

Army and RAF listed as top 100 social mobility employers

The Social Mobility Foundation has this morning published its annual Social Mobility Index, ranking the Army as 55th and the RAF as 76th. The Ministry of Defence has also been listed 35th.

The Social Mobility Index lists organisations that have taken substantial action to improve social mobility in their workplace. The index ranks employers on the actions they are taking to ensure they are open to and accessible to progressing talent from all backgrounds.

As an open and modern employer, the armed forces welcome people from all backgrounds and have been praised for a number of initiatives which help foster social mobility.

The Army has been recognised for a number of activities that have contributed to social mobility, including offering a substantial number of apprenticeships, such as higher-level and degree apprenticeships and having positive role modelling from senior soldiers who are commissioned as late entry officers.

The Army Cadet programme has also been praised for being likely to reach young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In 2017 an independent report from the University of Northampton also found that joining the cadets offers a range of benefits to individuals involved, including social mobility.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said:

The armed forces are an open and modern employer and welcome anyone to their ranks, whatever their background.

Today's listing demonstrates the positive benefits of a military career and reflects the key principle that the military want to recruit talented individuals who want to serve their country, regardless of where they come from.

The Royal Air Force has also been ranked on the Social Mobility Employer Index at 76th thanks to their extensive outreach to schools, a good range of apprenticeships and a strong recruitment section on the RAF website, with the mock-assessment centre video singled out for praise.

Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, David Johnston OBE, said:

We are delighted to see more and more employers every year taking part in our Social Mobility Employer Index. The quality of submissions this year meant we have increased the size of our Top list from 50 to 75 and it shows the very wide range of organisations trying to make progress on social mobility.

Whilst no employer would say they have cracked their social mobility challenge, all of the employers in the Top list – along with those that didn't quite make it – should be congratulated for the efforts they're making to ensure their organisation is open to talent from all class backgrounds.