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## **A Bourdieusian Analysis of Professional Military Education for Irish Army Officers**

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## Abstract

Professional military education (PME) is considered a key enabler in developing the military capabilities required for operating in the complex contemporary security environment. Despite the critical role played by PME in the Irish context, little is known about the PME *field*, how it is constructed, how it was formed and has evolved, and what influences it today. In addition, there is a dearth of research on army officer education and how PME impacts the professional *habitus*. This thesis aims to address these knowledge gaps by employing a Bourdieusian analysis to map the PME *field* in Ireland, and, by exploring how army officers perceive their experiences of PME.

Bourdieu and Wacquant's (1992) three-level analytical approach is employed to analyse the *field* of PME to develop an understanding of the relationship between military and higher education institutions (HEI) and the policies that influence the delivery of accredited military education. *Field* mapping is informed by an analysis of policy documents, secondary resources, and semi-structured interviews with military instructors and civilian educators. The findings establish that in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the increased complexity of military operations, benchmarking, and quality assurance caused the Defence Forces to partner with HEI's for accreditation purposes. These drivers brought together both the military *field* and higher education *field* to form the new *subfield* of PME.

The second part of this research explores how army officers perceive their experiences of PME and how military socialisation impacts their professional *habitus*. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) theory of *symbolic violence* is used as a lens to analyse military officers' experiences of PME to develop an understanding of how the military *habitus* is formed and evolves through career-long PME. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve serving army officers drawn from a cross-section of junior, mid, and senior ranks. Informed by Bourdieu and Passeron's theory, the findings indicate that initial military socialisation is achieved through *symbolic violence*. Also, a model is proposed for social reproduction and military *habitus* formation. The findings show that the *habitus* produced in the Cadet School is that of a focused, young leader who is physically and mentally resilient, and that embodies organisational values. These values guide behaviour and structure thinking, ensuring that the young officer conforms to the norms of the organisation. The military *habitus* evolves through subsequent PME to create a professionally capable officer with high problem-solving and critical thinking skills. This study contributes to understanding social reproduction and how hierarchical organisations such as the military successfully reproduce themselves.

This research demonstrates the continued practical application of Bourdieu's concepts and theory of *symbolic violence* whilst extending Bourdieu's thinking tools in a novel and practical way that can be used to analyse other organisations. Such analysis may help understand organisations as social institutions and their place in the broader social space.

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## List of abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
ACSC	Advanced Command and Staff Course (UK)
ATCA	Aid to the Civil Authority (county councils or corporations)
ATCP	Aid to the Civil Power (Police Force)
C&S	Command and Staff
CJEX	Combined Joint European Exercise
CMC	Commandant of the Military College
COS	Chief of Staff
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DCU	Dublin City University
DF	Defence Forces
DFR	Defence Force Regulation
DJ1	Director of Human Resources
DJ7 or J7	Defence Force Training and Education Branch
DoD	Department of Defence
DS	Directing Staff (military instructors)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance
ESDC	European Security and Defence College
EU	European Union
EUTM MALI	European Union Training Mission Mali
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IMG	Independent Monitoring Group
IT	Institute of Technology
JCSC	Joint Command and Staff Course (formerly known as the Senior Command and Staff Course)
LCSC	Land Command and Staff Course (formerly known as the Junior Command and Staff Course)
LMDS	Leadership Management and Defence Studies
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MU	Maynooth University
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCEA	National Council for Education Awards
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NFQ	National Framework for Qualifications
NUI	National University of Ireland
OSCE	Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe

PA	<i>Pedagogic action</i>
PAu	<i>Pedagogic authority</i>
PDF	Permanent Defence Force
PFP	Partnership for Peace
PME	Professional Military Education
PSO	Peace Support Operations
PW	<i>Pedagogic work</i>
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RDF	Reserve Defence Force
SOPs	Standard Operational Procedures
SQF- MILOF	Sectoral Qualification Framework for the Military Officer Profession
TU	Technological University
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
UCG	University College Galway
UN	United Nations
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

## Preamble

*The letter said for the successful candidate to report to the Cadet School, The Military College, The Curragh Camp, County Kildare, between 10 and 12 o'clock on Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1995. Dress: lounge suit, shirt, tie and black toe-capped shoes; not the typical dress for your average 18-year-old. The Curragh Camp was about 40 miles from the midland village of Durrow, where I grew up. My father never liked being late for anything, so we packed my carefully organised belongings into the car and set off at precisely 9 o'clock. The car had a strange atmosphere, a mixture of gloom, pride, excitement, and fear. My mam was quiet, and I could tell she was doing her best to hold back the tears. On the other hand, Dad was trying to make small talk, reassuring me that I 'would be well able for it' and that 'it would be no time' until I would be home.*

*As we came off the slip road of the old N7 at the outskirts of Newbridge town and turned right towards the Curragh Camp, the vista of my new home for the next 21 months came into full view. Concealed behind a band of tall Scot's pine trees, the Curragh Camp had an air of mystery and austerity about it. My stomach lurched as we crossed the cattle grid and made our way up the mile-long entrance to the camp. We arrived just before 10 o'clock and parked the car on the inner square of Pearse Barracks, as instructed in the letter. As we got out of the car, an immaculately dressed Cadet, in Service Dress No. 1, shoes and brasses twinkling in the early autumn sun, marched over and greeted us warmly. He led us through the Cadet's Mess gardens to the impressive colonnaded front entrance of the building that overlooked the vast expanse of the Curragh plains.*

*There, we were greeted by some senior people, officers probably, all in Service Dress No.1, complete with rows of overseas service ribbons. Someone gave us tea and coffee in the large reception room, and the three of us stood there, looking around, quietly in awe of our palatial surroundings. The excitement I had felt in the preceding weeks turned to an uncomfortable dread and a sense that I did not belong here. We tried to make polite small talk with the Cadet School staff and other candidates' parents, but mostly I said nothing. I drank my tea slowly, trying to compose myself and doing my best not to spill it all over my new suit and shoes. I don't think I had ever felt so ill at ease before. After a few minutes, a Cadet tapped me on the shoulder and beckoned me to follow him. I left down my cup and saucer and nodded to my parents, sure in the knowledge that I would return to say a proper goodbye a little later. I followed the Cadet through the small portal at the centre of the anteroom. As I crossed the threshold, the imposing bulk of one of the Officer instructors sidled up to my poor mother, and to her horror, he joked: 'he's ours now'.*

*That was the last time that my parents would see the civilian me. Little did I know what lay ahead as I stepped across the threshold between the civilian and military worlds and that the formation of my military habitus was about to begin.*

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

## 1.1. General overview

This thesis examines Professional Military Education (PME) for army officers in the Irish Defence Forces<sup>1</sup>. PME is considered a key enabler for developing the military capabilities required by the Irish Defence Forces to operate in today's complex security environment. Despite the critical role played by PME in the Irish context, little is known about the *field*, how it is constructed, how it was formed and has evolved, and what influences it today. In addition, there is a dearth of research on army officer education and how the military *habitus* is formed and evolves through an army officer's career. This thesis aims to develop a better understanding of the *field* of PME for army officers in the Irish Defence Forces, and in doing so, it delves into the experiences of military habitus formation of army officers. A Bourdieusian analysis (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104-107) is employed to map the PME *field* in Ireland and explore how army officers perceive their experiences of military *habitus* formation and evolution through career-long PME.

Bourdieu uses the term *habitus* to describe a range of features, dispositions and history that are embedded in an individual's ways "of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 70). The military *habitus* relates to common dispositions and characteristics identifiable in military personnel, encapsulated in the term "military being" (Maringira, Gibson, and Richters, 2015, p.

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<sup>1</sup> For readers unfamiliar with the Irish Defence Forces, Appendix 10 provides an overview of the organisation's governance, structure, and roles.

29) or “military dispositions” (Pendlebury, 2019, p. 34). *Habitus*<sup>2</sup>, therefore, represents a useful analytical lens for examining how the civilian *habitus* changes in response to military socialisation and training, and how the military *habitus* may evolve through career-long PME.

## **1.2. Professional Military Education**

How to effectively educate military officers for the complexity of the contemporary operating environment is a significant problem for military organisations. The environment where Irish Defence Forces personnel operate is more complex, volatile, uncertain, and ambiguous than before (Kiszley, 2004; Posen, 2016; Paananen and Pulkka, 2019). When security threats are identified, the typical military response is to develop capabilities or embed new practices to mitigate the danger. However, where threats are uncertain, and the operating environment is too complex even to define, military leaders turn to education to help develop the capabilities and responses required (Yong-De, 2017). Education is considered the key to security success for militaries where “we have to learn more quickly and understand more fully than our adversaries to prevail in the future operating environment” (Dempsey, 2009).

Professional Military Education is the term used to describe “a plethora of training, continuing education, and other activities designed to provide development to members of the military at various points in their career and to prepare them for the next level of responsibilities” (Shanks Kaurin, 2017, para.1.). The Defence Forces have not defined PME in any education publication; however, it is tacitly understood

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<sup>2</sup> *Habitus* is explored in more detail in Section 4.3.

as those 'career courses' that military personnel must complete to be eligible for promotion to the next higher rank. Career courses aim to provide qualified personnel with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to perform the duties of a specific military rank. All career courses for army officers are delivered at the Irish Military College, located in the Defence Forces Training Centre, the Curragh Camp.

Similar to other modern armed forces, the Irish Defence Forces have a three-tiered officer education system. The first tier of officer education is the cadetship. The cadetship is a robust, physically, mentally, and academically challenging induction into the Defence Forces that aims to develop leaders of character and competence (Defence Forces, 2021a). The second tier is the Land Command and Staff Course (LCSC), a residential career course for officers of the rank of Captain. The objective of the course is to provide officers with the academic qualification for promotion to the rank of Commandant/Major and with the knowledge, skills and competencies to hold command<sup>3</sup> and staff<sup>4</sup> appointments at that level (DJ7, 2012). The third tier is the Joint Command and Staff Course (JCSC), which aims to prepare mid-ranking officers to transition from the tactical level to hold appointments at the operational and strategic levels<sup>5</sup> (DJ7, 2018).

In response to the challenges posed by the contemporary operating environment and trends in PME throughout Europe, the Irish Defence Forces partnered with Higher

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<sup>3</sup> Command is the military authority and responsibility of an officer to issue orders to subordinates, pertaining to the command vested in him or her, covering every aspect of military operations and administration. The role of the commander is to command troops (Defence Forces, 2016, p. 3-1).

<sup>4</sup> Staff appointments refer to specialist military appointments whose role is to advise and assist the commander in the execution of command.

<sup>5</sup> Tactical level involves the application of combat power to achieve tactical objectives. The operational level is the level which major campaigns and operations are planned and conducted. The strategic level is the level where a nation or group of nations determine national security objectives and develop and use national assets to achieve these objectives (Defence Forces, 2015, p.1-12).

Education Institutions (HEIs) for accreditation purposes and to enhance education standards for all three tiers. Courses are delivered at the Military College by military instructors and academics from the partnering HEI. Since the initial accreditation of the Senior Command and Staff Course for senior officers in 2003, accreditation of learning on career courses has evolved incrementally and now underpins the education of all Defence Forces members.

In 2007, the Standard Cadet Course was accredited at National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ)<sup>6</sup> Level 7, Diploma in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies (LMDS). The LCSC has been accredited at Level 8 Higher Diploma in Leadership, Defence and Contemporary Security since 2013. There is now a clear progression in NFQ levels from initial military PME on the cadet course to mid-level PME on the LCSC to senior officer education on the JCSC, as illustrated in Figure 1. Accreditation has significantly influenced military education over the past twenty years and, thus, is an important concept for understanding the *field* when undertaking *field* mapping in Chapter 6.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 11 for National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ) levels.



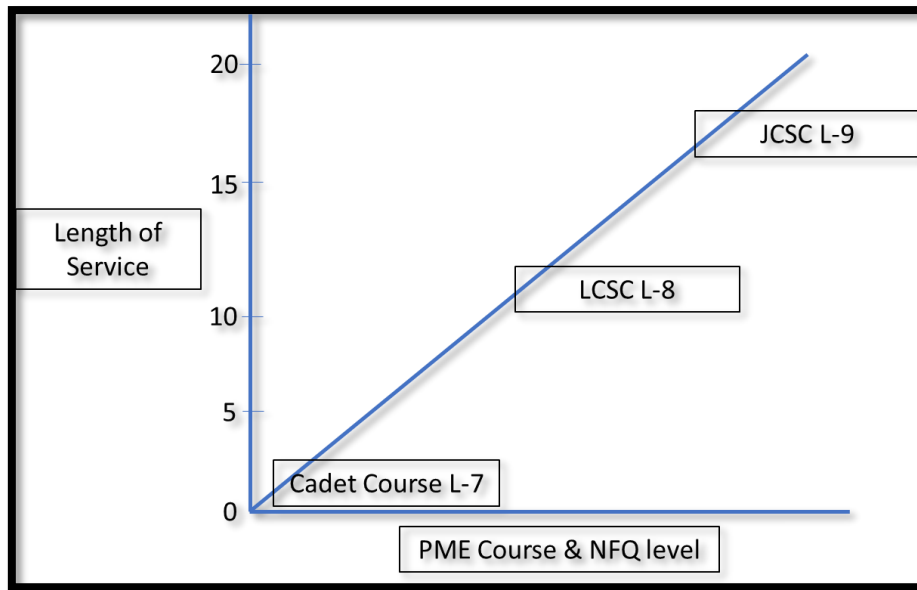


Figure 1 Irish Army officer education levels

In the remainder of this chapter, I explain how my professional experiences operating at the intersection of military and higher education has led to the research focus on PME. Then, I present the research aims, objectives and questions that have driven this inquiry. This is followed by a brief overview of the Bourdieusian theory that informs this study, incorporating the concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *capital*, and *symbolic violence*. The significance and limitations of the study are explained, and finally, I provide an overview of each chapter to orient the reader as they navigate this work.

### 1.3. Situating the self

The opening vignette recounts the first day of my military life, which marked the beginning of an experience that changed me fundamentally. As an infantry officer serving in the Irish Defence Forces for 26 years, I have experienced the full spectrum of PME from the perspective of both a learner and military instructor. However,

through my engagement with higher education, it is only now that I have the thinking tools to make sense of these experiences and understand how they have shaped my identity as an army officer, my sense of self, and my way of being. Thus, my military experiences connect me to this research profoundly.

Grenfell (2012b) points out that “our choice of research topic is shaped by our own academic backgrounds and trajectories” (p. 220). This research grows from my academic and professional experiences and is fuelled by professional and intellectual motivations to improve my understanding of PME in Ireland. In this way, my choice of research topic closely relates to Bourdieu’s concept of *illusio* or *libido*, also known as *interest*. I have what Bourdieu describes as an “investment in a game and in a stake, *illusio*, commitment” (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 290). Certain recurring themes on military education have emerged through my postgraduate studies. Prominent amongst these is the organisational problem of educating a military force to deal effectively with the challenges of the modern security environment. This challenge became a reality for me when I was appointed as a senior instructor at the Infantry School, Officer Training Wing in the Military College in 2012. My main area of responsibility was to instruct on the LCSC. Foremost in my thoughts throughout my time as an instructor was the idea that one of my students would find themselves in a life or death situation, relying on the tactical or decision-making skills that I taught them. This thought inspired me to do my best to teach well and create conditions where students could learn and develop in a positive learning environment. While working in the Infantry School, concurrently, I completed a Masters in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, which helped me think critically and make informed changes to the teaching and learning approach at the Officer Training Wing.

During this EdD programme, my cognitive focus shifted from classroom-based teaching and learning domains to organisation-level education. I began to question the fundamentals of the organisation's overall approach to education. However, critical reflection on the organisation's approach to military education yielded more questions than answers. When I looked to Defence Forces' policies for guidance, I discovered gaps in policy and research to guide the Defence Forces engagement with higher education.

The dearth of policies and literature on Defence Forces education became apparent in November 2012, when I was tasked as a project officer to collaborate with the Department of History at Maynooth University to explore the possibilities of accrediting the LCSC at NFQ Level 8, Higher Diploma. This would bridge the accreditation gap between the cadetship Level 7 and the JCSC Level 9. My work on this project led to creating an academic award of Level 8 Higher Diploma in Leadership, Management and Contemporary Security for the LCSC from 2013 onwards. By managing this project and successfully delivering the first accredited course, I experienced first-hand the intersection of higher education and military education for accreditation purposes. During this project, I realised that PME was not a clearly defined *field* and the Defence Forces' partnership with HEIs to deliver military education was an unexamined phenomenon. These knowledge gaps and unexamined assumptions informed the development of the research questions and the construction of the research object, PME for army officers, in the Irish context. Therefore, this research was influenced by my professional and academic experiences and emerged "little by little through a whole series of rectification and amendments", as Bourdieu predicted (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1989, p. 51).

#### **1.4. Development of research questions and study aims**

The development of the research questions has been an ongoing process of revision, rewriting, and editing in response to the literature and consultation with my supervisor. After much consideration, two research aims, each with two research questions, were selected to guide this inquiry:

##### **1. Map the *field* of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces.**

RQ 1.1. In what ways do the *fields* of military education and higher education intersect, and what influences their relationship?

RQ 1.2. How is the accreditation of learning in the Defence Forces reified in education policies and practices?

##### **2. Understand how army officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts their professional *habitus*.**

RQ 2.1. How is the military *habitus* formed during initial military socialisation?

RQ 2.2. In what ways does the military *habitus* evolve through PME?

#### **1.5. Methodological implications of using a Bourdieusian approach**

In this section, I provide an overview of how I have thought through my choice of theory in order to make methodological decisions and design the study. These decisions are described in detail in Chapter 5. Grenfell (2012b) identifies three methodological principles that should inform a Bourdieusian approach. The three principles are “the construction of the research object; three-level *field* analysis; and participant objectivation” (Grenfell, 2012b, p. 213). The first principle involves the “construction of

the research object” (p. 213), which requires focusing on “unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought” (Bourdieu, 1982a, p. 10, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 40). Essentially, this means that the taken-for-granted assumptions about PME are questioned and examined. This principle underpins the entire research approach, where PME as the research object, is analysed and deconstructed in the literature review through historical and policy contexts. Insights gained from semi-structured interviews with military and academic participants provide contemporary perspectives.

The second principle requires a three-level analysis (Grenfell, 2012b). The three-level analysis for analysing a *field* is outlined in *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The first level comprises mapping the *field* in relation to the *field* of power. The second level requires mapping agent positions within the *field*, while the third level analyses the *habitus* of agents. Bourdieu’s theory of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) is used as an analytical lens to examine military socialisation, social reproduction, *habitus* formation and *habitus* evolution experienced through PME.

The military *habitus* formed during an intense phase of early professional socialisation helps deal with predictable problems, as discussed in Chapter 2. However, by virtue of their rank and responsibilities, officers deal with complex issues that arise in the course of their duties. Education is seen as a means to deal with this complexity; however, this assumes that the military *habitus* formed during initial military socialisation can be reformed and reoriented through subsequent PME. During this level of analysis, this research questions this assumption or “unthought category” to establish just how malleable the military *habitus* is, and in what ways does military education impact the *habitus* of its learners? When Bourdieu’s *habitus*, *field* and

*capital* are brought together, they provide a powerful lens for understanding practice. Their relationship is expressed in the mathematical formula:

$$[(\textit{habitus})(\textit{capital})+\textit{field}] = \textit{practice}$$

(Bourdieu, 1984, p. 95).

This representation implies that practice is derived from the relationship between *habitus* and *capital* within the current state of the social *field* (Maton, 2012).

The final principle is participant objectivation, meaning the researcher should adopt a reflexive approach (Grenfell, 2012b). Bourdieu developed and evolved reflexivity as a methodological concept throughout his academic life. Deer (2012, p. 197) points out that Bourdieu believed that “all knowledge producers should strive to recognise their own object position within the intellectual and academic *field*”. Bourdieu explains that reflexivity is achieved through “participant objectification” or “objectivation of the subject of objectivation, of the analysing subject – in short, of the researcher herself” (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 282). Having completed 26 years of military service, I have experienced PME from both the perspective of a student and military instructor. Throughout this work, I am explicit about my insider status and how my experiences affect my relationship with the research object (PME). This is addressed in more detail in Chapter 5 and by documenting my thoughts and reflections through vignettes.

### ***Methods overview***

The first part of this research focuses on mapping the PME *field*. It is informed by an analysis of education policy documents from the macro (European), meso (national) and micro (institutional) levels (see Appendix 8). Secondary sources were also

examined, such as articles and book chapters. Analysis of semi-structured interviews with five military and civilian educators provide contemporary perspectives.

The second part of this research explores how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how military socialisation impacts their professional *habitus*. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) theory of *symbolic violence* is used as a lens to analyse military officers' experiences of PME to develop an understanding of how the military *habitus* is formed and evolves through career-long PME. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve serving army officers drawn from a cross-section of junior, mid, and senior ranks. NVivo was used to manage and analyse the data using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This research is underpinned by my social constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology, discussed in Chapter 5.

### **1.6. Claim to knowledge**

This research makes a relevant and valuable contribution to the *fields* of military and higher education. With its insider researcher underpinnings, coupled with Bourdieu's thinking tools, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into the *field* of PME, especially the relationship between higher education and military education. This work also provides the first mapping of the structures and actors that define and shape the *field* of PME in Ireland. Furthermore, it gives a novel insight into how army officers experience PME and how it forms and develops their professional *habitus* by mobilising the concept of *symbolic violence*. This makes a valuable contribution to the field of professional socialisation and has broader relevance and applicability.

Therefore, this research can make a valuable contribution to knowledge and practice through this methodological and theoretical approach.

### **1.7. Limitations**

The aims of this thesis are broad and ambitious. For this reason, the scope is limited to army officer education and excludes PME for Naval Service and Air Corps officers. In addition, there have been considerable advances in accredited learning for Private Soldiers and Non-Commissioned Officers in the Defence Forces; however, these areas are also beyond the scope of this research.

At the outset of this research, I intended to devote equal attention to Bourdieu's three concepts of *habitus*, *field* and *capital*. As the study evolved, the process of habitus formation through *symbolic violence* assumed greater salience. As a result, a section on how *capital* is employed in the military *field* and other *fields* post service was omitted but may be used in future work.

### **1.8. Summary of the following chapters**

This thesis comprises eight chapters. The first chapter has provided an introduction to the study and an overview of the aims, objectives, and methodology. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 comprise the literature review section that informs the conceptual framework for this research. The main focus of Chapter 2 is to introduce the Irish Defence Forces and the accreditation literature to provide a contextual backdrop for this study. Chapter 3 provides a scholarly analysis of the three main areas of the literature review: military sociology, military education, and military socialisation. The relationship between these three elements is discussed and synthesised within the context of the



Defence Forces and the research questions posed. In Chapter 4, key aspects of Bourdieu's theory of practice and *symbolic violence* are introduced, and their utility for studying the military *field* is evaluated. Chapter 5 addresses the research design and methodology. I justify the decisions made regarding the conceptual framework, sampling, data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations. Two chapters on findings and discussion follow this. Chapter 6 presents the findings and discussion that addresses the first aim of the thesis: to map the *field* of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces. Chapter 7 presents the findings and discussion that addresses the second aim of the thesis, which explores how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts their professional *habitus*.

Chapter 8, the conclusion, summarises the main findings and discusses their implications. Research limitations and potential for future research are discussed.

## Chapter 2 – The Irish Defence Forces Training and Education

### Approach

#### 2.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced the aim of this thesis, the methodological approach and explained why PME is critical to the Defence Forces. This chapter provides the contextual backdrop for this study. The first part of the chapter establishes the relationship between the roles of the Defence Forces and how they affect military education. The roles and responsibilities assigned to the Defence Forces in defence policy determine the military capabilities required to fulfil the assigned functions. The military capabilities dictate the training and education requirements, and in this way, all Defence Forces activities are nested in Ireland's defence policy. The second part of this chapter focuses on the broader literature around accreditation and specifically how accreditation has influenced military education. In this research, accreditation is recognised as a 'threshold concept' (Meyer and Land, 2003, p. 1) that opened up a range of possibilities that have transformed military education to such an extent that it is now integrated into the PME system. The convergence of military and higher education *fields* forms one of the strands of analysis that informs *field* mapping in Chapter 6.

This chapter begins by analysing the roles of the Irish Defence Forces' to understand why the military must educate its personnel. After this, the relationship between PME and military capability is discussed. How military education in the Irish Defence Forces is organised and the influence of accreditation on military education is then explored.

## **2.2. Military roles dictate military capabilities**

The government determines the roles and responsibilities of the Irish Defence Forces. They are expressed in defence policy through the White Paper on Defence 2015 (Department of Defence, 2015) and the White Paper on Defence Update 2019 (Department of Defence, 2019). The roles and responsibilities assigned to the Defence Forces provide the basis for action within the organisation and determine the organisation's boundaries.

Tonra (2019, p. 1) highlights that "Irish security and defence policy was driven by three interconnected policy goals: territorial defence, aid to the civil power and international security operations". These three policy goals provide a helpful structure for understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Defence Forces, which are significant drivers of defence education. These three policy goals are analysed next as they determine what the Defence Forces must be able to do when tasked by the government.

### ***Territorial Defence***

Chapter Two of the White Paper 2015 assesses international security trends and the consequent security threats posed to Ireland. The assessment concludes that:

[T]he probability of a conventional attack on Ireland is currently assessed as low. However, any potential conflicts affecting member states of the EU presents serious concerns for Ireland and the future outlook is likely to remain unpredictable in the coming years.

(Department of Defence, 2015, p. 17)

Ireland's geostrategic location "as an island, off an island, off Europe" (Hegarty, 2018) and its non-membership of a military alliance make a conventional attack on its territory unlikely. As Ireland is situated between two major military powers, with the US

to the west and the UK to the east, Ireland, by default, comes under their area of security interest and their collective security umbrellas (English, 2017). Similarly, Sweeney and Derdzinski (2010) illustrate how Ireland's geostrategic location affects its military: "Ireland, was safely behind NATO lines during the Cold War, which allowed Ireland to maintain both a small military and a low level of defense spending" (p. 41). Ireland's attitude to defence and defence spending has not changed much since the Cold War and is analysed later in this section.

Despite the low probability of a conventional attack, the White Paper 2015 acknowledges that "Providing for the military defence of the State's territory is a fundamental security requirement and responsibility" (p. 1) of the Defence Organisation<sup>7</sup>. The government has decided that Ireland will be prepared to defend itself from armed aggression, and if it is attacked, "Ireland must be prepared to act alone until the United Nations Security Council has taken appropriate measures" (p. 24). In response, the Defence Forces, like most national armed forces, are organised with "a conventional forces structure with the flexibility, adaptability and deployability to meet a wide range of threats" (DJ7, 2015, p. 1). This requirement places significant demands on developing conventional military capabilities to operate effectively in the land, sea, and air domains.

Tonra (2019) paints a bleak picture of the current reality of Ireland's territorial defence capabilities:

Ireland's military capacity is modest with a total force complement of just over 9,000 personnel divided between three branches of the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF); the army, naval service and air corps and a small Reserve Defence Force (RDF) of just over 1,500 personnel. Ireland is close

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<sup>7</sup> The Defence Organisation is made up of the civilian members of the Department of Defence and the military members of the Defence Forces.

to the bottom of the league in terms of defence spending – allocating just 0.34 percent of GDP to that end. This is the lowest defence spending of any of the EU27 member states and places Ireland at about 150th internationally. The paucity of defence spending is, of course translated into an exceptionally limited military capacity.

(Tonra, 2019, p. 2)

Tonra's assessment of the current state of Defence Forces' capabilities is accurate. Based upon analysis of military spending in 2021, Lee (2021) argues that Ireland falls well short of EU defence spending, allocating just 0.27 per cent of GDP on defence compared to the EU average of 1.2 per cent. By comparison, the military spending target for NATO members is 2% of GDP by 2024 (Selinger, 2021). If the Irish Government were to increase spending on the military to NATO's target of 2% GDP it would require a Defence vote allocation change from the current €1 billion to €6 billion per year.

Due to Ireland's military neutrality stance, sustained relatively fortuitously throughout World War Two, the Defence Forces has never needed to develop a credible territorial defence like other neutral countries such as Switzerland and Sweden. The Irish Government interprets neutrality as "non-membership of military alliances" (DFAT, 2019, para. 1.). English (2017) points out that successive governments have not made any real effort to comply with neutrality requirements as outlined in *Laws of War: Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land (Hague V); October 18, 1907* (Hague Convention, 2019). For the Irish Government to comply with this international treaty, it would need "sufficient military forces to deny the use of the territory, coastal seas and air space by one belligerent to the prejudice of the security of another" (English, 2017, p. 83). As Tonra (2019), Lee (2021), and others argue, this is not currently within the Defence Forces' capabilities. Flynn (2018) spells out the reality of the Defence Forces current capabilities: "Ireland has no tanks, tracked

armoured combat vehicles, fast jets or aerial monitoring capabilities, and Irish naval vessels lack any sophisticated guided weapons” (p. 86).

This situation creates a *wicked problem*<sup>8</sup> for Defence Forces’ planners, where defence policy specifies a task, yet defence spending is insufficient to achieve the capabilities required. Grint (2005) explains that there is a considerable degree of uncertainty involved in trying to solve wicked problems. Wicked problems are very much a characteristic of the modern security environment, and therefore, military colleges have an increased responsibility to ensure PME is tailored to educate officers to deal with such challenges.

### ***Aid to the civil power (ATCP)***

The Army, Air Corps, and Naval Service support the Garda Síochána (the police force or civil power) on request, to assist in explosive ordnance disposal, cash in transit escorts, prisoner escorts, prison security, search and rescue, drugs interdiction, VIP security and other specialist tasks such as the operation of the Garda air support unit (Department of Defence, 2015). Tonra (2019, p. 1) points out that “with the 1998 Good Friday or Belfast Agreement and its associated peace process, this function diminished in salience”. However, Brexit can threaten the Good Friday Agreement and return Northern Ireland and its border area to a state of sectarian violence. As

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<sup>8</sup> A wicked problem is: “complex, rather than just complicated, it is often intractable, there is no unilinear solution, moreover, there is no stopping point, it is novel, an apparent solution often generates other problems, and there is no right or wrong answer, but there are better or worse alternatives” (Grint, 2005, p. 1473).

specified in defence policy, the Defence Forces must retain the capabilities to react to ATCP requests in the event of a break-down of the peace process.

### ***International security operations***

Ireland has a long-standing policy of military neutrality, which remains “a core element of Irish foreign policy” (DFAT, 2016, p. 29). It pursues collective security primarily through the United Nations, European Union (EU), Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO Partnership for Peace (PFP). Any commitment of forces to overseas missions led by the UN, EU and/or NATO must by law comply with the “Triple Lock” mechanism where the mission must have a UN mandate, government decision and parliamentary approval. Since 1958, the Irish Defence Forces have deployed to the most dangerous parts of the world on UN Peace Support Operations (PSO) in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and South America, completing almost 70,000 tours of duty (O' Brien, 2019).

Ireland's use of military power to achieve its international strategic interests and ideals of peace and friendly co-operation has been projected mainly through the Defence Forces participation in UN operations. Ireland has never used the military instrument to fight a war; however, through involvement in PSOs around the globe, Defence Forces personnel experience the full spectrum of military operations ranging from peace to conflict through to war itself. Currently, there are 676 members of the Defence Forces serving on UN-mandated operations around the globe (O' Brien, 2019).

Through Ireland's commitment to international peace and security operations, Defence Forces members have first-hand experience of the complexity of the

contemporary operating environment. As mentioned in the opening chapter, the modern operating environment is characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Educating and training personnel to operate in this dynamic environment is a significant challenge for the Defence Forces PME system. Therefore, education and training activities are essential elements of military capability discussed in the next section.

### **2.3. So what does defence policy mean for military capability?**

As highlighted in the preceding section, defence policy dictates that the Defence Forces must maintain a broad range of military capabilities. Military capabilities can be understood “as the ability to attain operational success for a given scenario, achieving desired effects under specified standards and conditions through combinations of ways and means<sup>9</sup>” (Department of Defence, 2015, p. 60). Military capability consists of three components, as illustrated in Figure 2: a conceptual component (how to operate/fight); a moral component (the ability to get people to operate based upon Defence Forces values); and the physical component (the means to operate/fight) (Ministry of Defence, 2011). With its PME focus, this thesis is set within the conceptual component from a military capability perspective. The conceptual component comprises elements such as understanding conflict and context, doctrine<sup>10</sup>, innovation, lessons learned and education. The conceptual component is considered

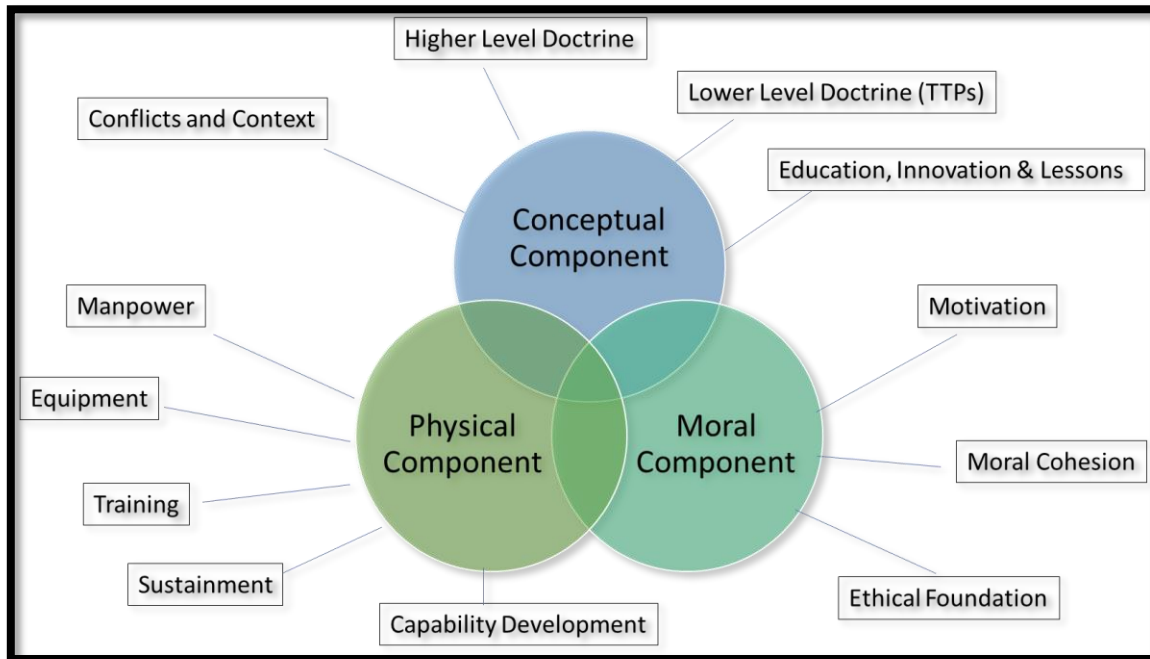
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<sup>9</sup>Strategy equals *ends* (objectives toward which one strives) plus *ways* (courses of action) plus *means* (instruments by which some end can be achieved) (Lykke, 2001, p. 179).

<sup>10</sup> Doctrine is defined as “the fundamental principles by which military forces guide their actions in support of military objectives. Doctrine is authoritative but requires judgement in application” (Defence Forces, 2015, p. 4).



a force multiplier<sup>11</sup>, and given the organisational and operational challenges faced by officers today, the education of Defence Forces officers has assumed greater importance than ever before.



**Figure 2. Components of Military Power (adapted from Ministry of Defence 2011, p. 1-4).**

Officers fulfil a diverse range of roles and responsibilities. They are the leaders, commanders, educators, managers, and decision-makers of the organisation. Officers are required to have a broad range of both military expertise and experiences in diverse areas such as business, logistics, economics, education, human resource management, international relations, to name but a few. Moelker and Soeters (2008, p. 37) recognise the “hybrid character of the officer’s profession” and the requirement

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<sup>11</sup> A force multiplier is a capability that, when added to and employed by a combat force, significantly increases the combat potential of that force and thus enhances the probability of successful mission accomplishment (US Department of Defence, 2021).

for officers to have a broad education base. Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, former Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, also recognises the hybrid nature of an officer's role asserting that the Defence Forces need "an officer corps that are leaders, warriors, diplomats and scholars" (Kavanagh, 2014, p. 6).

The management of defence in Ireland is the responsibility of both civil and military elements of the Department of Defence (Minister for Defence, 1954). The Department of Defence comprises a civilian aspect headed by the Secretary General, and a military element of Defence Forces Headquarters led by the Chief of Staff. Aside from conducting military operations at home and overseas, officers at Defence Forces Headquarters run the country's defence business, in co-operation with, but subordinated to the civilian Department of Defence.

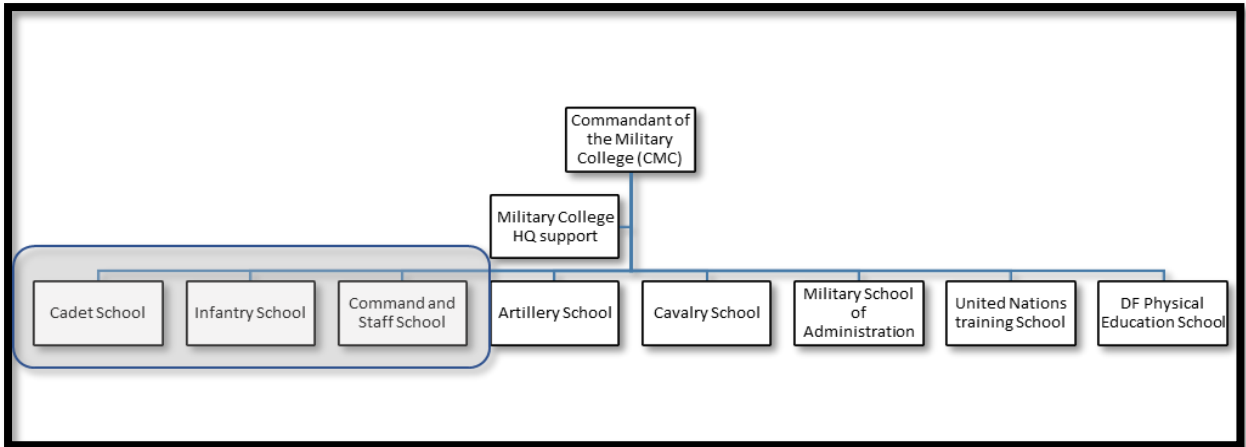
Providing education and training for such a diverse range of roles is challenging. There is a unanimous belief that militaries cannot recruit middle management from outside the organisation (Kem and Hotaling, 2017). Instead, like other militaries, the Defence Forces develop, train, and educate from within. The military is a unique profession in this regard, and its education processes are therefore different from other models of higher education. Kem and Hotaling (2017) provide some rationale for these differences, including: (1) the military is the "end user" of its students; (2) military education must address the "full spectrum of learning" for a range of specialist roles; (3) the military education system must deliver career-long learning to its personnel as there are limited options to hire "middle management" given the specialist nature of military roles (pp. 5-6). In the next section, the Defence Forces approach to education is discussed.

## **2.4. The Defence Forces Training and Education Approach**

The importance of training and education was articulated in the first White Paper on Defence in 2000, where it stated that “The primary focus of the Defence Forces, when not engaged on operations, is training and preparation” (Department of Defence, 2000, para. 4.6.1). The White Paper (2000) further stated that “All personnel will be provided with the opportunity for personal development and associated professional experience in order to realise their full potential during their service in the Defence Forces” (para 4.6.2). These policy lines have served as significant drivers of the education agenda since the publication of the first White Paper. Before then, there was no published defence policy, and that policy gap created a military education system that evolved in an *ad hoc* and incremental manner (Lawlor, 2017). Education and training activities in the Defence Forces are the responsibility of the Director of Defence Forces Training (DJ7). Defence Policy is the pre-eminent document that guides all Defence Forces activities, including the approach to training and education. How the Defence Forces manage this process is detailed in Chapter 6.

## **2.5. The Military College**

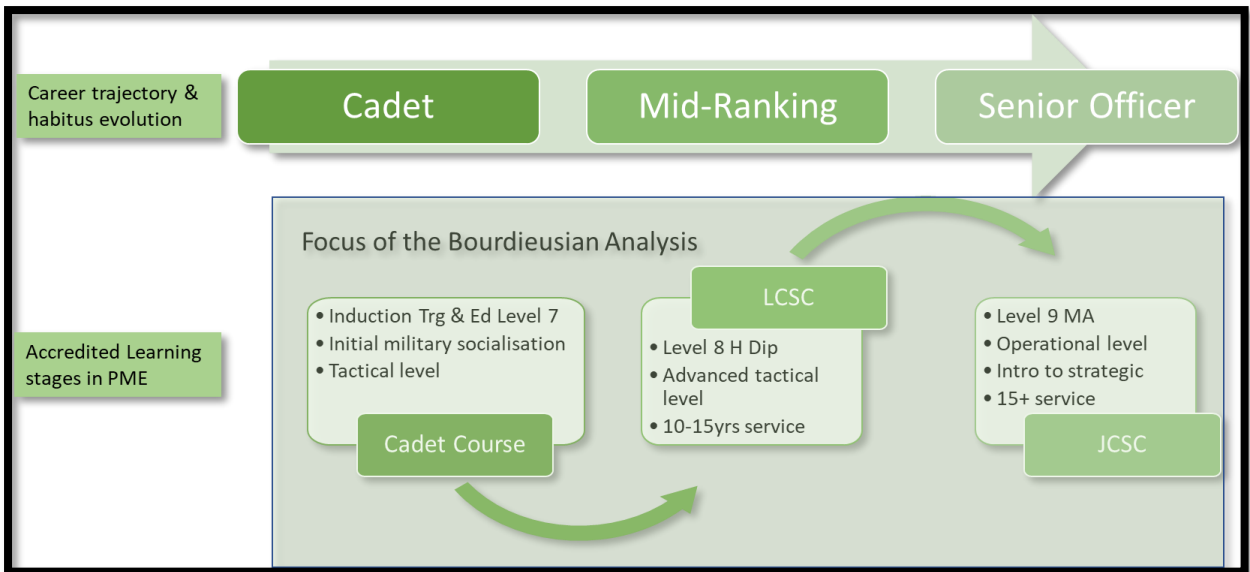
PME for officers takes place in the Military College. The Military College provides “training, education, and doctrine” to the Defence Forces' leadership and combat units (Defence Forces, 2021b). The organisational structure of the Military College is depicted in Figure 3. The Commandant of the Military College (CMC) holds the rank of Colonel and is responsible for managing the schools of the Military College. The HQ support element operates and coordinates all college administrative and logistics support matters. Eight specialist schools deliver training and education in the Defence Forces.



**Figure 3. The organisation of the Military College**

For army officers, the three career courses they complete throughout their careers are the cadetship, the Land Command and Staff Course, and the Joint Command and Staff Course, completed in the Cadet School, the Infantry School and the Command and Staff School, respectively (highlighted in Figure 3).

Figure 4 depicts the career trajectory and approximate length of service time when each PME course is undertaken. It also shows the NFQ education level for each course. These three career courses for army officers are the focus of analysis for this research.



**Figure 4 Career-long PME**

When officers are not attending PME, they may be working in their units, attending skills training courses, performing domestic operations, or deployed overseas. Except for the Cadet Course, it is up to the officer to decide when they will apply for the next level of PME. The LCSC and JCSC have limited capacity, so the Director of Human Resources (DJ1) selects personnel based on seniority. In this way, access to each PME level is controlled, which is discussed further in Chapter 7.

## **2.6. Military academic co-operation**

As accreditation is such a prominent feature of military education today, I review accreditation literature and explore its influence on the military education field in the next part of this chapter. This will provide context for the *field* mapping presented in Chapter 6.

In the late 1990s, the Defence Forces acknowledged that traditional military training was insufficient to address the complex problems officers face. Given the undisputed commitment to military exceptionalism (i.e. developing, training, and educating from within), the Defence Forces needed to create a practical solution for their specific educational requirements. The Defence Forces collaboration with HEIs to fulfil the education requirements coincided with the Bologna Declaration (1999), opening new possibilities for military-academic co-operation. The military-academic collaboration was not just about accessing HEI's academic expertise but was also about validating the overall quality of military courses. The prospect of accreditation of military courses was a break from the military exceptionalism that had prevailed until then. Accreditation was the key that opened up the Defence Forces to other education possibilities. The prospect of accreditation thus served as a threshold concept for the organisation "akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something" (Meyer and Land, 2003, p. 1). Accreditation provided a way to make the higher education *field* accessible for the Defence Forces, and it also opened up the Irish military education *field* to external scrutiny by HEIs.

This section begins with a review of accreditation definitions and examines accreditation's origins in Europe. The Irish HEI accreditation process is discussed, and then a review of accreditation in both the military and police education *fields* is conducted.

### **Accreditation**

The term accreditation has many different meanings and can be understood and misunderstood depending upon the context of its use (de Paor, 2016). Prince (2004)

highlights the complexity associated with the term and advocates for its detailed exploration to understand its nuances. The Oxford English Dictionary defines accreditation as “official approval given by an organisation stating that somebody/something has achieved a required standard” (OED, 2019). At its most basic level, accreditation involves some judgement by somebody or something against predetermined criteria or standards (Haakstad, 2001).

Prince (2004, p. 257) uses the definition proposed by the Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System that defines it: “The process by which an awarding body evaluates a programme of study (learning) to formally recognise the achievement of specified learning outcomes at a particular level”. Therefore, the accreditation process concerns the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved and credits earned, as demonstrated through assessment.

Harvey (2004) identifies that accreditation can be of institutions or programmes. He defines accreditation as “the establishment or restatement of the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution’s programme (i.e. composite of modules) or module of study” (p. 208). Similarly, de Paor (2016, p. 230) believes it is a validation process at “an institutional and programme level”. Institutional level accreditation is considered a way of guaranteeing to the general public that the institution is a credible actor and complies with quality assurance standards for its programmes.

In contrast, programme accreditation relates to the quality of the individual programmes (Westerheijden, 2001). Professional accreditation is a means of quality assessment associated with the standards of a particular profession (Ulker and Bakioglu, 2019). Some academic programmes are accredited by professional or regulatory bodies, such as the medical profession, law, engineering, and finance (de

Paor, 2016), where completing an accredited academic course is a requirement for entry into a profession. Where higher education courses are associated with practising a profession, professional accreditation can be viewed as a form of licence to practice that provides “consumer protection” (Frank, Kurth, and Mironowicz, 2012). Following de Paor (2016), accreditation can be broken into two distinct types: institutional accreditation; and programme accreditation. For this work, accreditation is understood as a form of quality control or quality assurance as to whether an institution or a programme achieves a certain standard. In the Defence Forces, programme accreditation is the type of accreditation used for the academic awards as part of career courses. Interestingly, there is no military-specific ‘professional’ accreditation, as with other professions.

## **2.7. Origins and Rationale for Accreditation**

The Bologna Declaration (1999) has been a significant driver of the accreditation agenda (Westerheijden, 2001). It was signed by 29 countries committed to co-operating and coordinating higher education policies throughout Europe. The main aim of the declaration was to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through the values of coordinated reforms, compatible systems and common action to make higher education in Europe an attractive commodity (European Commission, 2019). The declaration called for the following:

Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, interinstitutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

(European Ministers for Education, 1999, p. 4)



The Bologna Declaration (1999) objectives were to develop a compatible credit transfer system and a shared understanding of quality assurance. Implementing these reforms has been challenging across the 48 countries for many reasons (European Commission, 2019). As posited by Papatsiba (2006), higher education convergence is a difficult task due to Europe being “a region historically divided by language, religion and nationalism, and each country’s system of higher education has been developed independently of each other” (p. 93). In the process of making European higher education more transparent to achieve the aims of the Bologna process, accreditation has grown in addition to other quality assurance measures (Westerheijden, 2001). It established the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), whose task was to develop quality assurance and accreditation standards. These measures and standards were established in the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ENQA, 2009). However, the Bologna Declaration does not encroach upon national approaches to quality assurance which Frank et al. (2012, p. 76) identify as the source of issues surrounding “cross-national comparability and equivalency”.

## **2.8. Power and control in accreditation**

Harvey (2004) believes that accreditation is about control of the academic sector and its programmes. He advocates looking beyond the bureaucratic and consumerist rhetoric associated with European conformity and unity. Harvey believes that researchers should critically engage with issues of power and control associated with accreditation. He argues that the accreditation process:

is neither neutral nor benign; it is not apolitical. Quite the contrary, the accreditation route is highly political and is fundamentally about a shift of

power but a shift concealed behind new public management ideology cloaked in consumerist demand and European conformity.

(Harvey, 2004, p. 208)

Harvey bases his argument on research he conducted on participants' views of the accreditation process. He conducted qualitative online research with 53 academics and practitioners from the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia involved in the accreditation process. His research reveals tensions between academics, professional practitioners, and managers. Tensions between academics and professionals are based upon the "perceived infringement of practitioners into the academic realm" (p. 215), dictating what should be taught and how it should be taught. Similar tensions were identified between accrediting bodies and academics in the areas of "programme content, programme delivery and bureaucratic requirements" (p. 216). The bureaucratic burden and workload associated with programme accreditation were also identified as unnecessarily controlling. Harvey's research reveals some confusion about where the power should lie. There is tension between academics, practitioners, managers, and the "formal authorising power" over where the decision-making authority belongs (Haakstad, 2001). Harvey's research indicates the perception of a "shift of power from educators to managers to bureaucrats" (p. 222). Additionally, academics view the practice as another managerial process that undermines their academic autonomy. He feels that the:

diminution of autonomy and freedom to make pedagogic decisions creates a context of compliance and, ultimately, as has been seen in other areas of quality control, game playing, manipulation and subversion of the processes (Barrow, 1999). Improvement is a long way down the agenda, if it is really on it at all.

(Harvey, 2004, pp. 221-222)

How and where these tensions surfaced during the Defence Forces engagement with HEIs for accreditation purposes is analysed in Chapter 6.

## **2.9. Quality Assurance**

Ulker and Bakioglu (2019) identify that accreditation is driven by the requirement to have reliable quality assurance mechanisms that can stand up to scrutiny both nationally and internationally. The term quality assurance is “used to describe the processes that seek to ensure that the learning environment (including teaching and learning) reaches an acceptable threshold of quality” (QQI, 2016, p. 2). Haakstad (2001) identifies the 1998 UNSSCO World Conference on Higher Education and the 1999 Bologna Declaration, as the European origins of internationally recognised quality standards. The White Paper on Defence (2015) views accreditation as a quality assurance mechanism that “ensures that the educational and training outputs of the Defence Forces are in line with best international practice” (p. 76). In the next section, how accreditation is managed in Ireland is examined.

## **2.10. Accreditation in the Irish Context**

Institutional accreditation in Ireland is governed by the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 (ISB, 1999). The Act established the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ) to recognise and award qualifications within the state. In November 2012, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was established for quality assurance of higher education and training in Ireland. The 2012 Act specifies the roles and functions of QQI, including the making of awards (ISB, 2012). However, the

Defence Forces do not have the power to accredit its courses and must partner with either a university or an Institute of Technology (IT) for accreditation purposes.

The Universities Act (1997) gives universities the power to accredit their programmes and the autonomy to make academic awards (ISB, 1997). QQI is the awarding body for third-level educational institutions outside the university sector, including Ireland's eleven Institutes of Technology (IT). QQI, therefore, validates the programmes conducted in the IT sector for the purpose of academic awards. QQI is also the awarding body for further education and training. Fee-paying or private third-level educational institutions may offer higher-level courses that are accredited by QQI or by professional bodies. The Military College must partner with either an IT or university to accredit its programmes.

### ***Accreditation drivers in Ireland***

In 2011 the Irish Government published its National Strategy on Education to 2030. The report sets out Government policy on developing higher education in Ireland until 2030 (Report of the Strategy Group, 2011). In his foreword to the report, Chairperson of the Strategy Group, Mr Colin Hunt, explains:

As a group, we believe very strongly that higher education is central to future economic development in Ireland, and that there are broad social and cultural advantages to widening participation in higher education. The capacity of higher education will almost double over the next twenty years, with most of the growth coming from non-traditional areas, such as 'mature' students and those from overseas, as well as increased postgraduate activity. The need for lifelong learning and upskilling among the workforce will also contribute to growth.

(Report of the Strategy Group, 2011, p. 3)

The Defence Forces could be considered a 'non-traditional' area where lifelong learning within the workplace is required. This report highlights the link between

economic development and education, which is carried through to the White Paper on Defence (2015) and the requirement for Defence Forces' education to prepare individuals for their military role and the workforce after their military service.

The National Strategy goes on to elaborate:

In many professions and occupations there is already a requirement for continuous professional development, and this creates a demand for part-time and short courses at any time of the year, on any day of the week, at any time of the day. People want to study from home or from their workplace. People want to – and need to – move between employment and education several times during their lives. People want to pursue education in parallel with employment, so that their path to any particular educational goal could be considerably longer than that of a full-time student and people want to progressively build on their knowledge and experience, and want their achievements to be recognised.

(Report of the Strategy Group, 2011, p. 36)

Here the report acknowledges the demand for continuous professional development and how working learners can flexibly engage with education to pursue academic awards. It closely resembles the Defence Forces models for both officer and non-commissioned officer education, where progressive career courses require engagement with accredited learning.

### **2.11. European military education and the EHEA**

As explained in Chapter 1 and earlier in this chapter, the contemporary operating environment requires militaries to perform a more comprehensive array of tasks than ever before. This has required a fundamental change in how militaries train and educate their personnel. Military academies have recognised that focussing entirely on combat training is no longer sufficient for preparing military leaders for contemporary operational challenges (Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez, 2019). This has seen military academies worldwide change their approach to education,

resulting in greater integration and collaboration with civilian universities (Caforio, 2007). According to Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez (2019), European military education has exploited the opportunities provided by the Bologna Declaration to “renew itself and to improve its academic standards” (p. 2). The benefits of a standardised, compatible education framework across the ranks and the practice of increased mobility of both military students and military instructors through military ERASMUS, was recognised for its potential to enhance cooperation and interoperability on multi-national operations. Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez (2019) argue that the outcome of this work has been that “a coherent military education system has been consolidated across Europe and the Military Higher Education Institution (MHEI) has emerged” (p. 2). In 2005 the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) was established to:

deliver strategic-level education on CSDP [Common Security and Defence Policy], and provide knowledgeable personnel, within both EU Institutions and EU Member States ... aiming to further promote EU values and share best practices in security and defence.

(ESDC, 2018).

The college is primarily focused on achieving the goals set out in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSDP) through supporting national training and education programmes. The ESDC is a highly networked institution with links to several universities, military academies, and security and defence experts, including The EU Institute for Security Studies (Dubois, 2012). Recognising the value of the comprehensive approach to managing crisis, almost all ESDC courses have a civilian and military mixed audience.

### ***Establishing common standards***

One initiative arising from the ESDC is the Sectoral Qualification Framework for the Military Officer Profession (SQF-MILOF). Similar to the Bologna process's common qualification standards, the SQF-MILOF provides the EU Member States with a common military education standard so that the same ranks in each country will have an equivalent academic standard. Accordingly, “[i]t will provide a suitable guidance on what an officer should know and be able to do, under a certain degree of responsibility and autonomy, in order to match a generic profile for a European officer” (ESDC, 2018). Based upon my professional experiences as a student on the Joint Command and Staff Course in 2019, I have seen the similarities of officer education at equivalent ranks. It was particularly evident for me during a ten-day multi-national exercise called *Combined Joint European Exercise (CJEX)* conducted in May 2019. This annual exercise aims to undertake training in a joint and multinational environment at the operational level to improve international working skills between participating nations of NATO and PfP. This exercise was run in military academies throughout Europe as part of Joint Command and Staff Course training for officer students of Major/Commandant rank. Irish students worked in operational planning groups with students from the Netherlands Military Academy, the Portuguese Military Academy, Belgium’s Military Academy and the Swedish Defence University. Many other nations were represented in the exercise as they had students attending European military academies. This experience highlighted the extent of mobility within European military education and the *symbolic power* associated with accreditation exercised through European higher education policies (discussed in Chapters 4 and 6).

Paile (2012) identifies the French Presidency of the EU in 2008, as the origin of exchange programmes between military academies. Conditions of exchange were agreed upon between member states which were broadly in line with the Bologna process, such as increasing mobility of students and instructors, the mutual recognition of courses and academic awards, and the greater alignment of curricula (Paile, 2012). Interestingly, all students who participated in the CJEX exercise were attending year-long courses at master's level, reinforcing the notion of the 'generic' European officer and that officers of the same rank have an equivalent level of education.

This section highlights that officer education throughout Europe has been influenced by unrelated factors such as the changing nature of the contemporary operating environment, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy, and the move for greater higher education cooperation through the Bologna Process. Member States' efforts to standardise training and education are supported and facilitated through the European Union Security and Defence College. Many of the initiatives from the EUSDC are similar to elements in the Bologna process, such as common standards, student and staff mobility and exchanges. The following section reviews the models for military and higher education cooperation.

## **2.12. Accreditation and its effects on military education**

The adoption of rigorous academic standards has profoundly affected military education. Instead of military academies managing education standards internally, the adoption of higher education standards has changed the nature of the military academies to post-graduate institutions (Libel, 2019). Due to the lack of higher



education expertise within military academies, they have turned to military and education academics to bring military education standards to acceptable higher education standards. It has led to increased cooperation, collaboration and links between military academies and civilian HEIs. As Barrett (2009) notes, “For European staff colleges, the Bologna Process sets a reasonable and achievable common standard for what might be termed a “professional” masters degree, and this has pushed some staff colleges to acquire university status” (p. 2). Concerning the requirement for continuing professional military education, Barrett (2009) highlights that there is not enough time for an officer to learn everything required. He advocates a coherent defence education system that incorporates multi-national and interagency education throughout the career of the military professional. Barrett (2009, p. 3) argues that “defence education reform is a fully shared enterprise” and, therefore, international collaboration should increase. He cites several initiatives promoted by NATO and Partnership for Peace (PfP) that support military academies to share knowledge and best practice. Libel (2019) believes that the increase in ‘academisation’ is a natural consequence of increased collaboration between military colleges and HEIs. The adoption of continuing professional military education, otherwise known as lifelong learning, has served to bring the military and HEIs closer and has changed the structures of military education.

In their paper analysing the integration of military education into the EHEA, Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez (2019) describe the different models of officer education. They differentiate between models based upon who has responsibility for delivering the academic element of the curriculum, as shown in Table 1. In the first model, the traditional military college has changed its status to a military university, and they are equivalent to any other university with the EHEA. In their second model, the academic

part of the curriculum is outsourced to a partner institution and is separate from the military modules on the course. A third model is a joint model where military and academics share responsibility for the HEI while other nations delegate education to civilian HEIs. Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez (2019) table is a helpful summary of European national military education systems (EU 28).

Defence University			
Joint MHEI	Service MHEI	Association/ Delegation Civilian University	Without National Military Education System
Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden.	Bulgaria, France, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania.	Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Slovenia, Spain, UK.	Cyprus, Luxemburg, Malta.

**Table 1 European education system (EU28)** (Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez, 2019, p. 375).

In contrast to the traditional military academy, where all the instruction was delivered by military personnel, the new and prevailing model “is characterised by civilian-military, academic-professional faculty” (Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez, 2019, p. 4). In this model, oversight of military education is shared, and civilian university standards govern the delivery of the curriculum.

Research suggests a widespread transition from traditional ‘in house’ education to collaborative inter-agency military education (Libel, 2019). This sees military organisations changing from one form of social organisation to a military education model based around a national defence university concept.

### **2.13. Accreditation Research in the Defence Forces**

In this section, I review the work of two Defence Forces officers who researched the accreditation of Defence Forces courses as part of their post-graduate studies. The first work reviewed is based upon the research of Captain (Naval Service) Brian Fitzgerald. He conducted this research in 2009 in part fulfilment for an MA in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies titled *A review of Defence Forces training and education in the context of the National Framework of Qualifications: The implications for the organisation, the individual and society?* The second work is by Commandant Jayne Lawlor, conducted in 2016 for her MA in Teaching and Learning titled *The accreditation of Defence Forces education and training – beneficial or not?* These are the only existing studies on accreditation in the Defence Forces.

Fitzgerald's (2009) thesis aimed to examine the implications for the organisation, the individual and society of NFQ accreditation for Defence Forces courses. It is important to note that Fitzgerald's work predates the development of accreditation of NCO career courses. His research questions why the Defence Forces should pursue accreditation and how it could be implemented. The methodology chosen for this research was a case study, with focus groups and semi-structured interviews used to generate the data. The study participants included national educational policymakers, organisational leaders, accrediting authorities, academics and a selection of service personnel. This study was informed by human, cultural, and social *capital* theories. The findings highlighted a "significantly positive" attitude towards accreditation regarding benefits to the organisation, the individual, and society. From an organisational point of view, the Defence Forces could use accreditation as a means to provide "quality assurance, enhance relevance and credibility, and deliver on national policy" (p. 40). The individual may benefit from accreditation as it meets

individual needs of qualification recognition, mobility and employability within careers and satisfies their inherent need for self-actualisation. From a societal perspective, the Defence Forces have responsibility for creating a safe and secure economic environment where the Irish economy can prosper. Accreditation provides a means whereby learning is recognised, and personnel who leave the Defence Forces are equipped to contribute to society at the end of their service. Fitzgerald concluded that accreditation of Defence Forces courses is a “natural and necessary step for the Defence Forces” (p. 43).

Lawlor (2016) examined the perceptions of graduates of the Leadership, Management, and Defence Studies programme conducted through IT Carlow, which is completed as part of NCO career courses. Her primary aim was to investigate the benefits of this lifelong learning programme as perceived by the graduates through examining the impact on their professional and personal development. Lawlor adopted “a generic qualitative approach” (p. 4) with an interpretivist perspective for this study. Data were generated from several sources, including a questionnaire, focus group and semi-structured interviews. She used thematic analysis to generate an analytical framework that identified four main themes: access to further education; increased confidence; improved employment prospects; and issues with the programme.

The main conclusions from this study were that accreditation has resulted in a more educated and knowledgeable workforce. Lawlor (2016) reports that 69% of respondents use the accreditation process as a “stepping-stone” into other further education courses. 60% of respondents reported that their confidence had increased as a result of the accredited learning. Sub-themes emerged such as pride in achievement, improved promotion prospects, an improved ability to do their job and being a role model for their children. 76% of respondents believe that accreditation

would positively affect their career by either promotion in the Defence Forces or enhancing their prospects to find employment after their military service.

#### **2.14. Accreditation of police officer education**

Without a body of research on the benefits of accreditation in military officer education, I have examined some case studies into police officer education in the UK. I have selected police education accreditation experiences because there are many similarities between military and police training and education, and each has similar epistemological foundations. Similar to military forces, police forces also have to contend with the challenge of training and educating their personnel “to undertake an ever more complex role within society” (Nikolou-Walker, 2007, p. 357). The award of a vocational degree for police officer education is characterised by integrating “academic and work-based learning and the close and continued collaboration between programme providers and employers” (Heslop, 2011, p. 302). Awarding a vocational degree is analogous to accrediting NCO career courses in the Defence Forces through IT Carlow, as described earlier.

Paterson (2011) reviewed police training and education literature to find how higher education ‘adds value’ to police education. His research focused on literature primarily drawn from the United Kingdom, the USA, the European Union, Australia, and India. The methodology used in this research was the interrogation of nine databases for academic research related to the value of higher education to police education. Paterson found that there has been very little research on the value of higher education to police education in the UK. He cites the findings of Lee and Punch (2004), who note that higher education enhances police officers’ critical thinking skills and attitudes.

Concerning the European Union, Paterson notes that police education is transitioning from training to an education focus. Like military education, Paterson attributes the main driver of this change in approach to the Bologna Declaration (1999). This resulted in establishing a European Police Academy in 2005 that drives the implementation of the Bologna principles of transferability, mobility, and compatible modularisation and standards. Again, similar to military education, this has given rise to significant developments in police education and training throughout Europe and the proliferation of police academies that now have university status.

Paterson concludes that higher education does add value to police officer development in many areas. Firstly, higher education enhances the critical thinking ability of police officers and their ability to think creatively to solve systemic policing problems. Secondly, the research highlights the importance of the police developing a collaborative relationship with HEIs to inform organisational reform. Thirdly, higher education provides police officers with an understanding of global police issues and knowledge transfer from international contexts. Finally, Paterson believes that establishing police education as a distinct security element of the state can potentially allow greater police-academic collaboration to provide training and education to other security sector elements.

The second research reviewed is by Dr Richard Heslop, a Sergeant in the British Police and Deputy Head of Detective Training at West Yorkshire Police when conducting his research (Heslop, 2011). Informed by the social theory of Bourdieu, he completed a qualitative case study to examine the influence of police recruit training and education courses and the implications for their *habitus* as police officers. The research design was based upon a longitudinal approach, and data was generated from 25 interviews. As a police practitioner-researcher, Heslop was conscious of his

status as an insider and the associated biases that could arise. When he started his research, he believed that police recruits would view the university experience positively; however, the results differed.

The results were not what Heslop expected, and he discovered that partnering with a university to award a vocational degree had 'unintended consequences' (p. 304). The most surprising result from this research was that the university experience was mainly negative. Recruits were highly critical of the lecturers, their lecturing style, and their general attitude towards them. Another issue that arose was the fact that the police service has no minimum educational requirement to join. This caused problems for many recruits who struggled with the course's academic elements, which contributed to the belief that they were treated differently from the university's 'real students'. This feeling of isolation was exacerbated by the temporary 'portacabin' facilities on the periphery of the campus provided for police recruit lectures. These factors reinforced the feeling that police students were somehow less important than other students at the university. Heslop drew upon Bourdieu's theory to understand the dynamics at play in this case study. He contends that the university exercised *symbolic violence* to "devalue the professional experience and subordinate it to academic perspectives" (Heslop, 2011, p. 308). Heslop concludes that there is a danger in making assumptions about the benefits of university education for police recruits. This research has highlighted that universities, like police and military institutions, may have different cultures that can manifest as tension in the relationship.

## **2.15. Conclusion**

This chapter focused primarily on discussing the roles of the Defence Forces, how the roles are linked to capabilities, and how capability requirements drive education requirements. The concept of accreditation was then reviewed to understand its origins and features and how it impacts military education today.

While this thesis focuses primarily on PME in the Irish context, it is essential to understand how military education has evolved from military professionalism and how this has influenced the Irish approach. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will review the literature relating to military professionalism, and military socialisation, that provides the foundations for the subsequent empirical work.



## **Chapter 3 – The Emergence and Establishment of the Military**

### **Profession**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter reviews key academic literature related to the emergence and establishment of the military profession. Wellington et al. (2005, p. 73) suggest that the purpose of a literature review is to “locate your intended study within a wider body of knowledge, and to develop a theoretical rationale for your study”. Considering the purpose of the literature review and conscious of the breath of this study, I have been selective and pragmatic in the literature chosen for review.

This chapter aims to locate this study in the broader body of knowledge on the military profession. The first part addresses the sociology of the military profession, the history and evolution of military education, and the interdependence of the profession and its education system. The second part examines socialisation into military life, focusing on how and why it occurs.

#### **3.2. A sociological reading of the military profession**

The establishment of the military as a profession is inextricably linked to military innovation and education evolution. The professionalisation of the military can be traced to two significant historical developments. Firstly, the introduction of gunpowder from China and its subsequent scientific improvements led to the most significant change in the conduct of warfare (Hattendorf, 2002). Using gunpowder and cannon required a greater understanding of the mathematics, physics and chemistry associated with ballistics. From a tactical defensive perspective, military leaders

needed to understand how to design and construct fortifications to survive cannon fire attacks. From a tactical offensive perspective, soldiers needed to understand mathematics, ballistics and trajectories to ensure accurate gunfire. In response to the need for education, military schools were founded throughout Europe, such as Holland's Seigen in 1619, Royal Military Academy Woolwich in 1741, RMC Sandhurst in 1802, West Point in 1802, St.-Cyr in 1803 and 1808 (Haycock, 2002). To keep pace with this innovation, military education for officers became more academic in nature. It moved away from the perfection of skills and drills to higher-order thinking, such as understanding and analysis (Hattendorf, 2002).

The second driver for military professionalism came during the Napoleonic era, as war became too complex to be waged by willing amateurs (Showalter, 2002). Up to the early 1800s, European armies and navies were led by either mercenary officers or aristocratic amateurs who were called into action when required (Huntington, 1967). Holder and Murray (1998) argue that the impetus to professionalise the military arose from the Prussian defeat by Napoleon at Jena-Auerstadt in 1806. This battle saw the Prussian army entirely overwhelmed by the Napoleon-led French forces in a single battle. In response, the Prussian leadership under General Scharnhorst created an education program for its officers at the Kriegsakademie in Berlin in 1810 (Huntington, 1967). Scharnhorst "recognised that disciplined intellect was essential to the profession of arms" (White, 1989, p. xii) and is largely credited with the development of military education. He focused on the concept of 'Bildung' described by White, (1989 p. 2) as "a well-balanced relationship between character and intellect". Furthermore, Bildung focused on the idea that the "talents, abilities, and habits of thought which the officer in combat needs could in large part be acquired only through the broader avenues of learning outside his profession" (p. 5). This philosophy

resulted in a pivot from learning prescribed tactics to a more general education focused on a broad range of academic areas while improving self-reliance and reflection (Huntington, 1967).

Scharnhorst's approach bore relatively quick dividends, resulting in Napoleon's defeat in 1815. According to Holder and Murray (1998), most European armies began to copy the Prussian military education model. This approach influenced military education up to and beyond the First World War, still influencing military academies today.

Foot (2002) posits that Europe's military education system was very conservative during the Cold War period, and military academies were characterised by insularity rather than innovative thought on security challenges. Foot distinguishes between the different types of military academies in Europe over the past 200 years. He used three military campaigns to differentiate between the predominant approaches to military education: Jena, Falklands, and Kosovo.

The first approach is termed the "Jena" model and is based upon the Prussian defeat at Jena in 1806. This model prevailed until after 1945 and is characterised by what Foot (2002, p. 199) terms the "in house" option. This model adheres to the principle that officers should be taught by experienced officers who "embody the professional attributes and personal virtues held to be most valuable for the officer corps" (p. 199). Academic input from non-military personnel was scant if included in military programmes. Foot highlights that the "staff solution", or what Hodgson (2016b) terms "the <sup>12</sup>College solution", was the only recognised answer.

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<sup>12</sup> The 'College solution' refers to the incorrect belief amongst officer students at the Irish Military College that there is an 'ideal' answer to the tactical questions posed to them while on career courses.

The second military education model is termed the “Falklands” approach. This approach acknowledges the limitations of the Jena model. It recognises that “the military profession operates in an environment that ought not to be divorced from its social, educational, economic, and political contexts” (Foot, 2002, p. 199). Military colleges began collaborating with academia and the wider security sector to address these concerns. This approach saw selected officers undergo postgraduate education in the broader area of security studies and international relations to add to the pool of military expertise in these areas. These officers would then be responsible for teaching in their qualified area.

Foot’s third model is termed the “Kosovo” model. This model is characterised by “high quality military staff working alongside embedded academic staff” (p. 200). It sees military staff deliver education on joint operations and military planning processes, while academic input focuses on international relations, military history, politics and sociology. The collaborative military and academic delivery generally lead to an academic postgraduate award. The move away from the “Jena” and “Falklands” model towards a “Kosovo” model began in the late 1990s/early 2000s, interestingly coinciding with the concurrent developments in European Higher Education such as the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations. Foot points out that “the momentum toward common, higher standards has been driven by a variety of factors, many of which are largely unconnected with *direct* European security factors” (p. 201). He implies that changes to military education have been influenced instead by developments in the European higher education *field*.

Libel (2021) argues that contemporary PME can be considered a system that now exists as “one formal, structured, systematic and comprehensive system” focused on joint operations and managed by a centralised headquarters. He also notes that the

increased academisation of PME has resulted in officership becoming more security-oriented rather than military-professional focused.

### **3.3. The military as a profession**

While militaries became more 'professional' in their preparation and training throughout the 1800s, the concept of the military as a 'profession' can be traced back to the classical works of Huntington (1967), Janowitz (1960), and others. According to Huntington, "the art of fighting is an old accomplishment of mankind" (Huntington, 1967, p. 19). Even though warfare has existed throughout human history, the military as a recognised profession only came into existence in the nineteenth century. Huntington is credited with identifying military 'officership' as a profession that manages violence (Libel, 2019).

A profession is different from an occupation, as it has a distinct body of specialised and theoretical knowledge that is difficult for outsiders to acquire. Herron (2004, p. 62) acknowledges that military-specific knowledge is "not common in society at large because those outside of the profession typically do not acquire it". This specialised theoretical knowledge is captured in military doctrine, and the application and study of this knowledge is military science (Snider and Watkins, 2000). Several participants in Chapter 7 mention the importance of military doctrine.

In addition to having a professional body of knowledge, Libel (2019, p. 63) highlights that professional communities control access and advancement in their profession, creating a "professional monopoly". The idea of a professional monopoly in the military is explored using Bourdieu's concept of social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu

and Passeron, 1977). It is explained in detail in Chapter 4 and informs analysis in Chapter 7.

Millett (1977) convincingly summarises the factors that support the argument that the military is a profession when he states that:

The occupation was full-time and stable, serving society's continuing needs; it was regarded as a life-long calling for practitioners, who identified themselves personally with their vocational sub-culture; it was organised to control performance standards and recruitment; it required formal, theoretical education; it had a service orientation in which loyalty to standards of competence and loyalty to clients' needs were paramount; [it] was granted a great deal of autonomy by the society it served, presumably because the practitioners had proven their high ethical standards and trustworthiness; and, overall, the profession's work was the systemic exploitation of specialised knowledge applied to specialised problems.

(Millett, 1977, p. 2)

Based upon this argument, the military can be considered a profession. However, the idea that it is a profession is not accepted by everyone. Herron (2004) points out that the idea of soldiering as a profession is no longer universally accepted by those serving in the US army. He believes that the uncertainty around the profession's status and the subordination of the military to civilian leadership could relegate it to the status of another government bureaucracy. Snider and Watkins (2000) point out that the military can be viewed in two ways: a profession or a bureaucracy. They highlight that the primary differences are:

in their approach to their work and to their members – their emphasis on effectiveness versus efficiency, their commitment to knowledge development rather than knowledge application, and their view of members as professionals versus employees.

(Snider and Watkins, 2000, p. 7)

They argue that professions are more "adept than bureaucracies at evolving expert knowledge and controlling behaviour in complex environments, e.g. threatening or

using coercive force to maintain the peace or fight wars” (p. 7). The recognition that the military continues to be a profession is a central factor in determining military education and training approaches. Snider and Watkins (2000, p. 7) summarise this relationship very eloquently when they claim that “If expert knowledge is the heart of a profession, then effectiveness, the profession’s ability to apply that knowledge, is its pulse.”

In *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Bourdieu warns of the dangers of using language such as ‘profession’ as:

The notion of profession is dangerous because it has all appearances of false neutrality in its favor. Profession is a folk concept which has been uncritically smuggled into scientific language and which imports in it a whole social unconscious.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 242)

Bourdieu uses the legal profession as an example of a profession where all “lawyers” have the same name, have a similar economic status, and because of the rules of the profession are “organised into ‘professional associations’ endowed with a code of ethics, collective bodies that define the rules of admission, etc.” (p. 242). Bourdieu goes on to explain that “the category of profession refers to realities that are, in a sense, “too real” to be true” (p. 243). If, however, you view the concept of profession as an “instrument, rather than an object, of analysis, none of this creates any difficulty” (p. 244). Bourdieu suggests reconceptualising the profession as a field as he did in *Homo Academicus* (Wacquant, 1989), which is the approach taken in this work.

Based on the extant literature on professions, military officership qualifies as a profession but can also be considered a field in a Bourdieusian sense. Whether the military is considered a profession or a bureaucracy matters. This is particularly important for knowledge creation and development, rather than just applying

knowledge (Snider and Watkins, 2000). Professions can cope with complexity and uncertainty, while bureaucracies focus on processes and procedures for the known and predictable. As the contemporary operating environment is characterised by complexity and uncertainty, the education of military leaders assumes greater importance. These subtle distinctions are worthy of attention, as they require different training and education approaches and have different performance expectations. Herron (2004, p. 62) points out that “the army professional’s expertise is the study and application of military science”. Education, then, must be at the heart of the military profession. For this research, the military is considered a profession and a field. Considering the military and military education as fields facilitates Bourdieu’s relational thinking.

### **3.4. Socialisation into the profession**

Bourdieu's concepts help understand socialisation and social reproduction. The concepts of *habitus* and *field* provide a basis for "an exploration and analysis of socialisation and sociological existence" (Emmerich, 2015, p. 1054). Socialisation occurs through *symbolic violence* explored in the next chapter and forms the analytical lens through which *habitus* formation and evolution are analysed in this research. This section places socialisation in the broader literature to explore the different forms of socialisation, why it is helpful for organisations, and how it occurs in the military.

#### ***Socialisation defined***

Sociologists first explored the concept of socialisation in the US military in the 1950s to understand how groups emerged (Checkel, 2017). Much of this early research on



socialisation focused on the military and how to build teams. Since then, a large body of literature has been developed about the concept.

In its broadest sense, socialisation refers to the process newcomers experience as they learn the cultural norms in an organisation (Dalenberg and Op den Buijs, 2013). Organisational socialisation "focuses on how individuals learn the beliefs, values, attitudes, orientations, behaviours and skills necessary to function effectively within an organisation" (van Maanen and Schein, 1979, p. 211). It relates to how a newcomer to an organisation "acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role" (van Maanen and Schein, 1977, p. 3). Van Maanen and Schein (1977) describe how socialisation relates to organisational culture:

Any organizational culture consists broadly of long standing rules of thumb, a somewhat special language and ideology that help edit a member's everyday experience, shared standards of relevance as to the critical aspects of the work that is being accomplished, matter-of-fact prejudices, models for social etiquette and demeanor, certain customs and rituals suggestive of how members are to relate to colleagues, subordinates, superiors, and outsiders, and a sort of residual category of some rather plain "horse sense" regarding what is appropriate and "smart" behavior within the organization and what is not.

(van Maanen and Schein, 1977, pp. 1-2)

Therefore, socialisation is closely associated with an organisation's culture, so understanding the Defence Forces' culture and induction processes is a consideration for this research. Checkel (2017) posits that socialisation affects individuals profoundly as it changes how they view themselves and their place in the world. He defines it as "a process whose intended result is not simple behavioural adaptation, but a deeper change in an actor's sense of self" (p. 594). The idea of a more profound change in an actor is closely linked to Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* and how it endures, which is discussed in the next chapter.

## **Military Socialisation**

Dalenberg and Op den Buijs (2013) believe that military socialisation “fits the description of institutionalised socialization” (p. 98). Institutionalised socialisation is understood as socialisation that occurs within an institution. Socialisation research is generally split into two distinct areas: individual-level socialisation and group-level socialisation. As part of this research addresses military socialisation, collective or organisational level socialisation is the focus here.

Van Maanen and Schein (1977, p. 37) suggest six processes organisations employ during socialisation. The approach depends on whether socialisation is for a group at the institutional level or individualised, as outlined in Table 2.

Tactics connected with	Institutionalised	Individualised
Context	Collective Formal	Individual Informal
Content	Sequential Fixed	Random Variable
Social Aspect	Serial Investiture	Disjuncture Divestiture

**Table 2. Institutionalised Vs individualised socialisation (Jones, 1986, p. 263)**

Jones (1986) researched the six socialisation ‘tactics’ and concluded that the use of “institutionalized tactics lead to custodial role orientations, and individualized tactics to innovative role orientations” (p. 263). Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) research used army socialisation to illustrate how military training is institutionalised in nature and follows the steps in the institutionalised column. In a similar vein, Thomas (1999) argues that military training typically follows Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) institutionalised approach:

Specifically, new recruits go through learning experiences together (collective) and learn through structured lessons (formal); recruits know the

sequence in which these processes will occur (sequential) and the timetable associated with each stage of the process (fixed); and role models exist in the form of experienced Army personnel (serial). For the sixth tactic, past research has generally not confirmed divestiture as part of an institutionalised pattern of socialisation tactics. Instead, research has commonly found that investiture co-occurs with the other institutionalised tactics.

(Thomas, 1999, p. 25)

The *tactics* employed in collective socialisation in the Irish Defence Forces are very similar. Socialisation is experienced as a collective within the Cadet Class, where the process is formally structured, through sequential lessons, delivered by experienced instructors. Newcomers learn the culture during initial training through investiture as they progress through key milestones and experiences during the cadetship, as Thomas (1999) outlines above. A Cadet must pass each stage of the cadetship to advance to the next. It involves an official parading by the School Commandant of the Cadet School, where a 'stage' report is presented. *Investiture* is understood as the process that "reinforces peoples' beliefs in their own competency" (Jones, 1986, p. 265). A stage report is a form of *investiture* in that it gives the Cadet an insight into how the Cadet School instructors perceive their performance.

Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) approach helps understand the socialisation process that the military uses to turn civilians into military personnel and how the military as an organisation reproduces itself. "Socialisation tends to suggest the reproduction of individual conformity to the (supposedly uniform) environment" (Emmerich, 2015, p. 1065). Uniformity and conformity are achieved through education and drills in the military and intrusive mechanisms such as hazing and dehumanisation (Manekin, 2017). Soldiers in training are embedded in a social environment "which not only constrain and provide incentives to act, but also reshapes interests and identities" (Checkel, 2017, p. 592). Manekin (2017) points out that "the initial months

of military training thus instil discipline, obedience, inculcate norms and values and forge a shared identity (p. 612). Other practices on arrival, such as cutting hair, no facial hair, and wearing uniforms, help instil ways of acting and behaving that endure.

Goertzel and Hengst (1971) suggest that the purpose of military socialisation is to impart a "set of attitudes" to inductees appropriate for military service. They point out that military socialisation is the process applied in a total military institution to transmit the military culture. Most modern militaries are explicit about their commitment to values such as "integrity, justice, honor, courage, loyalty, comradeship, duty, discipline, honesty and many others" (Wortmeyer and Branco, 2019, p. 593). One of the complexities of military values that all military personnel must reconcile is adopting shared or collective values. Military inductees are expected to subordinate their subjective values to the organisations' collective values to build a "community of honor" (p. 590). Collective values in military organisations are "fundamentally anti-individualistic" (Wakin, 1976, p. 570). Huntington (1967) explains that military service requires that individuals' values are subordinated to the military organisation's values. Guttieri (2006) points out that military education and socialisation "may also take on the patina of indoctrination, that is shaping values and behavior, including those necessary for unit cohesion, morale, and significantly, obedience to political authority" (p. 235).

For this research, military socialisation is understood as those military training activities that instil discipline, obedience, and adherence to organisational values. As Guttieri (2006) points out, some readers may consider this indoctrination.

## ***Drill***

Most people are familiar with the sight of soldiers marching in formation for state ceremonial occasions. At its most basic level, drill involves the movement of troops on foot under the command of an officer or NCO. Drill originated from the ancient Greek army and was perfected by the Roman Legions (Cunningham, 2021). The ancient armies needed to develop ways of moving troops from one place to another in an organised and structured manner that prevented the mixing of units. Drill provided the structure, organisation, and discipline to achieve this on the way to battle. However, it was also used to determine formations and tactics while in battle. Bryant (2016) believes the Roman Army's success was based on their devotion to drill. He points out that "if one Roman soldier within their formation failed, the entire formation failed causing the battle to be lost" (Bryant, 2016, p. 38). Historically, drill for armies was combat-focused (Williams, 1956), and it remains a prominent feature of military service.

Today, military drill is mainly used for ceremonies and is no longer associated with its combat origins; however, its underlying purpose remains to instil teamwork, self-control, discipline, and the instinctive response to orders (Cunningham, 2021). Williams (1956) believes that the example set by the drill instructor influences the unit:

The drill instructor acts as a reflector to the man he drills. If his bearing is soldierly, his movements precise, his commands sharp, his corrective comments to individuals immediate and unfailing, if he refuses to overlook anything short of perfection in the execution of the movements he orders, he will have a profitable drill period. After it, the individuals comprising the unit will be a little more of a cohesive group than they were before. The unit will have acquired to a greater extent the habit of obedience to the word of command of the leader.

(Williams, 1956, p. 44)

From its ancient origins and practical purpose during war, drill remains an effective practice during military socialisation. It helps achieve discipline, teamwork, cohesion, and unquestioning obedience to orders. Drill forms an integral part of military ceremonies and rituals, discussed next.

### ***Rituals and rites of passage***

Rites and rituals play an important role in perpetuating an organisation's culture. They can be considered an 'artefact' of the organisation's culture (Schein, 2004).

Rituals are pre-planned events of varying formality, social, public, and have both manifest and latent purposes. The manifest purpose of the ritual generally contributes to the workings of the organization and helps the organization achieve its mission and accomplish its daily tasks.

(Martin, 2012)

Coffee in the officer's mess<sup>13</sup> at 1100hrs is an example of a well-established ritual in the Irish Defence Forces. Coffee can be used to discuss work matters in person and sort out work arrangements informally, helping achieve daily tasks, as Martin (2012) suggests. He explains that rituals help create a community within an organisation as people work together for a common purpose.

Barnao (2019) posits that rituals play a significant role in inculcating cultural norms during socialisation. For example, a young officer being socialised into unit life will attend many formal officer's mess functions such as Christmas and Commanding

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<sup>13</sup> The 'mess' is a building or room that provides meals and recreational facilities for officers. In the Irish Defence Forces there are three types of mess: the officer's mess, the Non-commissioned officers mess, and the Private's mess.

Officer's dinners. These are opportunities for the organisation to instil its values and behavioural norms through ritual whilst also building community and esprit de corps.

On the other hand, rites of passage are defined as "a ceremonial event, existing in all historically known societies, that marks the passage from one social or religious status to another" (Alexander, 2021). A military career is punctuated with rites of passage. From *attestation* on the first day of military service to *commissioning* on the last day of the cadetship, these ceremonies mark military career transitions from one social group to another. During attestation, the transition is from civilian to military, and during commissioning, it is from trainee or cadet to officer. Rites of passage can also take the form of a change of professional status. Overseas service is a rite of passage for a young officer, and this experience is considered valuable. Similarly, the different stages of PME can be regarded as a rite of passage as the officer must pass the career course to qualify for promotion to the next rank.

### ***Hazing and bullying***

Barnao (2019) highlights that military rituals experienced by troops in training lead to blind obedience and dehumanisation. "Rituals teach automatic obedience and never to question orders and the rules of the instructor, of the group, and of the military institution in general" (p. 298). On the other hand, dehumanisation relates to rituals that develop "characteristics of dehumanization and desensitization in soldiers" (p. 299). Dehumanisation is typically associated with discipline and is experienced through physical punishments for the transgression of the rules. However, it can also be associated with initiation rites such as hazing. Rituals and hazing remain part of

the military socialisation process and are still practised in military academies worldwide (Dalenberg, 2017).

Similarly, Pershing (2006) notes that "various forms of hazing are viewed as a critical component of the resocialization process from civilian to military life" (p. 471). Hazing is defined as "initiation rituals by which newcomers to an organisation are harassed and humiliated as a test of preparation for acceptance into the group" (Østvik and Rudmin, 2001, p. 18). Hazing can be used in civilian and military institutions to signal a change of culture or an identity transition (de Albuquerque and Paes-Machato, 2004). They view hazing as a way to acknowledge a person or a group's passage to a new culture.

As Pershing (2006) points out, "the process of military resocialization involves creating an environment of shared struggle and suffering which in turn leads to increased comradery and loyalty between peers" (p. 473). Instilling military discipline through processes such as hazing plays a vital role in the socialisation process. It is important to note that hazing and bullying are two different issues and should not be conflated:

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

(HSA, 2021, p. 6)

Problems with military initiation rituals abound, and in the past, military training institutions were the sites of much of the inappropriate behaviour reported in the Defence Forces. The *Challenge in a Workplace* report was initiated in 2002 after allegations that bullying and harassment were rife in the Defence Forces.

Over 78% of women and 72% of men reported that the person responsible for the harassment occupied a more senior position. Bullying was



experienced by 26.5% of all respondents, according to the report. As with harassment, the bullying was attributed to people of higher rank. With respect to sexual harassment, more than 30% of women indicated that they experienced it in the form of offensive jokes and sexist remarks. Over 25% of women said that they had been subject to offensive remarks about their physical appearance, while almost 23% of women and 1.7% of men reported that they had received 'unwelcome physical contact'.

(Dobbins, 2009. para.3.)

To implement the recommendations of this report, the Minister of Defence appointed an Independent Monitoring Group (IMG) in 2002. The IMG reported progress in 2004, 2008, and 2013 (Independent Monitoring Group, 2013). Since the publication of the first report in 2002, many changes to training practices, complaints procedures, and interpersonal policies have occurred. However, bullying, hazing, and initiation rituals may still be happening in some parts of the organisation. Currently, the Cadet School is the subject of an investigation into bullying initiated after a staff member made a protected disclosure (Ryan, 2020). Over three decades of alleged sexual harassment, attempted sexual assault, and bullying within the Defence Forces was recently revealed through an RTÉ documentary, 'Women of Honour' (Hannon, 2021).

The IMG (2013) acknowledges the importance of a high standard of induction training that is "Disciplined, robust, challenging, and humanly demanding in ways that are not normally asked of civilians in workplaces" (p. 54). The IMG define socialisation as "the process of inculcating the new (potential) member into another context, specifically from the civilian into the military context" (Independent Monitoring Group, 2013, p. 59).

The IMG further explains that:

Socialisation into a workplace connotes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and affective behaviours associated with carrying out the required (new) role as for example, inductees – and later, as officer/private whether in the Army, the Naval Service or the Air Corps

(Independent Monitoring Group, 2013, p. 11)

Cadets may experience hazing formally through disciplinary procedures and punishments by officers or NCOs, and secondly through the Comhairleoirs<sup>14</sup> system. During this research, participants were not asked about hazing, bullying, or harassment during interviews per se; instead, they were asked to describe disciplinary practices experienced during their cadetship.

### ***Why socialise?***

Given the pitfalls associated with socialisation, it is reasonable to question why military socialisation is necessary in the first place. Essentially, socialisation is an effective way to save on costs and ensures subordinates comply with organisation expectations. Checkel (2017) points out that it is cheaper than paying for compliance through coercion or financial incentives. Manekin (2017) suggests that "modern militaries also rely extensively on social control, instilling norms and constructing a shared identity so that soldiers identify military objectives with their own" (p. 609). It enables the organisation to self-regulate because the habits developed during socialisation guide subsequent professional behaviour. Socialisation generates habits that affect behaviour, which can manifest in ways such as shaving every day, exercising regularly, self-discipline and adhering to timings. Manekin also suggests that the purpose of socialisation is to "normalise organisationally sanctioned violence" (p. 607). This means that soldiers need to be conditioned to respond automatically to threats without hesitation.

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<sup>14</sup> Comhairleoirs is a mentorship programme conducted by the senior cadet class with the junior cadet class. The aim of this programme is to assist junior cadets, through peer learning, to adapt to military life and to understand the importance of personal organisation, comradeship and to develop morale and esprit de corps.

## ***Total Institution***

Several authors associate the military *field* and especially the arena of military training with Goffman's (1961) concept of the 'total institution' (Goertzel and Hengst, 1971; Nesbit and Reingold, 2011; Cooper, et al., 2016; Pendlebury, 2019; and others). Manekin (2017) argues that military socialisation is particularly potent as it occurs in a 'total institution' described by Goffman as:

a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.

(Goffman, 1961, p. xxi).

He describes three main characteristics of a total institution:

First, all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. Second, each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third, all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled, with one activity leading at a pre-arranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials.

(Goffman, 1961, p. 6)

Goffman (1961) argued that 'total institutions' employ divestiture socialisation such as the mortification of the self, understood as a form of self-punishment.

Anyone that has served in the military will identify that elements of Goffman's description of a total institution fit appropriately with how basic military training and socialisation are conducted. Every aspect of a recruit's life is managed from when to sleep (lights out) to when they wake (reveille). Daily activities are typically carried out collectively in their platoon (comprising 30-40 trainees), with every activity including military lessons, meal times, physical training, sports activities, and study time,

formally programmed. The whole purpose of this process is to turn the civilian into a soldier.

It is in this training environment that the military *habitus* is formed. This *habitus* that is developed is generally based upon espoused organisational values. In the Defence Forces, the values are loyalty, respect, selflessness, integrity, physical courage and moral courage. Other features are inculcated during the military socialisation process, including unquestioning obedience to lawful orders, hypermasculinity, resilience, toughness, aggressiveness, and embodied cultural *capital* such as physical fitness and robustness (Cooper, et al., 2016; Hinojosa, et al., 2019 ). It is important to note that officer education for mid and senior-ranking officers is intense, tightly scheduled, and residential for the duration of courses. It could be argued that mid and senior staff education also takes place in total institutions as described above. Interestingly, military deployments overseas are also characterised by elements of Goffman's total institution. Set daily programmes and collective routine activities behind fences and blast walls separate from the civilian world reinforce the military *habitus* formed in training.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

This chapter focused on PME in terms of military sociology. The first part firmly established the history of PME and its relationship with military professionalism. For this study, the military is considered both a profession and a field. The military has a distinct body of theoretical knowledge codified in military doctrine. It has a service orientation that requires high ethical standards and is considered by many to be a vocation (Millett, 1977). Acknowledging the military as a profession means that

knowledge creation and development is required to enable the profession to work in complex and uncertain environments (Snider and Watkins, 2000). PME, therefore, must cater for this requirement. Bourdieu warns of the danger of the notion of 'profession'. He advocates treating it as a field "that is a structured space of social forces and struggles" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 243). Considering profession as "an instrument, rather than an object, of analysis" (p. 244) is acceptable to Bourdieu.

The organisational and military socialisation processes were also analysed in the broader context to understand socialisation in the military field. Following van Maanen and Schein (1977), socialisation in the military is institutionalised in nature and is conducted in a total institution (Goffman, 1961). It is carried out collectively in a formal environment, with highly structured sequential lessons. Progress through each stage of the process is marked through investiture rituals such as formal parading.

This chapter has provided a broader view of the military as a sociological institution and has explored socialisation processes for new entrants. The next chapter focuses Bourdieu's theories and concepts. His theory of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) for *habitus* formation links directly to the socialisation literature discussed in this chapter. The next chapter explains and justifies a Bourdieusian informed approach to answering the research questions.

## **Chapter 4 – Theoretical Underpinnings: Using Bourdieu’s ‘Thinking Tools’ to analyse the Military Context**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter introduces the elements of Bourdieu’s sociology of practice (Bourdieu, 1990a) and explores the literature that examines its utility for studying the military *field*. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is widely regarded as one of the most influential scholars of the twentieth century (Grenfell, 2012a). His work has influenced the study of a wide range of social *fields*, including art, culture, media, education, and research methodology in the social sciences (Rawolle and Lingard, 2013).

In this chapter, firstly, I begin by exploring Bourdieu’s theory of practice and his key concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *capital*, and *symbolic violence*. I explain how I frame this research from a Bourdieusian perspective and use *symbolic violence* as a lens to explore *habitus* formation during military socialisation.

### **4.2. The Theory of Practice**

Grenfell (2012b) highlights that Bourdieu’s work has two characterising features that inform this section's structure. The first feature is concerned with the relationship between theory and practice. The second feature focuses on a set of conceptual tools (thinking tools) that can be employed in social science research. In the early 1960s, Bourdieu and his research assistant Jean-Claude Passeron developed the key sociological concepts of *field*, *habitus* and *capital* (Robbins, 2012), which frame this research, and each will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

During the early stages of Bourdieu's academic life, two research traditions dominated the study of culture. These were the structuralist and functionalist traditions (Grenfell and James, 1998). The structuralist tradition originates from Lévi-Strauss and views culture as "an instrument of communication and knowledge, as a *structured structure* made up of signs based on shared consensus of world meanings" (p. 11). In comparison, the functionalist tradition originates from Durkheim and Marx's writings that view "human knowledge as the product of a social infrastructure" (p. 10). The functionalist tradition is rooted in positivism. It recognises culture as a *structuring structure* that imposes the ideology of the dominant classes. Grenfell (2019) points out that viewing cultures structurally is helpful because "in structure we find the essence of relations and relationship – to the world, things, thoughts and each other" (p. 47).

Dissatisfied with traditional approaches to research, Bourdieu's theory of practice attempts to find a theory and method that "transcends the opposition between subjectivity and objectivity" (Grenfell, 2013, p. 9). Throughout Bourdieu's academic life, he developed and refined a methodological approach that employed a range of conceptual thinking tools that helped to explain and understand social phenomena. Grenfell and James (1998) point out that "Bourdieu's theory of practice rests on his understanding of culture; i.e., the way the organization of society gives rise to ideas which in turn shapes the organization of society" (p.10). Bourdieu defined his approach as a "science of the dialectical relations between objective structures ... and the subjective dispositions within which these structures are actualized and which tend to reproduce them" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). The idea of subjective dispositions within structures reproducing structures is expanded upon in the symbolic violence section and Chapter 7.

In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), Bourdieu writes of a series of breaks or ruptures with the traditional modes of thinking. The ‘*epistemological breaks*’ from three modes of theoretical knowledge; *empirical sense experience*, *phenomenological* or subjective *knowledge*, and objective *knowledge* (Grenfell and Lebaron, 2013; Grenfell, 2019). Researchers must break with the familiar conceptions of knowledge, society and the social world by breaking with empirical, subjective, and objective ways of thinking. Bourdieu developed his conceptual tools of habitus, field, capital, doxa and others as a means of developing new knowledge – “knowledge *of* and knowledge *for* social action, or praxis” (Grenfell, 2007, p. 64). In the next section, Bourdieu’s most famous concept, *habitus*, is examined.

### **4.3. Habitus**

While mainly associated with the work of Bourdieu, the concept of *habitus* has been used by several different philosophers and sociologists throughout history. Wacquant (2016) traces the origins of the term back to the Greek word *hexis* and to Aristotle who describes it in *Nicomachean Ethics* as a “stable disposition that is defined by its acts (*energeia*) and by its objects (*kai hôn estin*)” (IV, 4, 1122 b1). *Hexis* is defined by Rodrigo (2011, p. 6) as “‘state’, ‘stable disposition’, ‘*habitus*’, ‘way of being’, ‘or even possession’”. *Hexis* translates into the Latin word *habitus* that Bourdieu incorporated into his theory of practice (Wacquant, 2016). Bourdieu (1984, p. 166) points out that “different conditions of existence produce different *habitus*”. The individual’s *habitus* is thus influenced by the environment and conditions into which they are born. Factors such as family class (high/middle/low), socio-economic status (rich/poor), education (private/public), and other cultural features impact the *habitus*. Chan (2004, p. 333) believes that an individual’s *habitus* is formed “through family and the education



system, or as a group through organisational socialisation”. Similarly, conditions of existence or the “social milieu of their home and family life” account for forming and developing the *habitus* (Hart, 2019, p. 586).

“The *habitus* is necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 166). This means that *habitus* manifests itself through the individual's practices, thoughts, and preferences. Bourdieu (1990b, p. 70) posits that *habitus* is made visible through physical appearance and characteristics such as ways “of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking”. These are considered important features for military personnel, especially officers, where superiors and subordinates constantly judge their appearance and bearing. Green (2013) suggests that Bourdieu used the term *habitus* to “refer to the deeply rooted assumptions, not explicitly reflected upon but held almost subconsciously, which we all inherit” (p. 140). These ingrained assumptions influence both collective and individual behaviour, and therefore, *habitus* has much potential for analysing the social world. Bourdieu used the concept of *misrecognition* to show that what occurs during habitus formation “benefits certain individuals at the expense of others without appearing to do so” (Grenfell, 2004, p. 3). *Misrecognition* thus plays a role in facilitating habitus formation through symbolic violence.

*Habitus* is a central element of Bourdieu’s theoretical framework and can be used to “transcend a series of deep-seated dichotomies that shape ways of thinking about the social world” (Maton, 2012, p. 48). *Habitus* then has the potential to help understand dichotomies in the military *field* such as training and education, civilian and soldier, and structure and agency. It may also help understand the relationship between military physical and mental conditioning and how military personnel think and feel.

Bourdieu describes *habitus* as:

The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, systems of durable and transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.

(Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 53)

The *conditionings* that Bourdieu refers to relate to the social class and upbringing of the individual. For example, the *habitus* of an individual that grows up in a working-class geographical area will tend to have a similar *habitus* to others in the area who have a similar upbringing. Crossley (2012, p. 91) points out that people from the same background have “a tacit sense of their place in the world”. He calls this sense of being a “class unconsciousness” or a “class *habitus*” (p. 91). *Habitus*, therefore, is considered to represent subjectivity.

The notion that dispositions are *durable* and *transposable* means that once the *habitus* is formed, it is “relatively enduring” (Cooper, et al., 2016, p. 6). The idea that *habitus* is *transposable* indicates that it is “malleable to a degree and may develop and shift with the evolving influence of one’s social milieu” (p. 6). *Habitus*, therefore, is not deterministic, and individuals are not automatons set on a predetermined course. Instead, individuals can use their *transposable dispositions* to respond to a given social situation. Bourdieu elaborated upon and refined his concepts throughout his academic career through his publications and interviews. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) attempted to clear up misunderstandings about the durability of *habitus* when they clarified that:

*Habitus* is not the fate some people read into it. Being the product of history, it is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to

experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures. It is durable but not eternal!

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 133)

*Habitus* is not immutable and can be shaped by life experiences and history; it is constantly being written and rewritten throughout our lives. This clarification by Bourdieu is important, as this research is underpinned by the assumption that military training and education can shape the *habitus*.

Bourdieu later stated that *habitus* was a:

socialised body... which has incorporated the immanent structures of the world or of a particular sector of that world- a *field*- and which structure the perception of that world as well as the action in that world.

(Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 81).

*Habitus* thus embodies the social structures and history of a particular social *field* and accounts for how individuals perceive and behave. Laanepere, Truusa, and Cooper (2018) agree that “*habitus* allows for the exploration of ways of behaving and believing ... and is a set of unconscious dispositions that are embodied in social practices” (p. 29).

Bourdieu considers *habitus* a “structured and structuring structure” (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 170; Bourdieu, 1984). While this phrase may look a little disconcerting at first, the meaning behind it becomes more apparent when it is deconstructed into its constituent parts. *Habitus* is “structured” by the individuals’ history, current circumstances, education, and socio-economic class (Maton, 2012; Lee et al., 2019). It is considered “structuring” as *habitus* influences the individuals’ present and future circumstances. *Habitus* is a “structure”, according to Maton (2012, p. 50), that “comprises a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices.” Accordingly, *habitus* influences our thoughts, beliefs, interests and future actions (Bourdieu,

1990a). Reay (2004, p. 434) argues that the individual's history and the “collective history of family and class the individual is a member of” are significant elements of *habitus*. She uses the analogy of ‘layers’ of history, experiences and socialisations to understand how the *habitus* is constituted and can be visualised. *Habitus* then “refers to something historical, it is linked to individual history” (Bourdieu, 1993b, p. 86).

Therefore, the military *habitus* is inextricably linked to the history of the military organisation. With its links back to the Irish volunteers of 1913 and its distinguished peacekeeping tradition, the history of the Defence Forces is something that every soldier is cognisant of when they wear the uniform. This collective history influences behaviour positively as nobody wants to be the ‘one’ to tarnish this hard-fought reputation.

Bourdieu (1998a) used the analogy of having “a feel for the game” to describe *habitus*. The game is played on a *field* (social *field*) and is governed by rules.

Having the feel for the game is having the game under the skin; it is to master in a practical way the future of the game; it is to have a sense of the history of the game ... the good player is the one who anticipates, who is ahead of the game ... she has immanent tendencies of the game in her body, in an incorporated state; she embodies the game.

(Bourdieu, 1998a, pp. 80-81)

In this quote, Bourdieu suggests that those with a well-developed *habitus* succeed in a social *field*, as they understand the game, its history, rules and character, and have a sense of belonging in the *field*. Maton (2012) provides an even more accessible description that is helpful for understanding *habitus*' function and role:

*habitus* focuses on our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being. It captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then make choices to act in certain ways and not others. This is an ongoing and active process.

(Maton, 2012, p. 51)

*Habitus*, therefore, is constantly being shaped and reshaped by our past and current situation and experiences.

Bourdieu's notion of 'social space' or '*field*' is explored in the next section. He argued that it is crucial to understand the social context where interactions occur between individuals, groups, and institutions (Bourdieu, 2005).

#### **4.4. Field**

Bourdieu believes that the state is comprised of several social *fields*. Grenfell (2004, p. 27) provides a clear description of the concept of *field* and its relationship to *habitus*:

Individuals are surrounded by *space* – physical and social – with degrees of proximity – close and distant. The *space* is differentiated and is *structured*. It is in encountering this *structured space* that *habitus* is formed.

*Fields* include “political, economic, cultural, military - each with their own logic, stakes and kind of *capital*” (Mérand, 2010, p. 351). People can occupy more than one social *field* at a time in a shared social space which Bourdieu calls ‘the *field* of power’. The *field* of power can be thought of as political, economic, arts and education *fields* (Thompson, 2012). The relationship between the *field* of power and a social *field* is considered ‘mutually influencing’ as what happens in the *field* of power can shape what happens in the social *field* and vice-a-versa (Thompson, 2012). Decisions made in the *field* of power influence conditions in all other *fields*. For example, a political decision to cut military spending will influence the military, security, and possibly defence cooperation *fields*.

On the other hand, if there is a crisis in the military *field*, such as an increase in tensions between two nations, this will influence behaviour in the *field* of power, perhaps

through political or economic sanctions. The theoretical concept of *field* helps differentiate between social spaces and understand the relations between individuals, groups and institutions. In this section, Bourdieu's descriptions of the *field* are deconstructed to derive the critical features of the concept. The relationship between *field* and *doxa* is discussed, and how *field* fits into his overall theory is then explored.

As with all of Bourdieu's concepts, the literature is replete with definitions and descriptions of the term *field*. Like the evolution of *habitus*, Bourdieu's *field* concept has evolved through his writings and empirical work.

Field is considered to be an objective element in Bourdieu's theory which is:

a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon the occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relations to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.).

(Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 97)

Field can therefore be considered as "a structured system of social relations at a micro and macro level. In other words, individuals, institutions and groupings, both large and small, all exist in structural relation to each other in some way" (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 17). As a structured space, the *field* shares boundaries between other fields such as "professional (various professions), personal (families, social networks, residence) and political (administrative institutions, political agencies)" (Grenfell, 2004, p. 27). The boundary of a field can be considered as that point "where the *logic* of the *field* stops having an effect" (Iisahunter, et al. 2015, p. 80).

Bourdieu (1998b) elaborates further:

A *field* is a structured social space, a *field* of forces, a force *field*. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the *field*. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the *field* and, as a result, their strategies.

(Bourdieu, 1998b, pp. 40-41)

To help make the *field* concept more relatable, scholars and even Bourdieu himself have used many metaphors or analogies to help illustrate its meaning. These include metaphors for a *field* such as 1) a pitch where a game or sport is played; 2) a science fiction *field* (such as a Star Trek 'force *field*'); 3) a *field* of forces such as a magnetic *field* in physics (Thompson, 2012). The most useful and widely used of these metaphors is the idea of a social *field* being similar to a football *field* where agents play a game. Thompson (2012) expands on this comparison highlighting that the *field* is a bounded site, with rules and conventions that players must follow to be competitive in a dynamic social game. Its history and traditions shape the *field*. Players in the game have set *field* positions determined by their possession of *capital*, which in football can be considered skills, athletic ability (speed, endurance, strength), and mental attitude (determination, character, winning mindset, etc.). Thompson (2012) explains that "at stake in the *field* is the accumulation of *capitals*: they are both the process in, and the product of a *field*" (p. 67). Players who start the game with more *capital* are advantaged over those players with less *capital*. Players must devise a strategy to accumulate *capital* that can raise their position in the *field*. For example, a player with skill and a positive mental attitude but lacking in fitness must adopt a strategy that plays to his strengths. The overall aim of the players may be to preserve the status quo if they occupy a dominant position in the *field*, or it may be to transform the *field* conditions by increasing their power through the accumulation of *capital*

relevant to the game. The football player with all the necessary attributes except for fitness can improve his fitness levels and thereby increase the relative power he has at his disposal, which may result in his position in the *field* being raised. An individual operating in any social *field* must work at accumulating *capital* useful in the specific *field* to increase their relative power and elevate their position in the *field*. A tacit understanding of the social *field* is needed if one is to advance in the *field*. This ingrained know-how is called *doxa* (Bourdieu, 2000).

*Doxa* is an important concept when researching a social *field*. As mentioned above, *doxa* can be considered the tacit beliefs and unconscious assumptions shared amongst agents in a *field* (Deer, 2012). *Doxa* can be described as a “feel for the game” where agents are familiar with the traditions, unwritten rules and the way of acting and behaving in a *field*. *Doxa* is “a set of fundamental beliefs which does not even need to be asserted in the form of an explicit self-conscious dogma” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 16). *Doxa* was used in Bourdieu’s early ethnographic research in traditional societies to understand the *field’s* taken-for-granted assumptions. Kalfa and Taksa (2015) point out that *doxa* plays an essential role in differentiating one *field* from another and contributes to its overall autonomy. Bourdieu (1993a) highlights the importance of autonomy to the *field*. Autonomy is considered to be “the capacity it has gained, in the course of its development, to insulate itself from external influences and to uphold its own criteria of evaluation against those of neighbouring or intruding fields” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 269).

Using Bourdieu’s *field* concept, we can understand the military *field* and its various levels of *fields* or *subfields*. “By viewing the social world as multiple, overlapping and hierarchically differentiating *fields*, we are better able to understand the relational properties and power struggles between individuals and groups” (Iisahunter, et al.,



2015, p. 9). *Habitus* influences how agents behave and the strategies they employ in “the context of the *field*, their current position within it, and their history of positions, or what Bourdieu calls ‘trajectory’” (Mérand, 2010, p. 351). Bourdieu has referred to the relationship between field and habitus as one of ‘ontological complicity’ (cited in Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 16). This means that field and habitus depend upon, or ‘constitute’ each other as Bourdieu notes:

The relation between habitus and field operates in two ways. On the one side, it is a relation of conditioning: the field structures the habitus, which is the product of the embodiment of immanent necessity of a field (or of a hierarchically intersecting set of fields). On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction: habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and with value, in which it is worth investing one’s practice.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1989, p. 44)

Grenfell (2007) points out that one of the functions of fields is to socialise those that enter them. He explains that “fields, as the ‘objective’ element of social action, act on individuals (the subjective) in constituting social action; in short, they form *dispositions* to think and act in a certain way” (p. 57). How the military socialises those that enter the military field is the focus of the second aim of this work.

#### **4.5. Capital**

In Chapter One, I highlighted that my use of capital is limited in this study. It is an essential concept for understanding *habitus* and *field*; therefore, it remains an integral part of the theoretical review.

In general, *capital* can be considered something worth having in a specific *field* (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2002). However, Bourdieu’s use of the concept of capital extends it beyond the narrow economic sphere. Economic *capital* is primarily used in

a monetary sense in exchange for goods and services and can be considered something that can be immediately transformed into money or property. Bourdieu believes that other forms of *capital* contribute to the social world and argues that:

It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces *capital* in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory.

(Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 242)

To study the social world, the researcher needs to consider all other forms of *capital*. Bourdieu identifies several different forms of *capital*, such as social *capital*, symbolic *capital* and cultural *capital*. Bourdieu believes that *capital* in its different forms can be converted or “transubstantiated” into economic *capital* and vice versa (p. 242). Essentially, *capital's* function is to “buy positioning in a *field*” (Agbenyega and Klibthong, 2015, p. 157).

[A]gents are distributed in the overall social space, in the first dimension, according to the overall volume of capital they possess and, in the second dimension, according to the structure of their capital, that is, the relative weight of the different species of capital, economic and cultural, in the total volume of their assets.

(Bourdieu, 1989, p. 17)

Therefore, an individual operating in any social *field* must work to accumulate valuable *capital* in the specific *field* to increase their relative power and elevate their position in the *field*. The next section examines the three primary forms of *capital* that Bourdieu identified.

## ***Social capital***

Social *capital* can be understood as the amount of *capital* an individual has by virtue of their membership in a group or organisation and their access to the group's collective *capital*, be it economic, cultural or symbolic. This network of lasting relations and sense of belonging is characteristic of families, schools, and professions (discussed in the previous chapter) such as law, medicine (Iisahunter, et al., 2015) and is also recognisable in the military. According to Bourdieu, social *capital* is:

the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership of a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned *capital*... The volume of the social *capital* possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the *capital* (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected.

(Bourdieu, 1986a, pp. 248-249)

Bourdieu highlights that establishing a network of connections takes effort and is not automatic (Bourdieu, 1986a). He describes how individuals have to earn their place in the group and prove their worth and compatibility with group ideals. Bourdieu describes how social *capital* is:

the product of an endless effort at institution, of which institution rites – often wrongly described as rites of passage – mark the essential moments and which is necessary in order to produce and reproduce lasting, useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic profits.

(Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 249)

Social *capital* is significant in the military environment, where individuals depend on each other for their safety and wellbeing. Similarly, Chan (2004) discusses the role of social *capital* in the *field* of policing in Australia. She points out that the support network associated with social *capital* is essential for police officers to survive in the

occupation. By successfully passing socialisation rituals or, as Bourdieu terms them, “rites of passage”, group membership secures loyalty and group resources/*capital* when needed.

Initial military training can be considered a socialisation ritual, where an individual must pass through tests and challenges that evaluate their assimilation of military skills, knowledge and values. It is here that the social network is formed. While the military instructors formally evaluate everyone’s performance, the informal, unconscious group evaluation within the social group determines an individual's social *capital* at the end of the process. It leads to a pigeon-holing of people into informal groups. These groupings can be positive such as the ‘good scout’, ‘solid’, ‘hard bastard’ categories, or negative categories such as ‘malingerer’, ‘DS<sup>15</sup> watcher’ or ‘mé féiner’.

A malingerer is someone who feigns injury to avoid an unpopular or arduous task. The ‘DS watcher’ only works when instructors are watching them. They put on a show in an attempt to impress. The primary group generally sees through this, as the individual reverts to their usual ways after the instructor team has left. A ‘mé féiner’ or simply a ‘féiner’ is an Irish phrase that translates to ‘myself’. In a military sense, a ‘féiner’ is someone that is selfish and only cares about themselves and does little or nothing to support the group. It is probably the most negative term that can be attributed to an Irish soldier.

Interestingly, this informal evaluation in social groups represents an enduring form of social *capital* that follows the individual throughout their career. If the informal group evaluation is positive, the social *capital* of the collective can be mobilised when

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<sup>15</sup> DS refers to Directing Staff i.e. military instructors.

required. On the other hand, if it is negative, the group will be less inclined to employ its social *capital*.

Social *capital* in the military has been likened to an 'old boys club' (MacDonald, 2004). These social networks are generally based upon networks and connections institutionalised at private boarding schools and can help their members acquire prominent positions in society. MacDonald (2004) researched the organisation of the British Army and the link between public schools (i.e. private boarding schools), elite regiments and promotion to the rank of general. Using Bourdieu's concepts of *field* and *habitus* for his analysis, he concluded that the elite is indeed maintained as the "alignment of public school *habitus* and military *field* will ensure that (other things being equal) this state of affairs will be slow to change" (p. 128). It can increase group *capital*, which can benefit other social network members, so the cycle continues and reproduces.

### ***Symbolic Capital***

Bourdieu distinguishes between two broad forms of *capital*, economic *capital* as described above and symbolic *capital* with its infinite list of sub-types, dependent on the social *field* under consideration (Moore, 2012).

Symbolic *capital*, that is to say *capital* – in whatever form – insofar as it is represented, i.e. apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of misrecognition and recognition, presupposes the intervention of the *habitus*, as a socially constituted cognitive capacity.

(Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 255)

Essentially, this means that any *capital* can be considered symbolic *capital* as long as social agents recognise it. Symbolic *capital* can thus be understood as the power and

prestige that all other forms of *capital* give the holder, and this gives them the ability to shape or determine what happens in a *field*.

### **Cultural Capital**

Cultural *capital* relates to those culturally important possessions that are valued by society. The ability to use and understand language is considered an indicator of cultural *capital* in an individual. Bourdieu believes that cultural *capital* is linked with social class where “linguistic and cultural competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 494). Children born into a higher social class have an advantage over children born into a lower social class. It gives them an advantage throughout their lives and helps them maintain their class dominance in society.

Cultural *capital* exists in three states: embodied, objectified and institutionalised (Bourdieu, 1986a). In the embodied state, cultural *capital* is seen “in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (p. 243). Embodied cultural *capital* is closely related to the *habitus* and manifests in the physical disposition and features of the body.

The formation of embodied cultural *capital* entails the prolonged exposure to a specialized social *habitus*, such as that of the traditional English public school (i.e. an exclusive and expensive private boarding school cultivating the classical liberal humanist “gentleman” – *Bildung*, in the German tradition), the priesthood or the military.

(Moore, 2012, p. 107)

Embodied cultural *capital* is especially important in the military, and it is in the socialisation process where cultural *capital* is understood “through inculcation, into

principles of consciousness that translate into physical and cognitive propensities expressed in dispositions” (p.108). Embodied cultural *capital* can be understood as physical *capital* (Chan, 2004; Shilling, 2012). This type of *capital* is “enfleshed in the individual and expressed as patterns of speech and accents, posture, coiffure, musculature, and physical abilities” (Hinojosa, et al., 2019, p. 270). These physical dispositions are recognisable to military personnel. The way individuals walk, talk, their clothes, their haircut, the type of watch they wear, and their physical condition indicate their embodied military and cultural *capital*. This type of *capital* is closely associated with the military *habitus*.

In the objectified state, cultural *capital* can be seen “in the form of cultural goods” (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 243). These are represented in artwork, books, museums, and other artefacts with cultural origins (Moore, 2012). Objectified *capital* can be acquired through economic *capital*, but it can only be fully appreciated if the individual has the cultural taste and education to recognise its value. In the military, objectified cultural *capital* can be understood as the individual’s “personal military equipment” (Laanepere, et al., 2018, p. 34).

In the institutionalised state, cultural *capital* is seen as “a form of objectification”, resulting in such things as educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 243). It refers to what Hinojosa, et al. (2019, p. 270) call “institutionally bound knowledges” that manifests as knowledge, experience and skills relevant to that particular *field*. It is represented in certificates, diplomas, degrees, and titles conferred to demonstrate that an individual has acquired a particular knowledge or skill in an area. Laanepere, et al. (2018) point out that the use of ranks worn on uniforms is a form of institutionalised cultural *capital*. The fact that an individual has attained a specific rank within the military is a visible form of cultural *capital*. As mentioned in the opening

chapter, an individual is usually required to successfully complete a 'career course' to be eligible for promotion within the Defence Forces. Since 2012, all career courses in the Defence Forces have been accredited through their strategic partnerships with Maynooth University and IT Carlow. Military rank is now associated with an academic level, as discussed in Chapter 2, thereby associating rank with a particular academic level of achievement. Rank and its association with academic achievement is an important physical representation of institutionalised cultural *capital*. Indeed, it could also be argued that the relationship between the Defence Forces and HEIs is based upon leveraging the HEI's cultural *capital* to recognise military education courses.

Other forms of institutionalised emblems displayed on uniforms indicate an individual's institutionalised cultural *capital*. One of the first things that I notice when I meet another Defence Forces member for the first time is the number of overseas medals or ribbons they have on their uniform. These small swatches of coloured fabric represent active overseas service and other military honours such as bravery or distinguished service. They are symbolic representations of the cultural *capital* an individual has amassed through their service and personal sacrifice. Medals and ribbons are essential elements of institutionalised cultural *capital* in the military.

How individuals in the military *field* use *capital* in its various forms and how PME contributes to individual and organisational *capital* are exciting areas for future research.

In summary, each of Bourdieu's concepts is useful in its own right. However, when the three main elements are brought together, they provide a useful means for understanding practice. One's practice is derived from the relationship between *habitus* and *capital* within the current state of the social *field*. Essentially, this research



endeavours to understand the PME *field* in Ireland, how army officers perceive their PME experiences, and, how it influences their professional *habitus*. This review of Bourdieu's concepts has informed the questions that have driven this research.

#### **4.6. Framing the research aims from a Bourdieusian perspective**

This research analyses the *field* of PME of army officers using a conceptual framework informed by Bourdieu's theory described further in Chapter 5. As stated in the introduction, Grenfell (2012b) identifies three principles that should inform a Bourdieusian approach and these three principles structure this research. The three principles are "the construction of the research object; three-level *field* analysis; and participant objectivation" (Grenfell, 2012b, p. 213). The first principle involves the "construction of the research object" (p. 213), which requires focusing on "unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought" (Bourdieu, 1982a, p. 10, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 40).

Adhering to Grenfell's first principle, the processes, policy assumptions, and policy aims behind PME are interrogated. The second principle requires a three-tiered analysis comprising a mapping of the *field* in relation to the *field* of power, mapping agent positions within the *field*, and analysing the *habitus* of agents (specifically army officers). The final principle is for the researcher to adopt a reflexive approach. This is the framework that structures and guides this inquiry.

This approach has been successfully applied in studies in a diverse range of disciplines. Green (2013) describes her use of Bourdieu's concepts to analyse the impact of religion on school culture. She used an ethnographic approach to study the *field* of Christian academies and, based upon her familiarity with the setting, positioned

herself as an insider. She believes that her insiderness was an aid to reflexivity, and she questions her social world “with a view to explaining it to the outsider and clarifying it for the insider” (p. 145). My motivation is similar for this study, where analysis of PME will help explain the concept to the outsider and help insiders better understand the phenomenon.

Similarly, Kelly-Blakeney (2014) used a three-level analysis to investigate student experiences of widening participation in initial teacher education in Ireland. She mapped the *field* of initial teacher education concerning widening participation. In initial teacher education, the *habitus* of non-traditional students was analysed using narrative analysis to categorise student *habitus* as either *belonging*, *adjusting* or *struggling*. Kelly-Blakeney believes that using Bourdieu’s concepts to analyse the personal insights that she gathered “enabled a deeper understanding of [the student’s] experiences” (p. 128). Using Bourdieu’s three levels of analysis to study the initial teacher education *field* has helped inform the approach followed in this study.

#### **4.7. Symbolic violence and military socialisation**

This section presents an overview of Bourdieu’s theory of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) and emphasises its relevance for understanding socialisation, social reproduction, and *habitus* formation in the military context. Drawn from Bourdieu’s theory of *symbolic violence*, the critical elements of *pedagogic action*, *pedagogic authority* and *pedagogic work* and their interrelationships are examined. In the final section, I propose a model of *symbolic violence* that will serve as an analytical framework for analysing *habitus* formation in the Defence Forces, which is the focus of Chapter 7.

Bourdieu reveals his theory of *symbolic violence* in *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, co-written with Passeron and published in 1977. The theory is written in Bourdieu's customary obscure language, making it difficult to read and understand. In this work, Bourdieu and Passeron explain how order and social restraint are imposed on society "by indirect, cultural mechanisms, rather than by direct, coercive control" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 104). This social phenomenon is termed '*symbolic violence*'. In his foreword to *Reproduction*, Bottomore identifies that the principal theoretical proposition is that "every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force, adds its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. XV). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this is achieved through *misrecognition*. Bourdieu also attempts to explain how social inequalities endure and how the different classes perpetuate. He illustrates his social reproduction thesis by describing education and schools' role as socialising agents engaged in reproducing social inequalities (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu believes that children of the dominant class have an advantage over working-class children, as the education system and culture are familiar. Dominant class children, therefore, have an advantage in their education. This advantage places them on a trajectory to occupy dominant societal positions, thereby perpetuating and reproducing their dominance. Naidoo (2004) asserts that much of Bourdieu's work on higher education was focused on exposing higher education as a reproducer of inequalities that legitimate and constitute the social structure.

Bourdieu posits that *symbolic violence* is the means through which social reproduction is achieved. Bourdieu (1998a) explains that the socialisation process is a vital part of the theory of *symbolic violence*:

The theory of *symbolic violence* rests on theory of belief that or, more precisely, on a theory of the production of belief, of the work of socialization necessary to produce agents endowed with the schemes of perception and appreciation that will permit them to perceive and obey the injunctions inscribed in a situation or discourse.

(Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 104)

Socialisation, therefore, is a critical element of *symbolic violence* as it produces a mindset in agents that supports the inculcation of the *cultural arbitrary* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). *Symbolic violence* is understood as "the imposition of systems of symbolism and meaning (i.e. culture) upon groups or classes in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate" (Jenkins, 2003, p. 104). Symbolic power is required for symbolic violence to be effective. Symbolic power:

[I]s defined in and through a given relation context could be measured in terms of the degree of identification established between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e. in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced and reproduced.

(Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170)

It means that those that submit to a symbolic power must *recognise* its power over them due to their position in the field in relation to each other.

The term *cultural arbitrary* is difficult to understand when first encountered in Bourdieu's writings. He introduces the concept early in *Reproduction*, where he asserts that *pedagogic action* is "the imposition of a *cultural arbitrary* by an arbitrary power" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 5). In typical fashion, Bourdieu does little to clarify what he means by *cultural arbitrary*. Breaking it down into its constituent parts helps to provide some clarity. Culture is understood as "the set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular *field*, activity, or societal characteristic"

(Meriam-Webster, 2021). In the military *field*, culture relates to the values, traditions and social activities in the *field*.

On the other hand, arbitrary power is understood as "the authority to act in any manner that a person sees fit to do" (Blacks Law Dictionary, 2021). The Defence Forces' arbitrary power means it has the power to act in any manner it wants. It means that the organisation's dominant elements (the arbitrary power) can decide the culture it wants to inculcate (understood as the *cultural arbitrary*). Perhaps this is best understood by providing an example. In an earlier section, I listed the Defence Forces' values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity. In the recent past, somebody in the organisation decided that the Defence Forces needed to articulate its values. Decisions around selecting these values were made by an ad-hoc, arbitrary committee, with recommendations made to an arbitrary power (not necessarily experts in values), who accepted their adoption into the organisation's culture. Of all the values that could have been selected, why were these values chosen? Why are there only six? Murphy (2015) presents a strong case for including 'duty' as a value, arguing that it is central to all Defence Forces' activities. Duty is not included because these decisions are arbitrary and subjective, yet they influence the culture, hence the arbitrariness of military culture. The values of the British Army are courage, discipline, respect for others, integrity, loyalty, and selfless commitment (British Army, 2020). The US Army, on the other hand, have seven values that include: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage (US Army, 2022). Each institution has selected values that appeal to them and embody the national values they wish to espouse.

The Defence Forces values are enshrined in the organisations' leadership doctrine, where their provenance and characteristics are explained and rationalised. The values permeate every level of the organisation. They are used to judge a person's character, justify decisions, and decide if an individual will advance in the organisation or not. The organisation's leadership actively promotes the values. Each year the Chief of Staff rewards serving or retired Defence Forces members whose conduct and behaviour exemplify the organisation's values. The President of Ireland presents the awards annually during a reception at the President's residence at *Áras an Uachtaráin* (The President of Ireland, 2021). Bourdieu explains that "in any given social formation legitimate pedagogical action, i.e. the pedagogical action endowed with the dominant legitimacy, is nothing more than the arbitrary imposition of culturally dominant arbitrary" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 22). How the Defence Forces manage, inculcate, and promote its values is an example of the 'dominant legitimacy' imposing the *cultural arbitrary* onto its members.

This brief examination of the Defence Forces' values is not a critique of the values in themselves. In fact, I believe that the organisation's values are appropriate and serve the organisation well. However, applying a Bourdieusian lens to the organisations' values raises interesting sociological questions about the arbitrary nature of the organisation's culture and how the dominant legitimacy imposes it. The imposition of the *cultural arbitrary* occurs through '*pedagogic action*' during *habitus* formation. In the next section, the processes of *symbolic violence* are deconstructed to understand its constituent parts.

#### 4.8. The processes of *symbolic violence*

In his theory of *symbolic violence*, Bourdieu introduces three enabling elements: *Pedagogic action* (PA), *Pedagogic authority* (PAu), and *Pedagogic work* (PW).

##### ***Pedagogic action***

According to Bourdieu, "all *pedagogic action* (PA) is, objectively *symbolic violence* insofar as it is the imposition of a *cultural arbitrary* by an arbitrary power" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 5). He explains that *cultural arbitrary* imposition can occur through diffuse education (an educated social group or informal peer group), family education, and institutionalised education. Bourdieu argues that *pedagogic action* "seeks to reproduce the *cultural arbitrary* of the dominant or of the dominated classes" (p. 5). *Pedagogic action* can involve the exclusion of ideas by "the delimitation objectively entailed by the fact of imposing and inculcating certain meanings, treated by selection and by the corresponding exclusion as worthy of being reproduced by PA" (p. 8). Jenkins (2002) points out that dominant groups control *capital* distribution among groups, and censorship may be one of the most effective methods of *pedagogic action*.

*Pedagogic actions* reflect the interests of the dominant groups or classes, tending to reproduce the uneven distribution of cultural *capital* among the groups or classes which inhabit the social space in question, hence reproducing social space. *Pedagogic action* involves the exclusion of ideas as unthinkable, as well as their positive inculcation (depending of course upon the nature of the ideas). Exclusion or censorship may in fact be the most effective mode of *pedagogic action*.

(Jenkins, 2002, p. 342)

An example of the uneven distribution of *capital* in the Defence Forces is that entry to PME and consequent access to cultural *capitals* is controlled at various organisational

levels. For example, a junior officer is not educated or schooled in certain aspects of the Military Decision Making Process or Operational Planning Process as they are considered too junior to study these processes. Military education typically focuses on preparing the officer for commanding the 'one up', i.e., commanding the next higher rank's military unit. For example, a Cadet is trained and educated during Cadet training to fulfil a Lieutenant and Platoon Commander's role. The Lieutenant is trained and educated on a Young Officers Course to perform the role of a Captain, Deputy Company Commander (2IC). It would be unthinkable for a junior officer to be educated in planning at the operational or strategic levels, so those processes are excluded from junior officer education. This means that junior officers cannot access the cultural *capital* and professional knowledge needed to operate at a higher level. It ensures that junior officers occupy a social space appropriate for their rank, age, and experience, which preserves the social order. Hathazy (2012) describes a similar situation in the militarised police *field*:

The structure of this space is determined by the distribution of formal authority and 'in-house' *capitals*, internally produced, acquired, and deployed, and deemed necessary to occupy the posts in the hierarchy. The distribution of symbolic *capitals* structures the relations in this space, *duplicating* the formal relations of authority. In this case, different amounts of formal authority within the police organization, which define the commanding and subordinate positions, are doubled by a correlative distribution of in-house *symbolic capitals*.

(Hathazy, 2012, p. 747)

Cultural *capital* is a valuable commodity in the military *field*, and its management through *symbolic violence* and censorship ensures that the hierarchy and social structures are preserved.



### ***Pedagogic authority (PAu)***

For pedagogic action to function, Bourdieu asserts that it is necessary to have pedagogic authority. He states that "the idea of PA exercised without PAu is a logical contradiction and a sociological impossibility" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 12). *Pedagogic authority* is viewed as "a power to exert *symbolic violence* which manifests itself in the form of a right to impose legitimately, reinforces the arbitrary power which establishes it and which it conceals" (p. 13). Jenkins (2003) uses the example of the relationship between a parent and child to explain *pedagogic authority*, where the parent has a legitimate and natural *pedagogic authority* over the child.

A pedagogic agency commands the PAu enabling it to legitimate the *cultural arbitrary* that it inculcates, only within the limits laid down by that *cultural arbitrary*, i.e. to the extent that both in its mode of imposing [the legitimate mode] and in its delimitation of what it imposes, those entitled to impose it [the legitimate educators] and those on whom it is imposed [the legitimate addressees], it reproduces the fundamental principles of the *cultural arbitrary* that a group or class produces as worthy of reproduction, both by its very existence and by the fact of delegating to an agency the authority required in order to reproduce it.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 26)

In PME, the Military College is the agency with the *pedagogic authority* to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary*. The Military College delegates this authority to the Cadet School, the institution charged with socialising Cadets into the Defence Forces. Military instructors are the 'legitimate educators', tasked with inculcating the *cultural arbitrary* and the professional knowledge into the Cadets who are 'the legitimate addressees'.

Jenkins (2003) believes that "every agency exerting *pedagogic action* is authoritative (legitimate) only inasmuch as it is a 'mandated representative' of the group whose *cultural arbitrary* it imposes" (pp. 105-106). The Cadet School is the mandated representative of the Defence Forces that has "a power to exert *symbolic violence*

which manifests itself in the form of a right to impose legitimately, reinforces the arbitrary power which establishes it and which it conceals" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 13). Hathazy (2012) believes that schools serve as "sites of entrance to the *field* and mechanisms of legitimation of the bureaucratic structure" (p. 747). He points out that this is achieved by inculcating the "ethos, worldview, and rituals" along with the regulations that reinforce the hierarchy (p. 748). The Military College and its schools serve as important sites for cultural reproduction in the Defence Forces. The Cadet School is where cadets acquire the embodied cultural *capital* to function in the military *field*.

The Cadet School's strategic vision is "to develop leaders of character and competence". Furthermore, it aims to "prepare students morally, mentally and physically for their role as leaders in the Defence Forces" and to "imbue students with the Defence Forces Values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity" (The Defence Forces, 2021). The current Cadet course lasts 17 months and is delivered in an environment that Goffman (1961) terms a total institution. The course comprises four stages, Induction (three months), Development (seven months), Empowerment (five months) and Synthesis (two months). Cadets are guided through the stages of military training and education "as they learn the norms, values, traditions, techniques, etc, which mark the passage from a 'civilian' to a 'military life'" (Barnao, 2019, p. 289).

The use of rituals and ceremonies is a distinctive feature of military life as mentioned in the previous chapter. Wortmeyer and Branco (2019) contend that "ritualization is a hallmark of military socialization which employs several semiotic resources to promote and reinforce values and symbols characterizing military identity" (p. 595). The rituals

of inspections, parades, drill movements, flags, and ranks are used to instil the military culture and identity. Rituals such as military parades and drill also teach Cadets blind obedience. Barnao (2019) explains that "obedience is blind in the sense that it is 'non-reflexive'" (p. 289). This means that orders are obeyed automatically, without thought.

Bourdieu identifies that some *fields* use an indirect approach for imposing *symbolic violence*, while other *fields* such as the military use more direct 'strong arm' methods:

the Church, the school, the family, the psychiatric hospital or even the firm or the army, all tend to substitute the 'soft approach' (nondirective methods, 'invisible pedagogy', dialogue, participation, 'human relations') for the 'strong arm', reveals the interdependence which constitutes into a system the techniques for imposing *symbolic violence* characteristic of the traditional mode of imposition as well as those of the mode which tends to take its place in the same function.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 18)

The passage through the phases of Cadet training can be considered as secondary or tertiary socialisation. However, socialisation does not end after cadet training. Socialisation occurs at various stages during military service, as this research illustrates. After commissioning, junior officers are socialised into their unit and the officer corps. As they undertake successive PME courses, other military experiences and personal experiences, their *habitus* may change through the process of *pedagogic work*.

### ***Pedagogic work (PW)***

*Pedagogic action* is achieved through the process of '*pedagogic work*':

PA entails *pedagogic work* (PW), a process of inculcation which must last long enough to produce a durable training, i.e. a *habitus*, the product of

internalization of the principles of a *cultural arbitrary* capable of perpetuating itself after PA has ceased and thereby of perpetuating in practices the principles of the internalized arbitrary.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 31)

*Pedagogic work*, therefore, must be long enough to have a lasting effect on the *habitus* of the agent. Moore (2012) suggests that *habitus* formation and the cultural *capital* it provides through "the *pedagogic work* of the inculcation of the strict rules to the point that they acquire an embodied form" (p. 109). Thus *pedagogic work's* effect on the *habitus* is enduring. Primary *pedagogic work* occurs in the home "during the earliest phase of one's upbringing" (Gale, Mills, and Cross, 2017, p. 345). As mentioned previously, this is where the primary *habitus* is formed. Secondary socialisation is achieved through the *pedagogic work* of military training and education. Secondary socialisation aims to teach cadets to 'know their place' in the organisation and accept their position in the military *field*. It is achieved by transforming their *habitus*.

*Pedagogic work* (whether performed by the School, a Church or a Party) has the effect of producing individuals durably and systematically modified by a prolonged and systematic transformative action tending to endow them with the same durable, transposable training (*habitus*).

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 196)

Jenkins (2003, p. 107) believes that *pedagogic work* results in "the production of dispositions which generate 'correct' responses to the symbolic stimuli" given by the legitimate educator. Bourdieu likens the production of the *habitus* through education to the transmission of genetic material in biology.

Education, considered as the process through which a *cultural arbitrary* is historically reproduced through the medium of the production of the *habitus* productive of practices conforming with that *cultural arbitrary* (i.e. by the transmission of a training [formation] capable of durably patterning and 'informing' the receivers), is the equivalent, in the cultural order, of the transmission of genetic *capital* in the biological order. If the *habitus* is the analogue of genetic *capital*, then the inculcation which defines the

performance of PA is the analogue of generation, in that it transmits information generative of analogous information.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 32)

The institutionalised education delivered in the Cadet School fundamentally changes the disposition of the individual. *Pedagogic work's* productivity is judged by the degree to which the *habitus* it produces is 'durable' and 'transposable'. *Pedagogic work* helps create a *habitus* and disposition that will respond appropriately to "symbolic stimuli emanating from the agencies invested with the PAu" (p. 36).

Bourdieu points out that one of the functions of institutionalised education is to reproduce the conditions of the system and its existence.

PW tends to reproduce the social conditions of the production of that *cultural arbitrary*, i.e. the objective structures of which it is the product, through the mediation of the *habitus*, defined as the principle generating practices which reproduce the objective structures.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 33)

For example, the Cadet School is charged with inculcating the *cultural arbitrary* such as the Defence Forces values and other aspects of military life such as obeying all orders, respect for seniority and hierarchy, unquestioning loyalty, obedience, and many others. By inculcating these durable dispositions into Cadets in training, they will perpetuate them in their military lives.

Every institutionalized educational system (ES) owes the specific characteristics of its structure and functioning to the fact that, by the means proper to the institution, it has to produce and reproduce the institutional conditions whose existence and persistence (self reproduction of the system) are necessary both to the exercise of its essential function of inculcation and to the fulfilment of its function of reproducing a *cultural arbitrary* which it does not produce (cultural reproduction), the reproduction

of which contributes to the reproduction of the relations between the groups or classes (social reproduction).

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 54)

Jenkins (2003) points out that one of the aspects of *pedagogic authority* is to facilitate the "limited social mobility of a limited number of members of the dominated group or class" (p. 109). This links to the military promotion system and instructor selection in military schools. For example, Cadets who excel during training often return as instructors to the Cadet School based on their suitability. Because their performance in institutionalised education conforms with the *cultural arbitrary* principles, they are rewarded by a prestigious posting that is a form of institutionalised cultural *capital*. They can later use this cultural *capital* in promotion competitions to advance in rank and move from the dominated to the dominant class.

Bourdieu explains that 'specialised agents' or instructors are required to manage and regulate the *pedagogic work*.

A permanent corps of specialized agents, equipped with the homogeneous training and standardized, standardizing instruments which are the precondition for the exercise of a specific, regulated process of PW, i.e. the work of schooling (WSg), the institutionalized form of secondary PW, is predisposed by the institutional conditions of its own reproduction to restrict its activity to the limits laid down by an institution mandated to reproduce a *cultural arbitrary* and not to decree it.

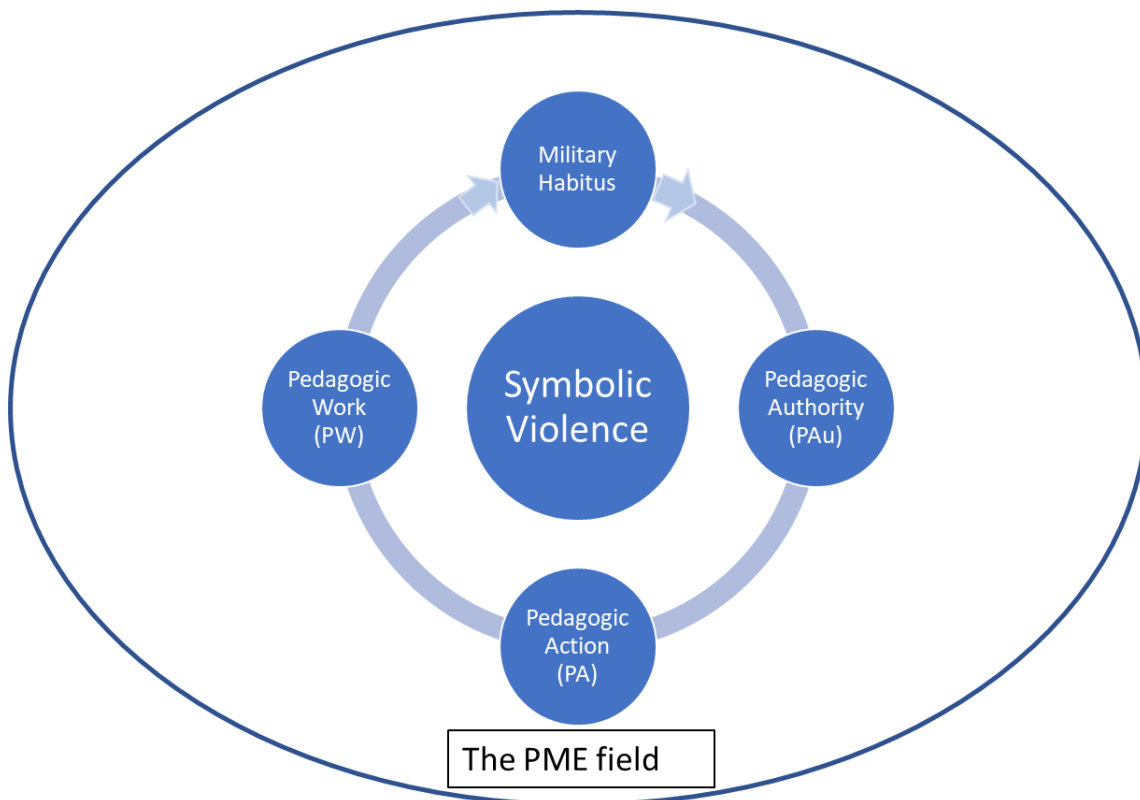
(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 57)

Because these specialised agents have excelled in institutionalised education, they become responsible for inculcating the *cultural arbitrary* into the next generation. This is achieved by adhering to the 'teaching tools' that control the education process to ensure a homogeneous *habitus* formation.

The teaching tools which the ES makes available to its agents (manuals, commentaries, abstracts, teachers' texts, syllabuses, set books, teaching instructions, etc.) must be seen not simply as aids to inculcation but also as instruments of control tending to safeguard the orthodoxy of PW against individual heresies.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 58)

Applying a Bourdieusian lens to military socialisation processes is a novel way of analysing the military as a social institution. Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* and social reproduction is facilitated by the nature of the training environment and its 'total institution' characteristics. In Figure 5, a summary of the processes of *symbolic violence* is presented. This representation has been refined from my early whiteboard versions depicted in Appendix 7.



**Figure 5. *Symbolic violence* and reproduction in the military *field***

It is represented as a cycle because it helps to explain how the Defence Forces perpetuate as a total institution. *Pedagogic action* inculcates the *cultural arbitrary*.

The Cadet School is the legitimate educational institution or *pedagogic authority* given the power to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary* in the socialisation process through *pedagogic work*. Legitimate educators supported by ‘teaching tools’ oversee the *pedagogic work* in a total institution setting that lasts long enough to produce a durable military *habitus* that conforms with the *cultural arbitrary*. The *habitus* produced becomes the "structured and structuring structure" (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 170) that contributes to the reproduction of the next generation of “legitimate addresses” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 26), and so the cycle continues. This is how the military *field* reproduces itself. This cycle will be used in Chapter 7 as an analytical framework for examining the socialisation process and *habitus* formation in the Defence Forces.

#### **4.9. Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the key elements of Bourdieu’s theory of practice. I explored and evaluated his key concepts and discussed the methodological implications of using a Bourdieusian approach to study the military field. A model for *symbolic violence* was deduced from Bourdieu’s work, which will be used as a lens for analysing socialisation and *habitus* formation in the Cadet School. The research design and methodology used in this research are discussed in the next chapter.



## Chapter 5 - Research Design and Methodology

### 5.1. Introduction

The preceding chapters have established this study's contextual, theoretical, and conceptual framework. This chapter explains my methodological approach, reflects upon my fundamental beliefs and explains how my positionality has influenced critical decisions in the research process. The aims of the study and research questions that have driven this inquiry are restated below. I then reflect upon my ontology and epistemology and how they have influenced the methodology chosen for this research. Following this is an overview of the research design, the methods used and a description of the analytical approach. I intend to be explicit about my role as a researcher and how my values and biases impacted the research process. The fact that this research was conducted during a global pandemic while deployed on operational duties with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) presented additional challenges. These challenges are addressed later in this chapter. Finally, I provide an account of the research ethics procedures followed to ensure that this research was conducted ethically.

### 5.2. Aim and Objectives

The aims of this research are to:

- 1. Map the *field* of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces.**

RQ 1.1 In what ways do the *fields* of military education and Higher Education intersect, and what influences their relationship?

RQ 1.2 How is the accreditation of learning reified in education policies and practices?

**2. Understand how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts their professional *habitus*.**

RQ 2.1 How is the military *habitus* formed during initial military socialisation?

RQ 2.2 In what ways does the military *habitus* evolve through PME?

**5.3. Researcher Positionality**

As mentioned in the opening chapter, Bourdieu advocated that “all knowledge producers should strive to recognise their own object position within the intellectual and academic *field*” (Deer, 2012, p. 197). The purpose of this section is to recognise my position and place within this research. Interrogating the researcher’s ontological and epistemological assumptions is a fundamental requirement for conducting credible research (Grix, 2004). Creswell (2007) emphasises the importance of making “assumptions, paradigms and frameworks explicit in the writing of a study” (p. 15). Similarly, Wellington et al. (2005) believe that being open about fundamental beliefs helps to justify the methodology and methods chosen “since it is the match between methodology and methods and research focus/topic/questions that the credibility of any findings, conclusions and claims depend” (p. 96). While I use Bourdieu’s theories to inform this research, it is my ontology and epistemology that underpins this research.

Grix (2004) suggests, “Ontology is the starting point of all research, after which one’s epistemological and methodological positions logically follow” (p. 59). Similarly, Hay (2011, p. 464) argues that:

We cannot know what we are capable of knowing (epistemology) until such time as we have settled on (a set of assumptions about) the nature of the context in which that knowledge must be acquired (ontology). Similarly, we cannot decide upon an appropriate set of strategies for interrogating political processes (methodology) until we have settled upon the limits of our capacity to acquire knowledge of such processes (epistemology) and, indeed, the nature of such processes themselves (ontology).

Agreeing with the logical sequence laid out by Hay (2011), I begin by briefly outlining my understanding of ontology and epistemology and how my philosophical assumptions have influenced the chosen methodology and research decisions made during the research process.

### ***Ontology***

Ontology is described as the study of being (Crotty, 1989), and is concerned with “the nature or essence of things, with the principle of pure being” (Wellington, et al., 2005, p. 100). Ontological assumptions are about an individual’s underlying beliefs of social reality or what Scotland (2012, p. 9) terms beliefs in “what is”. Similarly, Hay (2011, p. 462) believes that ontology “relates to being, to what is, to what exists, to the constituent units of reality”. Interrogating one’s philosophical position concerning these fundamental beliefs is difficult for a novice researcher, “particularly when no guidance is offered as to how this is to be done” (Blaikie and Priest, 2017, p. 17). This is something that I have found to be true. The natural busyness of this stage of my life in my mid-40s with a young family, a challenging profession, and growing responsibilities, leaves little time to think about such things. The rhythm of daily life is dictated around ‘what’s next’ rather than pausing to reflect upon ‘what is’. However, subconsciously, we constantly view and interpret our world and our place in it (Blaikie

and Priest, 2017). The interpretation of the social world is influenced by a myriad of factors that may include:

family, community and society of origin; life trajectory and experiences; level of self-awareness; the occupations and career(s) that we take up, the social relationships that we develop; and, of course, the period of history we live in.

(Blaikie and Priest, 2017, p. 15)

Interestingly, this is similar to Bourdieu's (1984, p. 166) notion of *habitus* and his belief that "different conditions of existence produce different *habitus*". It means that our *habitus* influences our practices, thoughts, preferences, and how we interpret the world.

Sikes (2004) posits that there are two ontological positions. The first one is considered as "external, independent, given and objectively real", while the other position views the social world as "socially constructed, subjectively experienced and the result of human thought as expressed through language" (p. 20). She explains that the realist position is compatible with quantification and observation, while the social constructivist seeks to collect data based on subjective experiences.

The individual researcher's ontological assumptions, beliefs, and values thus guide towards quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research. How the researcher understands the social world also influences the research questions and methodologies used in the research process (Wellington et al., 2005). Creswell (2007) identifies four possible researcher worldviews: post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism. In the next section, I justify my social constructivist ontology.

## **Social Constructivism**

Having reflected upon my ontological position, I identify as a social constructivist believing that:

knowledge is constructed by the researcher and is affected by the context. It is a belief in multiple truths and a belief that the interaction of the researcher with what is being studied affects the determination of the truth.

(Lichtman, 2013, p. 321)

For social constructivists, the role of the researcher is to understand the participants' lived experiences and world (Mertens, 2015). Creswell (2007, p. 20) suggests that social constructivists "seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" based upon participants' views of a situation. The notion of a shared experience with participants is explored later when discussing my insiderness.

Neuman and Blundo (2000) believe that constructivism:

infers that meaning and knowledge are cognitively and affectively constructed by the individual on an ultimately personal basis within the social context in the broadest sense. The learners' experience of the social context includes, but is not limited to: the historical context, prevailing and contradictory social values and norms, dimensions of culture and gender, and the influence of political realities and power.

(pp. 24-25)

Based on Neuman and Blundo's belief, each individual's learning experience in the military context will be broadly subjective and personal to them. Considering that this research aims to understand the lived experiences of learners in the military workplace and the relationship between HEIs and PME, social constructivism is paradigmatically appropriate for this study.

Grandy (2019) believes that constructionism acknowledges the role of the researcher in the research process and that "the subjectivity of the researcher is something to be

embraced, not controlled for or eliminated” (p. 179). She acknowledges that our opinions, values, thoughts, and reflections impact and influence our research, which I recognise as a researcher. I am an army officer engaged in the management and delivery of military education, so clearly, the opinions, experiences, and reflections I have internalised affect this research. I believe that my familiarity with the research topic, research participants, and research site has the potential to strengthen rather than weaken my findings, as long as I remain reflexive about their influence.

### ***Epistemology***

If ontology relates to how we know about something, then epistemology is about the theory of knowledge (Sikes, 2004). Hay (2011) puts it a little differently when he claims that “the ontologist asks “what exists to be known?” while the epistemologist is interested in “what are the conditions of acquiring knowledge of that which exists?” (p. 464). Grix (2004) explains that the word epistemology has Greek origins, with the word *episteme* meaning knowledge and *logos* meaning reason. Hofer (2004) defines it as “...a philosophical enterprise concerned with the origin, nature, limits, methods and justification of human knowledge” (p. 47). Because of its simplicity, I like Blakie’s (2011) six-word definition: “how we know what we know” (p. 310). Schommer-Aikins (2002) suggests that “epistemological belief development and change is influenced by experience” (p. 106). This means that for a researcher to understand their epistemology, they must reflect upon their life’s experiences to reflect upon how they know what they know.

## ***Ontological and Epistemological Vignette – How I know what I know***

*Reflecting on my life, there have been many influences that have shaped me and influenced my worldview. The three primary sources of influence have been my family, the military profession, and my education. The most significant impact on my early life was the role played by my parents and family. I was fortunate to grow up in a loving home and a large extended family where my interests, education, and well-being were nourished and encouraged by my parents and grandparents.*

*After completing my leaving certificate, I spent a year in University College Dublin studying Agricultural Science, but my main goal was to join the Army Cadets. The second significant influence in my epistemic history began in October 1995 when I made that fateful journey to the Curragh Camp and joined the Defence Forces as an Army Cadet. When I reflect now, I can make sense of this experience and the impact that it has had on my ways of knowing. Emerging from the Cadet School socialisation process, my worldview was reductionistic, and things were very black or white, either right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable or not. It was a life surrounded by certainties, with a cause and effect logic fitting with the positivist worldview with no grey shades. Retired Brigadier General Bryan Watters PhD uses the concept of an ‘arc of uncertainty’ (Watters, 2018) to describe how levels of military operations correspond to environmental uncertainty. He points out that the tactical level deals with a high degree of certainty and as one progresses through the military levels to operational and strategic level environments, uncertainty increases. The military need junior leaders that are confident of their ability to deal with certainty while on operations at home or abroad, and the Cadet School is where this knowledge was acquired.*

*I have found, however, that as I matured into my mid to late twenties, my mindset began to revert to a more authentic version of me. My marriage to Anne-Marie, the birth of our three children, several deployments on peacekeeping operations worldwide, and my postgraduate studies caused me to question my belief system. The comfort and absoluteness of dualistic thinking (Perry, 1970) that was nurtured through my early career at the ‘tactical’ level and through my science education, now, however, proved inadequate for dealing with real-world problems where ‘uncertainty’ is a defining feature.*

*Education has played a significant role in helping me to sort through and rationalise these thoughts. Postgraduate studies in education and especially this EdD programme have exposed me to a range of literature, social science philosophies, and people who have helped me better understand myself and the theory of knowledge.*

*As a military officer with a science education, one would think that the paradigm of positivism and its clear cut, black or white answers should sit naturally with me. If I were conducting research fifteen or twenty years ago, perhaps I would follow a positivist paradigm; however, my experiences in the intervening period have caused my epistemology to evolve. Over the past fifteen years, I recognise that my beliefs about knowledge have evolved from simple black or white binaries to a position of “relativistic thinking” (relative subjectivity) where knowledge is uncertain, there are lots of grey areas, and there are no absolute truths. This became apparent to me during Prof Gareth Parry’s lecture titled ‘Conceptualising Education Research’ during the first EdD weekend school that I attended. He conducted an in-class survey to plot the experience/expertise of the first-year Education Doctorate cohort. Using a quadrant with the four broad categories of Professional, Humanities, Social Science and*

*Science as the four categories, we had to raise our hands to indicate which quadrant we identified. You might think it a relatively straightforward exercise; however, it proved difficult to decide where I fitted in. The problem is that my third-level education comprised Military Studies (Professional Quadrant) and a Bachelor of Science degree (Science Quadrant), with both disciplines grounded in positivism. As I progressed in my military career and, in particular, through the experience of the MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, my outlook changed from positivism to interpretivism. I now sit relatively comfortably in Parry's Social Science Quadrant. This mini-exercise has led me to conclude that researcher positionality is not fixed. As some authors suggest, it can change with experience, education, and personal reflection (Schommer-Atkins, 2002; Blaikie and Priest, 2017), just like the habitus.*

### ***Interpretivism***

Based upon my epistemology, a positive philosophy with a quantitative research approach based on experiment and observation may not be a suitable approach for me to take as a researcher at this time. A qualitative methodology based upon my interpretivist epistemology is compatible. Creswell (2007) points out social constructivist ontology leads naturally to an interpretivist epistemology. The researcher positions "themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). As described through my epistemological vignette, my personal, cultural and historical experiences are part of who I am as a researcher and are very much part of this research.

Schommer-Aikins (2002, p. 106) argues that "epistemological belief development and change is influenced by experience". Therefore, the experience and preunderstanding of the researcher regarding the research topic and participants are epistemological issues. In the next section, I address the issues of conducting this research as an insider.



### ***Being an insider researcher***

A significant element of my positionality relates to my familiarity with the research setting and participants. Fillery-Travis and Robinson (2018) explain that this is a feature of modern doctorate studies as “the student undertakes a significant proportion of their research within their own professional practice and/or organisational setting” (p. 842). I recognise that my insiderness has influenced the whole research focus and process, permeating through research decisions as Hockey (1993) suggests. I aim to be explicit about this feature to mitigate my biases while maintaining reflexivity.

Merton (1972) considers that “insiders are the members of specific groups and collectivities, or occupants of specified social statuses. Outsiders are the non-members.” (p. 11). He calls these two opposing positions *insider doctrine* and *outsider doctrine* and essentially bases his definition of insider and outsider researcher on the ability of the researcher to access information. There are clear advantages and disadvantages to being an insider researcher in some contexts and an outsider researcher in others. Mercer (2007) likens the pros and cons of conducting insider research to “wielding a double-edged sword” (p. 7). The very advantages of being an insider can also be cancelled out by the disadvantages of being an insider. Chavez (2008) sums up the contradictions of conducting insider research:

Insider research is neither an unfettered nor absolute advantage to doing research in one’s own ‘home’ setting. Instead, insiders will find advantages and complications as a consequence of the need to negotiate the subject-object positionality unique to them and contending with multiple social identities.

(Chavez, 2008, p. 480)

Hockey (1993) advises that insider researchers need to be aware of the biases that their insider knowledge brings and need to be “wary of assuming that their views are more widespread or representative than is the case” (p. 199). He warns that the

researcher must be conscious of their roles in the process as “researcher, friend or a combination” (p. 199). Similarly, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) highlight the importance of not biasing a study by inserting insights gained from experiencing the phenomenon. Instead, they advocate using insider understanding to discuss those sensitive topics that an outsider may not understand.

Bourdieu (1988) makes some suggestions to mitigate the problems of insiderness. He suggests that if a researcher is studying their social world, they should “exotise the domestic, through a break with his initial relation of intimacy with modes of life and thought which remain opaque to him because they are too familiar” (p. xi). Bourdieu (1988) highlights the difficulties that the insider researcher faces:

The question of the difference between practical knowledge and scholarly knowledge, and particularly to the special difficulties involved first in breaking with inside experience and then reconstituting the knowledge that has been obtained by the means of this break.

(Bourdieu, 1988, p. 1)

This means that the insider researcher must ‘park’ the biases that insider knowledge brings in order “to make the familiar strange” (Mills, 1959) by questioning the social world that we usually take for granted. Fillery-Travis and Robinson (2018) believe that critical reflection is “central to the process of dissociating practice and making the familiar strange, especially in the context of a modern doctorate” (p. 846). Thompson (2013) warns that if a researcher claims to make the familiar strange, then they must show how this was achieved. Critical reflection through the lens of theory and reflexivity is something that I have engaged in throughout the EdD process and is a principle upon which my research questions and conceptual framework are built. Working on this thesis while deployed overseas and away from the PME environment helped distance me from the research. It provided me with time and space to critically

evaluate the overall project. How I achieve reflexivity is addressed later in this chapter. Critical reflection, reflexivity, and questioning assumptions have become ingrained elements of this research. My epistemology is interpretivist and is informed by my insider-researcher positionality. In the next section, I look at the experience of another insider doctoral-level researcher who researched the Defence Forces.

### ***Other insider doctoral researchers in the Defence Forces***

There has been very little insider doctoral-level research conducted in the Defence Forces which means that there is a paucity of literature to guide the researcher through the nuances of the process. The only account of doctoral-level research conducted by an insider in the Defence Forces that I could find was the PhD thesis of Tom Clonan (2000) *Women in Combat: The Status and Roles Assigned Female Personnel in the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF)*. Tom Clonan is a former Irish army officer and, while still serving in the Defence Forces, conducted sensitive research for his PhD thesis. Clonan's study "addresses the issues of patriarchy in an attempt to explore and critique the workplace culture of the Permanent Defence Forces" (Clonan, 2000, p. 2). His research revealed a toxic organisational culture where there was widespread bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual assault and allegations of rape amongst female members of the Defence Forces. To illustrate the gravity of what was uncovered, of the 60 female members of the Defence Forces that he interviewed, Clonan discovered that 59 had reported incidents of inappropriate behaviour in terms of bullying or sexual harassment.

Clonan left the Defence Forces shortly after completing his PhD in 2000 and began an academic career at Dublin Institute of Technology. In August 2001, Clonan found

himself in the middle of a media storm when the findings from his thesis were chronicled in the Sunday World tabloid newspaper. It was a major story at the time, where the findings were particularly damaging to the image and reputation of the Defence Forces. Clonan's thesis came under significant scrutiny as the Defence Forces questioned the validity of the research and even alleged that the findings were fabricated. He contended that he was physically and emotionally intimidated by former colleagues, and he documents his experience of being an insider researcher and a 'whistle-blower'. It led to several articles documenting the fallout of his research on him and his family (Clonan, 2010b; Clonan, 2010a; Clonan, 2017). Clonan (2010b) highlights the lack of academic literature to provide guidance when researching a secretive organisation such as the military. He advises the insider researcher to keep comprehensive written records throughout the research process and maintain hard copies of requests for access and consent forms. Furthermore, he suggests taking an overt, open approach and emphasises:

full disclosure of the researcher's dual role as both investigator and member of the organisation or institution under review as a basic pre-requisite for a successful and satisfactory conclusion of the research process.

(Clonan, 2010a, p. 6)

Clonan's experience highlights the importance of following a legitimate research process, diligent application of ethical practices, and the requirement for the researcher to document and archive correctly. Clonan spent years of his life after completing his PhD, defending his research and his decisions during the research process. He warns that the "protected status of 'academic researcher' is not one enjoyed by non-traditional researchers embarked on study within their own organisation" (p. 8). Almost 20 years later, Clonan admits that this has been "a traumatic, upsetting and bewildering experience" (Clonan, 2017, p. 5). Clonan's case

is “cited by Transparency International Ireland as a classic example of ‘Whistleblower Reprisal’” (Clonan, 2010a, p. 8). While it is not anticipated that my research will generate such controversy, reviewing Clonan’s experience has been a salutary process.

#### **5.4. Methodology**

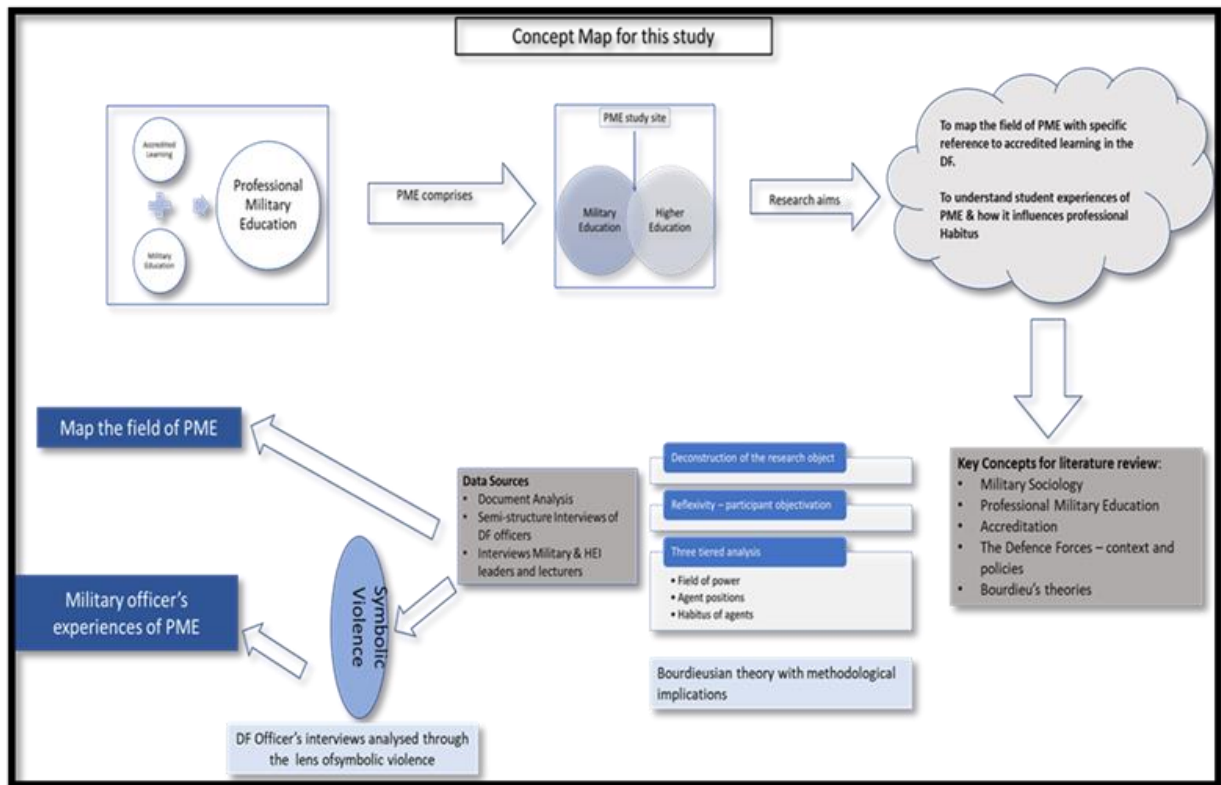
Methodology refers to the methods and techniques used in the research process (Grix, 2004). It can be considered a “broad theoretically informed approach to research” (Ryan, 2015a, p. 117). Daly (2003) suggests that “methodology connotes a set of rules and procedures to guide research and against which its claims can be evaluated” (p. 192). She sees methodology as having two functions: firstly, it provides a way of logically communicating ideas and findings from research, and secondly, it provides a basis for establishing the legitimacy of the study. Silverman (2010, p. 436) takes a more holistic view of methodology, believing it relates to “the choices we make about appropriate *models*, cases to study, methods of gathering data, analysis, etc., in planning and executing a research study”.

The following section provides an overview of the research design and how Bourdieu’s thinking tools are employed in this research.

#### ***Overview of Research Design***

A qualitative approach informed by a Bourdieusian theory is followed to address the two aims of this research as stated above. The concept map in Figure 6 defines the focus of the study, its aims, topics for the literature review, theoretical framework and how all these elements lead to answering the research questions. According to Halford

(1993, p. 7) “to understand a concept entails having an internal representation or mental model that reflects the structure of the concept”. This concept map illustrates the main elements of how this study is constructed.



**Figure 6. Concept Map for this study (See appendix 12 for a full-page version)**

Starting at the top left-hand corner, PME is conceptualised as comprising of two elements: military education and higher education. These two elements intersect at the Irish Defence Forces Military College to provide PME to military officers. As PME in the Irish context is an under-researched phenomenon, this research aims to map the PME *field* concerning accredited learning and understand student experiences of PME and how it influences professional *habitus*. The research aims informed the areas for the literature review that include accreditation, military sociology, PME’s evolution, defence policy context, and Bourdieu’s theories. Bourdieu’s methodological approach was followed by adhering to the three principles identified by Grenfell (2012b). These

principles are 1) Deconstruction of the research object; 2) Conducting a 3-tiered analysis of the *field*, and 3) Reflexivity. The three principles inform the data collection methods and structure the data analysis process. In addition, Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* is used as an analytical lens to understand military socialisation. The concept map serves as a blueprint (Grant and Osanloo, 2014) for this research and it has helped me to stay on track and achieve the aims and objectives of this study.

### ***Deconstruction of the research object***

The first principle involves the “construction of the research object” (Grenfell, 2012b, p. 213), which requires focusing on “unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought” (Bourdieu, 1982a, p. 10, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 40). PME is the *research object* in question. In the Irish context, this work deconstructs it to understand the intersection of the military education *field* and the higher education *field* and the military officer's experience of being a student at this intersection. Kvale (2007) explains that the concept of ‘deconstruction’ originated from Derrida. Deconstruction involves breaking down ones’ understanding of a concept or text and then “opening it for construction of other understandings” (Kvale, 2007, p. 114). In the context of this work, new understandings emanate from the theoretical lens applied to participant accounts of their experience of PME.

Adhering to Bourdieu's first principle, the processes and policy assumptions behind army officer education are interrogated. This principle guides all stages of this

research, from constructing the research questions through to the three-level *field* analysis.

### ***Three-tiered analysis***

The second principle requires a three-tiered analysis. The first tier of analysis maps the *field* in relation to the *field* of power, the second tier maps agent positions within the *field*, and the third tier focuses on analysing the *habitus* of agents. The *field* of power can be thought of as political, economic, arts and education *fields* (Thompson 2012). Thompson highlights that the relationship between power and a social *field* is considered 'mutually influencing' as what happens in the *field* of power can shape what happens in the social *field* and vice-a-versa. PME is depicted graphically in Chapter 6 based upon contextual analysis of the literature and the policies impacting military education in the Defence Forces.

The first two research questions are addressed in the *field* mapping section.

RQ 1.1 In what ways do the *fields* of Military Education and Higher Education intersect, and what influences their relationship?

RQ 1.2 How is accredited learning reified in education policies and practices?

By providing an overview of the history of PME and its development in Ireland, the relationship between the Defence Forces and Higher Education Institutions for the provision of military education is charted. Other macro, meso and micro forces that impact the PME *field*, such as international developments in PME, domestic and European education policies, and national policies are also analysed. *Field* mapping is based upon analysis of the literature and policies of PME and on the experiences of those responsible for PME to the Defence Forces. Additionally, I conducted semi-



structured interviews with participants from both the military and academic domains to find out how *the fields of PME and Higher Education intersect and what influences their relationship*. Documentary analysis of academic literature, higher education policies, and Defence Forces training and education policies is also conducted to establish *how accredited learning is reified in education policies and practices*. The findings from the first aim are presented and discussed in Chapter 6.

Concerning mapping agents' positions in the *field*, an agent's position relates to the amount of *capital* they have at their disposal. *Capital* can be considered as something worth having in a specific *field* (Webb, et al., 2002). Essentially, the *capital's* function is to "buy positioning in a *field*" (Agbenyega and Klibthong, 2015, p. 157). It means that an individual or institution operating in any social *field* must work at accumulating *capital* that is useful in a particular *field*, to increase their relative power and elevate their position in the *field*. For *field* mapping, the agents in the *field* are considered at the macro level rather than the micro-level.

The next stage involves analysing the *habitus* of the agents to *understand how military officers perceive their experiences of accredited learning and how it impacts their professional habitus*. This research will question how the military *habitus* is formed during socialisation and evolves through subsequent PME. This is achieved by exploring how military officers describe their experiences of PME and how they believe that PME impacts them.

### **Reflexivity**

The final principle is for the researcher to adopt a reflexive approach. Throughout Bourdieu's academic life, he developed and evolved reflexivity as a methodological

concept. Grenfell (2019, p. 19) asserts, reflexivity is “in many ways, quite a problematic word”. He views it as “the way that a person’s thoughts or ideas – including the values they carry – become embedded in what they do and know” (p. 19). Furthermore, he believes that “the researcher’s social relationship to the object of study is itself a necessary object of study” (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 126). This means that the researcher must reflect on their position in relation to the field, and, the capital they possess to illustrate the “nature of the sources and maintenance of one’s interest” (p. 126).

Deer (2012) suggests that “reflexivity is based on a phenomenological understanding of practice and action” (p. 208), and as such, it should be used as a “guiding principle”.

Reflexivity can be considered as the “active acknowledgement by the researcher that her/his own actions and decisions will inevitably impact upon the meaning and context of the experience under investigation” (Horsburgh, 2003, p. 309). Berger (2015) suggests that researchers need to understand their role in knowledge creation and “carefully self monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs, and personal experiences on their research” (p. 220). He sees reflexivity as “a process of continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher’s positionality” (p. 220). It means that the researcher must turn “the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognise and take responsibility for one’s own situatedness within the research” (p. 220).

How this is operationalised during the research is not a straightforward process. Some strategies that can help achieve reflexivity include prolonged engagement in the *field*, member checking, triangulation, journaling, and re-analysis of original material after a time-lapse (Berger, 2015). Keeping an accurate record of the reasoning behind all research decisions and researcher feelings can also be helpful.

Grenfell (2019) provides valuable guidance on maintaining a reflexive view. He suggests that researchers should think about:

1. Fields in relation to the field of power – my connection/connecting.
2. My relationship to the doxa in the field; held in institution. What am I connected to? Doxa of the discipline – Aims. Position in field.
3. My habitus and that of other people in the site context. Their habitus and mine; personal relationships/networks. My position and proximity.

(Grenfell, 2019, p. 153)

Documenting my reflections as a researcher and justifying my research decisions enriches the analysis and achieves reflexivity in this work. As Grenfell notes, “acknowledging such a relationship between the researcher and the research is not simply a methodological nicety, but central to the robustness of the resultant science” (Grenfell, 2019, p. 51). I have provided several reflexive accounts through vignettes and personal reflections that focus on my social trajectory, from my first day in the Cadet School to my current position as a Lieutenant Colonel serving overseas. In the methodology chapter, I explain my position concerning the research participants and address power issues, positionality, and bias. In this way, I engage reflexively by viewing my “research field in terms of habitus, field and capital” (Grenfell, 2013, p. 31) in line with a Bourdieusian approach and its limitations. I try to objectify my position within the whole project without it descending into an exercise in self-indulgent naval gazing.

## **5.5. Research Ethics**

Research ethics is defined as “the *field* of moral philosophy dealing with the standards by which behaviour should be regulated within research” (Sage, 2021). With this in

mind, I ensured that I behaved ethically during this research. An application was made to the University of Sheffield's ethical review panel in June 2020, and this was duly approved in July 2020 (Appendix 1). Information sheets were given to all participants to provide the background to the research and to allow them to ask questions before the interviews.

### **Access**

Research in the Defence Forces requires permission from the Defence Forces Registrar. In July 2020 (copy in Appendix 2), permission was granted to conduct research in the Defence Forces with certain conditions stipulated as outlined in the application. Conscious of the issues faced by Clonan (2000) following his study, I diligently followed the conditions imposed by the Defence Forces.

### **Recruitment**

After receiving ethics approval, I began the recruitment process. I used a theoretical or purposive sampling approach to recruit participants from the first group of participants (Ryan, 2015a). It is a sampling approach where "the researcher initially goes to where the answers to the research questions are most likely to be found" (p. 132). The first group comprises civilian academic and military personnel who have had, or currently have, responsibilities for delivering Professional Military Education on Defence Forces career courses. As an insider researcher, I had a good idea of whom I needed to interview to help answer the research questions posed.

The second group of participants was comprised of serving military personnel from a cross-section of army officers from junior, middle, and senior officer ranks. I selected

several possible candidates based on their rank, then emailed them requesting the possibility of participation. If they responded positively, I arranged to call them to explain the research aims, why I would like them to participate and what it would entail. If they were happy to consider taking part, I emailed them the Information Sheet and Consent Form (see Appendix 3 and 4) so that they could read about the project in more detail and make an informed decision about their participation. I asked them to contact me if they were willing to participate so that I could schedule a time and place at their convenience to conduct the interview either in person or over the internet.

### ***Informed consent***

After making initial contact regarding their potential participation, I sent the potential participant the information sheet and consent form so that they had the information about the research and their participation in it. These documents are written as clearly as possible to provide an unambiguous explanation of the research process from interviewing, voice recording, transcription, data use, storage, anonymity, and confidentiality issues. The informed consent form was also explained again before the interview and was co-signed by both the participant and me.

### ***Potential harm and researching in a pandemic***

Participant safety was a key consideration during the data gathering phase of this research. Due to travel restrictions and uncertainty around my deployment date to Lebanon, fourteen out of seventeen interviews were conducted using Google Meets. When the opportunity presented itself, and a potential participant met the criteria, I

conducted interviews in person. For example, before my departure, I interviewed four participants while adhering to national Covid-19 social distancing advice at the time.

Due to some of the topics under discussion, I was conscious that reflecting upon military education experiences and relating this to professional practice could raise distressing memories. For example, a participant potentially could have recalled distressing incidents during their military education and training where issues such as bullying, hazing, or physical degradation could have surfaced. Also, reflecting upon military practices could lead to discussions of operational experiences or incidents that occurred at home or overseas. I was vigilant to ensure that classified information of operational incidents was not disclosed unintentionally. I also carefully reviewed interview transcripts to ensure that classified details were not quoted in the finished work. I had protocols in place to stop the interview if a participant expressed signs of distress. I also had the contact details of the Defence Forces counselling services or the Health Service Executive Mental Health Services should they be required. This information was included in the participant consent form, with relevant contact details provided through hyperlinks. No such issues surfaced during the interviews.

### ***Participant well-being and power***

Several measures were followed to ensure the protection and well-being of the participants. Firstly, I ensured that participants were fully informed about all the aspects of the research project to ensure transparency about the purpose of the research, the processes involved and how the data would be used. I endeavoured to answer all participant questions about the research openly and transparently. Secondly, I am conscious that members of the Armed Forces may be considered as

vulnerable people and, because of their profession, “may socially not be in a position to exercise unfettered informed consent” (Sheffield ethics policy note 6). Additionally, I am aware that my position as a mid-ranking army officer could potentially raise ethical and legal issues. To avoid any conflicts of interest, I did not recruit participants from personnel that were under my command.

The key to ensuring that participants came to no harm was to preserve participant anonymity, confidentiality, and personal details. Anonymity was achieved using a numerical code when describing a participant’s ideas and their experiences of PME and ensuring that data that could identify the participant was omitted or generalized in the final report.

### ***Confidentiality and data management***

I am the only person that has access to the name and personal details of the participants. All data were anonymised, and the names of participants were stored only in password-protected files. Additionally, I aimed to achieve ‘data minimization’ by only collecting relevant data for the research. Also, all written or verbal communication between the participant and me was treated as confidential, and data was secured on password-protected files backed up to password-protected cloud storage. All audio recordings will be deleted when no longer required for assessment purposes.

### ***Participant details***

This research has participants from two distinct groups. The first group comprises civilian academic and military personnel who have had, or currently have,

responsibilities for delivering Professional Military Education on Defence Forces career courses. Their views were sought to help map the *field* of Professional Military Education in Ireland. A total of five interviews were conducted with this cohort.

The second group of participants was military personnel. The aim was to conduct twelve semi-structured interviews of a cross-section of military officers from junior, middle, and senior officer ranks. The qualifying participant criterion I used was that the participant had completed the Professional Military Education/career course appropriate for their rank.

### **5.6. Qualitative reliability and qualitative validity**

The relationship between reliability and validity is neatly described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) where they point out that “since there is no validity without reliability ... a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter” (p. 36). Essentially this means that if data are valid, then they are also reliable. Creswell (2009, p.191) explains the term reliability as: “...qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects”. Carefully following the coding process (described in detail later in this chapter) and continually cross-checking data was a key feature of my analysis. Creswell (2009, p.191) explains the term validity as: “Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures”. Creswell (2009, pp.191-192) and Guest et al. (2012, p. 85) identify several similar strategies for enhancing validity and reliability. I used a combination of both to guide me in this research including:



- Triangulation of different data sources. This was achieved by collecting data from several sources and methods.
- I sent participants the completed transcript so they could check that their views were accurately reflected.
- I use rich, thick descriptions to convey the findings by verbatim quotes in the findings chapters.
- I clarified any 'bias' that I brought to the research. This was achieved by being aware of the three sources of bias: my position in the social space, the orthodoxy of the field site, and the danger of research becoming a 'scholastic fallacy' (Grenfell, 2013, p. 31).
- I presented contradictory evidence that 'runs counter to the themes' or runs counter to the dominant patterns.
- I have provided an audit trail that documents each stage of the data gathering and analysis process.
- I spent enough time with participants to ensure that my data is accurate and that the findings are valid.

Following these strategies has helped achieve the validity and reliability required to ensure that this project has academic credibility.

## **5.7. Methods**

### ***Documentary Analysis***

Documentary analysis was the first stage in the data collection process relating to *field* mapping and is presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. Key macro and meso policy documents that influence PME were identified and sourced. These included European

and national level policy documents relating to accreditation, Defence Forces education policy documents, and Maynooth Universities policy documents. A summary of the documents that were analysed is in Appendix 8.

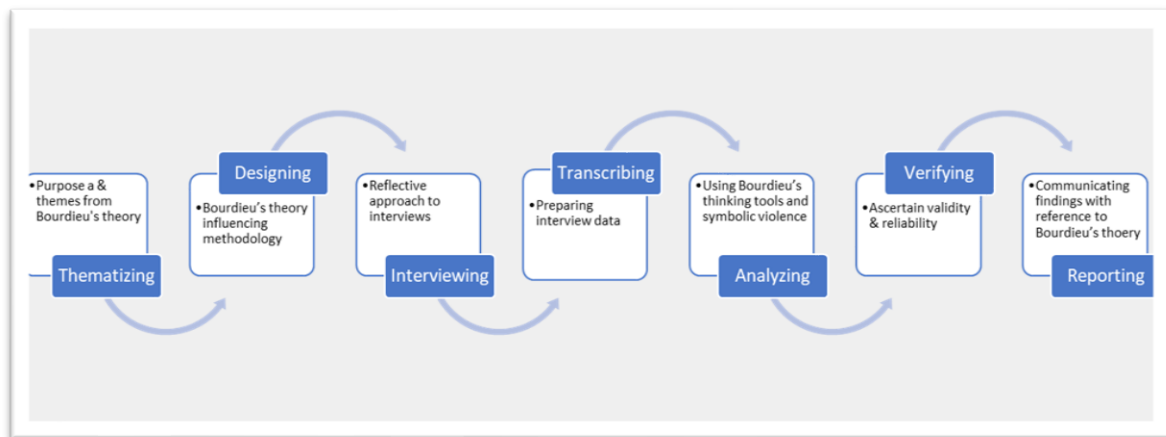
Some of this information was available to me on the Defence Forces IKON system (Information, Knowledge Online) or from Maynooth University's website. European and national level documents were mainly from European Union websites and QQI. The documentary analysis aimed to identify the policies and trends in higher education that influence PME in the Irish Defence Forces.

### ***Semi-Structured Interviews***

After completing the initial documentary analysis, I planned on conducting semi-structured interviews with education managers. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary method for gathering data as I recognise them as “a construction site for knowledge” (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2018, p. 9; Kvale, 2007, p. 7). Some semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face, while others were conducted using Google Meets discussed earlier in this chapter. Kvale (2007) defines a semi-structured interview as: “an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (p. 8). This type of interview gives an insight into the interviewee's lived daily world conveyed “from their own perspective and in their own words” (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2018, p. 14). Congruent with my constructivist and interpretivist outlook, the role of the researcher is to try to develop an understanding of the themes of the daily lives of the interviewees (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2018). For all semi-structured interviews, I followed the “shared understanding model of collecting

data” as described by Antonesa, et al., (2006), which allowed me to clarify meanings and, in line with my interpretivist epistemology, to provide tentative interpretations to the interviewee’s responses.

Kvale (2007) suggests a seven-step process for designing an interview inquiry. Informed by Bourdieu’s theories, I followed Kvale’s steps for planning and designing the semi-structured interviews and found it instrumental in keeping me oriented throughout the process. An overview of the interview planning process is depicted in Figure 7.



**Figure 7. Stages of an interview inquiry (adapted from Kvale (2007, p.35))**

I found Mikuska’s (2018) advice beneficial for managing the practicalities of interviewing. She advocates giving the interview schedule to the participant before the interview to ease any nerves and give them time to consider their answers. I found it reassuring that this was an acceptable practice in qualitative research.

*The Weight of the World* (2002) is an ethnographic study of social suffering in post-industrial France. In this work, Bourdieu objects to the idea that an interviewer must be socially and culturally different from the interviewees.

Bourdieu et al. (2002, p. 610) note that:

[S]ocial proximity and familiarity provide two of the conditions of “nonviolent” communication. For one thing, to the extent that the interviewer and the interviewee are interchangeable, researchers who are socially very close to their respondents provide them with guarantees against the threat of having subjective reasoning reduced to objective causes, and having choices experienced as free turned into objective determinisms uncovered by analysis. For another thing, one finds that in this case we can be assured of immediate and continuously confirmed agreement on the presuppositions regarding the content and form of the communication

This new approach to interview applied in *The Weight of the World* (2002) “highlights that the testimony of respondents can reveal the patterns of capital and social space” (Karadağ, 2011, p. 42). Hence, data from interviews are now accepted as legitimate when employing a Bourdieusian approach.

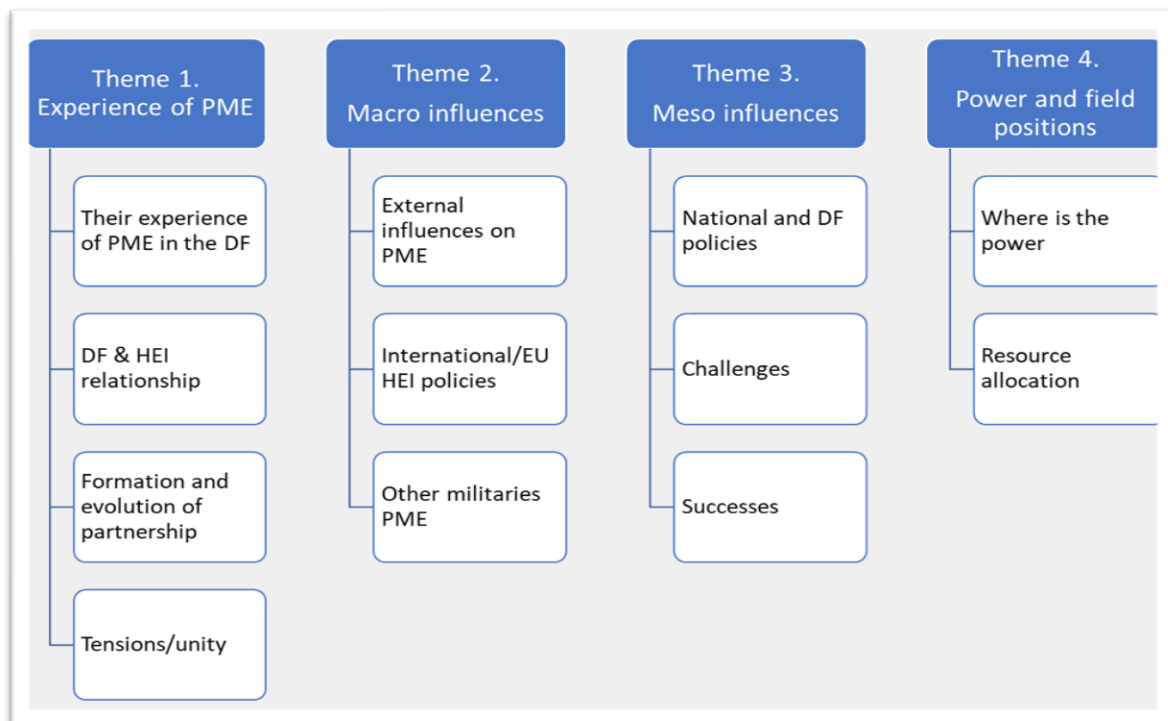
Mikuska (2018) also highlights the importance of maintaining *field* notes after each interview. She suggests that *field* notes can help record feelings, expectations, thoughts and reflections on each interview. It is something that I incorporated into my data through the use of memos in NVivo. These were invaluable in recording thoughts and ideas after the interview and transcription.

I considered using professional transcription services; however, transcribing the interviews facilitated greater familiarity with the data, and I viewed it as “an interpretative process” (Kvale, 2007, p. 92) that allowed me to immerse myself in the data. It helped to generate ideas for the subsequent analysis stage. Jenks (2018) points out that transcription work is “inherently subjective, theoretical, and political” (p. 128) and is inextricably linked to the data analysis stage. Similarly, Parcell and Rafferty (2017) believe that “transcription is an interpretive, creative and theoretical process that is the first step in data analysis” (p. 802). I felt that it was essential to

transcribe the data myself so that it was my subjective interpretation of the social interaction that generated the data, rather than someone else's.

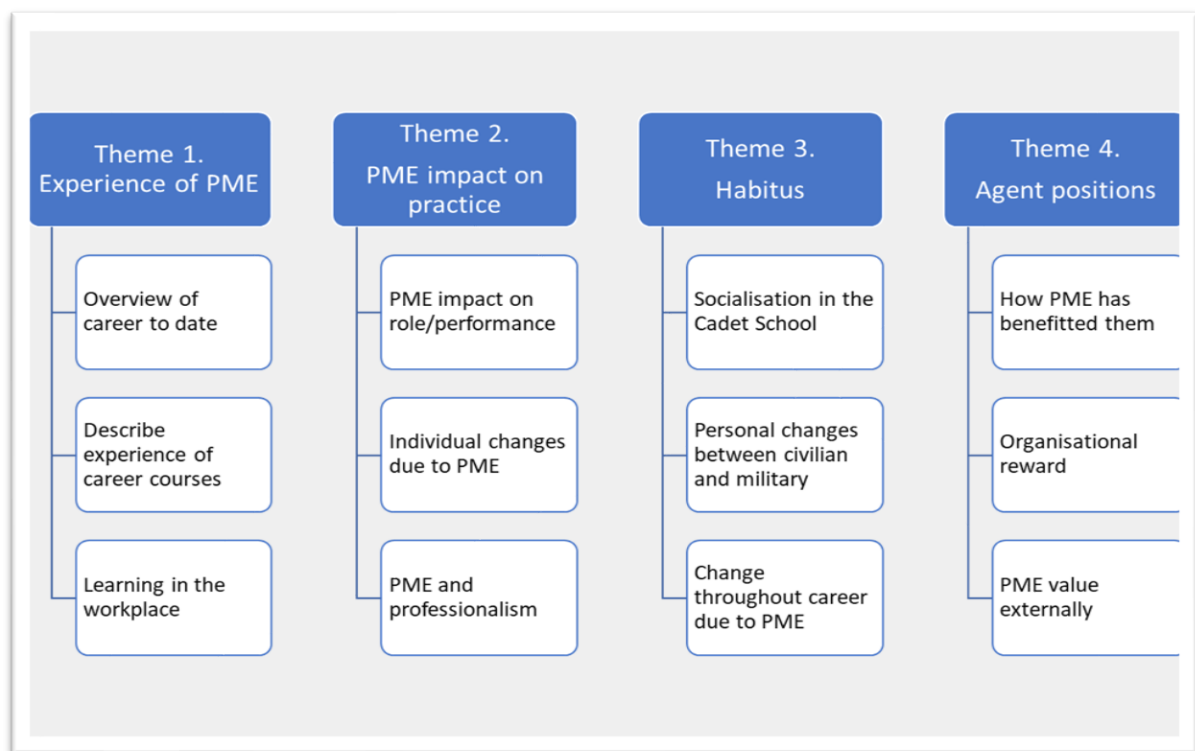
### **Research instrument and pilot interviews**

Based on the research questions, I developed draft interview schedules for both groups of interviewees. To check that each research question was addressed thoroughly, I mapped the interview questions against the research questions, which helped to identify gaps and omissions. For the education managers, interview questions focussed upon: their experience of military education; macro and meso influences on military education; and, power and *field* positions. An overview of the development of questions relating to *field* mapping and the first aim of this thesis is depicted in Figure 8.



**Figure 8. Question development for *field* mapping**

The questions for the military officers focused on understanding how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it influences their professional *habitus*. The questions focused on participants' experiences to understand how the military *habitus* was formed and its evolution through PME. Questions were divided into four main areas: their experience of military education; how military education impacts professional practice; the military *habitus*; and agent positioning, illustrated in Figure 9.



**Figure 9. Question development for army officers, informed by Bourdieu's theory.**

The interview was sequenced to include a short initial brief and was followed by some general introductory questions. I ensured that the conversation was flowing before addressing the main topics of interest. I had anticipated some possible follow up and probing questions to delve deeper into areas of relevance for this study. I found

Brinkmann and Kvale's (2018) advice on developing different types of questions and their phrasing particularly useful.

Once the draft interview schedule was developed, I conducted two pilot interviews with former colleagues (one in-person and one via Google Meets). The purpose of the pilot testing was to:

- Identify any weaknesses in the interview design.
- To test the interview structure and sequence of questions.
- To practice my interviewing skills for in-person and online interviews.
- To generate data that could be used for practising coding and analysis.
- To familiarise myself with Google Meets and its features.

The first pilot interview was conducted in person while adhering to Covid-19 social distancing advice. At the end of the interview, I asked my colleague for feedback on the interview questions and my interview technique. His feedback was mainly positive, and his only suggestion was to look at some of the questions again as there appeared to be some repetition in places. The second interview was conducted using Google Meets. This interview went better than I had anticipated. I assumed it would be an inferior experience to the face-to-face interview; however, I was surprised at how natural it seemed. Joshi, et al. (2020) suggest that video interviews are fundamentally different from in-person interviews due to the conversation being less fluid, the difficulty in transmitting and receiving verbal cues and that you can only see the head and torso of the other person, all of which can detract from the interview experience. While these factors cannot be ignored, people are more attuned to video conferencing than before COVID-19. During the debrief for this interview, my colleague stated that an online interview felt very natural. He stated that because of "COVID-19 and the

increase in the use of video-conferencing has dispelled any nerves or awkwardness that may have been a feature beforehand". The technical setup was also relatively easy, and participants had no problems setting up for the interview; they just followed the instructions in the link that I provided. An important aspect of using Google Meets is that audio and video recordings are provided, which can be viewed and analysed further for body language and facial expressions that can be documented in *field* notes if required. Because both pilot interviews went well and yielded interesting and rich data, I decided to include them in the overall data set for the project.

Dodds and Hess (2020) point out several benefits to conducting online interviews as they are: comfortable, non-intrusive and safe, engaging and convenient, easy to set up, and facilitate communication ease. This is broadly similar to my overall experience of conducting interviews using Google Meets. The fact that I could analyse the video recording and critically appraise my performance as an interviewer, such as identifying where I failed to ask a follow-up question or where my questions were unclear, is an added benefit that helped hone my interviewer skills.

### ***Approach to data analysis***

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, where I looked for themes under the main theoretically informed subheadings. Thematic analysis is defined as "a process for encoding qualitative information" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 4). Boyatzis (1998) considers it to be a way of "recognising an important moment (seeing)" that is followed by "encoding it (seeing it as something), which in turn precedes interpretation" (p. 1). Thematic analysis was not a clearly defined method until Braun and Clarke published their momentous paper in 2006, where a six-step method was proposed. They



acknowledge that thematic analysis at that time was “a poorly demarcated and rarely acknowledged, yet widely used qualitative analytic method” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 77). Since then, thematic analysis has grown in popularity and has “entered the qualitative canon as a recognisable and reputable method of analysis” (Terry, et al., 2017, p. 17).

According to Clarke and Braun (2019), thematic analysis’s flexibility makes it a suitable analysis method for use within a broad range of theoretical frameworks and research approaches. This has seen its employment in a range of *fields*, from social sciences to the medical *field*.

### ***Why thematic analysis?***

Thematic analysis was chosen primarily for its flexibility and because it could be employed throughout both sets of interviews and in conjunction with document analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) insist that thematic analysis can be used within different theoretical frameworks using either an inductive (‘bottom-up’) or deductive (‘top-down’) approach. Because of the two aims of this research, I needed a data analysis approach that was flexible enough to be employed to achieve both aims. Thematic analysis is also accessible for a novice researcher and is relatively easy to learn. Additionally, as it helps examine the perspectives of different participants (Braun and Clarke, 2006), it proved compatible with a qualitative constructivist approach.

Thematic analysis, however, is not without its weaknesses as a method. Most criticisms of the method highlight that it lacks a substantial body of literature supporting the approach compared to other methods such as narrative analysis or discourse

analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Another often cited concern relates to its flexibility resulting in a lack of consistency and the employment of Braun and Clarke's approach, which is "unknowing, unreflexive and indicative of some degree of conceptual confusion" (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p. 590). This has led to Braun and Clarke's articles explaining the assumptions that underpin their approach and justify their decision to label their approach "reflexive TA" (p. 590), where researcher subjectivity and reflexivity are central features.

Braun and Clarke (2019) clarify their version of thematic analysis and how it should be employed.

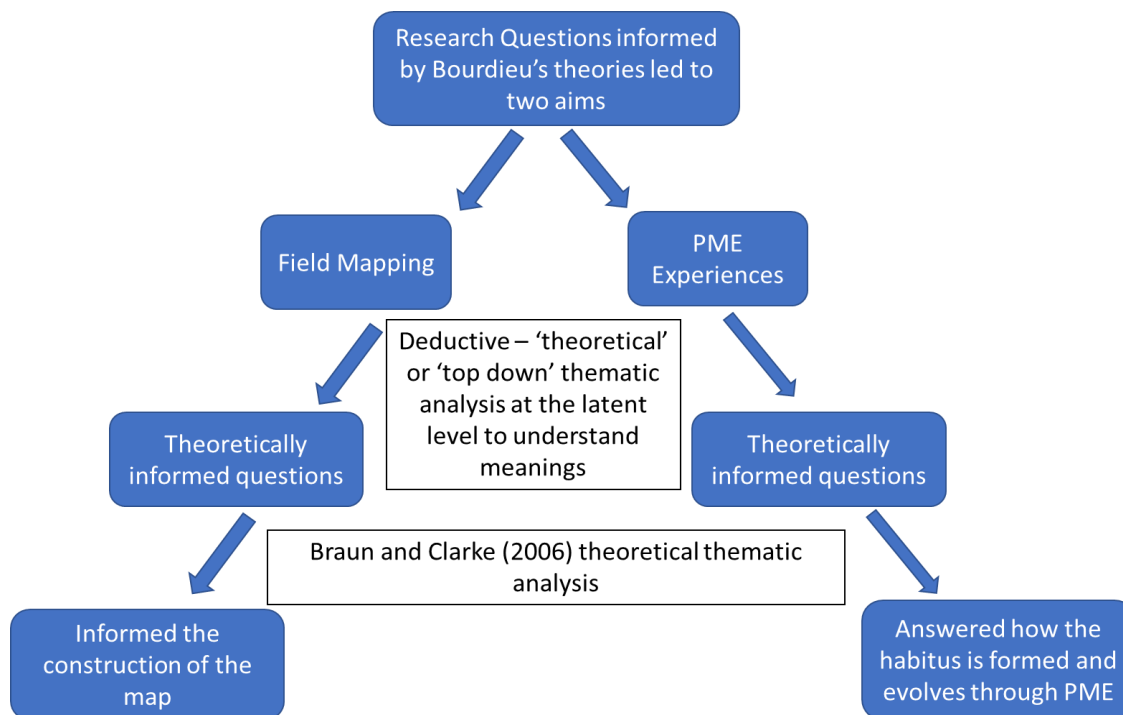
Reflexive TA needs to be implemented with theoretical knowingness and transparency; the researcher strives to be fully cognisant of the philosophical sensibility and theoretical assumptions informing their use of TA; and these are consistently, coherently and transparently enacted throughout the analytic process and reporting of the research.

(Braun and Clarke, 2019, p. 594)

They provide helpful guidance on the coding process and theme development. They point out that "themes are an 'outcome' of these coding and theme development processes, are developed *through* coding; coding is not -in general – a process for finding evidence for pre-conceptualised themes" (Braun and Clarke, 2020, p. 5). Furthermore, they explain that themes do not passively emerge from the data or coding but are the product of research work, and they are "*actively* created by the researcher at the intersection of the data, analytic processes and subjectivity" (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p. 594). At the start of this process, I was confused about the difference between the interview topics that structured the interview schedule and the 'themes' identified in the data. Themes are "patterns of shared meanings" (Braun and Clarke, 2020, p. 14) and "for themes to be patterns of shared meaning underpinned by a central concept, they must be analytic outputs, not inputs" (p. 15).

Bourdieu's theories of *field*, *habitus* and *capital* play a central role in this research. I needed to employ an analytical method that I could use flexibly within Bourdieu's theory, and thematic analysis provided that method. I employ 'theoretical thematic analysis' for analysing this research (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It simply means that Bourdieu's theoretical concepts such as *field*, *habitus*, *capital*, and *symbolic violence* provided the theoretical lens for "seeing the data, for what meanings are coded, and for how codes are clustered to develop themes; it also provides the basis for interpretation of the data" (Terry, et al., 2017, p. 10/32). Braun and Clarke (2006) six stages approach provided the method for analysing Bourdieu's concepts deductively. Braun and Clarke's approach can either be used at the semantic level (just words) or latent level (underlying meanings). I wanted to understand the deeper implications behind the data, so the analysis was conducted at the latent level. A summary of the analytical approach is provided in Figure 10.

Bourdieu's theory informed the selection of the research aims of *field* mapping and PME experiences. Research questions informed the formulation of the interview questions, which were informed by Bourdieu's theory. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was used to analyse the data at the latent level. In this way, Bourdieu's theory acts as the metaphorical golden thread that stitches this work together. It has informed all aspects of this inquiry from research question formulation to methodology and analysis.



**Figure 10. Overview of theoretical thematic analysis**

### **Stages of thematic analysis**

The steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87) outlined in Table 3 were followed throughout the analysis process.

Step	Activity	Description
1	Familiarising yourself with the data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2	Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3	Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4	Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis
5	Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme

6	Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.
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**Table 3. Stages of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 87).**

Following these steps in conjunction with NVivo 12 proved to be both a practical and reliable way of coding the data.

### ***Using NVivo***

The NVivo 12 workshop conducted by QDA Training during the February 2019 weekend study school piqued my interest in using qualitative data analysis software. The organisational features that NVivo offers appealed to me. I liked the idea that all materials relating to the project could be stored, organised and indexed in a central location. I have previously conducted qualitative data analysis for other smaller-scale research projects, where I used Microsoft Word and Excel to manage the data and then a highlighter pen and paper for the analysis. The thought of trying to organise so much material for this larger-scale project using these methods daunted me. I decided that this was a good opportunity to learn and develop a new skill in qualitative data analysis software. The fact that the University of Sheffield provides free access to this resource was also appealing.

Opinion on using QDAS for data analysis is divided in the literature (Bonello and Meehan, 2019). On the one hand, it is praised for its organisation and data management, and abilities to query and model data, while on the other hand, it is

criticised for “separation/distancing, misrepresentation, mechanisation of the entire data analysis process” (Bonello and Meehan, 2019, p. 483). Wellington (2015) cautions that:

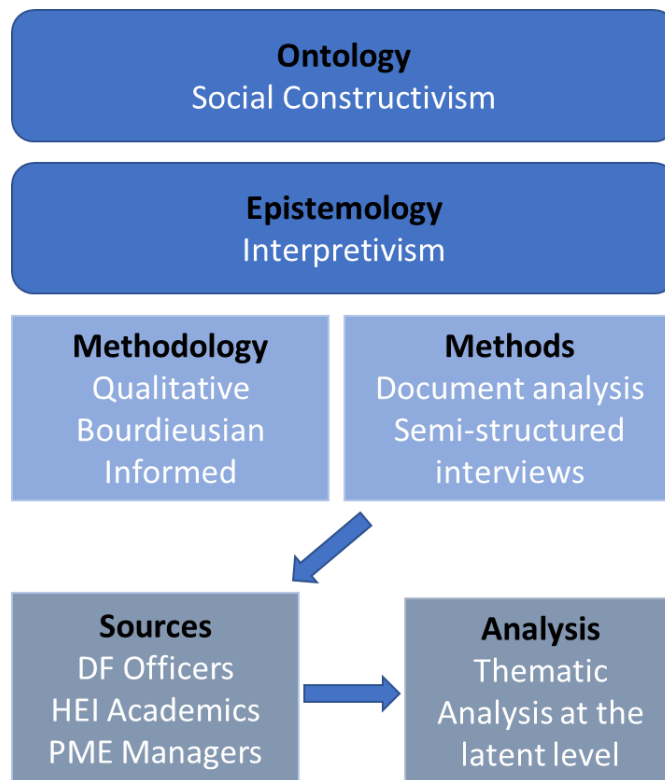
One should always remember that the software will not do the analysis for you. It may be a useful tool, for example, in searching for words and phrases, counting the incidence of those and thus helping to develop the codes and themes that you have conceived

(p. 172).

The researcher and the decisions they make remain central in the conduct of the data analysis. My approach to using NVivo has been to treat it like any other tool. A hammer and chisel cannot sculpt a piece of rock into art without the sculptor's input, skill, knowledge, and expertise. Similarly, qualitative analysis software cannot function without the researcher's input, skill, and understanding. In this way, my ontology and epistemology are imprinted on this work.

## **5.8. Conclusion**

This chapter provided an insight into my ontology and epistemology, linking them to the methodology and methods used in this research. The qualitative approach, informed by Bourdieu's theory, and the data collection methods were rationalised. A summary of my overall methodology is provided in Figure 11.



**Figure 11. Methodology overview.**

The qualitative analysis will be presented in the following two chapters, followed by an interpretation and discussion of the findings.

## Chapter 6 – Mapping the *Field of PME*: Findings and Discussion

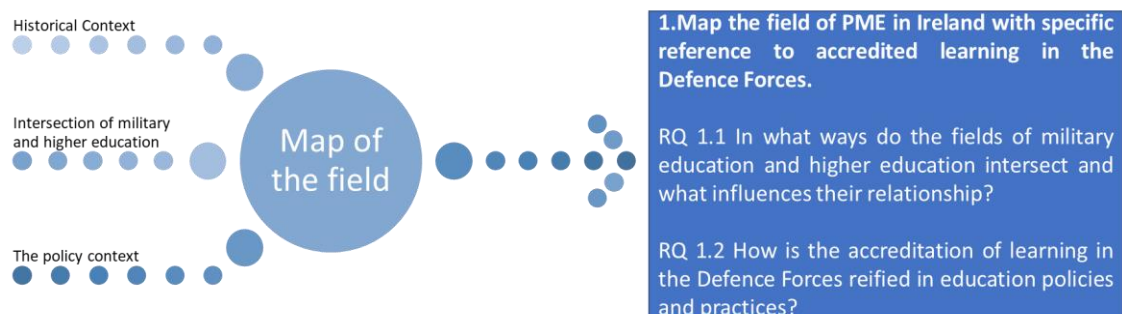
### 6.1. Introduction

The findings and discussion in this chapter address the first aim of the thesis, which is to: *Map the field of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces*. As outlined in the previous chapters, Bourdieu's second principle requires a three-tiered analysis, where the second tier of analysis consists of mapping "the objective structures of relations between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions who compete for legitimate forms of specific authority of which this *field* is a site" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 105). The idea of *field* is best understood as "an epistemological and methodological heuristic" (Thompson, 2012, p. 72) that helps make sense of the social world of which we are part. *Fields* have a logic and implicit structure that is both the "product and producer of the *habitus* which is specific and appropriate to the *field*" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 280). Therefore, the Irish PME *field* is a product of both the military and academic interaction that formed it, and it becomes a producer of the *habitus* of those that enter the *field*. Bourdieu (2007) notes that "to understand is first to understand the field with which and against which one has been formed (p. 4). An analysis of the PME *field* is required to understand the social practices that originate from it.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Bourdieu's theory is relational and thus, the research object, in this case, PME, must be examined in relation to its historical, national and international contexts (Thompson, 2012). To achieve relationality, *field* mapping is informed by three distinct strands of analysis, as illustrated in Figure 12. The first strand analyses the history of Irish military education and the historical and



contemporary drivers for accreditation. Much of the first section is drawn from Colonel Tom Hodson’s landmark work: *The Irish Military College 1930-2000* and is supported by articles that address military education in Ireland. The second strand of analysis focuses on the intersection of military and higher education. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted with military and academic participants to determine *how PME and Higher Education fields intersect and what influences their relationship*. In the third strand of analysis, the policy context is examined. Documentary analysis of academic literature, higher education policies, Defence Forces training, and education policies is conducted to establish *how accredited learning is reified in education policies and practices*. Finally, based upon the previous sections' analysis, I bring the three analytical strands together to inform a diagrammatic representation of Ireland's PME field.



**Figure 12. Field mapping analytical approach.**

The approach taken in this chapter is to interweave findings in the form of direct quotations from interviews and articles, followed by interpretation and analysis through a Bourdieusian lens. Analysis from the three strands will inform the *field* map's construction, which represents the complex relations between the *field's* objective

structures. Rather than use pseudonyms, participants have been given a numerical code with the identifier prefix of ME for a military educator or CE for a civilian educator.

## **6.2. Strand 1- Historical overview of PME in Ireland**

This section presents a brief historical analysis of military education in Ireland. The site of study is the intersection of military education and higher education *fields*, for the provision of PME to Defence Forces' officers. Rohstock (2011) argues that "a historical perspective is essential for understanding contemporary establishments as social institutions" (p. 92). She points out how historical analysis can help us understand today's current state as "history is actually an integral element of our immediate present" (p. 92). Similarly, Thompson (2012) believes that when employing a Bourdieusian approach, the *field's* origins and development must be examined to understand the *field's* contemporary form. Bourdieu recognises the influence of institutional thinking in *Pascalian Meditations* claiming that the social history of institutions and our relationship with them provides "real revelations about the objective and subjective structures (classifications, hierarchies, problematics, etc.) that, in spite of ourselves, orient our thought" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 9). It is necessary to explore how military education was developed and has evolved, to understand PME as a social institution.

Compared to most other European military academies, the Irish Military College's establishment is relatively recent. According to Hodson (2016a), the newly formed National Army of the 1920s were not well trained or educated in military subjects. Commandant Liam Egan alluded to the requirement for military education so that "the

private or NCO feels his Officers have other characteristics besides a Sam Brown and shoulder bars to distinguish them from the rank and file” (cited in Hodson, 2016a, p. 103). Accordingly, officers' training and education became a priority for the Irish Army following the War of Independence in 1921. However, development in this area was delayed due to the Civil War outbreak and subsequent demobilisation.

As the army's leadership had no experience in organising, training and educating an army, they embarked on several visits to foreign militaries to gather information about how the Irish Army could be trained and organised. In July 1923, then Chief of Staff, General Sean McMahon led the first overseas military mission to visit military establishments and military schools in France (Hodson, 2016a). While not an entirely successful mission due to language and access difficulties, it was an essential first step in the research process. In April 1924, the Army School of Instruction (ASI) was established in Kildare town's former British Army artillery barracks. Colonel Michael Hogan was appointed as Officer Commanding the ASI, and within a few weeks of his appointment, he wrote a report on the conditions there to GOC the Curragh Command, Major General Joseph Sweeney. He highlighted that “There is no proper sleeping premises, no library, no recreational halls, and last of all comparatively no furniture. These are the absolute needs of any Army School” (cited in Hodson, 2016a, p. 106). Despite its infrastructural difficulties, training continued at the ASI throughout 1924 until the decision was made to transfer the ASI to Pearse Barracks at the Curragh Camp, the Military College's current site.

A second military mission was conducted between July 1926 and October 1927 and led by Major General Hugo MacNeill. This mission aimed to study the organisation of the US military and its education systems. The Defence Forces' leadership believed

that it should develop its doctrine to prepare the force for the tasks it would undertake (DJ7, 2015). This visit was followed by a visit to the United Kingdom which led to the adoption of British Army structures and doctrine. It was not until November 1930 that the Military College was formally established to provide “training and education for a Defence Forces capable of defending the State” (Hodson 2016a, p. 109). The establishment of the Military College was a significant achievement for the young republic, during a time where the quality of a nation’s military was viewed as an indicator of sovereignty and post-colonial maturity. Indeed, some of the proposals put forward by the Army leadership at the time regarding officer education were practical, theoretically sound and visionary. Ideas contained in some of the reports such as the importance of locating the Cadet School at the “University Centres of either Dublin or Galway, in order to avail of the services of extra lectures and to facilitate attendance by Cadets at University lectures” (cited in Hodson 2016a, p. 109) were remarkably prescient. This explicit acknowledgement of the potential for collaboration between the military and academia was ahead of its time. However, Hodson (2016a) explains that efforts to move the Military College to the Phoenix Park in Dublin City were unsuccessful, and the Military College was destined to remain at Pearse Barracks in the Curragh Camp.

As a serving army officer and researcher, it is difficult to remain objective and stop wondering ‘what might have been’ if plans to locate the Military College adjacent to a university centre were implemented. It could have been a very fruitful symbiotic relationship through the exchange of *capitals*, in a Bourdieusian sense. The military could have benefitted from the university's subject matter and pedagogic expertise, while the university could have benefitted from the army as a research resource. However, it was not until 1969, that the Defence Forces finally sent officer cadets from

the 43<sup>rd</sup> Cadet Class to University College Galway, which was the beginning of the Defence Forces association with higher education. According to Hodgson (2016b, p. 160), “the effect of this decision was to prove, in time, ground-breaking for the future path of the Military College”.

### ***Accreditation beginnings***

In 1984 the Chief of Staff, Lt General Carl O’ Sullivan, initiated proceedings to have the Military College designated as an institution under the National Council for Education Awards (NCEA) (Hodson, 2016b). ‘Institutional status’ would have authorised the Defence Forces to make academic awards for military courses completed by enlisted personnel. The initiative's primary driver was to recognise military training and education completed by enlisted personnel to enhance their employment opportunities post-service. The rationale behind the project is explained by the Military Advisor to the Chief of Staff at the time:

From the individual’s viewpoint such a development would have benefits in the line of professional developments and occupational mobility in that personnel who leave the PDF will have some form of educational qualification which is recognised by outside Academic Authorities.

(MA to COS cited in Hodson, 2016b)

However, difficulties arose with the military authorities regarding military training and education subordination to NCEA supervision and oversight. It is important to note that at that time, Ireland was in the middle of ‘The Troubles’, also called the ‘Northern Ireland Conflict’, a violent sectarian conflict that raged from 1968 to 1998. Military tactics, techniques, procedures, and military training were closely guarded secrets. In

the domestic security environment of the mid-1980s, it is not surprising that the Defence Forces opted not to pursue accreditation through the NCEA.

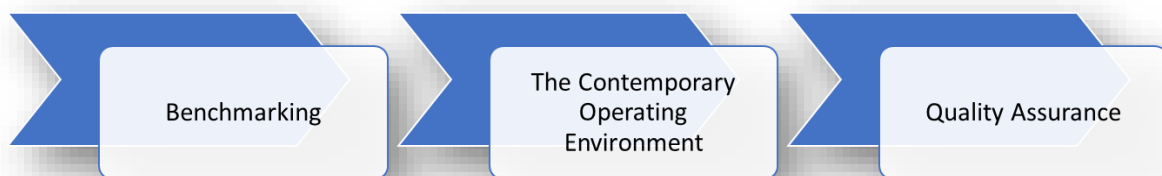
Despite these difficulties and security concerns, in 1985, the Military College was designated an 'institution' under the NCEA Act 1979. From 1988 onwards, students that completed a cadetship were awarded a National Diploma in Military Studies. The Defence Forces decided not to expand NCEA validation to other courses. In 2007 NCEA validation was replaced by a national diploma, 'Special Purpose Award', at level 7, in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies accredited by Maynooth University. It is unclear why the Defence Forces opted to disengage from the NCEA. I suspect that the conservative and secretive *habitus* of the Defence Forces' decision-makers at that time, combined with a lack of expertise and organisational structures to manage education, contributed to its demise.

In the next section, the drivers for accreditation are analysed to understand the factors that brought military and higher education together.

### ***Accreditation Drivers***

The Command and Staff School is the senior school of the Irish Defence Forces and was the first Defence Forces' entity to partner with an academic institution for accreditation purposes. The school's role has remained mostly unchanged over the years. It supports senior officers of the Defence Forces' professional development and education to enable them to operate across the full spectrum of military activities in national and international environments (Defence Forces, 2021b). What has changed, however, is the course content. It has changed in response to the changing

character of war and military officers' evolving educational needs. This research identifies three primary factors that drove the decision to pursue accreditation based upon analysis of the secondary literature (SIGNAL, 2002; Durnin, 2003; Ryan, 2012; Walsh, 2012) and analysis of interviews with educators. The three drivers are benchmarking; the changing nature of the contemporary operating environment; and quality assurance, as depicted in Figure 13. The rationale for selecting these drivers is presented next.



**Figure 13. Accreditation drivers derived from the data**

### ***Benchmarking***

In the late 1990s, the Senior Command and Staff Course, then a mainly military focused course, began to receive international recognition (Hodson, 2016b). As an equivalent of the Senior Command and Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth in the US and the Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC) in the UK, the Irish Command and Staff Course began to attract international students. Engagement with the international military education community led to student exchanges where Irish officers completed courses in the USA and Europe. Exposure to global approaches to officer education allowed Irish officers to compare their education against

international standards. I use the term 'benchmarking' to describe how academic standards and awards in other military colleges have influenced the Irish PME system.

Given that similar staff courses worldwide received academic awards, the idea was broached to accredit the Irish Command and Staff Course. Signal Magazine reported that "The Military College took the opportunity to co-operate with NUI Maynooth following a lengthy project to formulate a quality postgraduate programme" (SIGNAL, 2002, p. 73). Durnin (2003) believes that Command and Staff School members' experiences of working in multinational environments influenced the decision to pursue accreditation. He points out that "The aim is to ensure that the Irish course is of a similar high standard, so that the Military College can offer the same opportunity to our students, both Irish and International" (Durnin, 2003, p. 29). Lt Col Quinn, then Chief Instructor at the Command and Staff School, explains that "We have realised for a long time that there was a need for further development in career training and to move the focus of the course from the tactical, to the operational and strategic levels" (cited in Durnin 2003, p. 29). He further elaborates that "All Western armies pitch their training and education at these levels for their Command and Staff Courses" (p. 29). This view is shared by CE116, who notes that military and academic cooperation is "a norm in international staff colleges".

Several participants identified that developments in other military academies drove the accreditation agenda in Ireland. Irish officers recognised that their military education was falling behind their international contemporaries. The *habitus* of a competent military leader, well-grounded in conventional tactics, was no longer sufficient for Irish officers' roles while deployed on multinational operations. The sense that Irish officers were 'out of touch' and removed from developments in their profession is an example



of Bourdieu's concept of *hysteresis* or the *hysteresis* effect. Bourdieu describes this as:

As a result of the hysteresis effect necessarily implicated in the logic of the constitution of *habitus*, practices are always liable to incur negative sanctions when the environment with which they are actually confronted is too distant from that in which they are objectively formed.

(Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 78)

Hysteresis is experienced when there is a *habitus-field* mismatch. The recognition that an academic partnership could offset hysteresis brought the military and higher education *fields* together.

CE117 believes that the Defence Forces recognised that other military colleges were engaging with the academic *field*, and personnel were getting academic awards for completing military courses. He believes that the Defence Forces realised that they needed to do something similar both for their personnel but also for the military's reputation:

They [officers] were working with other military personnel in the EU and elsewhere, who were increasingly privileging the whole notion of academic knowledge and of letters after names, and connections with universities, and I think there was a sense that the Irish Army need[ed] to be able to do this.

(CE117)

In a similar vein, participant CE113 notes that military-academic developments in other military academies drove the Defence Forces' decision to engage with HEIs:

I think that there was a recognition of a need for accreditation. I think that across Europe, Command and Staff Courses were becoming accredited by different universities...There would have been a sense that professional military education was becoming accredited by universities, and it was that recognition that was necessary.

(CE113)

CE116 believes that it is essential for an officer to hold academic qualifications. He also highlights how it reflects well on an organisation to have well educated senior leaders:

It isn't that the army says this person is at a standard. It [MA LMDS] is an internationally recognised university, Europe-wide standard that this individual has met, and I think that is quite important for the individual. And it's important for the organisation, that you can say, that all of the officers that have done the Command and Staff Course have done a level-9, 90 credit MA programme that meets all normal university standards, and that says something about you as an organisation.

(CE116)

All interviewees noted that accreditation has value for both the organisation and the individual. The organisation can benchmark itself against equivalent military education systems. Maintaining standards is particularly important when working in an international context, and there is an expectation that officers are educated to a certain level. Accreditation rewards the individual for their academic engagement with military science as part of their professional development, and it is beneficial to the profession to have well-educated leaders to manage the organisation.

### ***The changing operational environment***

One of the most prevalent drivers identified by participants for the shift from internal military education and training to more academically focused accredited courses was the changing character of the contemporary operating environment. Irish officers experience modern military operations mainly when deployed worldwide on peace support operations with the United Nations and NATO-led and EU missions. Ireland's foreign policy is enacted through multilateralism, and this sees Irish officers work

closely with officers from other nations. Ireland's PME needs to be responsive to the operating environment to ensure that its officers are educated to function effectively while deployed on multinational operations.

Participant CE116 explains how the operating environment changed after the Cold War and that the approach to military education also needed to change. He recalls how a General at the UK Defence Academy in Shrivenham, described the two different educational systems. Pre-Cold War education focused on training for the predictable, while post-Cold War military education needed to educate for the unpredictable. He likened these two different training and education approaches to classical music and jazz:

The general in charge [of the UK Defence Academy] used to love talking about post-cold war operations being like jazz, not like classical music. When he was a young man in the Cold War, he didn't have to think that much. You had a script that you followed like classical musicians, and you don't have to be innovative, but the next generation had to be able to think. You couldn't train them, you had to educate them.

(CE116)

The focus of PME thus pivoted to more critical and analytical approaches. Up to its engagement with HEIs, military education in Ireland was focused on training for the predictable. CE117 claims that the Defence Forces recognised that their culture and operating environment were changing, which had implications for their role. He states that:

First of all, we began to get a sense that this [the DF] was a culture in the process of huge change. The world in which the Irish military was having to deal was in huge flux, what leadership, therefore, and what leaders were expected to do was also changing dramatically, and that the whole role of the Irish Defence Forces was changing.

(CE117)

CE113 believes that there is a shift in the officer's role:

I think that because the military itself is changing, that would be my opinion. Militaries all over the world are changing, to becoming more ... soldiers are more scholarly professionals now, than they would have been, in particular at officer level.

(CE113)

The student body on a Command and Staff Course comprises seasoned military professionals who were experiencing this changing environment at first hand. Their views and experiences accrued through domestic and overseas deployments influenced the direction of PME. This 'bottom-up' approach is a feature of Defence Forces courses. Participant CE117 recalls that:

The students were very much part of that in terms of creating a space where they could talk about what they wanted, and what they felt they needed in terms of practical application, whether they were to find themselves in Lebanon or Darfur, or whether they were to find themselves working in Brussels. They had a sense of what they needed, and it was pretty broad.

(CE117)

CE116 believes that it is vital for officers to understand the environment to make informed decisions. He believes that to:

Understand the complex, difficult, ever-evolving operating environment that we live in today, anybody that goes into a leadership position, be it the lowest possible level, or the highest possible level, needs to understand that complex operating environment, because they are making decisions on the basis of that understanding. Those decisions might be very tactical, or you might be advising a government or a UN agency or something, and you need to inform yourself.

(CE116)

Similarly, ME114 believes that accrediting military education is a worthwhile endeavour as it provides a broader perspective on the operational environments where the Defence Forces deploy. He says:

From a military perspective, we look to deploy both nationally and internationally, so like, when we go abroad, you should understand and have an acute awareness of where you are. I suppose a social awareness, or a spatial awareness, or situational awareness; there are always new dynamics.

(ME114)

According to the participants, the operating environment where Defence Forces' officers deploy necessitates a robust military education accredited by a university.

### ***Quality Assurance***

As outlined in Chapter 2, the term quality assurance is “used to describe the processes that seek to ensure that the learning environment (including teaching and learning) reaches an acceptable threshold of quality” (Quality and Qualification Ireland, 2016, p. 2). Quality assurance is essentially a form of quality control. For officer education, Maynooth University is the awarding authority; therefore, officer career courses must comply with Maynooth University's quality assurance standards.

CE116 contends that partnering with a university improves the quality of military education in two ways. Firstly, the university has a pool of academic and subject matter experts to draw from to deliver courses and lectures. Secondly, it subjects military practices to the university's quality assurance standards which are highly rigorous.

I think we bring subject matter expertise. What we also bring is credibility, academic credibility, and in a way, I'm not saying the stuff that went on before wasn't credible, but if you get involved with a HEI there are checks and balances that didn't previously exist, and we have to meet all normal university standards in a way that an army course that's run independently doesn't. We are tested through things like constant reviews of the department, and of the university itself. So, our standards are constantly

checked through a process such as the external examiner process. So, it brings not just credibility, but also quality control that might not always have existed, and it gives you access to expertise.

(CE116)

Based on CE116's experience of dealing with the military, he recognises that:

Sketchy stuff goes on, no offence, in the military. Sketchy stuff goes on when you can get away with it in an educational sense. You will know more than anybody, that arriving at schools and being told Johnny missed an exam, so we have given him the average grade. I mean, that is the sort of thing that goes on when you don't have an HEI involved...it sometimes goes on when you do ... and we catch it! I will sum it up by saying that it does increase the quality and it increases quality control. It also opens your eyes to things that you might not pick up on. You are engaging with academics. Its useful to engage with people from outside of the box and that's what you are doing when you go in with an HEI.

(CE116)

Similarly, CE113 notes that an average mark could be awarded under Defence Forces regulations if someone missed an assessment. Quality assurance procedures eliminated such practices as "Maynooth could never stand over a practice like that. As we became aware of certain kinds of quirks, we would say ... NO!" (CE113). ME115 points out that accreditation has forced the Defence Forces to embrace the partner institution's quality assurance mechanisms. These processes are now embedded in Defence Force training and education regulations:

A lot of the regulatory material we have now governing our training and education, whether it's right down to the training and education policy, through to quality assurance guidelines, down even to the more granular documents, like TI 2/2019 which deals with the conduct of authorised courses ... I think without the accreditation, without it being in some ways forced upon us, I think we would have been a lot slower to adopt those things.

(ME115)

ME114 believes that accreditation ensures quality through its programme review processes. He believes that quality assurance measures are “positive because it keeps you honest”. The notion that an organisation such as the military needs to be kept honest is an interesting observation. Practices that originated in the military training environment, such as awarding a class average if an exam was missed for a legitimate reason, are incompatible with university quality assurance practices. CE116 sums it up succinctly “as soon as you go down accreditation, there are parameters that you could ignore previously, but cannot now”. Accreditation and its associated quality assurance mechanisms help raise standards by vigorously checking that standards are being met. The fact that this process is external to the military organisation is positive. It ensures that the quality assurance process is free from internal organisational interference and maintains academic integrity. In that way, quality assurance “keeps you honest”, as ME114 puts it.

### ***Strand 1 – Summary***

In this strand, an analysis of the history of Irish military education was presented. It was followed by analysing the historical and contemporary drivers for accreditation, identified in the literature and interviews with academics and military educators. Military education for officers was recognised as an imperative since the Defence Forces' formation in the 1920s. At various times in its history, the organisation was going in the right direction educationally, only to shy away and maintain the status quo. This is illustrated when initial attempts to locate the Military College adjacent to a university were abandoned in the 1920s.

Furthermore, when the Military College engaged with the NCEA and achieved institutional status in 1988, the organisation failed to exploit the opportunity. The fact that the NCEA award only applied to the cadetship and was discontinued in 2007 demonstrates a lack of confidence and vision to recognise this opportunity's potential. Because the NCEA initiative failed to develop, accreditation for officer education became topical in the early 2000s. Accreditation's primary drivers identified in the data are: benchmarking the changing nature of the contemporary operating environment, and quality assurance. These factors drove the accreditation agenda and continue to influence Irish military education today.

In summary, strand one reveals that the Defence Forces is unable to operate as an 'institution' for academic accreditation purposes. The compelling drivers for accreditation mean that the organisation must seek a university as an educational partner to accredit its courses. This analysis has presented *why* military and higher education intersect and the history of their association. The following section discusses *how* military education and higher education intersected.

### **6.3. Strand 2 – The intersection of military and higher education**

Bringing together two vastly different organisations to provide military education to the Irish Defence Forces officers was not easy. Aside from the noticeable cultural differences between a military institution and an academic institution, military education models are contested concepts, and each nation has its particular nuances. Until the early 2000s, military education in Ireland was very much embedded within the military *field*, governed by military standards and delivered by military instructors.



There was very little engagement with academia, and both the military and the higher education *fields* operated independently.

Since the early 2000s, accreditation of military courses has emerged internationally as a prevailing trend. In larger militaries such as the US, Germany and Sweden, Defence Universities have been established to accredit its courses. Generally, in smaller states, the military partner with a university or HEI to accredit its courses (Callado-Munoz and Utrero-Gonzalez, 2019). Given that the Defence Forces attempts to become an accrediting institution failed in the mid-1980s, the decision was taken to create a university partnership. Discussions subsequently led to engagement with Maynooth University to develop an MA in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies (LMDS), a masters level qualification awarded for the completion of the Command and Staff Course from 2002 onwards.

This section presents an analysis of the Defence Forces and Maynooth University's relationship to understand how military education and Higher Education's *fields* intersected to create the PME *subfield*.

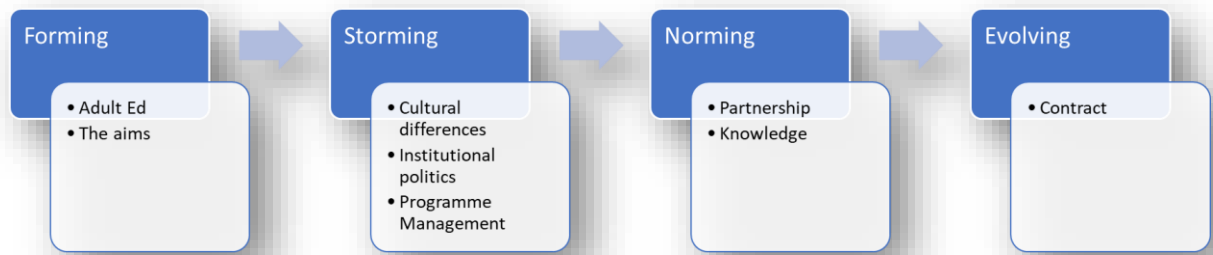
### ***Forming, Storming, Norming, and Evolving – adapting Tuckman (1965)***

Chapter 5 explained that data would be analysed using a six-step thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Stages four and five involve reviewing themes, and naming and defining themes. Having analysed the literature and interviews thematically, I grouped codes/nodes to form themes. Initial theme names included: accreditation, cultural differences, institutional politics, knowledge and *capital*, partnership, policies, relationship, and tensions. Each theme had several sub-themes

closely associated with it. While in the fifth stage of the analysis, I tried to group themes according to the accreditation partnership stage.

The early stages of the project had subthemes such as the early days, radical pedagogy, and adult education. The focus was on forming the project team and then defining the requirements and aims. Cultural differences, tensions and institutional politics themes were identified as areas of disagreement or conflict between the two institutions encountered early in the relationship. The themes of policies and relationships relate to a stage of harmony or functioning to accomplish the task. The final themes of knowledge and *capital*, and partnership, are identified with developing and evolving the relationship. It relates to when the project is going well without significant difficulties, and continuous improvement is a feature.

Unexpectedly, I recognised a pattern in the data that appeared to follow a familiar typology proposed by Tuckman (1965). Tuckman worked as a research psychologist for the US Navy when he researched small group behaviour (Bonebright, 2010). He identified four phases of team development: forming, storming, norming, performing, and later added a fifth stage, adjourning, representing the team's end as an entity (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977). When I stood back from the data and related the themes to time, unexpectedly, Tuckman's stages were identifiable elements of the military and HEI relationship. As the Defence Forces and Maynooth University's relationship continues, I borrow Tuckman's first three categories of *forming*, *storming* and *norming*, and include the new category of *evolving* to structure this section's analysis as illustrated in Figure 14.



**Figure 14. Themes identified at the intersection of military and higher education.**

Forming, norming, storming, and evolving are the overarching themes for this section; however, I do not intend to delve into organisational development theory. I am merely reusing and adapting Tuckman's nomenclature as it best describes in a few words how military education and higher education's *fields* intersect.

### ***Forming: Adult Education and Establishing the Aims***

I interviewed civilian educators from that period to understand how the partnership was formed with Maynooth University and the Department of Adult and Community Education. I was particularly interested in how the partnership was established and what the aims were. In the forming stage, two sub-themes were identified: Adult Education, and Establishing the Aims.

#### *Why Adult Education?*

CE117 provided background information explaining how the Department of Adult and Community Education became the university department responsible for the partnership:

I think that David Redmond [Maynooth University Registrar] initially came to the Department of Adult and Community Education, rather than to History or some other department, largely because we had years of experience of working with groups: a) in terms of bringing courses for accreditation, and b) working with external groups with very different cultures, to help them to define what they wanted but also to help them to define their learning needs, but also their knowledge base and every group that came to us, had its very own particular and specific knowledge base and it wasn't necessarily acknowledged.

(CE117)

The idea of helping the Defence Forces to identify their organisational *capital* in the form of knowledge and experience, and providing the conceptual structures to interrogate these experiences and knowledge base is particularly interesting. CE117 explains that it was necessary to make the organisation aware of the value of its experience, knowledge base, and *capital*.

There is a huge range of resources, of resilience', shades of *capital* that the Defence Forces have, because of existing within this boundary. I think a lot of our sense, our role came around to helping members of the organisation to become aware of, to own and to interrogate that *capital*.

(CE117)

The recognition that the organisation was unaware of its knowledge base is an example of Bourdieu's concept of *doxa* or *doxic* experience. It means that the natural practices and "pre-reflexive intuitive knowledge" that existed within the organisation went unquestioned (Deer, 2012, p. 115). Part of Maynooth University's role was to help the Defence Forces and its students to recognise *doxa* and to provide ways that it could be interrogated to create new knowledge.

Allocating the Department of Adult and Community Education's responsibility for developing and delivering academic content for such a course may seem incongruous. Indeed, Walsh (2012) points out that "The disciplines of Defence Studies and Adult and Community Education may, at first sight, appear to be unusual, if not uneasy

bedfellows” (Walsh, 2012, p. 8). Maynooth University had little or no experience of engagement with an organisation such as the Defence Forces (Durnin, 2003). CE117 believes that Adult and Community Educations’ experience in dealing with external agencies made them an appropriate department to lead the partnership. Also, the department had ‘radical adult education’ as the cornerstone of its pedagogical philosophy. Walsh (2012) explains that radical adult education addresses issues of inequality and marginalisation. In particular, it contends that traditional academic boundaries are ineffective for solving today’s complex problems. Ryan (2012) elaborates that radical adult education focuses on:

- (i) Undertaking a critical interrogation of unexamined assumptions and beliefs about how the world works – assumptions and beliefs that individuals and organisations draw on to determine the meaning of ideas and actions;
- (ii) Providing opportunities for students to draw on their personal and professional experiences to explore issues that are important to them;
- (iii) Actively involving all stakeholders in shaping the learning experience.

(Ryan, 2012, p. 57)

Walsh (2012) argues that “In a world characterised by the dissolution of traditional values and structures, formulaic responses and the reiteration of past certainties, familiar structures are no longer adequate” (p. 9). The realisation that officer education needed to embrace the contemporary operating environment’s uncertainty and focus on developing critical thinking and analytical skills was a position shared by both the Command and Staff School and the Department of Adult and Community Education. With recognising this shared philosophy as a starting point, the Command and Staff School and the Department of Adult and Community Education became more comfortable bedfellows than initially predicted.

### *Establishing the aims*

Ryan (2012) observes that it was “from this place of uncertainty and insecurity that the National University of Ireland Maynooth and the Irish Defence Forces began working together” (p. 52). CE117 explains that the Command and Staff School's initial requirements and expectations were “somewhat unclear”, but the conditions became more apparent through the process of dialogue and informal discussions. Ryan (2012) identifies that “the informal conversations and the formal meetings proved crucial in fostering each partner’s understanding of the other’s organisational culture and dynamic and that ultimately made it possible for a shared vision to emerge” (p. 61). Dialogue, openness, and a healthy respect for each organisation’s perspective and “epistemological pluralism” (p. 55) were crucial to the relationship's effective functioning.

A shared vision emerged from the dialogue process that was distilled into the partnership’s aims:

To build on the existing Command and Staff course in such a way that it would provide a learning experience that was appropriate in the rapidly changing world in which today’s military are called to operate.

To deliver the MA programme as effectively as possible, taking account of the professional experiences of this particular student body and the resource limitations of the organisations involved.

To utilise the partnership and the MA programme to contribute to the overall organisation development of the Defence Forces.

(Ryan, 2012, p. 55)

Ryan (2012) acknowledges that although formal management structures were in place, the “bottom-up” approach successfully managed each organisation's

engagement with the process. This means that the decision-making authority and responsibility for implementing the project were devolved to those who would eventually be responsible for its delivery.

CE117 explains that a significant element of the partnership's success that Maynooth staff realised early on was "how open the Irish military was to taking on new thinking". The Command and Staff School's willingness to improve and develop, driven by motivated and visionary staff, was vital to the project. He explains that the philosophy that underpins the educational approach taken in the Command and Staff School was based upon post-positivist and post-modern research methodologies.

We felt given the uncertainty and the changing nature of the world with which the military was dealing; we felt that what we could bring to the table was probably an emphasis on post-positivist, post-modern research methodologies would probably be the most useful and most appropriate methodology in which to ground the programme.

(CE117)

Postmodernism recognises a "world of change, nuance and the breakdown of familiar and reliable structures – a world influenced by evolving thinking in the new physics, complexity science and systems theory" (Walsh, 2012, p. 10). Walsh (2012) believes that military education needs to respond to the post-modern world by creating sites where it is possible to:

Learn to recognise and critique traditional grand narratives; interrogate the dominance of particular versions of reality; invite the presencing of marginalised or unusual voices, include the troubling or the disruption of the expected; include the presencing of the self in all its richness and ambiguity.

(Walsh, 2012, p. 11)

This philosophical approach introduced by the Department of Community and Adult Education to the Defence Forces was novel. Most other military colleges have international relations, strategic studies, or military sociology underpinning their staff courses. The radical pedagogy philosophy taken by the Command and Staff School has resulted in a diverse body of research that continues to influence the Defence Forces' organisational knowledge and evolution (McGinn, 2020).

### ***Storming: culture, politics and management***

Tuckman's (1965) second stage in group formation is the storming phase. It is recognised when "group members become hostile toward one another and toward a therapist or trainer as a means of expressing their individuality and resisting the formation of group structure" (p. 386). Data from this study suggests that cultural differences were the leading cause of tensions initially. As with any relationship, tensions can emerge even when projects are going well. A consistent message around contemporary tensions was that cultural difference, institutional politics, and programme management were the leading cause.

### *Embracing cultural difference*

Ryan (2012) points out how there were significant cultural differences between the two organisations as each organisation were "embedded in their respective organisations" (p. 58). CE117 provides an illustrative account of the Department of Adult and Community Education's first visit to the Command and Staff School in 2002, and the



cultural differences that became obvious during the first encounter. Indeed, cultural difference is a theme identified by both military and civilian educators during interviews.

I remember very vividly our very first day in the Curragh which was probably a little bit nuanced by the years. My memory of it was that it was a very cold day, we found our way to the Curragh, by all sorts of back roads for some reason, and arrived frozen in the Curragh. I was driving, and we somehow had taken a rather scenic route! Arrived in. My three colleagues went in first (I was parking the car) and followed into the C&S School into the corridor. As I came around the corner, I heard a military voice say, 'Oh here are the girls from Maynooth' (laugh). I think there was something of an intake of breath, and then, of course, we all needed a loo after the journey, and after the cold, so, that was fine as far as I was concerned. But Margaret (the school secretary) had the only key of the only women's toilet on the corridor, and she was at coffee, not there anyway, so the key couldn't be found, so there was absolute pandemonium and panic stations as you can imagine! Then it was decided as my three colleagues were hopping on foot to foot, that this was an emergency, so one of the male toilets had to be pressed into service as a women's toilet and, so it had to be inspected, and somebody had to be stationed outside to make sure that nobody else went in. I suppose in a sense what that wrote or illustrated, was something of the cultural chasm that existed between the two organisations. I mean, I think that we were aware that there was going to be a fairly major cultural chasm that needed to be attended to. I think that those two bits illustrate something of how significant that was.

(CE117)

The lack of suitable facilities for female visitors to the school and being referred to as the "girls from Maynooth" underlines the cultural gap that existed between the Defence Forces and society in the early 2000s. Again, this can be considered an example of the military *field's doxa* and patriarchal *habitus*, a prominent feature of the organisation at that time.

CE117 recognised that the military was closed to the rest of society with similar characteristics to Goffman's description of a total institution, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 7. Understanding this difference became part of the university team's role early in the engagement.

I think that it was a closed system. So, the fact that it was a culture and a very defined culture, for those that were part of the military, that was not something that they were aware of. The huge difference, the distinction, the huge boundary that bounded them off from the rest of society was largely invisible to those that were members of the military. So, I think that was a very significant piece.

(CE117)

Ryan (2012) reflects on the cultural differences between the typical university environment and the military classroom when she met military students for the first time:

The first time that I met the Defence Forces students, they were seated behind individual desks all facing forward and all set in perfectly straight rows. They were all men, all dressed the same and they had all worked and served together for at least twenty years. I was awed by their sense of order. It seems that everyone knew their place ... everyone except me.

(Ryan, 2012, p. 52)

CE 113 acknowledges that teaching the military would not suit every academic as some would be uncomfortable in the military environment:

I get a sense that it wouldn't be for everyone. I think that it could be quite intimidating for some academics. Some academics would find it quite intimidating or would object to a multiplicity of things, the fact that it's a military, they're all in uniform, they sit in rows as well as other things. I think that you've got to know yourself fairly well as a person.

(CE113)

CE113 points out that despite this sense of order and male-dominated environment, it is still essential to be sensitive to the learner's needs and anxieties.

I think that you have got to be sensitive. I know that what I teach can cause a lot of anxiety and I think that you have got to be sensitive to that and not to be dismissive of it. You know that people can be quite worried by it.

(CE113)

Given the robust nature of military training and education, it may be surprising to learn that engaging in academic work can be a source of anxiety for military learners. In a study on the military learning environment, Lawlor (2019) concluded that “military learners have similar pedagogic and proxemic needs to other adult learners”. Military learners need similar educational support and learning environment conditions as other adult learners in higher education. The fact that they are military students does not alter how they learn. The anxiety mentioned by CE113 may be due to the high stakes’ nature of military education. Assessment results from career courses contribute to the outcome of promotion competitions and career advancement. In this way, officer education qualifies as “high stakes”, as described by Price, et al. (2011, p. 487). It places additional pressure on the military learner, which is generally not a feature for other students.

ME115 notes that military professionals are sometimes sceptical of civilians teaching them about the military profession. Ryan's discomfort is understandable when faced by a class of experienced military professionals. ME115 notes that this attitude has changed as officers engage with academics throughout their professional development:

There definitely would have been a wider culture within the organisation, initially of ‘who are these guys coming in telling us how to do our job? A wrong attitude in a lot of ways. I think over time that it is definitely improving. I think as more people progressed through the Junior Command and Staff Course and Senior Course, now Joint C&S, definitely those attitudes have completely changed.

(ME115)

Understandably, the initial encounters between the university staff and the military were uncomfortable experiences. Bringing people together from two vastly different environments and professions can cause this, especially in the early stages of constructing a new *field*.

### *Institutional Politics*

Other tensions emerged once the project was up and running, mainly caused by institutional politics and programme management. Most interviewees mentioned the turnover of military teaching staff as a source of tension.

CE116 summarises the difficulties with the Defence Forces' management of teaching staff:

The turnover in the Military College is catastrophic. Nobody stays for two years. So, some poor soul lands in a job, gets himself half up to speed and then gets sent to Chad or Lebanon, Dundalk or wherever, and they are replaced by some other poor sod who then has to try and get themselves up to speed. It gets, it's almost like Groundhog Day. That we find ourselves that the only person who has any idea of what is coming next is the academic, because we have done it fifteen times. So, you have the same conversation with a different face, and they make all the same mistakes again and again, because they are not in the job long enough.

(CE116)

CE117 explains that staff rotation became an issue early on in the relationship and forced changes to the thesis supervision process:

You would have a stable relationship going in a particular direction, then suddenly, everybody would change. The one thing that we did kick up a lot about early on was supervisors being changed, halfway through, and ultimately the change from having joint supervision to having Maynooth

supervision, with just a bit of input from the staff was around that, because it was so disruptive, and it was becoming so disruptive.

(CE117)

CE113 also identifies that the turnover of staff is a big issue. She points out that:

The biggest challenge is probably the turnover. I have always maintained that it's not good for the school and it's not good for the students. Maybe more utility could be made of individuals who are retiring within the Military College and provide that continuity of care and I think that they need that.

(CE113)

Similar to CE116, CE113 explains that there is little or no corporate memory in the Military College because of staff turnover. CE113 suggests that the "Military College needs is a keeper of the memories so that we are not always reinventing the wheel". They explain that Maynooth University currently retains the corporate memory of the partnership.

ME115 recognises the problem with staff turnover as a critical weakness and believes that it is a human resource function to remedy:

The main challenges are obvious. It has to do with human resources, staffing, and more importantly, its security of tenure in appointment ... Until we can come up with a career pathway that yet supports personnel to have security of tenure and doesn't encourage people to go island hopping between appointments to get to the next rank. That's always going to be a problem. That's our key weakness, definitely within the organisation.

(ME115)

Ryan (2012) explains that Maynooth University had to learn how to manage the constant rotation of military staff. She views this policy somewhat more positively than other interviewees claiming that: "From an organisational development perspective, the turnover of staff means that more people are aware of the thinking that lies behind the programme of study and the partnership" (p. 61). While Ryan is correct that more people are being exposed to the programme's workings, most interviewees are critical

of the practice. McGinn (2020) points out that the high turnover of staff “can result in issues of continuity for both the students and University staff” (p. 6-7) and this can be very disruptive for the programme delivery.

### *Programme Management*

Programme management was identified mainly by the civilian academics interviewed as a source of tension. These tensions revolved around organisational issues such as the Defence Forces’ wish to run courses outside the college semester year. Other issues, such as requests for changes to programmes, can also be a source of tension.

CE113 acknowledges that the Defence Forces “is a 12-month organisation and there was an expectation that the university would teach during the summer”. This can cause issues for the university with access to facilities and contracting staff. CE116 explains that the university management system sometimes finds it challenging to accommodate the Defence Forces plans:

It might seem like a small thing, but if I am being told that the next LCSC<sup>16</sup> is likely to start in March, we’re geared for courses to start up in September. Courses from March through to December or January, none of our systems work because it starts in one academic year and it’s a one-year course, but it finishes in another academic year, it just causes exponential administrative problems, none of which can be dealt with by the Defence Forces side.

(CE116)

CE113 cites specific requests by the military, typically around changes to the programme, as tensions. Because the military courses are now fully accredited, they

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<sup>16</sup> Land Component Staff Course

are governed by university guidelines. Changes must go through the programmatic review committee and cannot be made ad hoc.

I'll be honest there would be a push from the military for things, that we can't deliver as a university, and that happens quite a lot. In so far as the military may want a change in a programme that's substantive, and we don't have that, that's not our gift. That's when you talk about what policies in Maynooth impact on the course.

(CE113)

This is an example of how the university's quality assurance structures can prevent incremental change and preserve the programme's integrity.

The storming phase is characterised by cultural differences, institutional politics and programme management challenges. The 'norming' stage is discussed next.

### ***Norming: partnership and knowledge***

The partnership's norming stage is when roles and norms are established (Bonebright, 2010). The tensions and resistance characteristics of the storming phase are overcome, and "cohesiveness develop, new standards evolve, and new roles are adopted" (Tuckman, 1965, p. 396). The norming theme is characterised by focusing on the partnership between Maynooth University and the Defence Forces and notions of what constitutes knowledge.

### ***Partnerships***

"Establishing and nurturing a partnership that could achieve these aims has involved time, trial and error and an ongoing belief in the intrinsic value of the venture" (Ryan, 2012, p. 56). Nurturing a partnership requires mutual respect for each partner's expertise and professional knowledge. While there were apparent cultural differences

between the two institutions, cordial relations were an essential aspect of the partnership from the beginning:

I think that what we were conscious of, was the welcome and the warmth of the welcome and that was very real, and that continued to be the case. That is not to say that we didn't have our ups and downs on occasion, but there was generally speaking a very warm and cooperative relationship. I think that was one of the huge richness's of the liaison between Adult Ed and the C&S School. I think that all of us involved put a huge amount of energy into creating trusting and warm relationships, that didn't always work, but worked most of the time. I think a huge amount of energy went into that.

(CE117)

The strength of the personal relationships between both institutions' members was critical in sustaining the partnership, particularly early on when the project did not enjoy universal support. CE117 points out that "there was a rear-guard that I would say weren't keen on this whole business of attachment to an academic institution".

CE113 is very positive about working with the military and highlights that the partnership works well because both staffs co-operate well:

Oh, I think the relationship is amazing. I would say the tensions are small and just they are more frustrations. What works really well – cooperation – working with the school, working with the instructors. I find that people can never do enough for you. Like every interaction with the school is positive. If I ask for something, it's always sorted, tremendous collegiality, the relationships are great... and working with the groups. Teaching the military is like teaching no other group.

(CE113)

She describes the relationship as "straightforward", and despite institutional constraints, both partners "kind of all muddle through together".

### *Knowledge*

Gibbons, et al. (1994) introduced the concept of Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge



production in the mid-1990s. They conceived Mode 1 as the traditional approach to knowledge production where knowledge is produced in universities and “the discipline sets the agenda for research” (Childe, 2001, p. 315). Mode 1 knowledge production is driven and led by academics within the specific discipline where the knowledge produced is used in industry (Gibbons, et al., 1994). Mode 2 knowledge, on the other hand, is generated at application sites. Mode 2 knowledge is generated when groups of people from different backgrounds converge and apply their collective disciplinary expertise to solve a problem (Gibbons, et al., 1994). Doctrine can be categorised as Mode 2 knowledge. Most military doctrine is Mode 2 knowledge, as a range of theoretical perspectives from academic experts and practitioners come together to codify how the military should operate in a given situation. The Defence Forces have been reluctant to develop its doctrine and typically adopt either the UK or NATO doctrine as its own. It may be a sensible approach for a small military such as the Defence Forces to adopt proven doctrine; however, this approach creates a knowledge and knowledge management gap. According to some of the military interviewees, doctrine is a significant area of neglect.

The other area where knowledge was not developed until the academic partnership was knowledge creation through internal research. Ryan (2012) notes that:

As successive cohorts of students undertake research, a wealth of knowledge has emerged. In many instances, this is knowledge that they or the organisation had heretofore assumed to be common-knowledge and therefore not in need of articulation, or knowledge that was not valued as worthwhile, or knowledge which was at times occluded by day-to-day operational imperatives.

(Ryan, 2012, p. 60)

Similarly, CE117 recognised that the Defence Forces were mainly unaware of the

value of its knowledge base:

The military and C&S School were not aware of the huge knowledge base they had. It was not made explicit ... A lot of the knowledge that we saw was part of this culture was implicit and was not necessarily recognised as something that was extraordinarily valuable, that was knowledge in itself, that needed to be acknowledged and theorised.

(CE117)

CE117 describes knowledge as a form of *capital* in a Bourdieusian sense and that students need to interrogate unexamined assumptions.

There is a huge range of resources (checks in a book for the correct term) ...resiliences... shades of *capital* that the Defence Forces have, because of existing within this boundary. I think a lot of our role came around to helping members of the organisation to become aware of, to own and to interrogate that *capital* ... What these participants need to do, is to own what their passion is, what they are interested in and to be given space to actually explore that, over nine months, ten months, exploring that because in that is their knowledge and their experience. There is a huge need to own that to explore that, interrogate that and own its richness.

(CE117)

ME114 considers the lack of doctrine and an organisational structure to manage and support its development as a significant issue.

I think doctrinally we have had a significant issue there, in that we don't necessarily adhere to processes from an organisational perspective, we are quite poor in that we don't have a doctrinal centre, we don't have established doctrine, again going back to the earlier quote I do think that we have a mid-Atlantic doctrine, a mixture of the US and UK and, then, sometimes there is a bit of NATO or EU thrown in for good measure just to kind of shake it up a bit. I think, if we are really serious about developing the courses and modernising to the future, the HEI can only do so much. At the end of the day, you need the doctrine for the operations side of the house that the military does. I think, in that case we've been quite poor, and we have a lot of work to do there.

(ME114)

ME115 states that there has been very little change to our doctrine over the past twenty-five years. He acknowledges that various ad hoc doctrinal groups and

committees have sat but lack a permanent supporting and directing structure. ME115 reasons where it would best fit in the Defence Forces current structure:

It needs to be almost a dedicated cell; you could tie it in to DJ7. Its more than just training it has to come from the operational side, what operational capabilities, what capabilities do we need ...its almost up at strategic planning level ...up at that sort of level ...this is where we are looking at in the future so based on the likes of the White Paper, missions assigned, this is what we are looking at in the future. Therefore we need these capabilities, therefore, we need doctrine to support these capabilities and that's the third leg of the stool, that's just missing so what we do is rehash our training to fit ourselves in, to try and do those future capabilities and do those future roles. I think that's what's missing.

(ME115)

Essentially, ME115 believes that policy dictates what capabilities are required for the future, doctrine then should be there to guide the employment of those capabilities, and in that way, these three elements are interdependent. Without doctrine, it is impossible to educate and train effectively. The Defence Forces need to address this gaping hole in managing its knowledge and doctrine. The Defence Forces engagement with academia and its focus on critical thinking has given the organisation the ability to interrogate these underexplored areas to generate a bottom-up change to our structures.

### ***Evolving***

In a break from Tuckman's (1965) typology, the word evolving describes the final theme of the intersection of military and higher education. This part focuses primarily on the formal contract that the Defence Forces signed with Maynooth University in 2020 to deliver PME to the Command and Staff School. The contract was awarded after a tendering process and will last for five years. Even though Maynooth University has been an academic partner with the Command and Staff School since 2002, the

Cadet School since 2007, and the Infantry School since 2012, no formal contract existed. The contract signed in 2020 was a significant breakthrough; however, this contract only covers the Command and Staff Course, leaving the Cadet School and the Infantry School to manage the partnership without formal arrangements. This has implications for the delivery of military education in both schools and the university.

ME114 believes that the contract gives the relationship stability. It allowed the university to make proposals and suggestions that they could not do previously because they were technically unsure if they would be delivering the course in the coming year.

I do think that when we went through the MA dialogue for the recent contract, you got to see where Maynooth we were looking to go, but then because we were actually going to a contract and going back to an earlier question you had, they suddenly had the freedom to start telling us about the ideas they had for improving and enhancing the course.

(ME114)

CE116 suggests that the relationship has taken a long time to become fully transparent. He points out that boundaries still existed until relatively recently and that university staff did not have full access to everything that was taught on the course:

There were these big, closed boxes that you didn't look into and you'd maybe afraid of what you would find if you did look into it. The military owned all that, they would let us into particular areas because there were things, they wanted us to do, but it wasn't our business to meddle beyond that, in the C&S School. That took a long time to break down and that really, only went in the last few years, in the last four or five years did we start having any sort of involvement, in the wider areas of the course.

(CE116)

A formal Memorandum of Agreement was not finalised until 2009, seven years after the partnership was formed, indicating how slow both organisations were in formally committing to the partnership. Referring to the recently signed contract with Maynooth

University, CE116 believes that now the partnership is 'real'.

I would say it is a genuine partnership. We have talked about partnership a lot over the past twenty years, but it wasn't really. It was a partnership limited to only specific lines, whereas what I think now we have got a genuine partnership ... if you are looking at Operational Art<sup>17</sup> or campaigning, that's clearly a military-led thing, yet there might be certain aspects we get involved in, and it's a partnership led by different elements. With the thesis, we are in a key position. We still work in partnership with the DS, so yeah, I think that is only getting better and stronger.

(CE116)

CE113 believes that the course improved considerably by giving the university access to all academic areas, including the military-led subjects and remodelling the course through the new programmes committee.

Two things happened that improved the programme considerably. It going through our new programmes and getting appropriate credits, and the modules being correctly written. That was vital for the programme because that gave the academic credibility that it needed. And the second thing being the contract, giving it that stability, the relationship that the stability it needed.

(CE113)

Clearly, the new contract also played a significant role in stabilising the relationship. CE116 believes that "The contract gives the institution a reason to value this, actually the military are serious about this. We can plan now into the medium term and that's far more satisfactory". While the interviewees point out that the Command and Staff School contract is overwhelmingly positive, all are critical that the contract only deals with one school and not the three schools in the Military College. CE114 believes that this approach inhibits development:

I do think it was a bad organisational policy call or judgement call to not look at the schools as a collective to go for a contract with an HEI. We now have a contract with Maynooth, whereas two other schools on the square both

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<sup>17</sup> Operational Art is "the employment of forces to attain strategic and/or operational objectives through the design, organisation, integration and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations and battles" (Ministry of Defence, 2013, para. 0207).

get services from that institution. Its back to the mate's rates approach ...it's a year on year, so you can't really develop.

(ME114)

CE116 is frustrated that the Defence Forces did not include the Cadet School and the Infantry School in the contract. He believes this creates uncertainty, causes difficulties with planning, and makes everything more expensive.

I don't know if I am doing the Cadet School next year, maybe DCU<sup>18</sup> will come in for half the price, and suddenly that changes, who knows and it makes it more expensive and I was clear about that in the informal conversations about the tender, and it would be much, much cheaper if you put the schools together. Then I could hire staff. I would know that I had a four-year contract with the three schools, and I could hire a couple of staff that are going to work across all three, instead of devoted to one.

(CE116)

The contract between Defence Forces and Maynooth University has played a significant role in the evolution of officer education in the Command and Staff School. The stability and benefits it gives to both partners can be understood as a state of homology in the *field*, with both agents occupying equivalent positions. The decision not to include the Cadet School and the Infantry School in the contract was a mistake, and thus, the struggle for resources in the Military College *field* continues.

I believe that the organisation made this decision because of how the Military College operates. The Military College does not function as a college in a traditional sense. Schools operate independently, and there is little or no cooperation between schools, even though many of the same subjects are being taught at different levels. The Military College's headquarters serves as an administrative headquarters and has little

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<sup>18</sup> DCU – Dublin City University

or no influence over military education. Teaching and learning are mainly left up to each school, and there is little crossover or cooperation between schools. CE116 gives an outsider's perspective:

I can't really believe that there is a Military College... There are three schools, that don't appear to be connected in any way other than they drink coffee in the same [officer's] mess, and that you all work in one or other at various times. There isn't a college in the way that I would understand a college as a unit that works together in a seamless way, and that is abundantly clear in terms of the academic provision.

(CE116)

The contract process with the Command and Staff School has emphasised the Military College's lack of collegiality. The fact that there is no focal point for the military subjects taught at each level is inexplicable. CE116 finds this situation difficult to understand:

I think it's crazy that the Defence Forces don't treat the Military College as a college or even have staff in one school that can teach in a different school. It doesn't seem to make any sense, it's crazy.

(CE116)

Bourdieu's theory offers some explanation for this behaviour. CE116 is correct that the Military College does not act as a college in an academic sense. The Defence Forces have unwittingly placed schools in competition with each other. Bourdieu suggested that institutions within a *field* could also be considered *subfields* (Thompson, 2012). From a *field* analysis perspective, the Military College could be understood as a *field*, with schools engaged in a struggle over resources, which is the *capital* at stake. The decision to allow only the Command and Staff School to contract with Maynooth University elevates the Command and Staff School's position within the *field*, creates an imbalance, and the struggle perpetuates.

## **Strand 2 – Summary**

Strand 2 findings illustrate that military education and higher education's intersection share some features of Tuckman's (1965) model for group formation. Initial engagement focused on establishing the aims of the project. Partnering the Command and Staff School with the Adult Education at Maynooth University was a decision made by Maynooth University because of their radical pedagogical philosophy and experience of working with marginalised groups. Radical pedagogy, its associated research methodologies, and ideas about knowledge, were coincidentally suitable for Defence Forces' needs. Cultural differences were highlighted as a source of tension between both partners. As a total institution, the Defence Forces was mainly unaware of its cultural differences and how out of sync it was with society. The organisation was also unaware of its substantial knowledge base. Partnering with an HEI created awareness around these issues and provided a space to examine them.

The new contract between the Command and Staff School and Maynooth University has significantly improved the partnership. It provides stability and allows for medium-term planning. It represents a model for other schools in the Military College to replicate. The last part of the evolving phase focused on the Military College's role in the overall education management. The findings suggest that the Military College requires substantial reform in how it is organised and operates. Education is critical for developing the capabilities needed to work in the modern security environment. Without a functioning Military College, with associated supporting staff, infrastructure, and educational expertise, the organisation risks failing in its role. In the next stage the final strand of analysis looks at how policies influence the PME *field*.



#### 6.4. Strand 3 - The policy context

In this section, the policies that impact Professional Military Education are analysed at three levels: Macro (International), Meso (national), and Micro (institutional level). This analysis will demonstrate that European higher education policy has influenced Irish military education in two ways. Firstly, Irish officers attended accredited Command and Staff Courses throughout Europe in the 1990s early 2000s, which spawned the idea to accredit the Irish equivalent course. Secondly, Irish officers worked alongside European colleagues while deployed on multinational operations and in European Union military appointments. The recognition that similar ranks should have an equivalent education standard also drove the accreditation agenda. A comprehensive literature review of European, national, and institutional education policies is beyond this section's scope and focus. However, I intend to demonstrate that European higher education policies have influenced European military education, thereby influencing Ireland's military education. This can be viewed as the exercise of *symbolic power* by the European Union on its member states. Bourdieu notes that:

Symbolic power – as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the every specific effect of mobilization – is a power that can be exercised only if it is *recognized*.

(Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170)

The introduction of common education standards in higher education throughout the EU, has transformed higher education and, consequently, military education throughout Europe.

## *Ireland's Defence Policy and military education*

Everything that happens in the military *field*, including military education, can be traced to defence policy. The *White Paper on Defence* (2015) is Ireland's expression of defence policy. It sets out a policy framework for responding to security challenges both domestically and abroad, as discussed in Chapter 2 and Appendix 10. In his foreword to the policy, then Minister for Defence, Mr Simon Coveney, specified that a critical goal of the White Paper is "to ensure that Ireland retains credible military capabilities that can meet anticipated future threats to the State's security, whilst ensuring that those capabilities remain flexible and responsive to a changing environment" (Department of Defence, 2015, p. v). To ensure that defence policy remains up to date, the Government decided defence policy will be subject to fixed cycle reviews every three years. The *White Paper on Defence Update 2019* is the first such review and is therefore considered defence policy.

The origins of accreditation in Defence Policy can be traced back to Ireland's first White Paper on Defence, published in 2000. It states that "Personnel will be provided with the opportunity to realise their full potential during their service in the Defence Forces" (Department of Defence, 2000, para. 4.6.2). As part of the Defence Forces efforts to pursue accreditation, a Working Group on Accreditation, Training and Education was established in 2007. This group reported that:

External accreditation and verification of capabilities will ensure that the educational and training outputs of the Defence Forces are in line with best international practice... it will further integrate the Defence Forces within the wider community...it will provide quality assurance and reward members for their participation in lifelong learning and on continuous development programmes.

(cited in Ott, 2013, p. 47)

Similar to the findings in Stand 2, the purpose of accreditation was to ensure that Irish military education was consistent with international norms, quality assurance, and reward for participation in lifelong learning. The development of the capabilities required of a modern military was also a significant driving factor. PME is an essential element of capability development, and as Yong-De (2017, p. 286) argues more than ever, it “needs to be the cornerstone of a military’s capabilities”. In a Bourdieusian sense, defence capabilities are equivalent to organisational *capital*. Since the significant developments in the education of officers and enlisted personnel in 2012, the importance of accrediting training and education has been enshrined in defence policy through the White Paper on Defence (2015) which states that:

External accreditation and verification of capabilities ensures that the educational and training outputs of the Defence Forces are in line with best international practice. Accreditation will be pursued where it is appropriate to military skills and capability requirements since the primary intended outcome is improved operational effectiveness.

(Department of Defence, 2015, p. 76)

Ireland’s defence policy explicitly acknowledges that accredited learning can improve the military’s ability to conduct operations effectively. The recognition of military education’s importance has resulted in the incremental growth of Defence Forces’ personnel undergoing accredited learning each year. Since 2012, over 2,800 enlisted personnel have participated in the LMDS programme, with over 220 officers completing the Level 9 masters since 2007 (Department of Defence, 2019).

The White Paper (2015) highlights that accreditation is also being used as a retention tool:

Accreditation is also aimed at making the Defence Forces more attractive as a career and increasing retention rates as personnel gain higher awards

the longer, they stay in the Defence Forces and the further along the career path they advance, thus rewarding members for their participation in lifelong learning.

(Department of Defence, 2015, p. 76)

Almost paradoxically, the White Paper (2015) asserts that accredited learning will benefit individuals if and when they leave the organisation:

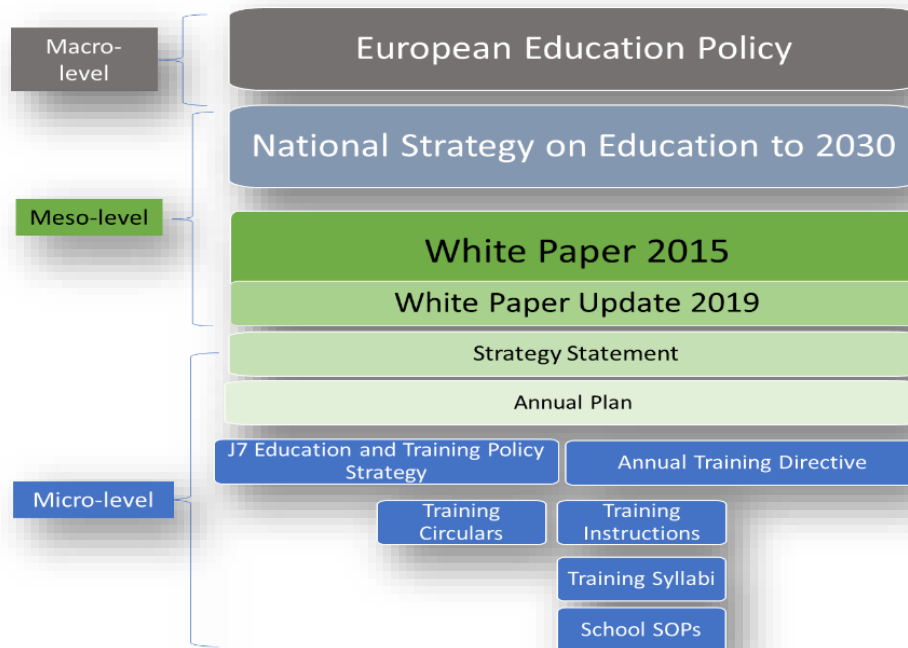
Accreditation is also of benefit to individuals when they leave the Defence Forces as they have either a nationally or an internationally recognised qualification which may assist them in finding suitable future employment.

(Department of Defence, 2015, p. 76)

The intention of accreditation as articulated in defence policy can be summarised as 1) benefitting the organisation through enhancing operational effectiveness; 2) ensuring that training and education standards are in line with international best practice; 3) making the Defence Forces a more attractive career; 4) enhancing the retention of personnel, and 5) enhancing the individual's ability to find employment outside of the Defence Forces. These assumptions will be addressed within the Bourdieusian framework in the next chapter.

### *Micro-level policies and practices*

This final section focuses on *how accreditation of workplace-based learning is reified in education policies and practices*. Figure 15 shows the policy architecture that informs and underpins the Defence Forces training and education.



**Figure 15. Defence Forces macro, meso, and micro policy levels.**

European education policy has been a significant driver of the accreditation agenda at the macro level. The *symbolic power* of the European Union is legitimated through European policies and common education standards. European policies have influenced national education policies and the Defence Forces' approach to professional military education. In this way, there is a line of communication of symbolic power from the European Union at the macro level, flowing to meso and micro policy levels.

At the meso level, the White Paper on Defence (2015) and its update (2019), is an expression of the 'drivers' of defence policy. It provides the foundation for the Defence Forces to develop its strategies and plans. The White Paper is implemented through the Strategy Statement (Department of Defence, 2016). The Defence Forces follow

Basil Lidell Hart's notion of strategy as "the art of distributing and applying resources to fulfil the ends of policy" (cited in Baylis, et al., 2013, p. 5). Thus, strategy is viewed as a bridge between policy and military means (Baylis, et al., 2013). The Strategy Statement sets out the shared high-level goal for Defence Organisation which is "To provide for the military defence of the State, contribute to international peace and security and fulfil all other roles assigned by Government" (Department of Defence, 2016, p. 4). This high-level goal has three strategic dimensions, including defence policy, ensuring the capacity to deliver and defence forces operational outputs. Training and education are part of 'the ensuring the capacity to deliver' dimension.

The implementation of the strategy statement is articulated in the Annual Plan. The implementation of the Annual Plan is evaluated by The Work Reference Document, which is employed as a classic lever. The annual plan is evaluated through the Annual Report. "This report fulfils the requirements of Section 4(1)(b) of the Public Service (Management) Act 1997 for an annual report to the Minister on performance against strategic objectives" (Department of Defence and Defence Forces, 2016).

Based on the Annual Plan, the Director of Training and Education (DJ7) then prepares the training and education plan. DJ7's policy for training and education is outlined in the Defence Forces Policy and Strategy document. This vision is implemented through the Annual Training Directive, which directs which courses will be conducted in the training year. It follows a three-year planning cycle to ensure that the Defence Forces' operational, logistical and personnel training and educational needs are met. Some of the other functional mechanisms/levers that control the conduct of training and education courses in the Defence Forces include:

- Training Circulars – these documents provide training guidelines for personnel preparation for overseas operations, including training schedules and instruction tables (modules).
- Training Instructions – are documents with general application and are binding in their entirety. It is a form of direction that is to be observed by all subject to military law.
- Syllabi – are similar to a programme handbook but are focused on the learning outcomes and tables (modules) required to achieve them.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) – relate to the rules, regulations and procedures that govern the running of Defence Forces' units and schools.

As illustrated above, there is a very steep hierarchy from policy to its practical implementation. This reflects how the Defence Forces are organised and function. The Defence Forces' management approach is very different from any other institution and is very much a bureaucracy founded on rules, regulations and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Decision-making is formalised, and usually, there is a 'top-down' approach to all matters. The policy process closely follows the rationalist approach, a linear series of stages (Jie, 2016). The policy of the symbolic power is communicated to subordinate levels as depicted in Figure 15. until it reaches the final stage where it is practically enacted. This is how military education policy is reified.

### **6.5. Mapping the *Field* - drawing the three strands together**

Military education's engagement with the higher education *field* in the early 2000s caused both the military education and higher education *fields* to intersect, forming a

new *subfield* of PME, as depicted in Figure 16. Strand 1 of my analysis traced the history of Irish military education. Based on the analysis of literature and semi-structured interviews, the historical and contemporary drivers for accreditation were identified as benchmarking, the contemporary operating environment, and quality assurance. These factors drove the accreditation agenda and were significant in forming the PME *field*. Taking a Bourdieusian approach to examining the history of the Irish military education *field* proved helpful in understanding the *field's* contemporary form. The analysis shows that the Defence Forces needed to partner with a university for accreditation purposes as it lacked the ability and educational expertise to manage it alone, as its engagement with the NCEA illustrates. This analysis has demonstrated *why* military and higher education have intersected to form a new PME *subfield*.

The overarching themes identified in Strand 2 analysis are, forming, storming, norming, and evolving. Initial engagement focused on establishing the aims of the project and the establishing radical pedagogy and its associated methodologies as the underpinning philosophical approach. Compared to other models of PME that are grounded in international relations, strategic studies, or military sociology, the Irish approach is unique. Having completed the Command and Staff Course as a student in 2019 and worked in the Command and Staff School afterwards, I was mostly unaware of radical pedagogy's influence. Through this research, I can only now understand the radical education philosophy that has influenced PME for senior officers, and in doing so, the military organisation. Cultural differences emerged as a source of tension between both partners in the storming theme. As a total institution, the Defence Forces was unaware of its cultural differences and how out of sync it was with society. The organisation was also very much blinded by Bourdieu's idea of *doxa*,

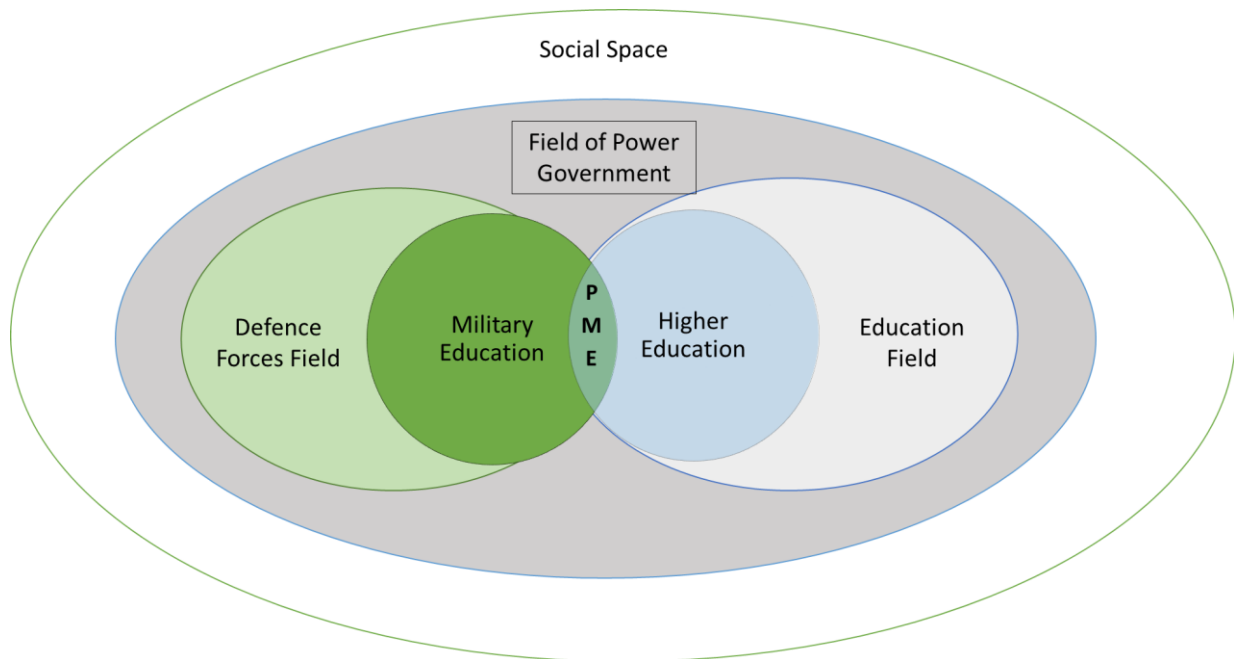


those beliefs and intuitive knowledge that were rarely questioned. Partnering with an HEI, created an awareness of the Defence Forces' knowledge base's value and provided a safe academic space where *doxa* and tacit knowledge could be interrogated.

The evolving theme mainly focused on changes in the PME *field* brought about by the new contract between the Command and Staff School and Maynooth University. The analysis from Strand 2, identified that the Military College currently functions as a *subfield* and is very much an area of struggle for those schools in competition for the available *capital*. In treating the Military College as a *subfield*, the schools are left with no option but to adopt positions and strategies that increase their *capital*. This has led to schools operating independently, and there is very little collegiality.

Strand 3 analysis focused on the Macro (International), Meso (national), and Micro levels. This analysis demonstrated that European higher education policy has indirectly influenced Irish military education. European education policies have been a significant driver of the accreditation agenda at the macro level. European policies have also influenced the meso level national education policies, and consequently, the Defence Policy which informs the Defence Forces' approach to professional military education. PME policies and practices at the micro-level are reified in a steep hierarchy of bureaucratic documents that guide training and education in the Defence Forces. These documents have adopted national-level quality assurance standards, ensuring that the Defence Forces are fully compliant with European higher education standards.

## Constructing the field - PME as a subfield



**Figure 16. Mapping the *field***

Mapping military education in the Irish context has been a challenge and depicting it, equally so. In Figure 16, social space is shown as the outer ring. Social space represents all the spaces that are available for occupation by agents. All social interactions occur within a social space. The next *field* depicted in grey is the *field* of power or government space. The *field* of power is that area where “the agents who possess a sufficient amount of one of the different kinds of *capital* to be in a position to dominate the corresponding *field*” (Bourdieu 1998b, p. 34). It is a site of struggle for *capital* between government departments. Politics, arts, justice, finance, are some examples of agents operating in the *field* of power. Operating independently of each other within the *field* of power, are the military and education *fields*. Military education is depicted as a *subfield* of the military *field* because “while following the overall logic

of its *field*, [it] also had its own internal logics, rules and regularities” (Thompson, 2012, p. 70). Similarly, higher education is considered a *subfield* of the education *field* because it follows the overall logic of the education *field* and has its own rules and processes. Prior to the Defence Forces engagement with Maynooth University, the military and education *fields* had little or no interaction. They occupied their respective places in the social space, independent of each other. The drivers for accreditation in the early 2000s forced a change in the military education *field*. Irish officers recognised that their military education was falling behind the standards of their contemporaries. The changing security environment necessitated a different approach to problem-solving. The sense that Irish officers were ‘out of touch’ with their profession is an example of Bourdieu’s concept of *hysteresis*. The *habitus-field* mismatch required a change in the *field* to rebalance matters. The recognition that an academic partnership could reverse *hysteresis* led to creating the new PME *field*, a *subfield* of both the military and higher education *fields*, where the work of forming a more ‘in tune’ *habitus* could begin.

*So what?*

These findings are significant because PME in Ireland has never been conceptualised as a *subfield* in this way before. Bourdieu’s *field* analysis has provided a unique analytical lens to examine the *doxa*, the implicit and taken for granted ideas about military education. It has helped generate new knowledge and insights that can be used to inform future decisions about PME. The historical analysis undertaken has proven worthwhile in developing an understanding of professional military education’s evolution and its contemporary form as a *subfield* of military and higher education.

The insights gained from mapping the *field* will also inform the next chapter, where the focus shifts to an analysis of how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts their professional practice. The military *habitus* is shaped in the PME *field*, so analysing the *field* is necessary to understand the social practices that emerge from it.

From a methodological point of view, mapping the *field* has been helpful in locating the military and education *fields* in the broader social space and in relation to each other. While the end product of *field* mapping is depicted in Figure 16, this diagram's simplicity belies the complex relations and analysis that informed its construction. Throughout this research, I have taken a 'qualitative' approach based on document analysis and interviews. This contrasts with other Bourdieusian approaches that use statistical and geometric data analysis to develop a spatial representation of the field and social space (Lebaron and Bonnet, 2013). Thompson (2012) posits that the *field* "must be understood as a scholastic device – an epistemological and methodological heuristic – which helps researchers to devise methods to make sense of the world" (p. 72). From my perspective, *field* mapping has helped me make sense of my professional world and to understand the social space PME occupies. Field mapping has also demonstrated how *symbolic power* is communicated and legitimated through policy and therefore, influences practice.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have addressed the thesis's first aim: to: *Map the field of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces.* Three

distinct strands of analysis were employed to answer the two research questions: *in what ways do the fields of military education and higher education intersect and what influences their relationship, and, how accreditation of accredited learning is reified in education policies and practices.* The three analytical strands were brought together to inform a diagrammatic representation of Ireland's PME *field*, which is depicted as a *subfield* of the military and higher education *fields*.

In the next chapter, the analysis focuses on achieving the second aim to *understand how military officers perceive their experiences of accredited learning and how it impacts their professional habitus.*

## Chapter 7 – Experiences of PME and How it Impacts the Professional *Habitus*: Findings and Discussion

### 7.1. Introduction

The findings and discussion in this chapter address the second aim of the thesis: to *understand how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts professional habitus*. Employing Bourdieu's tier-1 and tier-2 analysis (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), the previous chapter mapped the *field* of PME in relation to the *field* of power and mapped the positions occupied by military and higher education. This chapter focuses on tier-3 level analysis (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) as described in Chapter 4. In tier-3 analysis, the agents' *habitus* is analysed to understand how military officers perceive how their military *habitus* was formed and evolved through PME. This is achieved by employing the Bourdieusian concept of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) to explore how military officers describe their experiences of military socialisation and how PME impacts their professional *habitus*.

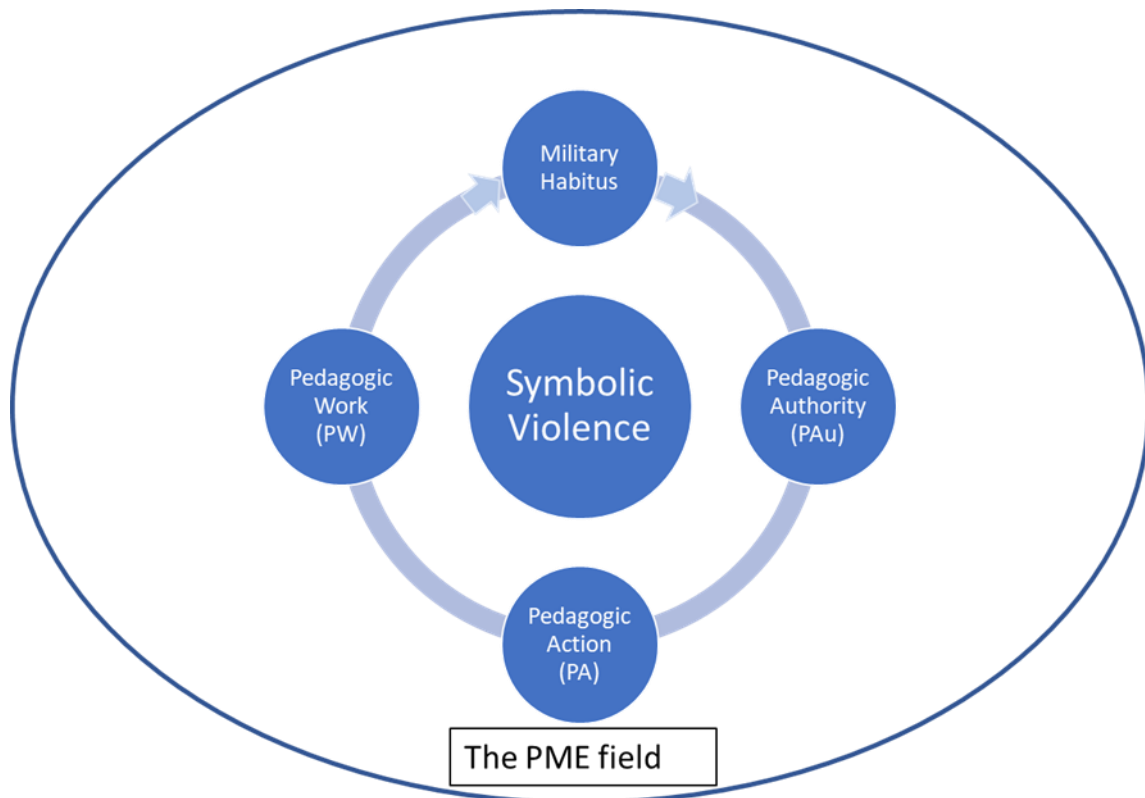
The focus of the analysis for the first part of this chapter is on the military *habitus* formation during Cadet Training. Cadet training is where army Cadets are socialised into the profession. Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* is applied to understand the socialisation process and its outcomes. The second part of this chapter focuses on how the military *habitus* acquired during socialisation evolves through further PME. *Habitus* evolution will be analysed by questioning participants about how they have changed due to their experiences of PME throughout their careers.

This chapter will compare data of the three participant groups: junior, mid-ranking, and senior officers. As with the previous chapter, interviewees are allocated a numerical code. MO identifies as a military officer, followed either a J for a junior officer, M for a mid-ranking officer, S for a senior officer (i.e. MOJ, MOM, MOS).

Part 1 begins with a recap of the model of *symbolic violence* introduced in Chapter 4. This model will be used as an analytical lens through which military *habitus* formation is examined. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) concepts of *pedagogic action*, *pedagogic authority*, *pedagogic work*, and *legitimate educators* are analysed in the context of the Cadet School as a total institution. Part 2 analyses the *habitus* evolution of army officers post initial socialisation. It examines how the initial military *habitus* evolves through PME experiences.

## **7.2. The formation of the military *habitus***

This section focuses on the formation of the military *habitus*. Bourdieu's concept of *symbolic violence* is a novel way of exploring the military's approach to *habitus* formation. I employ the *symbolic violence* model described in Chapter 4 as a framework for analysing how the *habitus* is formed in Cadet training and how it evolves through experiences of PME.



**Figure 17. Symbolic violence and *habitus* formation**

As explained in Chapter 4, this process suggests that *pedagogic action* or *symbolic violence* inculcates the *cultural arbitrary*. The Military College is the legitimate educational institution or *Pedagogic authority* given the power to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary*, and organisational norms in the socialisation process, through *pedagogic work*. The *pedagogic work* lasts long enough to produce a durable military *habitus* that conforms with the *cultural arbitrary*. The *habitus* created in young officers can reconstruct the PME *field* and its structures for the next generation, and so the cycle of cultural reproduction continues. This analytical framework helps to provide a novel sociological insight into why the organisation is as it is, and how it reproduces itself.



## ***Pedagogic action and forming the Military Habitus***

Bourdieu considers *habitus* a “structured and structuring structure” (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 170). *Habitus* influences our way of being, but it also influences and reproduces the structures that formed it. *Habitus* represents a useful analytical tool for examining how the military disposition is formed in initial training and how it may evolve through experience and education.

Bourdieu’s concept of *pedagogic action* is a helpful tool for understanding how an organisation can inculcate its values and norms into an individual. According to Bourdieu, “all *pedagogic action* (PA) is, objectively *symbolic violence* insofar as it is the imposition of a *cultural arbitrary* by an arbitrary power” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 5). They explain that *cultural arbitrary* imposition can occur through diffuse education (an educated social group or informal peer group), family education, and institutionalised education. For army officers, *pedagogic action* occurs through institutionalised military training and education, namely PME. Bourdieu argues that *pedagogic action* “seeks to reproduce the *cultural arbitrary* of the dominant or of the dominated classes” (p. 5). In the case of the Cadet School, the *cultural arbitrary* is based upon organisational values and the *doxa* of the military *field*. The rationale for inculcating the *cultural arbitrary* relates to an officer’s role in the “management of violence” or military force on behalf of the state (Lasswell, cited in Huntington, 1967), as discussed in Chapter 3. The potential requirement to use lethal force is explicitly stated in the Cadet School’s education ethos:

The underlying ethos of training on the Standard Cadet Course is based on the Defence Forces’ Values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity. The military officer must be prepared to apply and control lethal force and/or operate in a high-risk environment. This potential responsibility requires that the officer be not only tactically

and technically proficient, but he/she must also be informed and guided by a moral and ethical code, which demands the transcending of personal self-interest.

(The Defence Forces, 2021)

The objective of the Cadet course can be summarised as “the development of leaders of character and competence” (The Defence Forces, 2021). It is achieved in training by focussing on developing “self-confidence, inculcating pride in achievement, developing physical and mental endurance and providing a foundation for intellectual growth” (The Defence Forces, 2021). Cadet training aims to develop those characteristics and dispositions necessary for the military officers’ role. This form of socialisation is achieved by *pedagogic action* where new entrants are taught and are exposed to the *doxa* of the military *field*. Examining how the *doxa* and military culture is inculcated provides some understanding of the *habitus* that results.

### ***Pedagogic authority***

*Pedagogic authority* is viewed as “a power to exert *symbolic violence* which manifests itself in the form of a right to impose legitimately, reinforces the arbitrary power which establishes it and which it conceals” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 13). The Minister of Defence has overall responsibility for providing education to the Defence Forces. The minister is granted this authority through the Defence Act (1954), where he/she may “establish a Military College and so many other institutions as he thinks necessary for the training and instruction of members of the Defence Forces” (Minister for Defence, 2007, p. 27.1). For PME in the Defence Forces, the Director of Training and Education Branch designates the Military College as the agency with the *pedagogic authority* to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary*. The system of PME from the

Cadetship to the Senior Command and Staff Course can be considered as an “institutionalised system (ES)” that “must produce a *habitus* conforming as closely as possible to the principles of the *cultural arbitrary* which it is mandated to reproduce” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 57). Authority for conducting PME is delegated to specific military schools within the Military College.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the agency with the *pedagogic authority* to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary* into officer inductees or Cadets, is the Cadet School. As outlined in Chapter 4, socialisation in the Cadet School is considered secondary or tertiary socialisation. The *Syllabus of Training for the Standard Cadet Course* explicitly states that “the process of socialisation provides for the inculcation of ideas based on the values and culture of the DF” (DJ7, 2019, para 26). The Cadet School is granted its *pedagogic authority* through Defence Forces Regulations *DFR C.S.3. Military, Educational and Recreational Training*. Military instructors are the ‘legitimate educators’, tasked with inculcating the *cultural arbitrary* and the professional knowledge into the Cadets who are ‘the legitimate addressees’ (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 26). Roles and responsibilities for both instructors and students are explained in Defence Force Regulations, School Standard Operating Procedures, Training and Education policies, and codes of practices for instructors and students. These micro-level documents are what Bourdieu (p. 58) calls ‘teaching tools’ that serve to support and reinforce the *pedagogic authority* of military schools and instructors.

### *Establishing its Pedagogic authority*

*Pedagogic authority* is subtly established over Cadets from the moment they arrive at the Cadet School. MOJ103 describes the enduring ritual of the first day in the Cadet School, a process that has not changed much since the Cadet School was founded. The idea of this being different from starting any other job is highly symbolic, both for the individual and for their family. It shows the family that their son or daughter is about to embark on a different career as part of an important state institution. MOJ103, a junior officer, provides an insight into his experience of the first day in the Cadet School:

I suppose joining the Defence Forces isn't like a normal job. You don't bring your family with you on the first day of a normal job. So, I was met at the car by a Cadet who was one year ahead of me – luggage brought into the room, shown where I was staying, introductions to Staff, then the Cadet School Commandant [name withheld] got up and spoke. Teas and coffees - everything was very positive.... They break the mould for the first few weeks in phase one induction – it's gradual. It's a total shift from a civilian to a military mindset.

(MOJ103)

It was interesting to hear MOJ103 describe his arrival at the Cadet School and how the process has changed very little from my time, as described in the opening vignette. Military academies throughout the world have such enduring rituals. Military academies such as Sandhurst, West Point, Saint Cyr and many others are set within the walls of impressive classical or neo-classical buildings. Wortmeyer and Branco (2019) describe how upon entering the Brazilian Military Academy, “the person faces an environment impregnated with social suggestions ... decorated with artistic and warlike pieces that refer to myths of classical antiquity and events of national and institutional history” (p. 595). Similarly, the architecture, environment and the formality of the first day ritual in the Cadet School emphasise the institution's power, authority,

history, and national significance. In a Bourdieusian sense, it is an overt display of objectified cultural *capital* intended to impress. The polite conversations with instructors dressed in their Service Dress uniforms, and the formal welcome address by the School Commandant, are a potent display of cultural *capital* in an embodied form. For an outsider entering the military environment, the impression is lasting upon the potential Cadets and their families.

### *Accepting the Pedagogic authority as legitimate*

Attestation<sup>19</sup> is a significant administrative process completed within the first few hours of arriving at the Cadet School. During the symbolic ritual of military attestation, all inductees to the Defence Forces swear an oath solemnly declaring to “be faithful to Ireland and loyal to the Constitution and so long as I am a man of the Permanent Defence Force, that I will obey all lawful orders given to me by my superior officers...” (Minister for Defence, 1954). Huntington (1967) views this act as the subordination of the individual's values to the military organisation's values and the state. “Only rarely will the military man be justified in following the dictates of personal conscience against the dual demand of military obedience and state welfare” (Huntington, 1967, p. 78). The process of swearing an oath that places organisational needs above one’s own is not at the forefront of an inductee's thoughts when they join the military. It is only now that I really understand the ritual's meaning and symbology when I reflect on my experience of the attestation process.

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<sup>19</sup> Attestation is the formal process of swearing an oath of loyalty to the Constitution when joining the Defence Forces.

As an 18-year-old, I considered that attestation was just part of the process that needed to be completed when joining the Cadets. One aspect of my attestation that I remember vividly is that once I had taken the oath and signed the papers, the attesting officer referred to me from then on as Cadet Lawlor. I was now part of the organisation, subject to military laws, and I was no longer a civilian; I was in the Army and held the rank of Cadet. I had willingly, if somewhat unwittingly, committed to the Defence Forces' values and had formally recognised the institution and its instructor's *pedagogic authority* over me by taking the attestation oath. Attestation is the formal ritual or what Bourdieu calls "rites of institution" where I voluntarily recognised and committed to military values and laws (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 118). Bourdieu explains that:

By solemnly marking the passage over a line which establishes a fundamental division in the social order, rites draw the attention of the observer to the passage (whence the expression 'rites of passage'), whereas the important thing is the line.

(Bourdieu, 1991, p. 118)

During attestation, I had crossed a line in the social order that marks the boundary between the military and civilian world. Waiting for me on the other side of that line, was the military socialisation process.

### *Exercising Pedagogic authority*

Organisational values are learned in the Cadet School through the socialisation processes of cadet training. Jackson, et al. (2012) provide a helpful summary of what follows attestation, which is common in most military academies and basic training:

First, expectations for specific behaviors and norms are made explicit. New recruits are immersed in an extensive boot-camp program, in which their civilian status is broken down and the new identity of military recruit is forged. Second, an incentive structure is set up that rewards recruits who fulfil the expectations of military culture and punishes those who do not.

(Jackson, et al., 2012, p. 2)

The reward for successfully completing the *pedagogic work* associated with socialisation and acquiring professional knowledge during Cadet training is to progress to the next stage of the Cadet course. Cadets that have successfully inculcated the *cultural arbitrary* and have passed all tactical and academic assessments are recommended by the School Commandant of the Cadet School, to be commissioned as officers under the provisions of DFR A3 and the associated Administrative Instruction A3 (DJ7, 2019). The Cadet course culminates after 17 months (previously 21 months) with a highly symbolic commissioning ceremony. During the commissioning ceremony, Cadets receive a signed commission from the President of Ireland and swear the commissioning oath pledging loyalty to Ireland and the constitution. Commissioning is a process that Bourdieu calls an *investiture*. It “consists of sanctioning and sanctifying a difference (pre-existent or not) by making it *known and recognized*” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 119). Commissioning is a highly symbolic ritual or process of investiture that marks the passage of a Cadet, to a commissioned officer.

The process of investiture, for example, exercises a symbolic efficacy that is quite real in that it really transforms the person consecrated: first, because it transforms the representations others have of him (the most visible changes being in fact that he is given titles or respect and the respect actually associated with these enunciations); and second, because it simultaneously transforms the representation that the invested person has of himself, and the behaviour he feels obliged to adopt in order to conform to that representation.

(Bourdieu, 1991, p.119)

Bourdieu believes that processes of investiture, such as commissioning for an officer, act to transform the individual as they feel “obliged to comply with this definition, with the status of his function” (p. 121). Accordingly, even after socialisation is completed and the military *habitus* is formed, the institution of a rank continues to structure the *habitus*. It occurs as a young officer's professional and behavioural standards are expected to be higher than a cadet in training. Similarly, a senior officer's professional and behavioural standards are also expected to be higher than a junior officer's. The institution of rank achieves this by imposing behavioural boundaries or what Bourdieu (1991) calls *noblesse oblige*, which he explains as “acting in keeping with one's rank” (p. 120).

#### *Experiences of socialisation in a ‘Total Institution’*

MOJ107, a former instructor or, in a Bourdieusian sense, a ‘legitimate educator’ in the Cadet School, describes the rationale behind socialisation:

In the Cadetship, an awful lot of the focus is on military socialisation, so it's the induction course of coming into the military. So, for a Cadet starting their career to become a commissioned officer, the Cadetship is the mechanism for us to essentially switch that individual from being a civilian on day one, to adopting the military approach to work, to adopting military discipline through our military socialisation.

(MOJ107)

This participant is unequivocal about how the Cadet School has the *pedagogic authority* to change an individual by replacing the civilian characteristics and inculcating the military's *cultural arbitrary*. In a similar vein, MOM108 also describes how the socialisation experience changes the individual from civilian to military. The socialisation process begins by relinquishing your first name, a significant part of your



identity. Following attestation, taking on the Cadet rank is symbolic as it emphasises that the individual is now technically part of the military organisation, albeit occupying the lowest possible position in the *field*.

It was a big change; obviously, it's [socialisation] to take the civilian out of you, like some of the things that we weren't allowed to do, like you weren't allowed to use first names, so it was Cadet X or Cadet Y.

(MOM108)

MOJ112 suggests that change is unavoidable because of the arduous nature of the experience "there is no way, you can't but change from the Cadetship". The idea of 'switching' someone from being civilian to military, and changing their behaviour is fascinating. MOS111 believes that:

Anyone that survives a Cadetship, can't help but be socialised. You mightn't want it, you mightn't believe in it, but it does; it fundamentally achieves it. I think it's just the sheer immersion in the organisation and the values of the organisation, and the culture of the organisation.

(MOS111)

The idea of 'surviving' the Cadetship underlines the difficulty and robustness of Cadet training, which was a consistent message from participants.

MOJ107 explains the aim of the *pedagogic work* undertaken during Cadet socialisation:

There are certain graduate attributes that we need from our Cadets in relation to attention to detail, in relation to their personal organisation... as well as their leadership ability and their character and competence. So through the Cadetship, we either strengthen [them] in the individual, or if they are lacking, we instil in the individual through military socialisation and through basic induction training and through basic simulation tactical assessments.

(MOJ107)

Several participants describe how socialisation during Cadet training is designed to break you down and rebuild you into something the organisation wants. MOM108 describes a two-part process where once the individual is broken down and receptive, the process of rebuilding starts.

They try to break you down, and when they have you kind of indoctrinated in, and then they start to build you up into the soldier that they want.

(MOM108)

MOJ103 explains how early in Cadet training, the learning environment changes the mindset from civilian to military. As a relatively recent graduate of the Cadet School, his induction experience appeared to have been more gradual compared to mid-ranking and senior participants. MOJ103 describes his first few weeks:

They break the mould for the first few weeks in phase one induction – it's gradual, it's a total shift from a civilian to a military mindset. When you look back, you realise how funny they [the instructors] must have found it all, how ridiculous the situation was. But, it creates an environment that changes your mindset.

(MOJ103)

Reflecting on his Cadetship experience, MOM102 believes that the Cadet School should have focused on rebuilding the individual after breaking them down.

I'm in the army xx years, I have had time to reflect. I believe this approach [to socialisation] might be a little backward. Perhaps more effort could have been made to build confidence and develop our ability to problem solve rather than react quickly to constantly changing situations. Although reacting to constantly changing situations is achieved through some harsh training – that should be retained, but I think that if more of an effort was made to mentor, coach us and build us up rather than break us down, which is how we started out. I think that's an important point to make.

(MOM102)

Similarly, MOM106 also feels that the rebuilding of the Cadet was missing from his experience of a Cadetship. Interestingly MOM102 and MOM106 were members of

the same Cadet class and both believe that they were not 'rebuilt' during the socialisation process. This shows that different Cadet classes at the micro-level within the organisation can have different experiences, reinforcing Bourdieu's thesis that the arbitrary culture is indeed arbitrary.

Back when I was there, they would have talked about bringing a Cadet in and breaking him down, and building him back up to be a commissioned officer. I don't think that happened. I suppose it's not being negative in relation to the training, but it's one thing that they missed out on. It didn't happen until we arrived in a unit and spent time as an actual commissioned officer.

(MOM106)

MOM106's points about not being rebuilt until after he experienced unit life is particularly interesting as it suggests that socialisation into the organisation does not stop once the Cadetship is completed. It is an ongoing process throughout an officers' professional life, which this research demonstrates.

MOS104 contrasts his experience of socialisation in the Cadet School, which he believes to be outdated, with the educational approaches of other military academies.

He explains that:

Rather than just an exclusive educational model which you might see employed in other officer academies, there was very much an element of military socialisation in the Cadet School. It has changed significantly since the time we passed through there. I think at that time, it was very insular and very inward looking... they had a programme they wanted to deliver. It was very much about we want to score you, we want to grade you, we want to rate you against your peers, and we are going to deliver what it says in our syllabus of training whether we think it applies in this current context or not. So yeah, it was quite an interesting experience, probably it was looking back to an earlier time, I think.

(MOS104)

MOS104 believes that the Cadet School was not keeping pace with societal and educational developments. He and many other participants from the mid and senior ranks believe that the Cadet School had an insular approach to education. It appears that the focus of the Cadet programme based on his experiences was to achieve what was set out in the syllabus of training rather than dealing with contemporary military developments. The emphasis on assessment, testing and comparing performance with each other refers to the practice of 'norm-referenced assessment' or 'grading on the curve' (Knight, 2001). The literature on assessment identifies several problems with this form of assessment, mainly highlighting difficulties when assessing competence and "it does not provide an estimate of the absolute level of performance achieved" (Turnbull, 1989, p. 145). Since the Defence Forces collaboration with higher education institutions, norm-referenced assessment has now been replaced by the more accepted practice of criterion-based assessment; however, vestiges of the practice remain. Upon commissioning, officers are allocated an 'army number' based upon their overall class placing for performance in the Cadetship. This number follows the officer around for their whole career. It is a form of cultural *capital* used to determine seniority up to the rank of Captain.

### *The Cadet School a 'Total Institution'?*

The Cadet School has all the hallmarks of a 'Total Institution' described by Goffman (1961) and as described by civilian educators in the previous chapter. Several participants highlight practices in the Cadet School that are characteristic of a total institution. One of the recurring topics mentioned by participants was how Cadets are

cut off from their families and the rest of society for prolonged periods. MOM108 explains the nature of the regime in the Cadet School during the first three months:

Back then, no leave – the only time that you would get out of the Cadet School was a day pass to Dublin and then home for Christmas, which was the first time that you got home to wherever you are from. You also had long hours. There were early starts and late finishes, and a lot of the time, the tasks, the stuff you were doing was quite menial, a lot of cleaning, a lot of detailing, a lot of tidying, a lot of that kind of stuff.

(MOM108)

Similarly, MOS105 explains that the training programme was robust and packed. His first day pass was after 12 weeks.

At the time, you were not given a second really to think about it. From early in the morning until late at night, it's just go-go-go. You were told where to be, what way to be dressed, fitness training can be difficult, its go, go, go, high intensity all the time and really – it goes by in a flash, and again it was 2 or 3 months in before I realised that I was 2-3 months in. I think that was done deliberately, and I know still Cadet training is high intensity, but they have put a lot more work into it not being as big a shock on Day 1 when they arrive. Once you are in, the first day off was 12 weeks in [after starting].

(MOS105)

MOS106 reaction to a question on the socialisation process elicits a groan!

(Groan)– you go in and you don't go home until Christmas. That forced separation – an element of building group cohesion through hardship – they are trying to build group cohesion by setting the group against the instructors to a certain extent. There were often times when you were a Cadet that you forgot that the ultimate goal was to be an officer. You hated to see officers as a Cadet. You didn't want to see them coming because you knew there was going to be grief here.

(MOS106)

MOJ109 highlights how being confined to the Cadet School leads to an immersion in the military environment.

I suppose it's the fact that you are never leaving the Cadet School at the start, you are kept there, not going home in the evenings that you are in a

couple of weeks or months before you even get a weekend off. You are just totally immersed in the environment.

(MOJ109)

The word 'immersion' was used by several participants to describe the totality of their experience in the Cadet School. This idea links to Bourdieu's notion of censorship (Bourdieu, 1991), where the socialisation process is so demanding that there is little time or space to engage meaningfully in the outside world.

Participants stated that they were not permitted to go home during their first three months; however, they could be granted local leave at the weekends. Local leave is governed by strict rules relating to where the Cadet can go, what they must wear, and the leave pass duration. One of the more peculiar rules relates to how a Cadet is dressed while on local leave. MOJ107 provides an insight into the practice:

Cadets go on local leave in suits, tie and shirt – they are dressed very smartly, and people look at them and think that it's a very odd concept and that it's archaic. I personally don't believe that. I believe that from day one, we are trying to teach Cadets that you are different - you're different, that now you are a soldier in the organisation – you're no longer a civilian, so you carry yourself appropriately, you keep yourself clean and in an orderly fashion and when you're going out, you are representing yourself and the organisation and even a step above that again and even in a snobbery fashion, you are also an officer in the Defence Forces, you are not the same as a common man. I suppose there is a professionalism about you. It's a thing on how I perceive a commissioned officer should be and how I see a Cadet should carry themselves ... you should always take pride in how you conduct yourself in how you look and how you dress, and you are different from the enlisted ranks and there always has to be that boundary because you are superior [in rank] to them.

(MOJ107)

MOJ107's justification for making Cadets wear suits while on a pass serves as a 'distinctive difference' and an external reminder that they are different from the 'common man'. It is a practice which:

Underline the production of all practices, aimed, intentionally or not, both at signifying and at signifying social position through the interplay of distinctive differences, are destined to function as so many calls to order, by virtue of which those who might have forgotten (or forgotten themselves) are reminded of the position assigned to them by the institution.

(Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 123-124)

MOS104 is not convinced about the rules governing local leave for Cadets. He believes that socialisation can happen without resorting to such extremes. Indeed the sight of twenty-something Cadets, with tight haircuts, dressed in suits and overcoats, as they wander the aisles of Tesco's or Dunnes Stores looking for boot polish or brasso, must seem unusual today. He explains that even with such freedoms, the rules exclude and censor the Cadet from regular society.

Even though you don't get out, you go to Newbridge (the nearest large town) in a suit, and everyone goes together. You were set apart - you are going to follow our rules, you can go to Newbridge but, when you are in Newbridge, you are going to wear this. You won't go more than 10 miles from the Cadet School. You won't go into certain types of shops and this sort of restaurant. You can go into a hotel but, you can't go into a hotel bar ... just military socialisation; everybody does it. I think genuinely that military socialisation can be achieved without the levels that we sometimes went.

(MOS104)

Based upon the interviewees' accounts, the Cadet School conforms to Goffman's (1961) 'total institution' characteristics. It is closed off from the rest of society, and strict rules and regulations govern the Cadets. Participants highlighted that the military institution controls all aspects of a Cadet's life, like life in prisons, monasteries, and asylums. As Barnao (2019) observes, "within the four walls of these institutions that the individual members experience the totality of their daily relationships, and carry out their duties" (p. 293).

An interesting observation is made by MOS104, who found leaving the Cadet School and transitioning to unit life to be a challenging process:

It was a hard separation to be taken out of your Cadet bubble and your support mechanisms that you had in the Cadet School, and then you were in the unit – yeah it was definitely a month or two into it before you realised that at 1630hrs that you can leave here, get in the car and drive out the gate and no one is going to be looking for me. I can go home for the weekend and everything will be fine.

(MOS104)

The institution's total control over Cadets facilitates the inculcation of the cultural arbitrary through socialisation. The effect is so profound and lasting that newly commissioned officers must adjust to the most basic freedoms, such as going home from work in the evenings. In the case of this young officer, the *pedagogic work* undertaken in the total institution produced the desired military *habitus*. He felt he could go home at the weekend and everything would be fine, indicating his belief that he was more important, than he actually was. Bourdieu believes that acts of the institution “manage to make consecrated individuals believe that their existence is justified, that their existence serves some purpose” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 126).

A strong sense of purpose is instilled in Cadets during their training by the instructors who serve as the ‘legitimate educators’ in the Cadet School, whose role is analysed next.

### ***Legitimate educators - Instructors***

The legitimate educators in the Cadet School are the NCOs and officers that work in the Cadet School as military instructors, also known as Directing Staff (DS). They are responsible for the socialisation and technical education of the primary group, or Cadet class. Barnao (2019), citing Cockerham (2003), considers the primary group as



“composed of a limited number of people who have developed a common way of adapting to the environment and a common way of behaving in it” (p. 295).

MOM106 highlights the influence that the instructors have on a course and how it is conducted. He believes that a “big thing in relation to the Cadet School and courses in general, is the experience of the instructors”. He goes on to explain how his Cadet Class “were lucky enough to have very good, experienced instructors in the Cadet School NCO wise” however, there was a general fear of the officers:

We were so afraid, or I would even say petrified of some of the officers that were with our Cadet Class, that when you were sitting inside in a classroom with them – you were more concerned about being asked a question rather than sitting there learning from them.

(MOM106)

The word ‘petrified’ is an extreme description of the fear that this participant felt when in the presence of officer instructors. Sitting in a classroom and being fearful of being asked a question is not an environment conducive to learning. MOJ112 explains that “you were afraid of any mistakes, you were afraid of answering a question in case there is a repercussion”.

MOM102 recalls how initial socialisation was achieved in a harsh, highly disciplined environment driven by the instructors (legitimate educators). He also emphasises the role that fear played in ensuring obedience.

I think that it [socialisation] was achieved through a series of shocks. Each time it was a sharp and explosive and potentially, if not actually, violent experience. It scared us to the point of strict obedience, and I think that was the objective of the DS and instructors. Punishments for imperfections or underperformance were severe, and as I said, it was not actually violent; the fear of violence was actually a factor. We were deeply immersed in a zero defects environment.

(MOM102)

The phrase 'zero defects' was coined by Philip Cosby in 1979 in his book *Quality is Free* (Mind Tools, 2021) "Zero defects is a way of thinking and doing that reinforces the notion that defects are not acceptable" (para. 3.). This zero-defects approach, exercised in a total institution, meant that all aspects of a Cadets' existence were open to scrutiny and inspection. MOM102 points out that he experienced typical military induction training, which made his Cadet Class highly disciplined.

It wasn't bullying at all, but it was a harsh environment. It definitely made us a well-disciplined group and a very deeply cohesive bunch of people. It enhanced our understanding of what it means to be on a team and to work towards a common goal.

(MOM102)

The fact that this class was 'deeply cohesive' indicates that they had to work together to manage the environment. This observation supports Barnao's (2019) point that the group adapts to the environment and negotiates a common way of operating in it. Interestingly, he acknowledges the approach's effectiveness and carefully recognises that it was harsh and demanding training, not bullying.

### ***Pedagogic work***

In Chapter 4, it was identified that *pedagogic action* is achieved through the process of '*pedagogic work*':

PA entails *pedagogic work* (PW), a process of inculcation which must last long enough to produce a durable training, i.e. a *habitus*, the product of internalization of the principles of a *cultural arbitrary* capable of perpetuating itself after PA has ceased and thereby of perpetuating in practices the principles of the internalized arbitrary.

(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 31)

*Pedagogic work*, therefore, must be long enough to have a lasting effect on the *habitus* of the agent. Moore (2012) suggests that *habitus* formation and the cultural *capital* it provides through “the *pedagogic work* of the inculcation of the strict rules to the point that they acquire an embodied form” (p. 109). This means that *pedagogic work*’s effect on the *habitus* is enduring. The embodied *habitus* is important for military personnel, who are expected to be physically fit and robust. Barnao (2019) posits that rituals play a significant role in inculcating cultural norms during socialisation. He highlights that military rituals experienced by troops in training lead to blind obedience and dehumanisation. “Rituals teach automatic obedience and never to question orders and the rules of the instructor, of the group, and of the military institution in general” (p. 298). On the other hand, dehumanisation relates to rituals that develop “characteristics of dehumanization and desensitization in soldiers” (p. 299). Dehumanisation is typically associated with discipline and is experienced through physical punishments for the transgression of the rules.

### *Blind Obedience*

One of the main elements of *pedagogic work* undertaken by a Cadet in their first few months is learning foot and arms drill. During this part of training, Cadet instruction is based upon the psychology of ‘behaviourism’ that leads to blind obedience. As the name suggests, this philosophy is based upon “a relatively permanent change in behaviour as the result of experience” (Jordan, Carlile, and Stack, 2008, p. 21). Many of the tactics, techniques and procedures practised and taught in training and operations are behaviourist in nature. An environmental stimulus leads to a predetermined and immediate response. Instead of critical thinking and evaluating the

situation, the response is pre-reflexive, meaning it is “an individual's immediate, uncritical reaction to something prior to any conscious evaluation” (Chandler and Munday, 2021). This approach leads to classical conditioning, whereby a stimulus leads to the desired response. Calling a body of soldiers to ‘attention’ is a simple example. The stimulus is a voice command that generates a response where people immediately stop what they are doing, come smartly to attention, and remain at attention until commanded otherwise.

Similarly, every trained soldier knows the drill automatically if they come under effective fire. It is fire-dash-down-crawl-cover-observe sights-fire. These reactions are so engrained into individuals that they remain with them for the rest of their lives.

MOJ107 explains how the lessons learned during foot drills permeate behaviours outside the parade ground.

It starts with foot drill, and in that, you are taught to immediately react to a command and how to do it in a disciplined manner and a uniform manner working with a section or platoon or whatever the case is. So in that, that was far more than just learning foot drill or arms drill, that was instilling in you the reaction to a command - that you react immediately or without question to a command from a higher authority or command.

(MOJ107)

Drill conditions Cadets to immediately react to and obey orders when received. According to the Cadet course syllabus, almost 10% of programme time is dedicated to military drill and inspections. The second-highest time allocation of the eight military subject areas is for military drill and inspections. Obeying lawful orders is an intrinsic element of a Cadet's life and a feature of military life for everyone in the chain of command irrespective of rank.

## *Dehumanisation*

As mentioned above, dehumanisation is typically associated with discipline and punishments imposed by legitimate educators; however, it can also be associated with initiation rites such as hazing. Keller et al. (2015, p. 5) report on *Hazing in the US Armed Forces*. They highlight how the US Department of Defence developed a definition of hazing in 1997:

Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful...

(Keller, et al., 2015, p. 6)

This report into hazing in the US Armed Forces acknowledges that initiation ceremonies are part of military culture. Participants were not asked about hazing during interviews per se; instead, they were asked to describe disciplinary practices experienced during their cadetship. Punishments in the Defence Forces now adhere to the Training Instruction governing the *Military Codes of Practice for Instructors and Students in the Training Environment* (DJ7, 2014). The publication of this instruction is a welcome addition to the Defence Forces' 'teaching tools' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 58) that now govern the training environment. Before the publication of this instruction, codes of practice for instructors and students were less well defined. It is important to note that many of the punishments described hereafter predate the 2014 code of practice.

'Details' or 'interior economy' are the terms used to describe manual work that may be prescribed during or outside of programme hours. It can entail menial tasks such as

sweeping leaves, polishing classroom floors, cleaning windows, or other maintenance tasks. Details can have a practical value, such as maintaining the training facilities and preparing for upcoming training activities or cleaning equipment after exercises. 'Dirty details' is the term used for additional manual work and is usually given as a weekend punishment or outside of programmed time. Dirty details punishments ranged from digging a battle trench to scraping moss off the parade square. As they were completed on a weekend afternoon, they were particularly despised. MOJ107 calls details a 'humbling experience', which implies that they are a form of abasement used to show a Cadet where they are positioned in the *field*.

MOJ107 explains the rationale behind 'details':

Interior economy working in the evening – so for a Cadet at the time its just outside doing dirty details and maybe you don't realise why you are doing it, but really why you are doing it is because, its kind of a humbling experience in that you are responsible for your own patch, be it a Cadet in training, be it a Lieutenant overseas, be it a Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel overseas – you are responsible for your own patch so it's a humbling experience

(MOJ107)

MOM108 highlights the consequences of failing to meet the expected standards:

I mean, the standards were always set by the NCOs and officers like timings, cleanliness, inspections ... all that kind of stuff. Enforced then, I mean if you were kicked off parade, it would either be dirty details, extra details or the loss of local leave so you wouldn't be able to go into Newbridge at the weekend and this kind of thing. One thing that you had that they could take off you, was your time. So, most of the punishments were around that, be it in the evening time with extra cleaning details or the weekends with 'Rock' or weekend details or taking a weekend pass off you. Your time was the currency, and that's what you had to pay.

(MOS108)

'Rock' or 'Rock around the clock' was a particularly onerous punishment given to an individual or group. It required that the individual report to the Military College Guard Room on the hour, every hour, in a different dress code ranging from Service Dress No. 1 to full battle dress complete with all combat equipment. It involved running from the Cadet School lines (accommodation block) to the Guard Room, approximately 500m away. The duty NCO carried out an inspection, which was followed by a run back to the accommodation, change into the next specified dress code, and then repeat for the duration of the punishment, which could last throughout the night.

MOM106 believes that it is easy to instil discipline in a Cadet because of their status and position in the *field*.

I suppose how they imposed it was the risk of being punished and probably a little bit of intimidation as well. When you are a Cadet and you are the Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant or Captain, its very easy to instil discipline. In relation to punishment – push-ups or press-ups or writing out Chapter 1 of the MSD<sup>20</sup> – it's very easy to instil discipline in a Cadet.

(MOS106)

He also mentions the prospect of being back-classed for either not meeting the academic or behavioural standards:

**MOM106:** There were guys in our class, one in particular, that was back-classed very late, there were a few guys that left during the Cadetship. So if you're in an environment where there are people still leaving the course or worse, they are people being back-classed, towards the end of the cadetship, whether in your own head you are doing good, bad or indifferent, its always that thing in your head; that could be me next, when you see that happen to a guy three months before commissioning.

**Researcher:** It's interesting that up until the last minute, then that the threat of failing, the threat of being back-classed is there up until the last minute?

**MOM106:** We as a Cadet class would speak about this XX years later about the fear that we had for our class officer and the fact that we could have

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<sup>20</sup> Manual of Staff Duties

learned so much from him, and we learned very little from him because of that fear and that intimidation.

While the military prides itself on maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline, this can create tension in the learning environment. The threat of being back-classed to the junior class or of being discharged from the Defence Forces creates fear and anxiety amongst the cadet class.

MOS104 believes there was an imbalance in the time spent developing professional knowledge and time allocated to socialisation activities. He contends that too much time was spent on socialisation activities instead of developing expertise in weapons.

He says:

There is a requirement for a junior officer to be an instructor on all the weapons systems that are employed in an Infantry Platoon – that's tactical expertise and I think a junior officer really needs tactical expertise when they go to their Infantry Battalion for the first time. They need to be able to demonstrate tactical expertise and proficiency to troops in order to socialise in the Battalion and that was recognised in the syllabus of Cadet training, but I would have spent a multiple of the amount of time, than I would have spent on instruction on those weapons systems or instruction on Platoon level tactics – on activities that were much more focused on military socialisation for example.

(MOS104)

MOJ109 appears to be conflicted concerning giving corrective actions and believes that sometimes people have to 'suffer' to learn.

I think that when you are on the receiving end of it, you think that this is stupid, but then it actually works, and then I have seen where sometimes if things aren't hitting home, if they are still having ND<sup>21</sup>s, to make people take this as seriously as they need to, you have to do these awful things like make them do rock, make them dig trenches, make them do things, make them suffer to learn, which is terrible.

(MOJ109)

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<sup>21</sup> An ND stands for negligent discharge of blank or live ammunition.



MOS111 predicts that the process of socialisation in the Cadet School will not be acceptable in the future.

This isn't going to last much longer because we as an organisation aren't going to be allowed to bring civilians or people in and treat them like this. In terms of modern society, if you stand back and look at it as a practice, it's antiquated, as an ideal, it's antiquated. We are talking about values, we are talking about culture, we are talking about indoctrination, we are talking about literally repetitive... almost injury to your psyche, by doing things over and over and over again until you accept or leave. It's a full onslaught, and I actually do honestly believe that it's something that we are not going to get away with.

(MOS111)

In the military context, *pedagogic work* is understood as the learning activities, physical, emotional, disciplinary and academic, undertaken by a Cadet during training, whose purpose is to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary*. These activities and experiences are fundamental in producing the military *habitus*.

This part has answered RQ 2.1. and has explained how the military *habitus* is formed during initial military socialisation through the lens of *symbolic violence*. In the next part, I categorise the initial military *habitus* and how it evolves through subsequent PME experiences.

### **7.3. Military *habitus* evolution**

In part 2, I categorise the initial military *habitus* formed during Cadet training and then chart its evolution through subsequent PME. I provide a trajectory of the army officer's *habitus* as it evolves through PME experiences.

### ***Initial Military habitus***

Thus far, it has been established that *pedagogic action* is *symbolic violence* that inculcates the *cultural arbitrary* through *pedagogic work*. The *pedagogic authority* is granted to the Military College through Defence Force Regulations and individual attestation. This gives the Cadet School, a total institution, the *pedagogic authority* to conduct *pedagogic work* through its legitimate educators. The *pedagogic work* undertaken by the primary group ranges from socialisation to learning military subjects. *Pedagogic work* shapes the group's *habitus* through secondary socialisation. MOS111, a former instructor in the Cadet School, notes that there is a significant change in individuals in the course of the Cadetship:

It struck me when I trained the XX Cadet Class. It was just around the commissioning time, and we were reflecting on the individuals we had on day one and the group that we met 15 months later. When you look at that, standing back, it's [the change] phenomenal.

(MOS111)

The agents themselves also recognise this change by benchmarking themselves against their social group before joining the Defence Forces.

### ***Recognising individual changes***

When asked how he had changed through the Cadet School experience, MOS105 recalls:

When I went home and bumped into some of my school friends, I realised how much I had come on in just three months. They were still young lads who may have gone to college, maybe still working, who had just got their leaving cert results and were just 18-year-olds, and I realised that I had come on so much in a very short time – what I am talking about is my ability to make plans, to coordinate the issues, to deal with problems, to problem solve - to be far more grown-up. I realised that I was far more grown-up

than my contemporaries that were floating around maybe doing something. But I had to go home to realise that.

(MOS105)

Similarly, MOM108 compared his development to his social group before joining the Defence Forces and identified a sense of purpose as being a prevalent difference:

Discipline, I suppose like discipline, is the obvious one and easy one – you certainly learned about your own self-discipline and your time, and you also had a purpose. I can remember going home on leave and stuff and you'd be talking to your school mates that were in first year or second year in college, and they didn't know what they were doing next week, never mind next year, or when they graduated out of college. You certainly had a purpose and would have known what to expect in the next 5-10 years of life, and career etc. mapped out, and you would have known exactly where you were going – that for me would have stood out as one of the key things.

(MOM108)

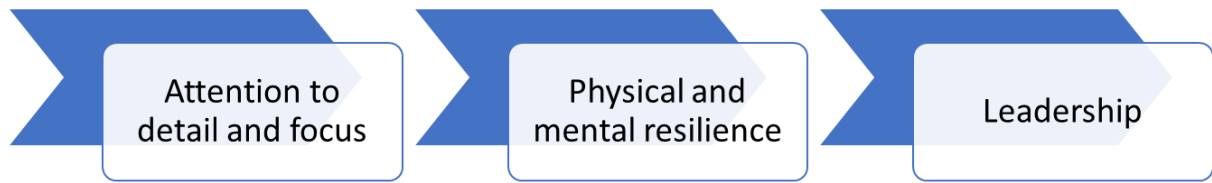
MOJ109 echoes the idea of having a sense of purpose and structure. She says that:

I am someone who loves a good structure to things and it's a space that I love operating in, not that there is a very direct plan for you, there is roughly a plan and what you can do and what you can achieve to get to where you want to go... I like the structure to it.

(MOJ109)

### *Initial military habitus*

In response to questions about how they had changed personally, some convergence of views were identified. The initial military *habitus* is the *habitus* produced through the *pedagogic action* of the Cadet School experience. Participants were questioned about how they had changed on a personal level through their Cadet School experiences. This elicited a wide range of answers with many commonalities that helped construct the *habitus* of officers post-Cadet School. Responses are grouped into three main features of the military *habitus* produced in the Cadet School, which are depicted in Figure 18:



**Figure 18. Initial military *habitus* formed during Cadet School socialisation**

### **Attention to detail and focus**

MOM102 identifies several changes brought about by his experiences in the Cadet School, including his attention to detail:

Well – severe changes for me (laughing). A couple of changes, attention to detail changed significantly. I had previously been in jobs where I thought that I was diligent at, but I think the Cadetship definitely changed my diligence, my effort, my focus, attention to detail,

MOJ107 plays elite level sport and notices that the Cadet School experience enhanced their focus:

The biggest comparison that I can make is that I have always played sports at a relatively high level and maybe I was a bit too *laissez faire* about things before I joined the military. But then, when I joined the military, I realised the amount of hard work that it takes, and I suppose a focus came into how I did things and how I approached things. I think that was the biggest thing that the Cadet School did, it really hones many of the attributes that the Cadet School looks to establish. Everything just got a lot more focused.

(MOJ107)

MOS104 completed 3<sup>rd</sup> level education before joining the Cadets. He recognises that his college experience would have been different if he had the same level of application that was required in the Cadet School.

You would have looked back and kinda thought, if I had this level of application when I was at college – my educational experience would have been different.

(MOS104)

MOS110 notes that because of his Cadet training:

If I was told to do something - I'd be as planned as organised as I could be, you know I'd recce out what need to be done, and I'd be aware that if I didn't do it properly, there would be consequences.

(MOS110)

The level of attention to detail and focus is a product of the socialisation process. Inspections on the parade square and in rooms require Cadets to make extraordinary efforts to pass the inspection. MOM101 highlights the difference between his comfortable working life before he joined the Cadets, and his socialisation experiences.

I went from that [working] environment fully consciously, where I had a 19-year-old Corporal screaming in my face in the Cadet School that there was dirt on the sole of my runners, and it was about as big as a disjuncture as you could possibly get.

(MOM101)

Because of such experiences, a level of focus and attention to detail becomes ingrained in the *habitus* of the cadet.

### *Resilience – physical and mental*

MOS104 highlights that his endurance and resilience were enhanced.

You were certainly more efficient and better use of time – you would have realised that you were capable of being up early in the morning and working until late at night and applying it. Your resilience would have gone up, your endurance would have gone up – at times your self-confidence would have gone up. Cadet training would have demonstrated to me that I was more capable physically, mentally and emotionally than I thought I was.

(MOS104)

MOS110 recognises that he was physically and mentally stronger. Resulting from the physical training and prolonged tactical exercises MOS110 found that he was

“definitely able for hardship, and a lot more independent”. MOJ103 also notes changes in physical fitness levels and that repetitive messaging was guiding his thinking.

I suppose there is definitely physical changes – you are fitter than before – you become quite conscious of the training that you received when you are home. So the environment is intense and the messaging is quite repetitive you are not a civilian anymore. You are in the army now – stop thinking and acting like a civilian.

(MOJ103)

Thus resilience was cultivated through physically and mentally demanding activities.

### *Leadership*

MOM102 recognises that the Cadet School experience developed his leadership and self-confidence; however, he did not realise it at the time.

The bit that was lacking I think, was my personal self-confidence and my leadership skills and they did that. They certainly imprinted those skills on me – did I realize that at the time – no – I was far from the finished article.

(MOM102)

MOJ103 explains how the leadership training and education that he received in the Cadet School helped him to take on leadership roles when working with his peers in college:

You know you can perform – when you are in university, commerce would have been a lot of group work and group essays and that – I would have found that there would be a lot of pussy footing around in the group, should we do it this way or do that. I think that as an officer you have leadership here just to cut out the time wasting at the start. Identify the problem, identify the tasks, delegate the tasks, agree a timeline and just take away all the politeness almost, to be crude about it. For civilian teenagers it wouldn't have been natural for them to step up - this is the way its going to be ... not that you were authoritarian about it – all anyone wanted was to get the essay done to a good standard in the shortest time possible and then move on – but they wouldn't grab it. You identify that the vacuum is there and being willing to step into it.

Through the *pedagogic action* of the Cadet course, participants noted substantial change between their civilian and military selves. A wide range of changes were noted, however, there was broad agreement in the data around the features of attention to detail and focus, physical and mental resilience, and leadership. These features are listed in the Cadet course syllabus as desired competencies for officers of Lieutenant rank (DJ7, 2019), indicating that the processes of *symbolic violence* produce the desired outcomes for the military.

#### **7.4. Section 2 - *Habitus* evolution**

This section examines the evolution of the military *habitus* by analysing how participants describe their overall experience of PME throughout their careers. Military officers experience PME after the Cadet School while attending accredited career courses in the Military College. It is beyond the scope of this work to examine the effect that short tactical or skills-based courses have on the *habitus* evolution. Also, the influence of the USAC<sup>22</sup> experience on *habitus* evolution is not incorporated. Gibson (2020) comprehensively studied the USAC scheme and its origins for his PhD thesis *Socialisation, Role Theory, and Infrapolitics: Officers of the Irish Defence Forces and Civilian Higher Education since the 1960s*. He concluded that “higher education was not necessarily an impediment to military socialisation, and certainly the evidence did not suggest that higher education was a place of desocialisation in its own right”

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<sup>22</sup> USAC stands for University Scheme Army Compliment which is the Defence Forces unit that manages the accommodation and attendance of non-graduate officers at 3<sup>rd</sup> level education.

(Gibson, 2020, pp. 298-299). This finding supports Bourdieu's notion of the durability of the *habitus* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) and how it has been enacted in the military context.

### ***Land/Junior Command and Staff Course experiences***

After the Cadetship, the first accredited PME course is the Land Command and Staff Course. The purpose of the LCSC is to provide officers of Captain rank, with the qualification for promotion to the rank of Commandant and with the knowledge, skills and competencies to hold command and staff appointments at that level (The Infantry School, 2015). Upon completing the programme, graduates are awarded a Higher Diploma (HDip) in Contemporary Security and Defence Studies, by Maynooth University. The LCSC is residential, with students accommodated in the Military College throughout the 24 weeks of term time. It is a very intensive learning experience as students are expected to devote considerable time and effort to their studies. Additional study time is provided by including an 'Orientation Seminar' typically eight weeks before the course commencement. This two-day seminar marks the start of the programme, where students receive introductory lectures and are issued with assignments and detailed reading lists, which enables them to begin their reading/research before the commencement of the residential period of the programme. I completed the course in 2009 and then served as a senior instructor in the Officer Training Wing from 2012-2016.



A consistent set of messages emerged from the interviews around LCSC experiences. All responses were positive, with many, overwhelmingly so. MOM101 notes that it was:

Excellent, superb, genuinely excellent and anyone who I have met I have said the same. Both personally and professionally, it was a fantastic six months.

(MOM101)

MOM102 contends that it was the best military course he has undertaken:

I completed my JCSC slightly earlier than the majority of my class, and it still remains the best course that I have undertaken in the army to date. It was a thoroughly educational and enriching experience that professionalises the junior officer to take part in staff work at the tactical, operational and even strategic levels.

(MOM102)

Similarly, MOM108 claims that the LCSC was one of the best courses that he has completed. This was somewhat unexpected for him as the course had suffered from a bad reputation and was particularly challenging in a demanding learning environment, where pressure and workload were a constant feature.

I found that to be one of the best courses that I've done, not what I was expecting to get from it at all because back then, it was considered a beaster<sup>23</sup>.

(MOM108)

MOM104 also was surprised that he enjoyed the course. He highlights the valuable education opportunity the course presents to acquire a level-8 qualification.

I found it to be excellent – I really, really enjoyed it – I know anecdotally that people didn't enjoy it and would have complaints about it. I thought that it was an amazing opportunity to be taken out of your working life for six

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<sup>23</sup> In the military a 'beaster' refers to an arduous or unpleasant activity.

months and for your organisation to give you a six-month graduate-level course. I don't think that there is any other employer in Ireland that does that for their personnel.

(MOS104)

MOS105 completed the course before it was accredited and felt the course was too focused on internal matters.

I did learn a lot and I felt at the end of it as a Captain /Comdt that I could go into any staff job anywhere at home or abroad and I had the tools to do the job...any job. I was given the proper amount of information – at the same time I didn't feel that the junior course put enough emphasis on critical thinking – it wasn't affiliated with an outside agency at that time and it was too insular – it was purely military and I think that an injection from an outside agency would have made for better learning.

(MOS105)

Participants were very positive about their overall experience on the Land Command and Staff Course. The course suffered from a bad reputation in the past; however, changes in its structure and educational approach considerably improved it. Accrediting the course through Maynooth University substantially changed how the course was delivered and it provided the broad external outlook it needed.

### ***Senior Command and Staff Course/Joint Command and Staff Course***

The next course undertaken is the Senior Command and Staff Course. Defence Forces regulations provide the Command and Staff School with the *pedagogic authority* to conduct PME for senior officers in the Defence Forces. This is achieved by delivering the Senior Command and Staff Course, recently renamed the Joint Command and Staff Course. A Joint Command and Staff Course is conducted annually in the Command and Staff School. The course is accredited at postgraduate

Level-9 MA standard “incorporating relevant academic, critical thinking, operational-level, defence management and leadership skills, in order to prepare officers for command and higher defence management roles, nationally and internationally” (DJ7, 2018, p. 6).

MOS105 speaks positively of accreditation and how the course exposed him to ways of thinking outside of the military. It is something that he observed as lacking during his Junior Command and Staff Course.

Subsequently, on the Senior Command and Staff Course it was affiliated with Maynooth and we had X amount of lectures in Maynooth or we had a lot of external lecturers coming into the Military College. I think that it gave a better-rounded approach to education, especially being outside of the military environment because you are teaching officers to think in a different manner, therefore, you should remove them from the military insular type institutions we have.

(MOS105)

MOS110 felt that the course prepared him well to perform his role and to develop further.

I did the old version of the Command and Staff Course, apart from the 8-9 weeks of the TEWT<sup>24</sup> assignments, I found it to be very beneficial. Again, there was a very good academic focus, and to me, in my opinion, it was focused on the right areas. When you come off the course, you would be in a better position to fulfil your role and develop.

(MOS110)

MOS111 acknowledges the role played by the class and the informal peer learning that takes place on the Joint Command and Staff Course:

It’s the one huge thing I got from the Senior Command and Staff Course, is the knowledge and experiences of others and the skills, you could clearly see the skills they had gained throughout their career, not being the same

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<sup>24</sup> TEWT Tactical Exercise Without Troops is a military wargame or training exercise not actively involving the deployment of troops. It focuses on planning and execution of military operations.

strength and skills I had. That was interesting and actually, was very educational, if that makes sense as some people, are good at some stuff, and they were able to put their speak into it or explain it to you, so you got an awful lot more from it.

(MOS111)

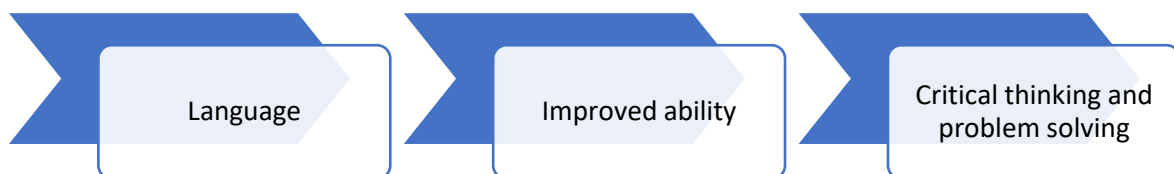
MOS111 believes that the Defence Forces do not have the academic background or expertise to deliver the academic subjects on the syllabus. He contends that the military should focus on teaching the military-specific subjects well.

I think personally, we haven't developed the academic background. So on the senior course, I think that some of that and the most recent iteration of it are probably getting better. Leave the academic [subjects] to the academics, we do skills and drills, we do education of MDMP, planning processes, all of that, yes that's our bread and butter, the education stuff is very specialised and to do it well it needs to be...we need to be at the top of the game.

(MOS111)

### ***Habitus Evolution through PME***

When participants were asked how they had changed through PME post the Cadet School (Land Command and Staff Course and Joint Command and Staff Course), their answers clustered around three distinct areas highlighted in Figure 19. These areas are language, improved ability, and problem-solving and critical thinking.



**Figure 19. Military *habitus* evolution**

## *Language*

MOM101 identifies that the Land Command and Staff Course gave him access to a professional language used by his superiors. He notes that senior officers use the language and concepts associated with the Military Decision Making Process or Operational Planning Process.

I have found that senior officers talk a different language – they talk the language by in large that they were taught on their own senior course or junior courses. Courses of action, positives and negatives, the way in which they structure thinking at times is driven by this process.

(MOM101)

He acknowledges that he was a better staff officer because of the PME he experienced.

I felt a much better staff officer in the months after completing the course – dealing with problems using the language that I had been taught on the course and the critical methodology.

(MOM101)

MOM102 also identifies that the Land Command and Staff Course provided him with the means to engage with his superiors.

It also meant that I was able to speak the same language as senior officers and that was commented on several times when a captain undergoes the Junior Command and Staff Course sometimes they refer to him as a real captain or a professional captain. I didn't understand this before the course, but, after the course I felt that senior officers treated me very differently, because I could understand a certain language that they possessed.

(MOM102)

The notion that a Captain that has completed the Land Command and Staff Course is considered a 'real' Captain means that this qualification is recognised as significant cultural *capital* within the organisation.

While MOJ103 has not completed a staff course, he believes that the Infantry Young Officer's Course exposed him to a military language spoken internationally when on overseas operations.

I think the YO provides you with a military language that you don't even realise you are learning at the time, but when it all kicks off overseas, all of a sudden the language changes between international officers and you realise that I have this. The stars are now aligning – that's where I think I see the benefit of it.

(MOJ103)

Bourdieu makes some interesting observations on language and how it relates to power. He notes that "it is the access to the legitimate instruments of expression, and therefore the participation in the authority of the institution, which makes *all* the difference" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 109). This appears to be the case with MOM102 who distinguishes between a "real Captain or professional Captain" i.e. Junior Command and Staff Course qualified, as opposed to a Captain who has not completed the course. His belief that he was treated differently by his superiors reinforces the notion that "language and social life are inextricably linked" as John B. Thompson observes in the editor's introduction to *Language and Symbolic Power*, (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 1).

### *Critical thinking and problem solving*

MOM102 believes that learning how to use the MDMP influenced how he solved problems after the course. The decision-making process gave him the tools to make quick or more considered decisions as the situation dictated.

The JCSC gave me a broad and thorough knowledge of a variety of military subjects in particular the MDMP, so that meant that my approach to decision making and problem solving after the course in dealing with challenges that arise day-to-day, was far more streamlined and structured and I felt that I could react to respond to adverse situations quickly or

alternatively apply a calmer methodical analysis of the problem in equal measures

(MOM102)

MOS104 highlights that his thought processes are considerably more critical because of his PME. He points out that critical thinking and creativity are required to address organisational-level problems. Interestingly, he notes that an officer with a well-rounded education is essential for operating at that level.

As you progress through the rank structure – critical thinking analysis and creativity become more important when you start to deal with organisational level problems. You are required to break them [problems] down into their constituent elements – when you are required to provide rounded advice to strategic leaders which takes cognisance of our relationship with the government, the Department of Defence what we represent to the country. I think certainly at that point, a more rounded educated officer is valued. Maybe it comes later on in your career, maybe its more important to be smarter the longer you stay in the organisation, because you have the capacity to do more damage the longer you stay in (laugh).

(MOS104)

MOS105 believes that one of the main benefits of the Joint Command and Staff Course was that it provided him with a new way of solving problems that employs NATO's Operational Planning Process.

There are a lot of aspects to the JCSC – but the overall pro was the new method that I have been given to approach problems and problem-solving. I think it is very well rounded and can be applied in a multi-facet way. I have used it abroad [overseas] – I have used it on exercises. But I do think it works - that's a big pro. That problem-solving technique and approach to a broader problem and how things work is very important.

(MOS105)

### **Improved ability**

MOM108 notes how PME helped him grow in confidence and improved his abilities as an officer.

I suppose I have grown in confidence and your ability – confidence and ability are two big ones. You know that what you have achieved on your course and you know the feedback that you get at the end of the course and even at the end of the year if its not a course year, you can track how you've grown and your ability has grown very easily. And with that, comes the confidence. Also a key thing that we have in our organisation is the variety of work – back to what we have laid out there at the start. The different appointments the variety of what I've seen all of that builds towards your professional military education. Its everything combined – we're lucky that we have that variety in some ways.

(MOM108)

MOS102 points out that completing the Land Command and Staff Course has given him the knowledge and skills to perform his role both at home and overseas. He notes that PME:

Has updated and enhanced my professional knowledge and skills. It has given me an opportunity to develop my leadership skills it has improved my self-confidence, it has given me a broader and deeper knowledge in areas that I know are important to the state and to effect the conduct of our training and operations at home and overseas and particularly, overseas. A thoroughly good, sound military education has enabled us to participate in multinational operations for years and years and the more professional it [PME] gets the more we can contribute. And Irish staff officers and NCOs contribute quite a lot to multinational operations – I have seen that at first hand.

(MOM102)

MOM108 was serving as in an operations role overseas at the time of the interview. He notes that the Land Command and Staff Course prepared him very well for the role. He associates being qualified for the role with giving him confidence to apply what he learned.

Like it's putting the theory into practice for real. I suppose the job now like you could not be in a more perfect job for what the Junior Command and Staff Course meant you to do in a lot of ways. I think the real thing that it gives you from those courses is a lot of confidence, in that you know that you know the subject matter very well and that you apply it and not only that you can apply it under stress or under strain, you never don't deal with perfect scenarios or perfect solutions you just kick the ball in front of you and you play the ball. You know what you've learned or what you've seen



before or what has the team that you've built around you'll come up with a very workable or a good solution to every problem that you have.

(MOM108)

MOS111 recently held a critical operations role in the Middle East. He notes that the Senior Command and Staff Course prepared him very well for this appointment. He notes that working with his staff was:

It's like being on a senior course again with 5-6 people that could work with you. You are predominantly doing all the planning, at the broad concept level which you would do the course and that made it excellent. It meant that you were in the middle of everything, you were able to compete with the Major General and Brigadier General in terms of providing product, providing guidance, providing advice and at the same time you were able to work with Captains and Lieutenants giving them direction. So, I think in that sense, the Senior Course was excellent.

(MOS111)

It is interesting that participants mainly focused on their overseas experiences to describe how their PME impacted their professional practice.

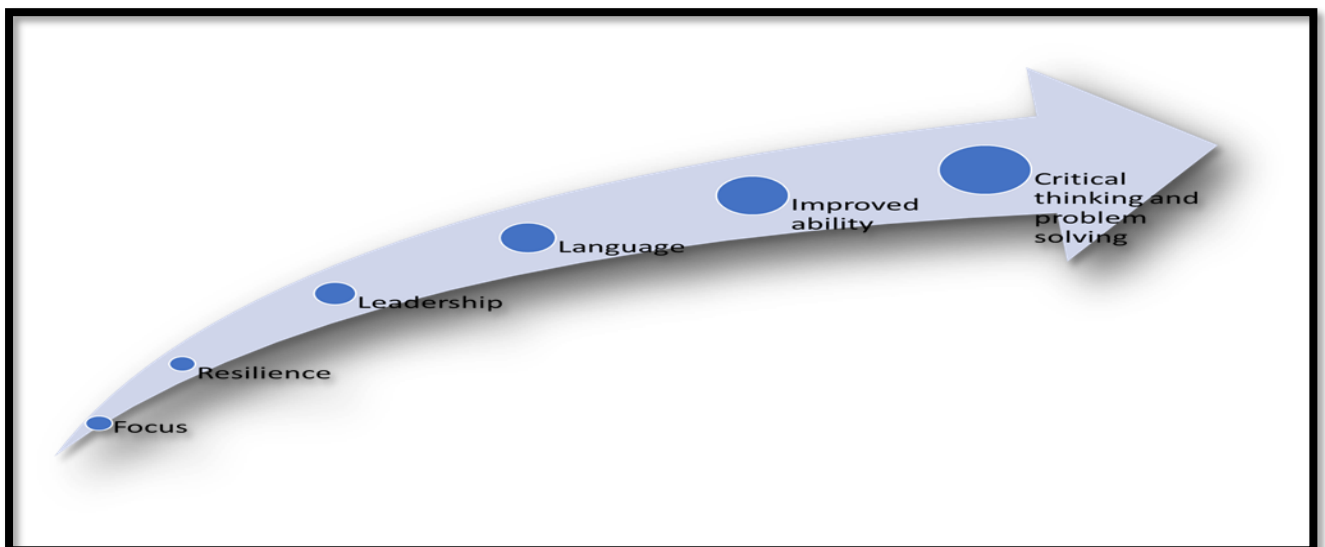
### **Summary**

As several of the participants mention, PME appears to provide officers with the requisite knowledge and skills to operate successfully in a multinational environment. Overseas operations are the ultimate arbiter for Irish PME. The military *habitus* produced during military socialisation evolves through experience and PME to create a *habitus* appropriate for the *field*. Bourdieu points out that “the *habitus* as a feel for the game ... is the social game embedded and turned into second nature” (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 63). From a practical viewpoint, this means that an agent's *habitus* fits the *field*, so they are like a “fish in water”.

[W]hen *habitus* encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a "fish in water": it does not feel the weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted could, to make sure that I am well understood, explicate Pascal's formula: the world encompasses me (me comprend) but I comprehend it (je le comprends) precisely because it comprises me. It is because this world has produced me, because it has produced the categories of thought that I apply to it, that it appears to me as self-evident.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 127-128)

Based upon participant responses, PME currently produces a suitable *habitus* for the army officer, especially when deployed on overseas operations. An army officer is a product of an operations-focused PME, so is comfortable working in that environment. Maton (2012) points out that it must be acknowledged that both *fields* and *habitus* are evolving. For the Defence Forces, this means that PME can not remain static. It must be responsive to the evolution of *fields* that impact it. Figure 20 depicts the trajectory of the military *habitus*.



**Figure 20. Military *habitus* trajectory**

The *habitus* produced through PME is subjective and is based upon individual experiences. The professional experiences of officers in the Defence Forces through

PME are broadly similar, so there is some agreement on the features of the military *habitus* produced. The *habitus* produced in the Cadet School is that of a focused, physically and mentally resilient young leader imbued with organisational values. These values guide behaviour and structure thinking, ensuring that the young officer conforms to the norms of the organisation. This *habitus* evolves through PME to produce a professionally capable officer with high problem-solving and critical thinking ability levels, that is educated to perform in a variety of roles.

## **7.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter, the thesis's second aim was addressed: *Understand how military officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts professional habitus*. It was achieved by using Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* and its processes as a lens to understand PME's role in *habitus* formation and evolution for Defence Forces officers. From a methodological viewpoint, the findings indicate that *symbolic violence* and its processes of *pedagogic action*, *pedagogic authority*, *pedagogic work* are useful sociological tools for analysing social institutions such as the military. The findings indicate that the *habitus* evolves through PME and increases the professional competence of agents, leading to a *habitus – field* match or "fish in water".

In the final chapter of this thesis, I draw together and discuss the three levels of analysis employed to answer the research questions posed. I will then provide recommendations for defence policy and PME, based upon my critical evaluation of the research. I will also outline my original contribution to knowledge, both empirically

and methodologically. Finally, I provide my reflections of the EdD journey and how I have changed as a result.

## Chapter 8 – Conclusion

### 8.1. Introduction

As an instructor in the Military College, I have been engaged in military education since 2012. In this role, I have been preparing army officers to work in the complex operating environment that characterises military operations today. The dynamic operational domain presents significant challenges for armed forces. I believe that military education is a key enabler in helping the Defence Force fulfil operational roles both at home and overseas. Despite the critical role played by PME in the Irish context, surprisingly little is known about the PME *field*, how it was formed and evolved, and its influence on military learners. There are significant research gaps in PME and how PME experiences impact the professional *habitus*. This work has attempted to address these substantial knowledge gaps.

Utilising Bourdieu's three-level approach (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104-107), this study explored the Irish Defence Forces approach to Professional Military Education for army officers. It mapped the PME *field* in Ireland, then explored how army officers perceive their experiences of PME and how it impacts their professional *habitus*. PME was deconstructed to understand the intersection of the military education *field* and the higher education *field* and the military officer's experience of being a student at this intersection. This research raises key sociological questions about PME, the military socialisation process, and how PME reproduces the military *field*.

In this concluding chapter, I first respond to the research aims and questions stated at the beginning of this research. Then, the overall research approach is evaluated,

including a statement of this work's contribution to knowledge, its strengths and limitations, and recommendations for research, policy, and practice. This is followed by a brief overview of my dissemination plan and, finally, some concluding remarks.

## **8.2. Review of the research aims**

In this section, I evaluate to what extent the research aims were achieved. The first aim was to:

### **1. Map the *field* of PME in Ireland with specific reference to accredited learning in the Defence Forces.**

Before the Defence Forces engaged with Maynooth University, the military and higher education *fields* had little or no interaction. They occupied their respective places in the social space, independent of each other. The drivers for accreditation in the late 1990s and early 2000s forced a change in the military education *field*. Irish officers recognised that their military education was falling behind the standards of their international contemporaries. Also, the changing post-Cold War security environment necessitated a different approach to problem-solving. The sense that Irish officers were 'out of touch' with their profession exemplifies Bourdieu's concept of *hysteresis*. The *habitus-field* mismatch required a change in the *field* to rebalance matters. The recognition that an academic partnership could reverse *hysteresis* led to creating the new PME *field*, a *subfield* of both the military and higher education *fields*, where the work of forming a more 'in tune' *habitus* could begin.

The approach to mapping the *field* drew upon three relevant strands of analysis to inform the construction of a *field* map. This map depicted PME's location in the broader social space. The first strand of analysis focused on analysing the historical context

of military education, the second focused on the experiences of the intersection of military and higher education, and the third examined the policy context. The findings of these three analytical strands informed the diagrammatic representation of Ireland's PME *field*. The key finding from this section is that PME is a *subfield* of both the military and higher education *fields*. The *subfield* status means that "while following the overall logic of its *field*, [it] also had its own internal logics, rules and regularities (Thompson, 2012, p. 70). It is not a bounded-off, fully autonomous, independent space. Instead, PME is somewhat dependent on the larger *fields*. This is borne out in the findings showing how international and national HE policies influence the PME *field*, demonstrating the *symbolic power* of European higher education policies. Furthermore, it explains how the internal logic of the Defence Forces *field* and its imperatives and policies impact PME.

The first strand of analysis focused on the history of military education for officers. At various times in its history, the organisation was going in the right direction educationally, only to shy away and maintain the status quo. This is illustrated when initial attempts to locate the Military College adjacent to a university were abandoned in the 1920s. Furthermore, when the Military College engaged with the NCEA and achieved institutional status in 1988, the organisation failed to build upon and exploit the opportunity of becoming an accrediting institution. The fact that the NCEA award only applied to the cadetship and was discontinued in 2007 demonstrates a lack of confidence and vision to recognise this opportunity's potential.

In the late 1990s, internal and external factors raised the issue of accreditation of military courses once again. Accreditation's drivers were identified in the data as benchmarking, the changing nature of the contemporary operating environment, and quality assurance. These factors primarily came from the officers themselves, and

this 'bottom up' approach drove the accreditation agenda and continues to influence Irish military education today. The compelling drivers for accreditation caused the military education and higher education *fields* to intersect and form a new PME *subfield*.

Maynooth University Registrar partnered the Command and Staff School with the Adult Education Department at Maynooth University because of Adult Education's radical pedagogical philosophy and experience of working with marginalised groups, as discussed in Chapter 6. Radical pedagogy, its associated research methodologies, and ideas about knowledge were suitable for Defence Forces' needs at the time.

There are many lessons to be learned from the experiences of bringing together these two vastly different organisations. Based upon the interview data, the relationship appeared to follow the first three stages of Tuckman's (1965) model for team development: forming, storming and norming. A fourth phase, 'evolving', was identified in the data to illustrate how the relationship has changed in response to a formal contractual agreement between the Defence Forces and Maynooth University to deliver Joint Command and Staff Education.

Cultural differences were highlighted early in the relationship as a source of tension between both partners. As a total institution, the Defence Forces was unaware of its cultural differences and how out of sync it was with society. The organisation was also mostly unaware of its substantial knowledge base. What the organisation assumed as tacit knowledge and organisational *capital* was largely unquestioned and unexamined. Partnering with an HEI created awareness of the Defence Forces' knowledge base and organisational *capital*. Furthermore, it provided a safe academic space where



internal and external issues could be examined and interrogated in a scholarly way, thereby generating new Mode 2 knowledge (Gibbons, et al., 1994).

The new contract between the Command and Staff School and Maynooth University has significantly improved the partnership. It provides stability and allows for medium-term planning. It represents a model for other schools in the Military College to replicate. The last part of the evolving phase focused on the Military College's role in the overall education management. The contract between Defence Forces and Maynooth University has played a significant role in the evolution of officer education in the Command and Staff School. The stability and benefits it gives to both partners can be understood as a state of homology in the *field*, with both agents occupying equivalent positions.

The importance of PME is acknowledged in Defence Policy and is emphasised in the subordinate documents that manage education. *Field* analysis has helped identify problems in the *field*, such as the turnover of military instructors. It explains why this problem occurs, i.e., the internal logic of the Defence Forces *field* and its HR policies. Several interviewees mentioned the high turnover of military teaching staff as a source of tension. McGinn (2020) points out that the high turnover of staff “can result in issues of continuity for both the students and University staff” (p. 6-7). The findings also indicate that the Military College requires substantial reform in how it is organised and operates. Staffing in the Military College is a significant problem that the Defence Forces needs to address. Another concern raised by military educators relates to ‘doctrinal’ deficiencies and how the lack of doctrinal management structures results in substantial knowledge loss. Unless the Defence Forces capture and codify its doctrine, it risks losing this valuable knowledge.

Chapter 3 highlighted how military professionalism arose because wars in the seventeenth hundreds became too complex to be waged by willing amateurs. In a similar vein, PME has become too complex to be managed and delivered by willing non-experts. PME requires professional military educators to teach and manage education and codify its knowledge in doctrine for the organisation to get a meaningful return on its investment in education.

**RQ 1.2. How is the accreditation of learning in the Defence Forces reified in education policies and practices?**

The analysis focused on the Macro (International), Meso (national), and Micro (institutional) levels for this question. This analysis demonstrated that European higher education policy has influenced Irish military education through exercising its *symbolic power*. European education policies have been a significant driver of the accreditation agenda at the macro level. European policies have also influenced the meso-level national education policies and Defence Policy, which informs the Defence Forces' approach to professional military education. PME policies and practices are reified at the micro-level in a steep hierarchy of bureaucratic documents that guide training and education in the Defence Forces. These documents have adopted national-level quality assurance standards, ensuring that the Defence Forces fully comply with higher education standards and the intent of the macro-level policy.

**2. Understand how army officers perceive their experiences of PME and its impact on their professional *habitus*.**

**RQ 2.1. How is the military *habitus* formed during initial military socialisation?**

Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) and its processes was employed as an analytical lens to understand PME's role in *habitus* formation and evolution for army officers. Conceptually, the findings demonstrate that *symbolic violence* and its processes of *pedagogic action* (PA), *pedagogic authority* (PAu), *pedagogic work* (PW) are helpful thinking tools for analysing social institutions such as the military. The process of *symbolic violence* is depicted as a cycle in Chapter 4, as it shows how the Defence Forces reproduce itself.

*Pedagogic authority* is granted to the Cadet School through Defence Forces Regulations which grants authority to inculcate the *cultural arbitrary*<sup>25</sup> into cadets. This research demonstrates that the Cadet School can be considered a total institution where all aspects of the Cadet's life is managed in a highly disciplined environment. The inductee formally commits to the military during attestation by swearing an oath of loyalty to Ireland and the Defence Forces. Through this ritual, the inductee volunteers to be subjected to the *pedagogic authority* and the rules and regulations of the organisation. Legitimate educators oversee the *pedagogic work* that inculcates the *cultural arbitrary* into cadets. Socialisation is achieved in a total institution through *pedagogic work* practices such as learning activities, drills, rituals, blind obedience, and dehumanisation managed by legitimate educators (DS). This experience is considered secondary socialisation and results in a change in the *habitus* of the cadet. The *habitus* produced in the Cadet School is that of a focused, young leader who is physically and mentally resilient that embodies organisational values. These values guide behaviour and structure thinking, ensuring that the young officer conforms to the

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<sup>25</sup> *Cultural arbitrary* is explained in detail in Section 4.7.

norms of the organisation. The processes of *symbolic violence* produce the military *habitus* desired by the organisation, which helps the organisation reproduce itself.

**RQ 2.2. In what ways does the military *habitus* of army officers evolve through PME?**

The military *habitus* produced during military socialisation evolves through experience and PME to create a *habitus* appropriate for the *field*. When participants were asked how they had changed through PME post the Cadet School (LCSC and JCSC), their answers clustered around three distinct areas; language, improved ability, and problem-solving and critical thinking.

The professional experiences of officers in the Defence Forces through PME are broadly similar, so there is some agreement on the features of the military *habitus* produced. This *habitus* evolves through PME to create a professionally capable officer with high problem-solving and critical thinking ability levels. Participants noted that PME provided them with the language of the profession that allowed them to engage with the organisation's hierarchy. Similarly, participants reported how PME provided them with methodologies for solving complex tactical and operational problems by mastering the military decision-making and operational planning processes. The technical mastery of these complex problem-solving structures resulted in increased confidence and improved professional ability.

The Defence Forces use the process of *symbolic violence* in PME to reproduce the military *field* and preserve the status quo in the *field*. Thus, PME is partly responsible for the organisation's current state and its problems. Recognising the link between

the education system and the organisation's current state is vital in planning for the future organisation.

Given the nature of the contemporary operating environment and the complex global security challenges humanity faces, the big question that has emerged for me is: is the military socialisation and education model fit for purpose? Does it prepare the organisation's future leadership to solve the problems it may encounter in the future, or does it simply reproduce and preserve the military *field* and the status quo? These are critical and complex sociological questions that militaries worldwide need to consider and reconcile with their societal role.

### **8.3. Contributions to knowledge**

This is the only study that examines PME in the Irish context. Regarding its contribution to the literature, this study brings together the *fields* of military education and higher education to create a new *subfield* of Professional Military Education. This study sheds light on how and why this happened and the challenges of two *fields* intersecting to create a new *subfield*.

From a theoretical point of view, it brings Bourdieu's theory of practice and *symbolic violence* to a new arena, namely PME for army officers in the Irish Defence Forces. It combines conceptual and theoretical resources in a novel way that can be applied in other contexts. Its main methodological contribution is that it demonstrates through empirical work the continued practical application of Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic violence* for understanding military and organisational socialisation. This work proposes a model for social reproduction and *habitus* formation through *symbolic violence* in the military. Bourdieu's concepts of *pedagogic action*, *pedagogic authority*,

and *pedagogic work* are examined and employed in a novel and practical way that can be used to analyse other organisations. Such analysis may help understand how organisational problems persist and why change may be challenging to implement.

#### **8.4. Study limitations and strengths**

As with most research, I encountered some limitations in the course of this study. It is challenging to conduct a study within the organisation you are part of. While the Defence Forces' strength is 8,500 personnel, I knew most people that I interviewed in a professional capacity. I had to be aware of my prior assumptions and my need to maintain a critical distance.

Another limitation of this study is that only twelve army officers were interviewed, four from each group, junior, mid-ranking, and senior. The small sample, while it yielded rich data, makes results less generalisable. Only two female officers were interviewed, which provided a female perspective proportional to the number of females in the Defence Forces; however, the role of gender was not within the scope of the study.

A methodological limitation was that organisational positions (military education and HEIs) were mapped during *field* mapping while individual agent positions were omitted. I decided against mapping individual agent positions because analysis would require more detailed personal information such as socio-economic data before joining the army, and this was not the area where I wanted to focus this research. I also decided against mapping the wider social space and field of power as I wanted to focus on the intersection of the military education and higher education fields. Because of space requirements, I left out a whole section on how *capital* is employed in the military *field* and in other *fields* post service. I also had to leave out a section on how

PME impacts professional practice. These are areas that I may revisit for journal articles in the future.

The main strength of this research is that it provides a holistic view of army officers' perceptions of PME, and it defines the *field* of PME in the Irish context. Its main theoretical and methodological strength is that it employs Bourdieu's three-tiered analysis with Grenfell's (2012) three principles and *symbolic violence* in a novel and productive way. This research draws on an intimate, critical understanding of the sector to illustrate how the military *habitus* is formed and evolves through PME.

### **8.5. Recommendations for research, policy, practice**

There is a tension between the ultimate social fatalism of Bourdieu's theory and the need to be 'normative'/'pragmatic' in practice. Grenfell (2010, p. 97) states:

[A] critical perspective is not only the prerogative of the politically engaged but equally has to be of interest, literally to managers and leaders, the makers of educational policy – as simply a better and more effective way of doing things.

Being critical and debating education and training policy has practical relevance for those implementing policy, and ultimately aims to do things better. With this in mind, the following recommendations are made to enhance the management and delivery of PME in the Defence Forces:

#### ***Research***

This thesis has raised several questions that merit further research in the future. There are many areas for potential study that could enhance PME in the Defence Forces.

Firstly, Bourdieu's concept of *capital* could be used to examine the current retention problem in the Defence Forces. Questions about what is valued in the military *field*, and how military *capital* may be transubstantiated into *capital* for use in other *fields* would be an exciting and valuable research topic. The employment of Multiple Correspondence Analysis or Geometric Data Analysis when researching the military field may yield more illustrative representations of the social space.

### ***Policy***

From a global policy perspective, it is noteworthy that changes in higher education policy have led to changes in a diverse range of professions. This research confirms Libel's (2019) finding that rigorous academic standards profoundly affect military education. Instead of military academies managing education standards internally, higher education standards have changed the nature of some military academies to post-graduate institutions. Therefore, policy changes in the Higher Education *field* will continue to influence the PME. From the Defence Forces' perspective, the organisation needs to be aware that its policies and decisions affect the *subfield* of PME. HR policies and practices such as continual staff rotation negatively impact military education and the relationship with the HEI provider. The turnover of military staff has been described as 'catastrophic' at the Military College. This area needs to be addressed by professionalising military education and by providing a career path in PME for officers, or else by civilianising academic management appointments. Appointees should be selected based upon qualification and expertise rather than rank and availability, as is currently the case.



## ***Practice***

Narrowing the focus to the Irish PME context, this study highlights the importance of PME to the military professional. From a practical viewpoint, the management and functions of the Military College need substantial review. Greater collaboration between Defence Forces Schools for the provision of PME is required for the Military College to act and operate as a college. Such change will be challenging for the organisation and will require a considerable shift in organisational structure and working practices. For future contract negotiations with potential academic partners, a whole of Military College approach must be taken.

### **8.6. Dissemination channels**

As per the requirements for researching the Defence Forces (Appendix 2), this thesis will be submitted to the Defence Forces Library as a resource for future research. Furthermore, I will present my findings to the Director of Defence Forces Training and Education Branch to inform the organisation of my conclusions. I also plan to write many journal articles relating to this thesis and submit them to peer-reviewed military and higher education journals.

### **8.7. Closing remarks**

This work has been driven by my genuine interest in military education and my desire to contribute to its improvement. This work clearly shows that PME is vital for the Defence Forces. Military education is the key to providing military capabilities that allow the Irish nation to project military power to respond to domestic or international security crises. This responsibility weighs heavily on the Defence Forces and requires

a robust and relevant education at the foundation of its response. The Defence Forces should embrace the spirit and ambition that its founding fathers had for military education almost a hundred years ago, and become leaders rather than followers of trends in the PME *field*.

*Sapere aude* (dare to know)

## Epilogue

### *Journal entry Lebanon 20 June 2021*

*I have spent yet another weekend writing, editing, cutting, pasting, and deleting parts of this work to have a completed draft before I depart Lebanon in six weeks.*

*I got dressed up to go to a colleague's farewell party; then, I changed my mind. I am in my 'dark place', a disposition all too familiar to my family and those close to me. I recognise it as a solitary mental state, focusing solely on my thesis work. I reasoned that there would be no point in going to a party; my mind was too frazzled to meet people and engage in small talk.*

*I have hardly left my room over the past 48 hours. It has become my refuge where I can work productively without the distractions of home or work. Sometimes, I think this undertaking has changed me into a sort of recluse, where my thesis work provides a credible excuse for avoiding those social interactions that still make me uncomfortable.*

*A doctorate is described by many as a journey. This journey for me started in IT Carlow in 2013, leading to an MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and ends almost nine years later on the Lebanese-Israeli border. A six-month long deployment to Kosovo 2015-16 gave me the time and space to evaluate my future and reflect upon what I wanted to achieve academically. I concluded that my academic journey was unfinished, and I was eager to learn and do more. This decision led to the University of Sheffield and its EdD programme.*

*My daughters were 3, 5 and 6 when I started 'Daddy's book' as they called it. How else do you describe a dissertation to a child? Combining fatherhood, professional responsibilities, and the EdD placed considerable demands on me. I tried, sometimes unsuccessfully, to shield my family from these competing demands, and in the end, we found a balance that worked for us.*

*As I read and edited this work, I asked myself how I have changed from that 18 year old who walked through the gates of the Cadet School 26 years ago, to the man I am now. It's a difficult question to answer. Having reflected upon it, I conclude that personal change is continuous. While the habitus is being written and rewritten through each new experience, as Bourdieu suggests, the habitus formed during primary and secondary socialisation endures. They serve as the foundation of my habitus, and new experiences (professional, educational, or personal) are laid on top and thus reshape the habitus, but the foundational habitus remains. Bourdieu has provided me with a way of understanding and accepting this.*

*Sometimes, I wonder how different I and my habitus would be if I had not chosen a military life. I would love to go back in time and talk to that awkward teenager filling out his Cadetship application form at the kitchen table and talk to him about the life he was volunteering for. At that time, I had little understanding of what a life of military service entailed. I was caught up in the romanticism of proving that I was tough enough to endure military training, become an officer, wear the national uniform, and represent the country on overseas peacekeeping missions. The notion of that exciting life and its associated cultural capital drew me in.*

*The symbolic violence experienced during the cadet socialisation process inculcated the military habitus of a well-trained and competent infantry officer. Looking at it from a Bourdieusian perspective, I occupied a relatively low position in the military field, and I*

*accepted this willingly, as I was trained to do. My socialisation was so complete that I trusted the hierarchy without question. As my career has progressed, I realised that this is what the organisation wanted of me. It had achieved its aim of producing a young officer who behaves well, does what he is told and does not question authority. I had reached my 'rightful place' or what Bourdieu calls achieving "subjective expectations of objective probabilities" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 59). My military socialisation was complete. Grenfell and Lebaron (2013) point out that employing a Bourdieusian approach to "studying the social world promises to 'restore to men the meaning of their actions'" (p. 297). This thesis has given me an understanding of how and why social reproduction happens in the military, and in many ways, it has helped me to understand who I am.*

*My post-graduate studies and engagement with sociology have been enlightening. I now think more deeply and critically about organisational issues, which has led to this thesis. I hope this work begins an internal discourse around PME and military socialisation and its effects on the culture of the Irish Defence Forces. If education has the power to reproduce the cultural arbitrary, then education can be an instrument of change for the organisation to emancipate it from the traditions, outdated practices, and unexamined assumptions that sometimes constrain it. PME can play a pivotal role in providing the Defence Forces with the vision and the academic space to reflect on and evaluate its role in society and beyond.*

*As Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 251) state:*

*The task is to produce, if not a 'new person', then at least a 'new gaze', a sociological eye. And this cannot be done without a genuine conversion, a metanoia, a mental revolution, a transformation of one's whole vision of the social world.*

*Let the conversion begin...*

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## Appendix 1 – Ethics Approval



Downloaded: 21/07/2020

Approved: 21/07/2020

Colin Lawlor  
Registration number: 160137204  
School of Education  
Programme: EdD Doctor of Education

Dear Colin

**PROJECT TITLE:** Professional Military Education of Irish Defence Forces Officers  
**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 011352

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 21/07/2020 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 011352 (form submission date: 01/07/2020); (expected project end date: 01/03/2022).
- Participant information sheet 1080463 version 3 (01/07/2020).
- Participant consent form 1080464 version 3 (01/07/2020).

If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation please inform me since written approval will be required.

Your responsibilities in delivering this research project are set out at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Sophia Chahad  
Ethics Administrator  
School of Education

Please note the following responsibilities of the researcher in delivering the research project:



- The project must abide by the University's Research Ethics Policy: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/researchandteaching/ethicsandethicalapproval-procedures>
- The project must abide by the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices Policy: [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/policy/policy\\_601\\_6710660/InnovationPolicy.pdf](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/policy/policy_601_6710660/InnovationPolicy.pdf)
- The researcher must inform their supervisor (in the case of a student) or Ethics Administrator (in the case of a member of staff) of any significant changes to the project or the approved documentation.
- The researcher must comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
- The researcher is responsible for effectively managing the data collected both during and after the end of the project in line with best practice, and any relevant legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements.



## Appendix 2 - Permission to conduct research in the Defence Forces

18-20

### APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEFENCE FORCES

NO A0007	RANK Lt Col	NAME Colin Lawlor
UNIT Command and Staff School DFTC		
TITLE OF COURSE : Doctorate of Education		
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION: University of Sheffield		
IS THE COURSE BEING FUNDED BY THE DF?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> No
RESEARCH TOPIC: Professional Military Education of Irish Defence Forces Officers		
SUBMISSION DATE: 01 Sep 2021		
<p>I agree to abide by the following conditions in conducting my research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will submit a full research proposal with this application, outlining the benefits of my study to the Defence Forces, my hypothesis, proposed methodology and expected findings.</li> <li>2. I will submit my completed report/thesis to the DF Registrar for approval a minimum of 4 weeks prior to final submission to the educational institution.</li> <li>3. I will, if requested by the DF Registrar as a result of that approval process, submit my completed report/thesis as confidential to the educational institution.</li> <li>4. I will not release any research findings or reports into the public arena (e.g. media) without the prior approval of the DF Registrar.</li> <li>5. I will email a complete copy of my report to the DF Registrar for retention and utilisation by the Defence Forces should that be desired.</li> <li>6. I will where necessary recommend that my research project should be treated as confidential.</li> <li>7. I am aware that I have a responsibility to prevent the unauthorised disclosure, loss, destruction or disclosure of personal data as defined in the current Data protection acts.</li> </ol>		
Signature of Applicant 		
Date: 21 Jul 2020		
RECOMMENDED		DATE
APPROVED	 DF REGISTRAR	DATE 24/7/20

DF Registrar  
 Cearlaíochir Oigleáir  
 na hÉireann  
**24 JUL 2020**

## Appendix 3 - Participant Information Sheet

### Participant Information Sheet

1. **Research Project Title:** Professional Military Education of Irish Defence Forces Officers.

2. **Invitation paragraph**

You are being invited to take part in a research project that I am undertaking as part of an Education Doctorate in the School of Education at the University of *Sheffield*. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3. **What is the project's purpose?**

This research has two aims. The first aim is to map the *field* of Professional Military Education for Irish Defence Forces officers in order to develop an understanding of the relationship between the military and higher education institutions and the policies that influence the delivery of military education. The second aim focuses on developing an understanding of how military officers perceive their experiences of Professional Military Education and how it impacts their professional practice.

4. **Why have I been chosen?**

This research project requires two categories of participants. The first category of participants sought are civilian and military educators that have worked or are currently working in the management/delivery of Professional Military Education in the Irish Defence Forces. The second category of participant sought are Irish Defence Forces officers that have recently completed a career course appropriate for their rank.

5. **Do I have to take part?**

Participation in the research is entirely voluntary and if you do not wish to take part, there will be no negative consequences. If you decide to participate, you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. You can however still withdraw two weeks after your participation, at which point all collected information will have been anonymised. You do not have to give a reason. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please contact me using the contact details supplied on this sheet.

6. **What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?**

The data collection process will take place from July 2020 to December 2020. A semi-structured interview will take place at a convenient location or via the internet (Covid 19 restrictions dependent). During the interview, I will ask mainly open-ended questions, which you are free to answer in any way you deem appropriate.

The purpose of the interview with the civilian and military educators is to explore your experiences/reflections of operating at the intersection of the military and higher education for the delivery of Professional Military Education in the Defence Forces.

The purpose of the interview with Defence Forces' officers is to explore your perceptions of the experience of being a student on a career course and how this experience has impacted how you perform your role as an officer in the Defence Forces.

Prior to the interview I will provide you with a general outline of the topics that will be covered. The interview may last up to 60 minutes and will be held at a time and location that is convenient for you and of your choosing. I will, with your permission audio record the interview as it will help me to maintain an accurate record of what you said. During the interview I may take some notes to help to guide the interview and you are free to read these if you wish. It is my intention to only conduct one interview, but should I need to clarify something I would be grateful if you would permit me to contact you again.

**7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

Other than the time involved in participating in this research, there are no anticipated disadvantages to your participation. In the unlikely event that your participation raises issues that are a source of distress, service personnel can contact Personnel Support Services through the following link: <https://www.military.ie/en/member's-area/> or the Health Service Executive at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/>

**8. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will make a relevant and useful contribution to the *field* of military and higher education. Empirical and qualitative studies of Professional Military Education and accredited workplace-based learning are scarce. This study will help to advance understanding of these concepts in the *field* of military and higher education.

**9. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible by me. It will not be possible to identify you in any reports or publications. I will ensure confidentiality by ensuring that all data stored on my personal computer is password protected and any portable storage devices that I use are also password protected. All transcripts and audio recordings will be stored within a locked cabinet in a

locked office where I am the only key holder. All information will be destroyed following the completion of the study and thesis assessment. Whilst absolute anonymity is impossible to achieve, every effort will be made by me to preserve your anonymity. Several strategies will be employed to achieve this including allocating a pseudonym for each participant and ensuring that no identifiable ranks or appointment titles will be used. Additionally, contextual details that point to specific identifiable events will be either generalised or withheld. All interviews will be recorded, and no names will be used during the interview. Transcribed interviews will not have identifying names, ranks or other identifiable details.

**10. What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?**

According to data protection legislation, I am required to inform you that the legal basis I am applying in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)).

Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

**11. What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?**

To facilitate data collection, the interview will be audio recorded, and will be transcribed. Transcription will be carried out by either myself or a professional transcriber. If a professional transcriber is used, they will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect your confidentiality.

It is anticipated that this research will be published in 2021 as part of my doctoral degree. All data stored on my personal computer is password protected and any portable storage devices that I use are also password protected. All transcripts and audio recordings will be stored within a locked cabinet in a locked office where I am the only key holder. All information will be destroyed following the completion of the study and thesis assessment.

**12. Who is organising and funding the research?**

This research is part of a self-funded doctoral degree

**13. Who is the Data Controller?**

The University of *Sheffield* will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University of *Sheffield* is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

**14. Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This project has been ethically approved via the University of *Sheffield's* Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by the School of Education.

**15. What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

If you have any complaints how this research is being conducted and do not wish to discuss it with me, then you are free to contact my supervisor: Dr Vassiliki Papatsiba, School of Education, email: [v.papatsiba@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.papatsiba@sheffield.ac.uk) Tel +44 1142228152. If you feel that your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction by my supervisor, you can contact the Head of Department, who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

**16. Contact for further information**

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding your participation in this project.

Lt Col Colin Lawlor, Command and Staff School, The Military College, Defence Forces Training Centre, Kildare, Ireland

Email: [cclawlor1@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:cclawlor1@sheffield.ac.uk)

Tel: +00353 868365771

**Finally, I would like to thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.**

## Appendix 4 - Consent Form



### Participant Consent Form

#### Professional Military Education of Irish Defence Forces Officers

Please tick the appropriate boxes	Yes	No
<b>Taking Part in the Project</b>		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 04 June 2020 or the project has been fully explained to me. [If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will <u>include</u> : being interviewed and being audio recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study within two weeks after the interview has taken place. I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How my information will be used during and after the project</b>		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers</b>		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Researcher: Colin Lawlor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Project contact details for further information:**

Researcher: Colin Lawlor	Supervisor: Dr <del>Vasiliki Papadaki</del> <a href="mailto:v.papadaki@sheffield.ac.uk">v.papadaki@sheffield.ac.uk</a>	EDD Part 2 Lead: Dr David Hyatt
Email: <a href="mailto:colawlor1@sheffield.ac.uk">colawlor1@sheffield.ac.uk</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:v.papadaki@sheffield.ac.uk">v.papadaki@sheffield.ac.uk</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:d.hyatt@sheffield.ac.uk">d.hyatt@sheffield.ac.uk</a>
Phone: +353 868365771	Phone: +44 1142228152	Phone: +44 114 2128126

**\*Save 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant, 1 copy for the research data file**

The template of this consent form has been approved by the University of Sheffield Research Ethics Committee and is available to view here: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ra/ethicsandintegrity/ethicspolicy/further-guidance/homepage>

## **Appendix 5 - Question Guide Military and Civilian Educators**

### **Question Guide for Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Military Education Management**

#### **Interview Opening**

- Welcome participant and thank them for their time.
- Summarise purpose of the interview, its duration and format.
- Highlight main areas from the covering letter and information sheet.
- Explain ethical issues and invite any questions about the research.
- Sign the consent form and start recording the interview.

#### **Theme 1 – the experience of the delivery/management of military education**

- I would like to know a little more about your current role and experience/role in managing military education for the Defence Forces.
- Can you provide an overview of the professional military education system for officers (key career courses) in the Defence Forces?
- Why do the Defence Forces partner with HEIs for the delivery of military education?
- What do HEIs bring to the table that cannot be delivered internally?
- Why is accreditation necessary for Defence Forces career courses?
- Why do officers need to know about international relations, defence and security matters etc?
- How would you describe your experience of the relationship between the Defence Forces and HEI for the delivery of military education?
- Do you think that the DF's partnership with HEIs for the delivery of PME represents good value for money?
  - Where do you see or experience areas of tension between the HEI and the DF?
  - Where is there agreement/unity?
  - How has the relationship evolved/developed over time?

## **Theme 2 – macro influences of military education**

- Based upon your experiences, what are the main influences on the military education curriculum, i.e. what is included in the syllabus and taught in DF schools?
- Is it driven by the bottom-up or top-down (i.e. from the corps or instructors, or the general staff?)
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?
- Do HEIs offer any guidance on what is taught, how it is delivered and assessed?
- How has military education developments/practices from other nations impacted on military education in Ireland? Can you describe this process? (influence of sending students abroad)
- Are you aware of any Irish and European higher education policies have influenced the relationship between HEIs and the Defence Forces?
- Does the 'generic' European officer education concept influence the curriculum?

## **Theme 3 – meso influences of military education**

- What policies (military and HEI) manage professional military education in the Defence Forces? (FDF Ed and Trg Policy, ATD, 2/2019, Syllabus etc)
  - What are your thoughts on these policies?
  - When did you become aware of them?
  - Are they useful for managing military education?
  - What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the challenges of providing PME in the Defence Forces? (facilities, infrastructure, IT, staffing etc)
- What in your opinion works well in the current system?

## **Theme 4 – power and *field* positions**

- Where does the power lie for the delivery of professional military education in Ireland? (the military/the accrediting HEI/DoD or elsewhere? Why is this the case?)



- How are resources for military education managed and prioritised (accreditation cost, teaching, staffing, infrastructure etc)
- In what ways could PME be improved in the DF?

### **Closing Question**

- Before we close the interview, is there anything further that you would like to add any of your answers or is there any other relevant area that we have not covered?

### **Close the Interview**

- Extend my thanks for taking the time to participate and for engaging in a positive, honest, and open manner with the question posed.

## **Appendix 6 - Question Guide Army Officers**

### **Question Guide for Semi-structured Interviews with Defence Forces' Officers**

#### **Interview Opening**

- Welcome participant and thank them for their time.
- Summarise the purpose of the interview, its duration and format.
- Highlight the main areas from the covering letter and information sheet.
- Explain ethical issues and invite any questions about the research.
- Sign the consent form and start recording the interview.

#### **Theme 1 – experience of military education**

- Can you provide an overview of your military career to date?
  - How would you describe your experiences of professional military education (training and education) at various point in your career – starting with Cadet School, USAC, YOs, JCSC, SCSC?
- What motivated you to undertake these courses?
- Based on your experiences, what are the positives and negatives of the Irish approach to accredited military education?
- What did you like and dislike about these programs?
- What did it feel like for you to be a student in your workplace?
- What do you think of learning in the workplace as opposed to attending the HEI?
  - Do you prefer to learn in the military workplace/college or HEI? Why?
  - Is your approach to learning in the military environment different to learning in a HEI?

#### **Theme 2 – how military education impacts professional practice**

- When you reflect back on the career courses that you have completed, in what ways have they impacted how you perform your role. Can you provide examples?
- Do you think that military education has helped you to become a better military professional? If so, how? If not, why not?
- When you reflect upon your military education, do you believe that you have changed at a personal level as a result? (dispositions, beliefs, behaviour, attitude etc)

- Do you think more creatively or critically when faced with problems?

### **Theme 3 – Military *habitus***

- One of the aims of Cadet training is to socialise the new entrant into the military – how was this achieved during your Cadetship?
- At what point did you feel that you were part of the organisation as a ‘soldier’ as distinct from being a civilian in training?
- What were the main changes between the civilian and military you?
- Do you think that you have changed through your engagement with PME? How would you describe how you have evolved from a junior, mid/level, to a senior officer?
- Has your approach to problem solving changed? If so, in what ways?

### **Theme 4 – Agent positions**

- In what ways has professional military education benefitted you personally?
- Have military education opportunities helped to retain you in service?
- What are the attributes/profile both personal and profession of an individual that advances or ‘does well’ in the organisation? i.e. what type of person does the organisation reward?
  - What do you think of these attributes?
- In what ways does the organisation reward people for participating in lifelong learning?
- Do you think that the military education and academic credentials that you have received in service have any use outside of the organisation?

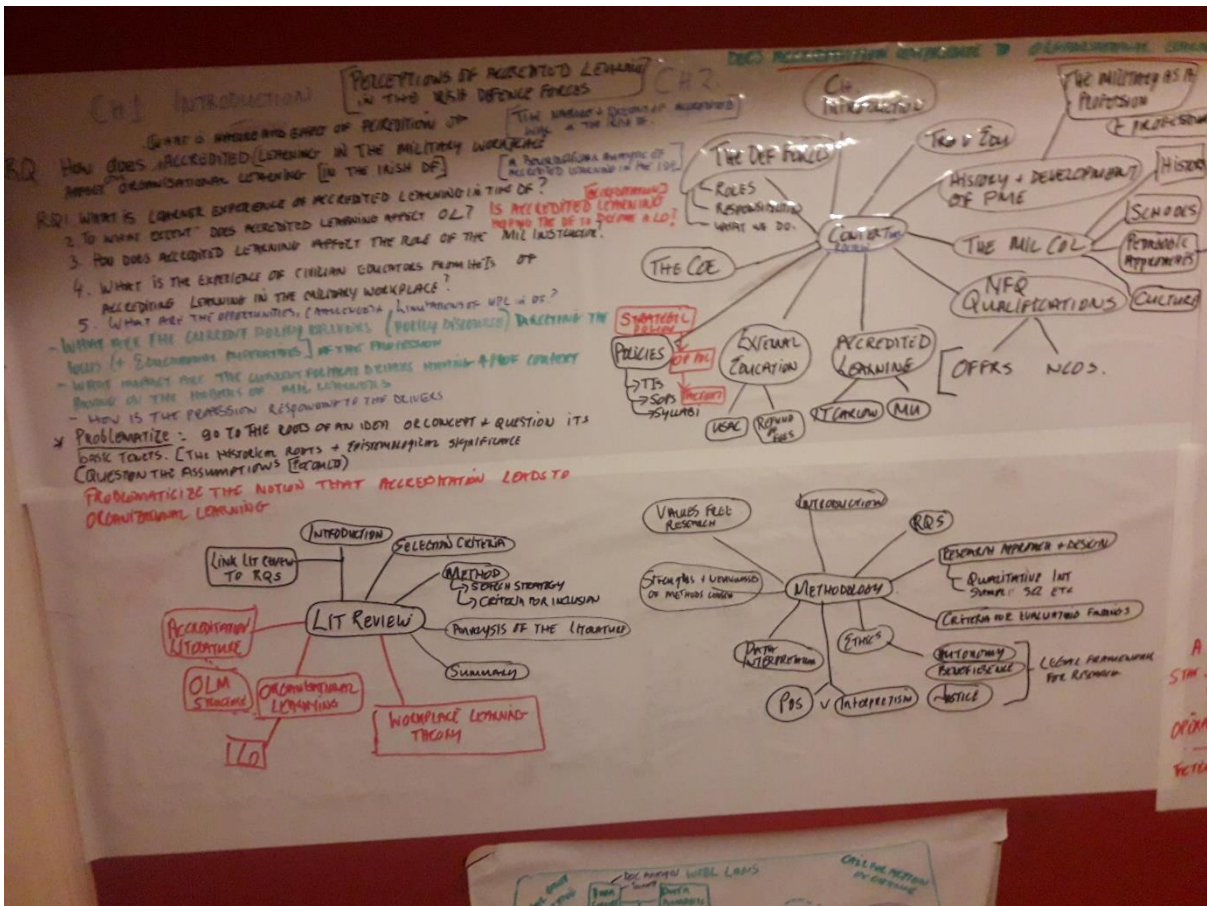
### **Closing Question**

- Before we close the interview, is there anything further that you would like to add any of your answers or is there any other relevant area that we have not covered?

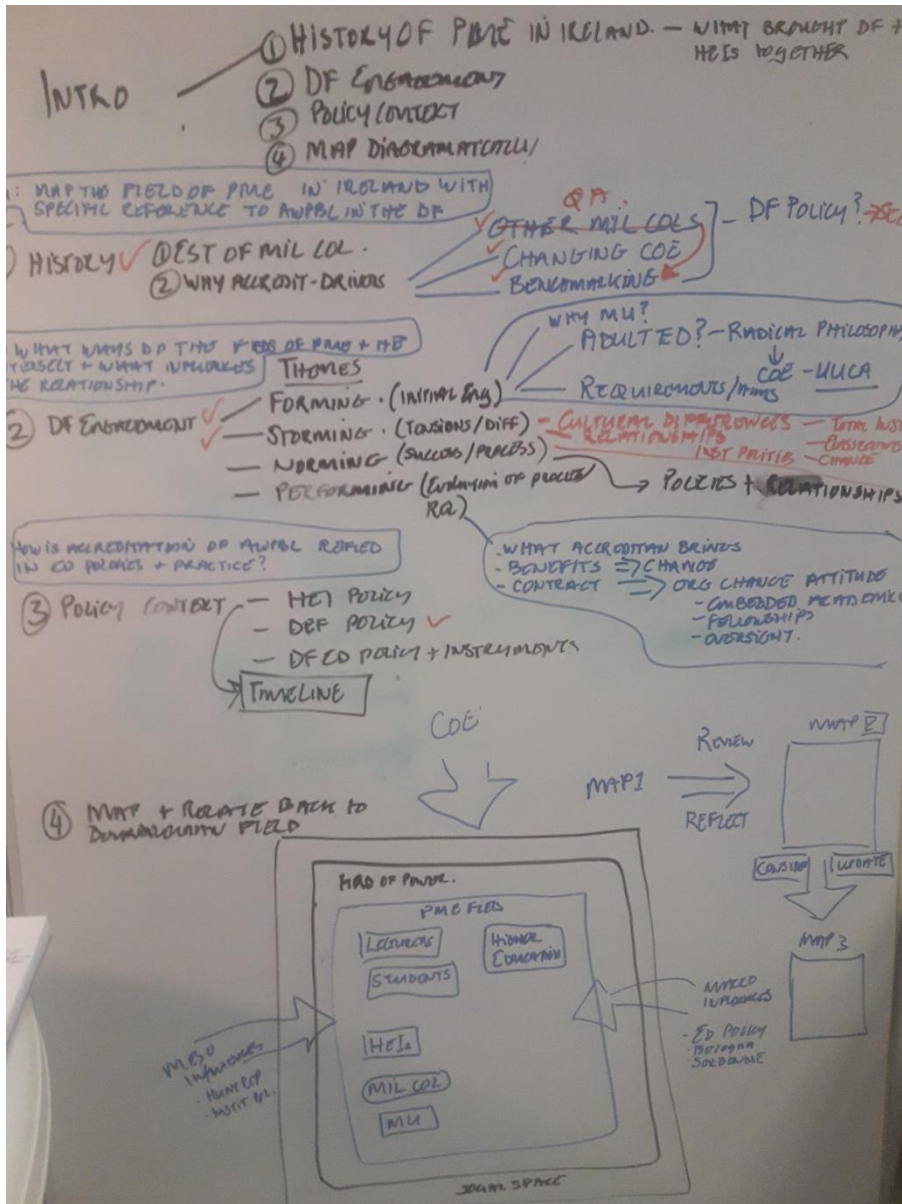
### **Close the Interview**

- Extend my thanks for taking the time to participate and for engaging in a positive, honest, and open manner with the question posed.

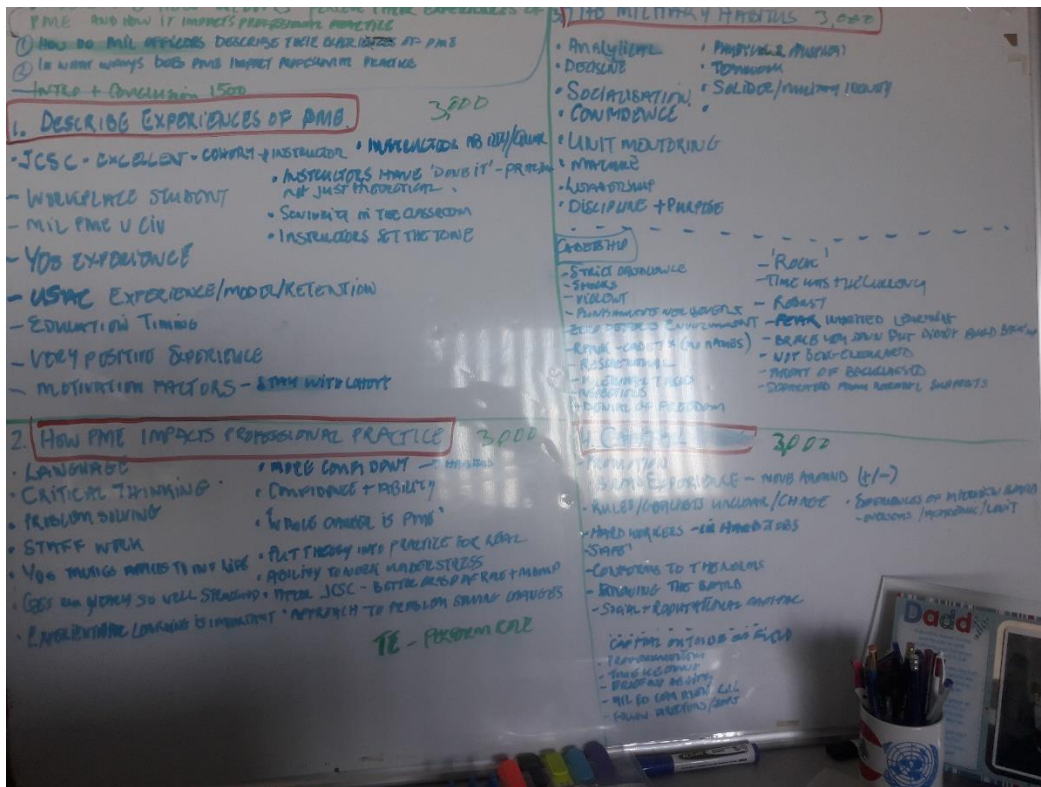
## Appendix 7 – Whiteboard brainstorms



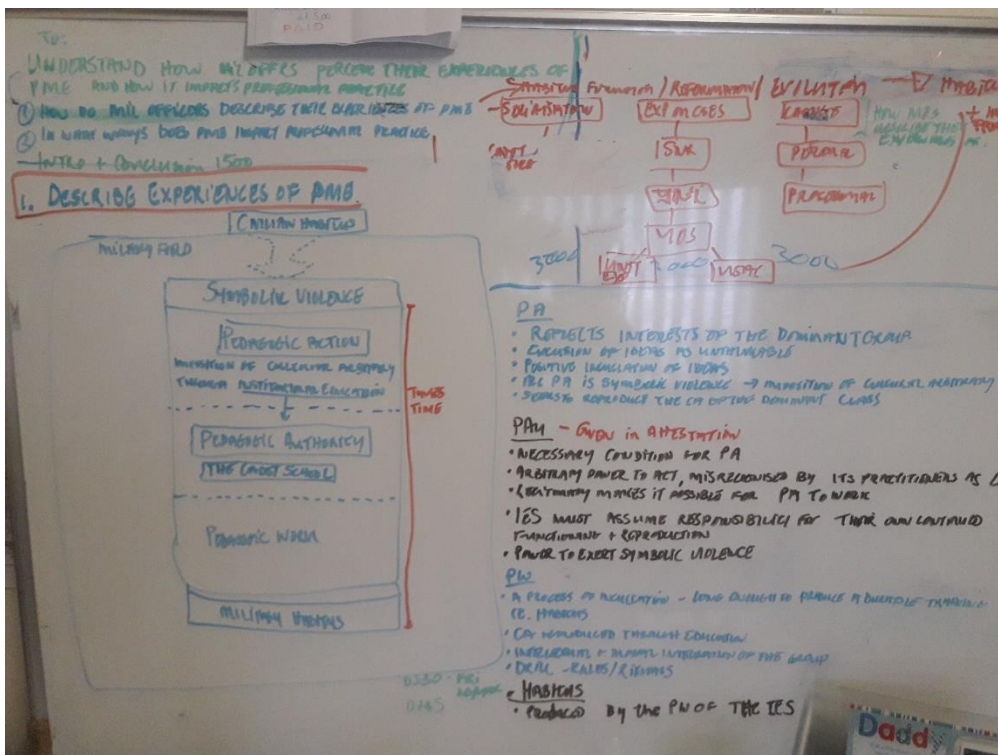
Early chapter plans



Chapter 6 – Ideas for mapping the field



Chapter 7 – working out the structure

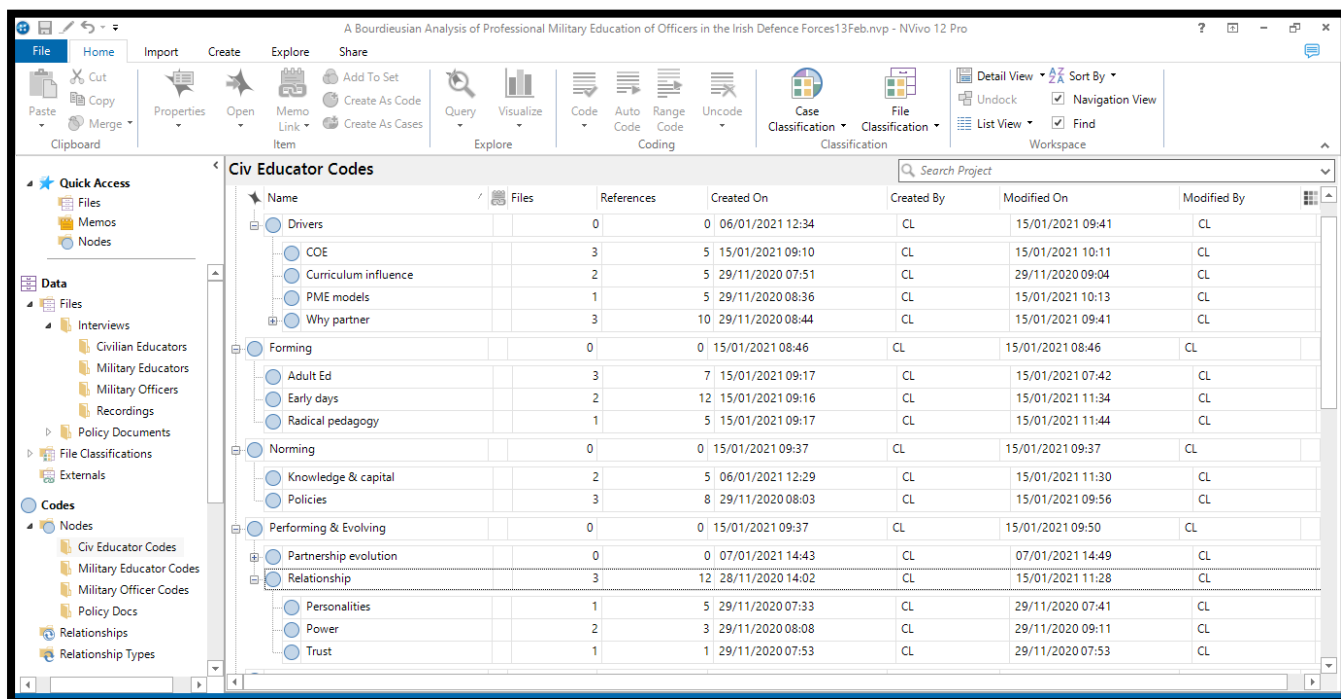


Chapter 4/5 – figuring out symbolic violence and early model efforts

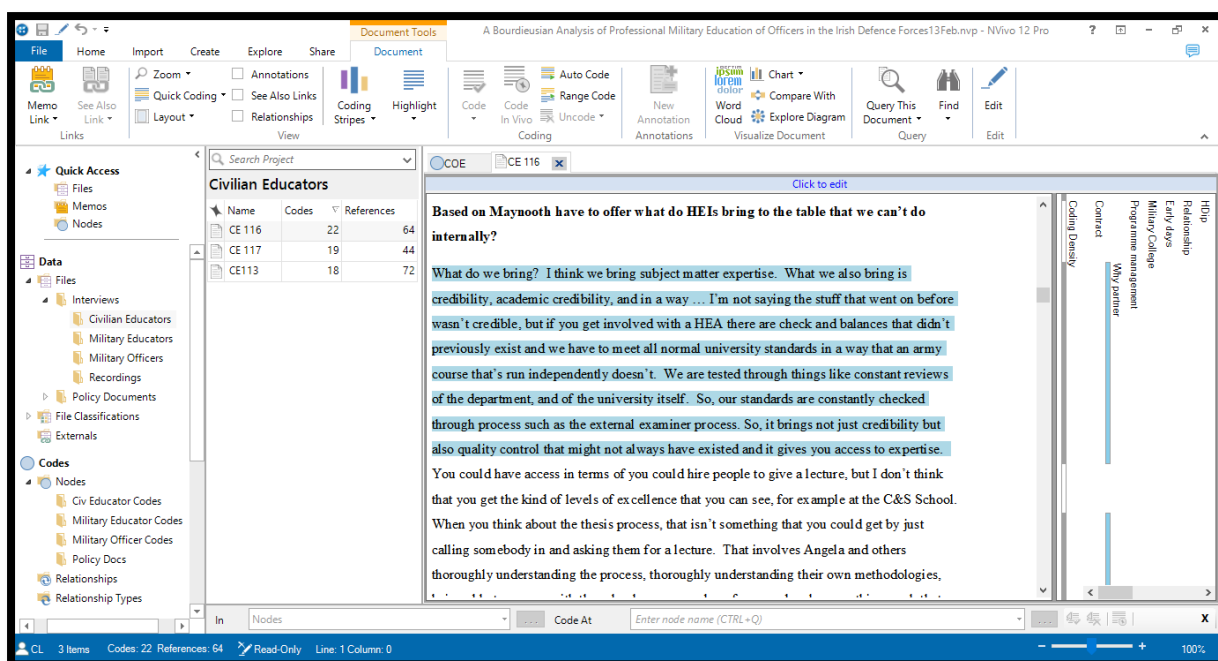
## Appendix 8 - Documents for analysis

European Level	National Level	Defence Forces	Maynooth University
The Sorbonne Declaration	The Hunt Report	The White Paper on Defence (2015)	DF MOU with Maynooth University
The Bologna Declaration	Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012	White Paper on Defence Update 2019	Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement (2016)
CSDP Handbooks	QQI Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines (2015)	Strategy Statement	
Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education	QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)	The Annual Plan	
		The Defence Forces Annual Training Directive 2020	
		Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures for Learning in the Defence Forces 2016	
		TI02/2019 The Conduct and Administration of Authorised Courses in the Defence Forces	
		Training Syllabi for career courses	

## Appendix 9 – NVIVO coding



Civilian Educator Codes



'Why partner?' code – coding strips on the right hand side



## **Appendix 10 – DF Overview**

### **Overview of the Defence Forces**

Overall responsibility for defence rests with the Minister for Defence as outlined in the Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924. The Minister for Defence is assisted in discharging their duties by both the civil and military components. The Secretary-General is the 'principal officer' who heads the civilian element and is the principal policy advisor. The Chief of Staff is the head of the Defence Forces and is the principal military advisor to the minister. The Secretary-General is also the Accounting Officer for all defence expenditures.

### **Organisation and Structure**

The Defence Forces is a professional military force with 9,500 personnel in the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF) divided between the Army, Naval Service and Air Corps. The Army comprises two Brigades and provides the land component of the state's defence capabilities. The Defence Forces Training Centre located in the midlands serves as the centre for training, education, and logistical support for the Defence Forces. The Air Corps is based at Casement Aerodrome, on the outskirts of Dublin and has a fleet of fixed and rotary wing aircraft that supports the Army and Naval Service. It provides the air component of the state's defences. The Naval Service provides the sea component and is based at Haulbowline, Co. Cork. The Reserve Defence Force (RDF) consists of the First Line Reserve, the Army Reserve and the Naval Service Reserve. The Army Reserve has an establishment of 3,869 personnel, and the Naval Service Reserve has an establishment of 200 personnel.

The primary role of the Reserve Defence Force is to augment the PDF in crisis situations.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

Ireland's overall approach to defence and security is founded upon its Constitution, Article 29.1, which affirms that Ireland's "devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly cooperation amongst nations is founded on international justice and morality" (Government of Ireland, 1937). Furthermore, Ireland undertakes to adhere to the principle of pacific settlement of international disputes and is guided by international laws when dealing with other nations (DFAT, 2016). The sentiments within this statement directly influence the roles that the government has given to the Defence Forces. The functions of the Defence Forces are determined by government policy with the White Paper on Defence 2015, the current expression of Ireland's defence policy. The roles are as follows:

- *To provide for the military defence of the State from armed aggression;*
- *To participate in multi-national peace support, crisis management and humanitarian relief operations in accordance with Government direction and legislative provision;*
- *To aid the civil power – meaning in practice to assist, when requested, An Garda Síochána, who have primary responsibility for law and order, including the protection of the internal security of the State;*
- *To contribute to maritime security encompassing the delivery of a fishery protection service and the operation of the State's Fishery Monitoring Centre,*

*and in co-operation with other agencies with responsibilities in the maritime domain, to contribute to a shared common maritime operational picture;*

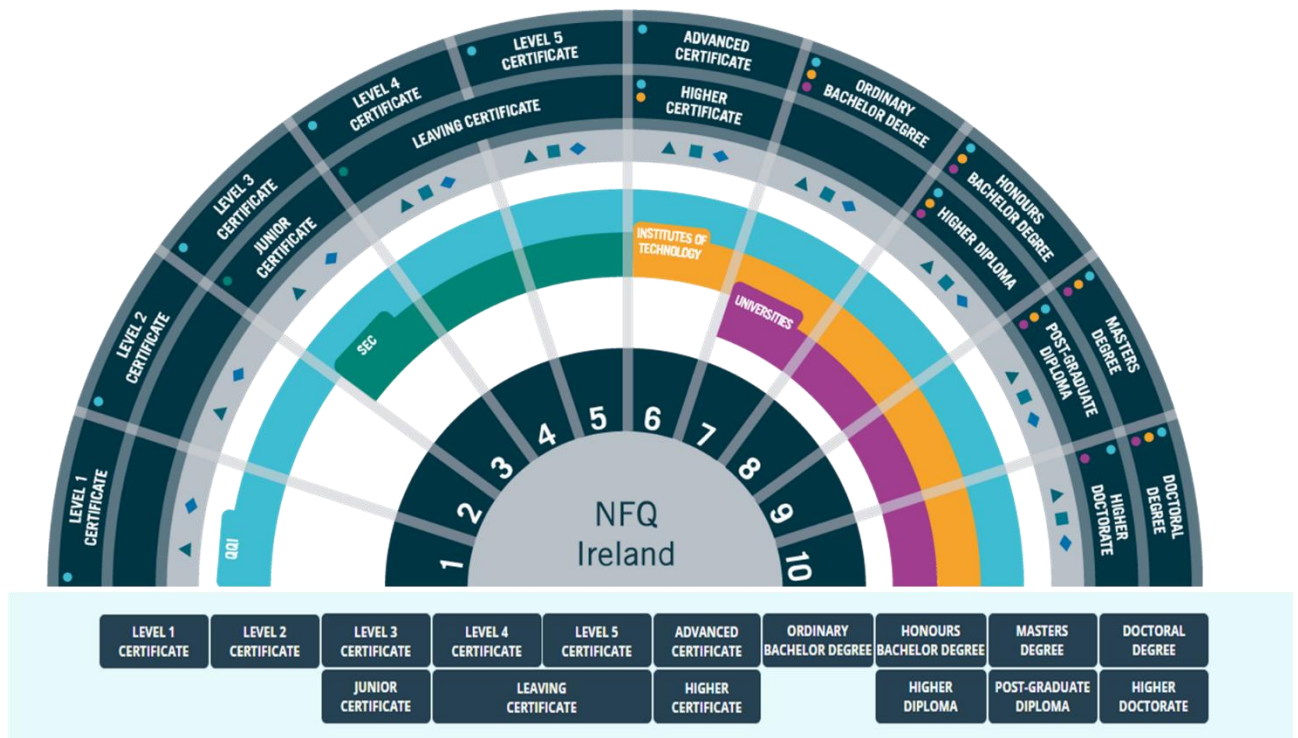
- *To participate in the Joint Taskforce on Drugs interdiction;*
- *To contribute to national resilience through the provision of specified defence aid to the civil authority (ATCA) supports to lead agencies in response to major emergencies, including cyber security emergencies, and in the maintenance of essential services, as set out in MOUs and SLAs agreed by the Department of Defence;*
- *To provide a Ministerial air transport service (MATS);*
- *To provide ceremonial services on behalf of Government;*
- *To provide a range of other supports to government departments and agencies in line with MOUs and SLAs agreed by the Department of Defence, e.g. search and rescue and air ambulance services;*
- *To contribute to Ireland's economic well being through engagement with industry, research and development and job initiatives, in support of government policy;*
- *To fulfil any other tasks that Government may assign from time to time.*

(Department of Defence, 2015, p. 59)

The roles and responsibilities assigned to an organisation in government policy provide the basis for action within the organisation and determine the organisation's boundaries. In the case of the Defence Forces, only three roles apportion direct responsibility (military defence, ministerial air transport, and ceremonial services), while the remaining eight roles are in support of other agencies. Another characteristic is that only the first two roles are exclusively related to military operations (provide for

the military defence and participate in multinational peace support operations). The other nine roles are supporting other organisations, such as assisting the police force when requested through Aid to the Civil Power (ATCP) operations, supporting the civil authorities through Aid to the Civil Authority (ATCA), and contributing to maritime security.

## Appendix 11 - National Framework for Qualifications



Source: [NFQ \(qqi.ie\)](http://nfq.qqi.ie)

## Appendix 12 - Conceptual Framework

