

Reserve Forces training: a guide for employers

Platoon Tactics Course (Platoon Commanders)



Overview of the training

The Platoon Commanders Course qualifies successful participants to command an infantry platoon (made up of around 28 soldiers) in barracks, on exercise and, if necessary, in an operational theatre such as Afghanistan. It is a mandatory training course for all new Platoon Commanders in the infantry and students will have already passed the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst commissioning course to become officers.

The course places a heavy focus on the leadership abilities of the individual, which will already have been honed at Sandhurst but are now put to the test through a series of challenging exercises over a sustained two-week period. The Army is well respected for developing leaders and this course is designed to take them on to the next level of responsibility.

The training takes place at the Infantry Battle School in Brecon in Wales (which also trains the Regular Army) and is both mentally and physically demanding.

The prospective Platoon Commanders must demonstrate a wide range of skills and aptitudes beyond the ability to lead. They must be able to make effective plans, conduct tactical problem-solving, execute complex tasks and demonstrate flexibility in available resources. At all times they must show exemplary levels of effort.

The course involves a great deal of theory and tactics as well as adherence to procedure. Participants are also taught how to command soldiers back in barracks and how to plan effective platoon level training.

Content of the course

The training is a residential course that lasts for 15 consecutive days. Each day consists of at least 12 hours of training (excluding any individual preparation).

On the course, 10 days of the training are conducted through practical exercises outdoors and, of these, four consecutive days and nights are spent on an assessment exercise in the field.

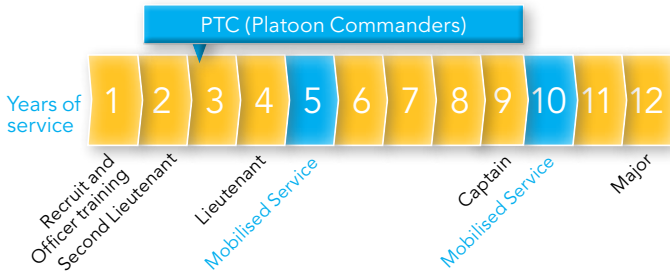
The course includes lectures and individual tuition sessions covering topics such as leadership, tactical planning and communication. This theory is then put into practice during the field exercises which test students in a range of military scenarios during the day and at night such as platoon attacks, patrolling, defensive operations, fighting in built up areas and casualty evacuation.

During these exercises the student practices and is tested on performing the role of Platoon Commander. The TA officer is trained alongside TA Corporals and Lance Corporals who are simultaneously being trained in the roles of Infantry Platoon Sergeant and Section Commander respectively, which enables the officer to practice the role with a real team.

There is also continuous assessment of core competencies throughout the course and a final written examination. These competencies include: command and leadership; operational planning; attitude and effort; specialist knowledge; and planning training for others.

Position in a Reservist's career

The Platoon Tactics Course for Platoon Commanders is typically undertaken after around two years in the Reserve Forces (as soon as possible after being commissioned as an officer).



How do employers benefit?

The Platoon Commanders Tactics Course develops leaders capable of managing a team of 28 people in highly demanding environments. Candidates must show the ability to plan, communicate and delegate tasks to meet objectives.

The course expects participants to complete these objectives in a physically gruelling and high-pressure environment where the student is stepping up to a new level of responsibility.

The training specifically develops the following skills and qualities:

- Strong and active leadership, motivating and inspiring a group of 28 people
- The ability to build a solid team of supporting staff
- Excellent communication skills to direct personnel through complex tasks in a high-pressure environment
- The ability to make difficult decisions in time-pressured situations
- The ability to solve problems and adapt plans to work within shifting constraints and using available resources
- Planning skills using situational analysis to select the best way forward
- Self-motivation and confidence

How much would this training cost you to buy?

£5,500

According to research endorsed by the Chartered Management Institute, if you were to pay for training to deliver equivalent employee development it would cost you in the order of £5,500.

This relates just to the leadership and skills development which is relevant to the civilian workplace.



This document has been published by SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers), the Ministry of Defence campaign which explains the benefits, rights and obligations associated with employing a member of the Reserve Forces.

The Reserve Forces include the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines Reserve, Territorial Army and Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

Reservists are civilians who train for their military role in the evenings, at weekends and normally for a two-week period each year. In times of need, the Government can mobilise them for full-time military service alongside the Regular Forces – and many thousands have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Reservists carry out a huge variety of roles which mirror those in the Regular Forces, including serving in combat units and providing essential medical and logistical support.

They are critical to the success of our Armed Forces.

This course has been endorsed by the Chartered Management Institute – the only chartered professional body in the UK dedicated to promoting the highest standards in management and leadership. It delivers training and skills development that is as applicable and relevant to civilian work as it is to military life.

www.managers.org.uk

If you want to know more about the benefits, rights and obligations related to employing a Reservist, or have a particular issue you would like to resolve, please contact SaBRE.

www.sabre.mod.uk
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