



AOSB Main Board

Introduction AOSB Main Boards run throughout the year and take place both during the week and at weekends and are available to both Regular and TA candidates. Weekend Boards are only really available to those who have genuine unchangeable commitments that prevent attendance during the week. A weekday Board usually commences on a Tuesday and finishes on a Friday, whilst a weekend Board commences on a Thursday and finishes on a Sunday. Outlined below is a short summary of the Main Board Programme.

The Selection Process

THE BOARD. Up to 40 candidates may be attending the Main Board at any one time. You will be divided into groups of eight, with men and women working together. It is important to remember that you are not competing against the other candidates. You are all being assessed against a common standard and your success is based entirely on your own performance. Equally, there is no single test by which you pass or fail – this is a series of assessments designed to give us an understanding of your officer potential. The officers assessing you will be interested in your approach to problems and challenges, and your attitude towards other members of the group – both as a team player and as a team leader.

Board Composition

The Board consists of the following members:

- PRESIDENT. A Brigadier.
- VICE PRESIDENT. A Colonel.
- DEPUTY PRESIDENT. A Lieutenant Colonel.
- GROUP LEADER. A Captain or Major
- EDUCATION ADVISER. A commissioned or retired Army Education Officer.

Programme – Day One

INITIAL PHYSICAL TESTS. Soon after you arrive you will do a Multi-Stage Fitness Test (MSFT), more commonly known as the 'bleep' test. It is exactly the same as the one you did at your AOSB Briefing – males must reach Level 10.2 and females Level 8.1. You will also have to do 50 sit-ups (males and females) and some press-ups (males 44, females 21). Should you fail these tests badly, the President may invite you to leave the Board at this stage.

INTRODUCTORY TALK. The Board President, an Army Brigadier, will give an introductory talk. This will include some useful tips on how to approach the Board.

WRITTEN TESTS. An essay will assess your written communication skills. This is followed by computer-based tests on general knowledge, Service knowledge and current affairs.

PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS. You will be required to sit Mental Aptitude, Memory & Attention and Personality tests

Programme – Day Two

(Day One and Day Two programmes are combined into a single day on weekend Main Boards)

OPENING DISCUSSION. The group opening discussion lasts for 40 minutes. During this time we will invite you to discuss a number of moral and newsworthy topics. A thorough knowledge of current affairs will help you.

INTERVIEWS. All candidates have one-to-one interviews with their Vice President, Deputy President and Education Adviser. The style and tone of the interviews are relaxed and informal. You will probably be asked about your interests, ambitions and why you want to be an Army Officer.

OUTDOOR TASKS. After lunch the leaderless outdoor tasks begin. A typical task might involve the group crossing a defined space without touching the ground using ladders, ropes, poles and planks. You will usually have to carry a 'burden' with you – a heavy or awkward object that must be treated with care. The Opening Race follows these tasks, when your group will complete a leaderless task against the other groups.

PLANNING EXERCISE TUTORIAL. You will receive a lecture on how to approach the Planning Exercise. This session is not assessed.

Programme – Day Three

PLANNING EXERCISE. This theoretical written exercise tests your ability to use people, equipment and time effectively. You are given an hour to study the narrative and write up your solution. Then each group discusses the problem with the aim of reaching an agreed plan. Importance is attached to individual contributions and your reaction to the ideas of others. Finally you will be asked questions about aspects of the exercise to test whether you can think on your feet. A practise paper is available for download at www.army.mod.uk/join/20538.aspx.

COMMAND TASKS. The next part of the morning is devoted to outdoor Command Tasks, where each member takes a turn at being in command of the group. The objective is to complete a specified practical task within a time limit. The Group Leader will brief you and give you a few minutes to develop a plan. You then explain the task and your plan to the rest of the group before executing it.

INDIVIDUAL OBSTACLE COURSE. For the final morning task, individuals must negotiate an individual obstacle course with the object of completing as many obstacles as possible within a set time limit.

LECTURETTE. In the afternoon, each candidate gives an informal five-minute talk to the group on a specified subject. There will be five topics (taken from your CV) to choose from, and you will be given time to prepare. At the end of each lecturette, the speaker answers questions from the group.

DINNER. In the evening you will enjoy a formal dinner with your fellow candidates. This activity is not assessed.

Programme – Day Four

THE FINAL RACE. On the last morning you will compete the Final Race – an outdoor leaderless task competing against the other groups on the Board. It is a tough course, and is your final opportunity to show the Board your abilities.

What Happens Next?

The Board Officers start assessing candidates after the Final Race. This is the first time the assessors discuss the candidates, and every point raised by the Group Leader, the Deputy President and the Education Adviser is explored in detail. The results will be posted first class and should arrive within two working days; for a Weekend Board the results will be posted on a Monday morning.

If you pass, you will have demonstrated that you have the potential to be an Army Officer. You will also have rightly earned yourself a place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, provided you pass the Army medical.