁷:

- How far officers believe Army Values and Standards transfer across professional and personal lives;
- What personal qualities and character strengths an ideal officer of their own rank might have;
- What routine professional challenges they have faced or are facing;
- If a single professional challenge stands out as especially difficult for them, including how these were resolved and what lessons (if any) were learnt;
- What pressures or barriers make it difficult for them – or others like them – to do the right moral thing from time to time;
- Which personal qualities or strengths are most important to them in their current role as an Army officer.

This part of the report involves a different research paradigm that is concerned with understanding the perspective of the Army officers (see Section 3: Methodology).

Findings are organised in this Section by each question asked and then, within that, by AICM group in the order of 'lowest' followed by 'highest' scoring group.

This following account of the interviews begins with a description by group of why individuals became Army officers and if or when they planned to leave the Army.

4.1.4.1 Becoming Army Officers

In the **low**¹⁸ scoring AICM group, reasons for becoming Army officers were especially varied. For example, officers talked about the following motivating factors for becoming Army officers: their own positive experiences of being in the Officer Training Corps (OTC), Combined Cadet Force (CCF) or Air Training Corps (ATC); general participation in outdoor activities; being a member of the Scouts; participating in sport; feeling generally comfortable with the Army and having military family connections. Present in this group were two ex-junior-non-commissioned officers, one of whom was encouraged to become a commissioned officer, while the other realised their own ambition to do so. Others said they wanted from their Army career to have a

challenge, make an impact, gain operational experience and to lead and change people. One officer felt they had no option but to join the Army and mentioned as incentives cheaper housing and disposable income in exchange for sacrifice.

For **high** AICM scoring officers, reasons for becoming Army officers included a feeling of general comfort with the Army; military family history; positive personal experiences of being a member of OTC; being a member of Scouts and taking part in outdoor pursuits. Two officers had multiple positive reasons for joining whereas others wanted to be fulfilled and challenged; to lead people and to have fun and excitement. A number of individuals also said they valued the ethos and character of the

Army and of Army personnel.

4.1.4.2 Intentions to Leave the Army

An intention to leave the Army soon was commonly expressed by those in the **low** scoring AICM group. Reasons given for leaving were: aspirations to travel; family matters; limited opportunities and limited challenges in the Army, as well as always expecting that they would have a short career. Across all forty interviews, officers regularly said they would stay in the Army only until the point that they stopped enjoying it. This was a frequent sentiment expressed by 'stayers' in this low group. One officer added that moving every two years prevented boredom and encouraged their continued service.

As well as a commonly expressed desire to stay for as long as an Army career was enjoyable, the **high** scoring AICM group tended to be undecided about their career length or to hope for a long Army career. One officer said there was 'no point plodding on unless you were adding value'.

4.1.4.3 What Makes an 'Ideal' Army Officer?

Responses to the question about what makes an 'ideal' officer of the same rank as respondents divided into six main themes for the **low** group: professional competence; leading by example; integrity (and humour); being humble; having enthusiasm and/or dedication; and, being charismatic.

¹⁶ Interview data will also be used to inform further analysis that is beyond the scope of this report.

¹⁷ The qualitative data represents a range of topics on a junior officer's experiences in his/her Army career. This report focusses on aspects of the interview that emphasise the officer's own relationships to Army values, rather than for example soldiers and more senior officers about whom questions were also asked during interview.

¹⁸ When discussing analysis the term 'low group' and 'high group' are used to refer to officers who scored low on the AICM dilemmas and those who scored highly, respectively.

Additionally, based on their own Army role, one officer said that an 'ideal' officer would 'be proactive and be willing to work alone a lot'. Descriptions of an 'ideal' officer among the **high** group included qualities of humility (similar to 'humble' above); respect for others and being selflessly committed, but these officers tended to describe 'personal-quality-clusters' that an 'ideal' officer would have, such as:

- Calmness, step back, assess, listen to advice, strong morals
- Intelligence, keep in perspective, prioritise, physically robust, work hard don't put self-first
- Hits everything – values and standards, trustworthy, integrity, getting things done on time, able to talk to people you command, approachable
- Professional competence, self-aware of shortfalls, interested in developing self, fair and good communication

4.1.4.4 What Routine Professional Challenges does the Officer Face?

Routine professional challenges for the **low** group included conditions of Army service such as Army life in general; too much uncertainty; reduced incentives for serving; fewer 'carrots'; achieving successful career profiles and responding to specific personal development needs. Also mentioned were welfare matters such as accommodation issues for females; dealing with soldiers with multiple problems and witnessing soldiers being messed around – for example, moving them at short notice when there was no need to do so. Other challenges were specific to the officers' roles and or positions, such as certain kinds of task at Sandhurst or understanding other organisations that they had to deal with. Other mentioned challenges fit themes of managing relationships and liaising and communicating. Examples of these are challenges of relating down the ranks to more experienced senior non-commissioned officers and translating information from above into digestible formats. Two remaining themes for this group were making judgements (eg, decisions about an officer passing or failing a course) and moral matters (eg, disciplining others and dealing with one's own 'moral compass').

Apart from one Sandhurst cadet (who mentioned keeping up with lessons, applying course knowledge and physical demands), routine professional challenges for the **high** group clustered around four themes: planning and managing; liaising and getting things done; guiding and responding to others; and moral challenges. The last two themes require explication. Moral challenges depict coping with another officer behaving badly and adjusting to Army standards of morality after civilian life, whereas the theme guiding and responding to others encompasses noticing and dealing with the needs of others such as helping them see where they have gone wrong, regretting in hindsight not helping a person more and the need to get to know people well in the context of delivering bad news.

4.1.4.5 Single Professional Challenges

Many officers identified a single professional challenge that stood out from other challenges. Inevitably, these were varied and difficult to theme.

Examples from the **low** group are: training the Afghan Army when individuals 'are in it just for the money'; being threatened with disciplinary action, when others do not do what they should do; physical efforts at Sandhurst and dealing with the disappointment of not deploying. Lessons learned from these prominent professional challenges comprise learning to advise others and 'making a turning point for responsibility'. One officer also learned to be critical of himself from a moral perspective following a particular professional challenge.

Single professional challenges for the **high** group involved some physical challenges. However, two of the officers described as a challenge that stood out from others, situations involving service related deaths. The first scenario involved the death of a soldier on exercise and the other a lengthy period looking after bereaved family members attending a memorial service. Other single challenges were dealing with a colleague making wrong decisions; 'losing their cool' with soldiers and dealing with the aftermath of this; coping with the demands of being positive and enthusiastic in a 'selfish' environment; coping with a service complaint and negative attention from the chain of command.

A single challenging event was not always identified by these officers. However, follow-up comments about challenges that they were able to identify suggest a lot of learning took place afterwards: 'you need to kick yourself out of the selfish zone'; it 'taught me my style of mentoring does not work for all'; 'my emotional sensitivity to subordinates and peers is much greater'; I am more aware of the emotional impact of loss, it was humbling to see a range of emotional responses from everyone and I learned not to make too forceful decisions against which people would react.

4.1.4.6 Most Important Personal Quality

Junior officers asked about their most important personal quality were subsequently probed directly about the Army values of *self-discipline* and *selfless commitment* if these values were not mentioned spontaneously by the officer. In their responses, officers in the **low** group said that integrity and/or honesty were widely valued. For example, one officer said they had resisted pressure to falsify unit statistics; one said they tried to live by integrity but that it was difficult, and others said they were always upfront and honest, or at least 'pretty good' at integrity. Interestingly, the officer that resisted lying about unit statistics said that he had subsequently become cynical about this because 'in the end what does a few percent matter whichever way you look at it'. Another officer said they did not always follow through on integrity.

Self-discipline was described as: 'steady'; 'easy'; 'okay'; 'good'; 'don't shy away from tasks'; 'always (having) a clear line'; and, 'involves putting in the hours'. Officers also said: 'you need to do something wrong for it to be an issue'; 'it is neglected more widely'; 'not to live by all the time'; 'it can fall by the wayside sometimes'; 'standards are slipping'; 'people like their own time'; 'officers slip away more than they should – not a deal breaker'; recognition that they had neglected physical fitness and that doing the right thing was not easy.

Selfless commitment was described as: 'good'; 'in the contract and not a choice'; 'easy' and the 'biggest thing I do and compatible with being a perfectionist workaholic'. It was also recognised that selfless commitment was: not always adhered to; that it was slipping for some who saw the Army as a job more than a vocation (this comment was about other officers); that 'it was quite punchy once during ops but dropping now'; and, that people were not going above and beyond every day (again a comment about others). This **low** group also valued loyalty with some admitting to finding this quality hard to achieve at times. Two officers said that they found respect for others hard to achieve because it is difficult to respect someone who does not deserve it. Being professionally competent, courageous and responding to feedback were described as important, as was teamwork.

In terms of the officers' most important personal quality, the **high** group described the following in positive ways: integrity (and honesty); leadership and motivation; respect for others; loyalty; humour; helping others (teamwork); and, courage (but see below). Another strong theme for this group was personal development of oneself and their soldiers, which required an honest reflexivity. Comments such as: 'you will never nail values and standards – the day you stop asking is the day you stop developing'; 'I'm very keen on developing the guys'; 'it's not that I don't feel humility I'm bad at showing it'; 'being honest with self – risk of tricking self'; 'sometimes I miss on courage – I can be outspoken or miss if tired'; and, 'need to recognise when I am not supporting the boss – be honest with self'.

This group rated themselves highly for **self-discipline**, for example as being 'fundamental throughout life'; as being close to loyalty and as an individual requirement for maintaining standards. Negative comments about self-discipline were concerned mostly with difficulties disciplining others or as an expression of shock when others did not have this quality. Two officers discussed struggling a little with their own self-discipline.

Difficulties of being **selflessly committed** were recounted by this group of officers within an overarching intention to be so. Selfless commitment was described as: 'in my top three'; good morally and physically; most difficult to achieve; worthwhile but impossible to deliver completely 'without being a 'yes' man and having no identity' and particularly difficult for those with young families. More nuanced approaches to this value included a suggestion that it is better viewed as a loss of self (selflessness) and that it requires balance because it is not effective to give everything to the Army. One officer realised that although they put in the hours, being better at time management might be more effective for them.

4.1.4.7 Transfer of Values and Standards from Military to Civilian Life

While the possibility of the transfer of values and standards from military to civilian life was generally supported by the **low** group (eg, 'by this stage character has developed on values and standards'; 'you're never off duty once you have commissioned'; 'if you come home and are different then that will cause problems on operations'), there was nevertheless an expression of a balancing dynamic and some ambiguity in their discussions (eg, 'ought to be, but officers are hypocritical but better than soldiers'; there are always difficulties – it's not easy to be the best person you could be; 'The Sun test is best – is it bad for an officer to wear jeans on the weekends for example'; you 'play a role in the Army – knowing difference of who you are as a person as well'; 'by and large fairly easy – but there are certain grey areas on a sliding scale').

Similarly, for the **high** group there was mostly support for the possible transfer of Army values and standards to their civilian lives: the values 'should permeate both'; 'some are sceptical but we should live by values and standards at all times'; 'yes definitely think that'; 'the Christian in me would say completely'; and, 'can't distinguish – they are innate strong qualities'. However, a small number of comments expressed a more balanced and partially ambiguous view: 'difficult to be 100% all the time but that's not what it's asking – it's asking that you live with those values in mind'; '100% necessary but hard to do and no one is perfect'.

4.1.4.8 Pressure or Barriers for Doing the Right Thing

Among responses to the question concerning pressure or barriers to doing the right moral thing, was a suggestion in the **low** group that the Army system is 'geared towards helping you do the right thing'. Other responses identified points of difficulty as pressures or barriers to good moral action, such as: 'yourself'; when there's an easy way out; social media; the close-knit Army environment; a vertical Army rank structure; wanting to be popular; the need to think for the long term, being seen as a whistle blower; and 'bringing cap badge, friends and career through the mud'.

The **high** group also discussed a range of pressures or barriers to doing the right moral thing, including: pressure to pre-date signatures for inspections; confident and competent soldiers; not wanting to be the one that rocks the boat; embarrassment; other people's pride when you want to change their behaviour and social and peer pressure. One officer said there were no pressures or barriers and one said that for '90% of your time you have to hold your capital – only fight the battles having big impact – people will say who are you to have that opinion (lieutenant)'.

4.1.4.9 Summary of Finding from Semi-Structured Interviews

These findings were supportive of the kinds of differences expected between high and low AICM scorers as summarised below.

Responses to interview questions about Army values have been described in this Section as they relate to low and high scores for the AICM. Several dominant themes stand out. For example, while reasons given for becoming Army officers were generally inspirational and in keeping with high quality potential officers, the high scoring group stood out for mentioning character and values as reasons for joining the Army. It is also the case that responses from low scorers to this question often included quite mundane motivations and reference to an intention to leave – or a statement that they were in the process of leaving – the Army.

In descriptions of an 'ideal' officer, all participants mentioned admirable military qualities compatible with Army Values and Standards. A notable difference for the high scoring group, however, was a tendency to describe clusters of personal qualities – rather than single ones – depicting visions of a rounded or balanced 'ideal' officer.

Descriptions of professional Army challenges reflect many of the routine difficulties experienced in an Army context, with low scorers tending to focus more comprehensively on these kinds of difficulty. In contrast to such descriptions, high scorers focussed on impediments of accomplishing goals, provided some moral content in their responses and were especially detailed in their accounts of lessons learned from being professionally challenged.

When asked about Army values and their own orientation to them, accounts of striving for and achieving necessary standards of excellence followed as described above. For the low scoring group, self-discipline was occasionally discussed as a personal shortcoming, whereas the high group expressed a broader range of qualities (Army values), talked about how they may be nurtured by themselves and others, and discussed a requirement to continuously work on those values.

Both groups were quite unanimous in accepting that Army values and standards should and could transfer from Army to civilian lives, albeit in a less detailed and less reflective form for the low scoring group. A clear and nuanced understanding of the necessary and inherent connection between contexts was notable among high scorers.

The question about which barriers and pressures might work against junior officers doing the right moral thing in an Army context triggered the responses discussed above which, on the whole, reflect very well on the quality of individual officers concerned, as do the interviews more generally.



'WE ARE DEFINED BY WHAT WE DO REPEATEDLY, THEREFORE EXCELLENCE IS A HABIT, NOT AN ACT.'

Aristotle

5 Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

This Section considers findings in light of the research questions stated at the beginning of the report.

5.1 TO WHAT EXTENT DO JUNIOR OFFICERS SHOW ETHICAL REASONING IN LINE WITH STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE DESCRIBED IN THE *BRITISH ARMY VALUES AND STANDARDS GUIDE*, ESPECIALLY REGARDING STRENGTHS OF COURAGE, RESPECT FOR OTHERS, INTEGRITY, AND LOYALTY?

That participants scored well overall for AICM ($M=.65$) is suggestive of appropriate application of Army values to the dilemmas and of ethical reasoning that aligns with Army standards of excellence. This result also reflects choices consistent with decisive ethical leadership under difficult circumstances, supported by a grasp of why such action is needed (justification choices).

Generally, in terms of moral development, the ability to identify reasons for action lags behind a capacity for knowing what to do. In this sample, the officers' justification scores were only slightly lower than for action choices – again, suggestive of well-developed moral agency. The finding that highest results were for identifying *poor actions* is perhaps not surprising given the severe consequences of making poor choices in military contexts. A number of officers recalled during interview, however, that as a result of recent operations,

there had been a shift towards a slightly risk-averse culture in the British Army which, if true, might manifest in heightened awareness of *poor* options.

Although female officers moderately outperformed males for action choices, gender differences were smaller on the AICM than is generally the case for moral dilemmas of this kind. Some minor differences of approach to specific dilemmas were noted however, suggesting that female officers were slightly more willing to protect their soldiers against investigation (Milgram) and that male officers were more prone to distraction from loyalty to a friend over doing the right thing (Jacobs).

Overall, officers most successfully rejected inappropriate aggressive methods under pressure and chose to uphold truth to the detriment of their soldiers, but were *least* successful diverting from a mission to make a rescue (Metcalf) or upholding the Army's fraternisation policy (Jacobs). Poor responses to the Metcalf dilemma signal a trend towards prioritising mission and avoiding risk; poor responses to the Jacobs dilemma suggest over-emphasis on loyalty to friends. Some officers said during interview that they disagreed with the Army policy on fraternisation under certain circumstances, especially if it did not compromise operational effectiveness.

Despite high average dilemma results, it is also the case that 35% of responses were

inappropriate. Scrutiny of trends among these responses is useful towards continuous development and improvement. The trends may be divided into those that relate to action and justification choices. They involve individuals who occasionally made selections at odds with the expert panel, as well as a few individuals who performed poorly overall.

Low scoring action choices were a result of choices that were indecisive, unnecessarily risky and concerned with getting the job done at all costs. They were also choices that failed to 'go the extra mile' for another human being, turned a blind eye to means in favour of an end, used inappropriate force, were occasionally foolish, concealed the truth, or put soldiers before truth and failed to act when action was needed.

Similarly, low scoring *justification* choices were a result of choices that showed an over-emphasis on rules and/or on authority, apathy, risk aversion or acceptance of poor means for desired ends. These choices also derived from: collective cover-up; an emphasis on being found-out; an excess of loyalty to soldiers; an over-emphasis on career; self-preservation; following others; putting soldiers before the truth; giving selective accounts of what has happened; prioritising other factors such as achieving the mission over risk to life, and not showing appropriate respect to the enemy.



5.1.1 Performance by Rank

It was a little unexpected that officer cadets and senior captains and majors would do better on the measure than lieutenants and junior captains. A measure such as the AICM might be expected to generate mostly lower scores among junior personnel which then improve with experience. By the age of attendance at RMAS potential Army officers' most formative years for character development are largely over and Army selection processes are, of course, designed to pick the best candidates for further development. Moral dilemmas used in the research as part of the Intermediate Concept Method are unique to the Army environment and profession, but it is also the case that the application of virtue has a global as well as a role-related expression. In the 1962 Lees Knowles lecture, Lt General Sir John Hackett made the same point:

The military virtues are not in a class apart; "they are virtues which are virtues in every walk of life...none the less virtues for being jewels set in blood and iron." They include such qualities as courage, fortitude and loyalty. What is important about such qualities as these...is that they acquire in the military context, in addition to their moral significance, a functional significance as well. (Army, 2008)

It is also known that Verweij, Hofhuis and Soeters (2007) found few differences on Lind's moral judgement test between military and civilian responses to military dilemmas, except when it came to more experienced military personnel who did better. In terms of identifying and applying the virtues, perhaps military and civilian differences are not as stark as are often imagined?

Despite limited military experience, high scoring cadets seemed to see the virtues at stake in the measure. At the time of the survey, they were being educated in ethical and military excellence, possibly in idealised ways as is the mode for military academies. As such, officer cadets were primed for (hypothetical) identification of military excellence. A combination of military naivety, emerging institutionalisation and good character may have afforded this group an advantage.

Research on other professions has shown a similar pattern whereby junior professionals outperformed experienced colleagues but did less well than very experienced colleagues for similar measures (Arthur *et al.*, 2014; 2015a; 2015b; Kristjánsson *et al.*, 2017a; 2017b).

Another group related factor is that senior captains and majors have the benefit of accumulated experience and are perhaps more likely to respond to the dilemmas as fully-rounded professionals. They have brought together military experience and Army values at an advanced level. Unlike the cadets, they consider all military factors expertly ahead of responding in line with Army values, whereas some of the lieutenants and captains were distracted by military factors (too mission focussed) that distracted them from appropriate military choices that were also compatible with Army values. Senior captains and majors, as a group, were perhaps acting from a professional orientation that equates to Aristotelian practical wisdom or *phronesis*, which, in simple terms, means that theory and practice have become thoroughly entwined and integrated; for the cadets, theory dominates, while for lieutenants and junior captains, practice dominates.

Of course, it is also known that infantry/artillery officers were depressing scores, especially for lieutenants and junior captains. However, as cadets, infantry/artillery officers scored much higher than lieutenants and junior captains from these branches of service which recovered with experience. At this point, a look at each dilemma is appropriate to explore this result.

The **Metcalf dilemma** divided officers most by branch of service. Infantry/artillery lieutenants and junior captains performed least well with a tendency to over-emphasise the mission but this improved with experience. That non-infantry/artillery officers scored high across experience and rank, but were evenly matched to remaining officers only at the cadet level, suggested infantry/artillery experiences, and not other cap badge experiences in the years after Sandhurst, were associated with a tendency towards military instrumentalism.

Interviewed officers noted to the research team that the **Smith dilemma** would produce best results because an anti-torture sentiment was well absorbed into Army rhetoric and practice. Overall, this was indeed the case. Even so, one or two officers said that an official line on aggressive methods would be hard to achieve if the Smith dilemma were real because it invokes a military vulnerability – the need to be loyal to comrades. Among infantry/artillery officers, lieutenants and junior captains showed less aversion to obtaining information aggressively than did other rank/experience groups. This compares to a junior-to-senior pattern of improvement for non-infantry/artillery officers. Again, early infantry/artillery (lt. and jnr. captains) experiences were associated with a suppression of Army values for military ends – a tendency that reduced with experience.

Another dip for infantry/artillery lieutenants and junior captains for the **Milgram dilemma** did not recover with rank, suggesting that experience is associated with a stronger sense of loyalty to soldiers. It may be that experience has taught these officers that sharing information with higher command/investigating authorities can conflict with other leaderships and value considerations.

Again, in response to the **Jacobs dilemma**, infantry/artillery officers dipped dramatically in the middle ranking group and this does not recover with seniority. Infantry/artillery officer cadets were more amenable to stand up for the fraternisation policy than were more experienced officers in this branch of service. As with all four dilemmas, it is possible that officer cadets were more vulnerable to a desirability bias owing to their new position in the organisation. They were also accustomed to being tested and giving responses in line with expected standards. Fewer female soldiers work alongside infantry/artillery officers and this is something that officers told us would manifest in responses to the measure.

Relatedly, there was a higher number of female officers in the sample that were not from the infantry or artillery. To check if differences so far discussed were, in fact, acting as a proxy for gender, the sample were divided by gender and the interaction effect remained even when female officers were removed.

In summary, responses to each dilemma showed clear, nuanced differences by branch of service and stage of career such that, although infantry/artillery officers scored very well across the board as cadets, at later career stages they seemed especially drawn to options emphasising the mission and getting things done over other considerations. In terms of responses to each dilemma from officers of all branches of service, central concerns of anti-torture practice (Smith) and not covering up soldiers' failings (Milgram) attracted highest AICM results. Lower scores were, however, achieved for dilemmas requiring ethical balance between compassion and mission (Metcalf) and for squaring personal relationships with military needs and policy (Jacobs).

5.2 HOW DO JUNIOR OFFICERS RATE THEIR OWN CHARACTER STRENGTHS? WHAT ARE THEIR MOST AND LEAST DOMINANT STRENGTHS?

The 24 areas assessed by the self-report measure cover a broad range of character strengths that do not entirely overlap with Army values. It is reassuring that from these 24 strengths the officers, as a group, reported their own strengths in ways well-aligned with Army values. This evidence suggests that, on average, the officers value as key aspects of who they are, strengths of character that are either specifically listed as Army values or are highly relevant to the Army profession. For example, results show that their most dominant strengths were (associated Army values are shown in brackets): bravery (courage), honesty (integrity), teamwork (loyalty, selfless commitment), leadership (all values), fairness (respect), perseverance (self-discipline).

Female officers did not differ from male officers except that they rated kindness (respect) as a top three strength. It is also worth emphasising that teamwork was the overall most dominant reported character strength.

It would be misleading to suggest, in the same vein, that average least dominant reported character strengths are not relevant for the Army profession. Indeed, the importance of some or all the least dominant reported strengths (spirituality, prudence, self-regulation, appreciation of beauty and forgiveness) has been discussed by individual officers and there is also a correlation between some of those and AICM results (eg, self-regulation).

5.3 HOW DO RESPONSES TO MORAL DILEMMAS RELATE TO THE JUNIOR OFFICERS' SELF-REPORTED CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING INTERVIEW ABOUT ARMY VALUES?

5.3.1 Self-Report

Correlations between higher AICM scores and some self-reported character strengths suggested that application of Army values in response to the dilemmas was related to strengths of: judgement, honesty, bravery, perseverance, fairness, leadership, prudence and self-regulation. In many cases these map onto stated Army values but as a group are generally strengths one would expect to find among Army officers. However, also present in this group was the strength of creativity, which correlated negatively such that the more highly an officer rated himself or herself for creativity, the more likely this was to correspond to lower AICM results¹⁹.

Overall, the convergence of information from these two measures was consistent with the view of the AICM as representing values that are central to the Army profession and not just general character strengths.

5.3.2 Interviews

All interviewed officers discussed Army values in overwhelmingly positive ways, generally accepting them as central for their lives. On the whole, they easily recounted situations when these were brought to the fore and described admirable qualities among fellow officers.

Using AICM results to separate interviewed officers into top and bottom scoring groups distinguished the quality of interview answers in subtle ways, supportive of the aspiration that AICM was meaningfully separating officers on their application of Army values to the military dilemmas.

In general terms, high scoring officers could be distinguished from their low scoring peers based on responses they gave that were especially inspirational. Further, by responses that, for example: mentioned character and values explicitly as motivations for joining the Army; that defined their 'ideal' officers in a holistic and balanced way; that discussed themselves in an ongoing and reflexive way with an intention to improve and learn from experiences; and, that rarely mentioned intentions to leave the Army.

‘NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER—IN NOTHING, GREAT OR SMALL, LARGE OR PETTY—NEVER GIVE IN, EXCEPT TO CONVICTIONS OF HONOUR AND GOOD SENSE.’

Winston Churchill

¹⁹ It is worth noting that officers' ratings of themselves compared to their peers were significantly related to their AICM results.

5.4 HOW DO HIGH AND LOW PERFORMING JUNIOR OFFICERS DESCRIBE THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ARMY VALUES OF SELFLESS COMMITMENT AND DISCIPLINE? WHAT ROUTINE AND KEY CHALLENGES HAVE THE OFFICERS FACED AND WHAT LESSONS (IF ANY) WERE LEARNT? WHAT QUALITIES OF AN 'IDEAL' JUNIOR OFFICER ARE ADMIRABLE AND ASPIRED TO? HOW FAR DO OFFICERS BELIEVE ARMY VALUES TRANSFER ACROSS PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIVES?

Based on a sub-sample of interviews with twenty officers drawn from high and low performing groups on the AICM, these officers explained the centrality of self-discipline for the Army profession. Both groups emphasised keeping standards high and calling individuals to account. Similarly, both groups also recognised that this Army Value is difficult to maintain, requiring continuous effort. Some degree of 'slippage' for self-discipline was discussed, both for themselves from time to time (mostly low scorers) and among others (higher scoring officers). Similarly, selfless commitment was viewed as a supreme value for Army professions but it was also described as, to some extent, variable across officers and circumstances (by low scorers). This seems to express the impossibility of achieving 100% selfless commitment across circumstances and individuals; something that was resolved in more positive ways by treating selfless commitment rather like a virtue that can have both excesses and deficiencies (higher scoring group). In other words, the higher scoring officers were more likely to describe using good ethical judgement to inform how and when selfless commitment (total) was justified, within the context of high levels of persisting commitment.

Routine professional challenges for these officers included Army life in general, postings, conditions of service, routine administration and the like. Also taxing for them were: communicating and relating well up and down the ranks; planning and managing; getting things done; and adjusting to high moral standards of the profession. Descriptions of stand-out challenges often drew on lessons learnt in terms of adjustment to their profession. For example, dealing with people and their emotions. These include: managing expectations and situations where soldiers have died (non-operational); controlling their own emotional reactions; learning how others react differently to adverse events, and the experience of trying to maintain good character and a positive outlook under difficult environments, including the strain involved in doing so; and the challenge of dealing with disappointment.

Descriptions of an 'ideal' officer create a daunting array of qualities that the officers wanted for their own. Taken together these describe an 'ideal' junior officer that is competent, intelligent, leads by example, is calm under pressure, maintains perspective, has high moral standards (including six Army values), is physically robust, selfless, trustworthy, self-aware, knows their own weaknesses and is continually improving, approachable, listens and is hard working. Further understanding of the gendered features of those characteristics is advisable.

Standards of excellence for Army officers involving the incorporation of Army values into their own judgement and character cannot be switched on and off by context; this was discussed by many officers during interview. Jacobs dilemma demonstrates how ethical judgement can span professional and personal Army domains. Similar situations engaging the entirety of the military person are common since soldiers live in close confines for long periods of operational tours or in garrison communities and overseas stations. Unique roles and close-knit communities require a coherence of values, especially for officers. Interviewed officers agreed with this sentiment but grappled with its limits and costs, which involved mundane matters such as clothing, as well as more serious considerations, such as questions about what adhering to Army values across domains really means in practice.

'IN PAST GENERATIONS, IT WAS OFTEN ASSUMED THAT YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN COMING INTO THE ARMED FORCES WOULD HAVE ABSORBED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CORE VALUES AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR REQUIRED BY THE MILITARY FROM THEIR FAMILY OR FROM WITHIN THEIR WIDER COMMUNITY...I WOULD SUGGEST SUCH A PRESUMPTION CANNOT BE MADE TODAY.'

General Lord Dannatt, a former head of the British Army

6 Conclusion

The British Army is a unique and complex profession and so instead of making a number of recommendations in this final Section the key findings of the research that would benefit from further consideration by the British Army chain of command in the context of other information available only to them are highlighted.

- Transitions from training to profession are always challenging. These challenges may be especially so for the Army profession owing to its unique role and culture. Reconciling sound ethical judgement with the need to develop practical military skill in the early years as commissioned officers seems a necessarily uneven process as officers work to integrate all features of their role. Results suggest there are experiential differences following Sandhurst for infantry/artillery versus other officers.
- Overall results are unevenly spread across justification and action choices in response to the dilemmas. Good ethical functioning involves a consolidation of knowing what to do and why. The sample does well, but does less well for *justification* reasoning.
- Highest scores for identifying worst action choices suggest possible overemphasis on avoiding risk.
- Another pattern of difference concerns responses to each dilemma. Dilemmas concerning issues of probable Army emphasis such as anti-torture practice and not covering up soldiers' failings (ie, avoiding the kind of over-loyalty evident in the case of Baha Musa) generated best AICM results. Lower scores were achieved for dilemmas covering ethical balance between compassion and mission and negotiating personal relationships with military needs and expectations.
- Gender differences are typically large for studies such as the current one with females performing better than males. Gender differences for this study are less marked. Officers, regardless of gender, were found, on average, to embrace Army values.
- The measures (AICM and VIA-IS-E1) underpinning this report had good support prior to and during this research, but some further testing is necessary before AICM may be considered fully validated. Findings need now to be corroborated by a larger representative sample as many more subtle differences could not be addressed here due to sample size. Now that the measure is developed and has achieved preliminary support it can be used to develop more representative norms

Finally, it must be emphasised that junior officers taking part in the study showed overall that they were well aligned with Army Values and Standards.

‘EVEN THE MOST RATIONAL APPROACH
TO ETHICS IS DEFENSELESS IF THERE
ISN’T THE WILL TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT’

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

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‘WE BECOME JUST BY
PERFORMING JUST ACTIONS,
TEMPERATE BY PERFORMING
TEMPERATE ACTIONS,
BRAVE BY PERFORMING
BRAVE ACTIONS.’

Aristotle

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Plan – Values and Standards among Junior Army Officers

This was adjusted slightly for officer cadets.

(Preliminary Questions)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview about character and values and standards in your Army career – by character we mean the personal characteristics, or qualities needed to be a professional Army officer.

I hope you have read the information sheet – I can also answer any further questions you may have about the project.

Are you comfortable that you understand what the study is about and what we are asking you to do?

What you say will be confidential to the Jubilee Centre university research team and if we use anything you have said in our publications, it will be reported anonymously. We are interested in your honest views and opinions based on your experiences as an Army officer. However, in the unlikely event that you describe an issue of serious misconduct, I will be required to pass this information on to the chain of command.

You can withdraw your interview data at any point until the research is published which is likely to be no sooner than six months' time. I have questions, but hope the discussion will be informal and that you will feel free to add anything else you think may be relevant. All records will be stored securely.

(Introductory Questions/Building Rapport)

If you are ready, we will begin. The first few questions are about your current role and aspirations as an Army officer.

Q1 – How long have you been in the Army since commissioning? Do you have any prior experience in non-commissioned roles?

Q2 – What is your current job? (not Sandhurst cadets)

Q3 – In brief, which role(s) or kinds of task have you been working on over the past 6 months?

Q4 – Which role(s) or kinds of task are you likely to be working on over the next 6 months?

Q5 – Why did you become an Army officer?

Q5a – What are/were your expectations?

Q6 – Do you expect to have a full Army career? – If no, how much longer do you expect to stay? Why?

(Non-commissioned Soldiers and Officers More Senior than Yourself)

Q7 – Regarding soldiers you see regularly in your current or last unit, which personal qualities stand out for you as consistently worthy of **most admiration**?

Q7a – can you give a few examples of when and how these qualities were displayed?

Q8 – Of the same group of soldiers, which personal qualities stand out for you as **least** worthy of admiration? – can you give an example? (*NB: try and get a sense how common these are (most/least)*)

Q9 – Regarding officers one or two ranks more senior than yourself – that are in your chain of command in this and/or your last unit – which personal qualities stand out for you as consistently worthy of **most admiration**? – can you give an example?

Q10 – Of the same group of officers, which personal qualities stand out for you as **least** worthy of admiration? – can you give an example? (*NB: try and get a sense how common these are (most/least)*)

(Moral Exemplars)

Q11 – Often officers model themselves on others/mix of others they admire in order to improve themselves as professionals and people. Do you sometimes have in mind other Army officers whose qualities you try to emulate or copy?

Possible probes:

- Can you describe this person/these people?
- Which qualities do you admire?
- Do they have flaws – what are they?

Q12 – Have moral role models been readily available to you in your career?

Possible probe:

- If yes, or no, how so?

Q13 – Right now, are there officers senior to you whose qualities you would not want to emulate or take for your own?
Q13a – How often do you come across such officers?

(Professional Challenges)

Q14 – Can you tell me about the sorts of routine professional challenges you have faced or continue to face, say over the past year?

Q14a- How about moral challenges?

Q15 – What pressures or barriers make it difficult for you - or others like you – to do the right moral thing from time to time? – Can you give an example?

Q16 – Looking back over your entire career, does a single professional challenge stand out as especially difficult for you? It may not.

Possible probes:

How did it develop? When?

How did you address or deal with this?

What significance does this incident have for you now?

Q17 – One challenge was addressed in the moral dilemmas (No 3) that you completed in the form of situations where there was conflict between being loyal to the group and doing the right thing – have you faced this issue yourself? – or have you seen others deal with this sort of situation?

(Character Across Professional and Private Lives)

Q18 – How far should professional standards of good character also transfer to personal lives for soldiers and officers?

Possible probes:

- How far is this possible / reasonable?
- Are there any particular difficulties?
- What are your own experiences of this? Others you have known?

Continued Overleaf

Q19 – One area involving the transfer of professional standards to personal lives was covered in the moral dilemmas (No 4) involving fraternisation between officers and soldiers – in your experience, is this a common problem?

(Ideal Soldiers and Officers)

Q20 – What personal qualities/character strengths might an ideal officer of your rank in your present unit have?

Possible probes:

- *Select a specific rank – senior or junior for example.*
- *Probe using 6 ‘values’ from Army Values and Standards Guide, if not mentioned – courage, discipline, respect for others, integrity, loyalty, selfless commitment...*

(Self – Report)

Q21 – Which personal qualities or strengths are most important to you in your current role as an Army officer?

Q21a – Which do you generally get right and which do you find more difficult to achieve?

Q21b – How about (self) discipline or selfless-commitment? (*Ask for examples*)

(Failure/Regret)

Q25 – Looking back over your career, however short it may be, please can you identify a professional regret or failure, if you can think of one?

Possible probes:

- *How did you cope with this?*
- *What did you learn from it?*
- *What effect did it have on you and your career? If any.*

(General/Ending the Interview)

We are almost at the end of the interview.

Q26 – Is there anything else you could add to help me understand the current strengths and weaknesses of character among junior officers in the British Army?

Q27 – Is there anything going more generally in the Army community/career that might be impacting junior officers such as yourself?

Q27a – do you have any suggestions for improvement relating to some of the issues or problems you have identified?

Q28 – Are the stated Army Values and Standards still relevant to junior officers and are they still relevant to current Army roles and tasks? – are there gaps or areas where change is needed?

Finally and very briefly, I would like to ask you about your experience completing the moral dilemmas to help us understand how the measure is working.

Q29 – During the survey you completed, there was a dilemma (Dilemma 1) about whether or not the protagonist should rescue a local in Somalia from a crowd and there were various options. – Do you remember what your own instinctive response was?

Q30 – Another dilemma (Dilemma 2) concerned the need to get information out of a prisoner that potentially could save British soldier’s lives. – Again, do you remember your response to this dilemma?

Q31 – How realistic did you find the dilemmas/ options?

Q32 – How did you approach the measure?

In other words, can you explain the frame of mind you were in when you took it and how seriously did you view the measure?

Q33 – Do you have any suggestions for changes?

Appendix 2: Describing and Testing the Psychometric Properties of the AICM

The Army Officer Inter Mediate Concepts Measure (hereafter AICM) is built upon previous work in the US by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Turner (2008). As such the current AICM benefits from the extensive vetting process used to create the target dilemmas and associated items in the original version. This vetting process included US Military officers assigned to the Simon Center of Military Ethics housed at West Point Military Academy, West Point civilian instructors and cadets. Using the US version as a starting point, the Jubilee Centre staff along with British Military officers reworked the US dilemmas and items to ensure relevance and plausibility within the British setting. The process used to arrive at the final AICM employed different groups of officers who independently judged the dilemmas and items. These independent judgments were used to ensure that only reliably rated items were used in the final version of the measure and in the assessment process.

Following the developmental phase of the AICM, the measure was then piloted on 240 participants including junior officers from various locations within the UK and cadets from the RMAS. This pilot study also included demographic information, independent interviews with a subset of the participants used in part, to cross-validate the instrument, and an updated version of an established measure of values and character strengths (The Values in Action – hereafter VIA) used to support the validity of the instrument. The Centre's approach to validating the AICM was to ask three main questions: does the AICM provide sufficient range in scores to be a useful measure of Army Values and Standards and then can the measure differentiate groups of participants who ought to be different on the measure. Secondly, we asked whether there is a correspondence between scores on the AICM and interview responses to similar issues. Finally, we assessed whether AICM scores related to an established measure within the moral domain in theoretically consistent ways. Taken together the Centre's approach to validating the AICM included multiple methods and sources of information.

Preliminary evidence provides consistent support for the measure as an index of Army Values. These findings include:

1. The AICM describes participants as holding a range of views on Army values that are more or less consistent with the established 'expert' view of how they should be applied in the assessed situations.
2. Consistent with many similar measures in the moral domain, female officers and cadets apply Army values more consistently with expert views than do their male peers.
3. Consistent with other similar measures in the moral domain, identifying appropriate justifications for action was more difficult than selecting the actions themselves.
4. Participants who had decided to leave the military had more difficulty identifying the more optimal choices and justifications for action than their peers who intended to stay.

Using the Values in Action Measure (VIA) to support construct validity of the AICM.

The VIA is an updated version of an established measure of character strengths with broad-based empirical support. For the purposes of validating the AICM it was noted that both the AICM and VIA purport to measure values that overlap with the Army values. Thus one would expect that individuals' responses to both instruments ought to converge if the AICM measures what it purports to measure. It is important to note that the VIA surveys a range of character strengths some of which are directly related to the Army values (eg, bravery) and some less so (eg, appreciate beauty). Thus prior to an assessment of the link between the ICM and VIA ratings on the VIA for the full sample of cadets and officers were factor analysed. This process identified three factors underlying the relationships between character strengths. These factors were identified as: Aesthetic values (including the spiritual and appreciation for beauty), Leadership (including: leadership, bravery, teamwork and honesty), and Decision-making strengths (including prudence, self-regulation, fairness, humility and perspective taking). Interestingly the Army values were concentrated in the Leadership and Decision-making factors and absent from the Aesthetic factor.

To assess the relationship between the AICM and VIA the two measure's total scores were first correlated and a significant relationship was found. Thus, there is support for the claim that the AICM does tap into a person's understanding of character strengths. To explore this relationship in more detail factor scores for the three VIA factors were also computed and related these values to the AICM. Findings indicate that the AICM was uniquely related to the Leadership and Decision-making factors but not the Aesthetic cluster of items. Taken together these findings indicate support for the AICM as a measure of the Army virtues. Specifically:

1. There is evidence that the AICM is linked to an established measure of character strengths.
2. The obtained overall relationship is driven by the cluster of VIA items that are most closely linked to Army values and less so other character strengths that are less tied to the context and military profession. The latter findings demonstrate that the measure is more directly tied to the intended context/values and less so character strengths in general.

Using Interview data to support the AICM Virtually all surveyed officers agreed to be interviewed and forty officers were asked randomly after completing the surveys to sign-up for an interview. Participants took part in an extended interview that asked questions that overlapped with the values and strengths measured by both the AICM and VIA. These participants were purposely selected to provide a range of ranks, a sampling of cadets, and attention to gender. The interview data was coded for emerging themes and then sorted by participant responses to the AICM. In this way two groups were formed: high and low AICM scorers. The assessment approach used to support the AICM focussed on whether participant interview responses differed by these groupings. The interview served as a concurrent assessment of the Army values albeit using a different strategy and thus, there ought to be a correspondence between the responses to the AICM and to the themes and emphases observed in the interviews. Six main themes, based directly on questions asked, were identified for analysis after multiple

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readings of the transcribed interviews. These questions were chosen for special focus because they related to the officers sense of themselves as Army officer's and involved, in varying degrees, an assessment of their own relationship with Army Values. Taken together the overall impression of the two groups provided support for the AICM in that low scorers tended to provide responses that were more superficial and narrow interpretations of the military values and context and seemed less willing to embrace these values. Specifically and broken down by these emerging themes:

1. Interest in the Army as a profession: High scorers were more likely to explicitly reference character values as a draw towards a military career. Low scorers expressed more skepticism in remaining in the Army and focussed more exclusively on one's personal satisfaction in the life of an officer. High scorers more often mentioned the value of their work as an indicator of whether or not their career was worthwhile.
2. Characteristics of an 'ideal' officer. All candidates mentioned leadership skills and personal attributes that further the respect of those individuals under their command. The difference between groups however, was in the detail and organisation of these characteristics. To low scorers the central characteristics were provided as a list of attributes. High scorers, by contrast, clustered these attributes to provide a holistic account of a superior officer. For instance developing arguments for how the combination of professional competence and self-reflection define a superior officer.
3. Professional challenges. Participants in the low group mentioned primarily difficulties of working within an organisation and the specific problems associated with the Army context. In contrast to these descriptions, high scorers focussed on the impediments of accomplishing goals. The high group was noticeable in mentioning Army values and the need to consider difference between the civilian and military context. When specific professional challenges were discussed, the high group was also noticeable in attending to the aftermath of these events and what one learns from them. Additionally, moral content in these challenging situations were much more evident in the higher group.
4. Most important personal quality. Participants were asked about Army values

and their own orientation to them. To low AICM scorers self-discipline was highlighted often in terms of their own shortcomings and the need to improve. The high group expressed a broader range of qualities and mentioned superordinate considerations about how these qualities develop, how they are nurtured by the self and others, and the need to continually attend to these values as one's career develops.

5. The connection between Army values and standards and civilian life. Both groups expressed the position that the two contexts, army and civilian, ought to connect but for the low group the responses seemed to be less reflective and ill formed. Members in the high group expressed a clear understanding of the connection between contexts, some of the pitfalls in maintaining the connection on day-to-day bases and overall, expressed a more nuanced understanding of the question and why it was asked of them.
6. Pressures and barriers for expressing the Army values. The groups were similar in identifying which factors conflict with Army Values. Strikingly both groups unhesitatingly provided detailed situations in which values were tested and the optimal response was very difficult to identify.

Across themes and categories, the interview provided support for the AICM by demonstrating that individuals who differ on the measure respond to the questions in a more reflective, nuanced, and integrative way. Thus, one can argue that the AICM is able to reflect superior understanding and application of the Army Values in context.

Summary

The strategy for developing preliminary support for the Army Intermediate Concept Measure focusses on information from three sources: The behaviour of the ICM relative to other similar measures, construct validity as determined by relationships with other established measures, and as supported by an alternative assessment of the same values in the military context. Taken together the triangulation of findings across approaches suggest that the AICM has sufficient preliminary support as an assessment of junior officers' understanding and application of the Army Values and Standards.

Appendix 3: Table 1 Demographic Categories

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Seniority by rank and service	Cadet	76	31.4
	Lieutenant and Junior Captains (Captain with 5 or less years' service)	93	38.4
	Senior Captains and Majors (Captain with 6 or more years' service)	73	30.2
Seniority by course	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst	76	31.4
	Junior Officer Tactical Awareness Course	85	35.1
	Captains Warfare Course	81	33.5
Gender	Male	190	78.5
	Female	52	21.5
Ethnicity	White British, Irish, Other White	234	96.7
	Indian, Chinese, Asian, Mixed	5	2.1
	Rather not say	3	1.2
Religion	Christianity	135	55.8
	Atheist	70	28.9
	Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism	4	1.7
	Other	11	4.6
	Don't know	10	4.1
	Rather not say	9	3.7
	Did not answer	3	1.2
Future career intentions	Stay as long as I can	144	59.5
	Leave at end current contract	51	21.1
	leaving	35	14.5
	Did not answer	12	4.9

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Appendix 3: Table 1 Demographic Categories (continued)

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Type of Commission	No commission (officer cadet)	74	30.6
	Short Service Commission	88	36.3
	Intermediate Regular Commission (IRC)	51	21.1
	Regular Commission	21	8.7
	Did not answer	8	3.3
Education level	Below degree	39	16.1
	Degree	159	65.7
	Post degree	38	15.7
	Did not answer	6	2.5
Number of operational tours	None	138	57.0
	1 or 2	74	30.6
	More than 2	15	6.2
	Did not answer	15	6.2
Self-rating compared to peers	Better	34	14.0
	Mostly better	103	42.6
	About same	96	39.7
	Did not answer	9	3.7
Age	Age 30 and below	186	76.9
	Age 31 and above	53	21.9
	Did not answer	3	1.2

Appendix 3: Table 1 Demographic Categories (continued)

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Corps/kind of service	Royal logistic Corps	28	11.6
	Adjutant General Corps	20	8.3
	Royal Engineers	20	8.3
	Royal Electrical and mechanical Engineers	15	6.2
	Infantry	65	26.9
	Royal Artillery	19	7.9
	Royal Military Police	10	4.1
	Royal Signals	14	5.8
	Medical / Veterinary	5	2.0
	Intelligence Corps	10	4.1
	Army Air Corps	10	4.1
	Not yet allocated – RMAS	26	10.7
Branch of service	Infantry/artillery	84	34.7
	Non-infantry/artillery	158	65.3

Appendix 4: Demographic Categories and AICM Performance

Variable	Category	Sample Size	Total ICM
Education	No degree level education	38	0.64 (0.15)
	Degree or equivalent	159	0.66 (0.13)
	Higher degrees	39	0.64 (0.13)
Years served	Less than 1 year	57	0.68 (0.13)
	1 to 5 years	92	0.64 (0.14)
	6 to 10 years	63	0.66 (0.12)
	More than 11 years	24	0.63 (0.11)
Operational tours	None	138	0.66 (0.14)
	1 or 2	74	0.63 (0.15)
	More than 2	15	0.66 (0.11)
Type of commission	Not yet commissioned	74	0.67 (0.13)
	SSC	88	0.65 (0.12)
	IRC and IRC(LE)	53	0.66 (0.15)
	Reg C	21	0.59 (0.15)
Leaving or staying	Leaving Army before current engagement ends, as soon as possible or already leaving	35	0.62 (0.16)
	Intend to stay until end of current engagement or as long as possible	195	0.66 (0.13)
Religion	Have a religion	148	0.65 (0.14)
	No religion	68	0.66 (0.14)
	Don't know/Would rather not say	19	0.64 (0.14)
Rating against peers	Better than peers	34	0.61 (0.17)
	Mostly better than peers	103	0.68 (0.12)
	Somewhat better than peers	96	0.64 (0.16)

Note: Standard deviations are shown in parentheses

Appendix 5: List of Interviewed Officers

Top scoring group

Gender	Branch of Service	Course	Rank
Female	Not yet allocated	RMAS	Officer Cadet
Female	Infantry/artillery	RMAS	Officer Cadet
Male	Infantry/artillery	RMAS	Officer Cadet
Male	Infantry/artillery	RMAS	Officer Cadet
Female	Non-infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Male	Non-infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Male	Infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Lieutenant
Male	Infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Female	Infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Lieutenant
Male	Non-infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Lieutenant

Bottom scoring group

Gender	Branch of Service	Course	Rank
Female	Non-infantry/artillery	RMAS	Officer Cadet
Female	Non-infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Captain
Male	Non-infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Female	Non-infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Male	Infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain
Male	Non-infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Lieutenant
Male	Non-infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Lieutenant
Male	Infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Captain
Female	Infantry/artillery	JOTAC	Captain
Male	Infantry/artillery	CWC	Captain

RMAS – Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

CWC – Captains Warfare Course

JOTAC – Junior Officer Tactical Awareness Course



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