



Tradition and Future: Historic Passing-Out Parade at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

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A day of celebration and historic milestones at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS), where the latest class of Officer Cadets completed their programme with official entry into the ranks of the British Army and allied armed forces.

The Sovereign's Parade marked the culmination of 44 weeks of demanding military and leadership training. In total, 238 British cadets and 31 international partners (for a total of 40 foreign cadets) received the "King's Commission", the official appointment signed by King Charles III.



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The Historic Milestones of the 2026 Edition

The second Sovereign's Parade of 2026 rightfully enters the annals of the British military academy for three absolute firsts:

- **First Finnish Officer:** Twenty-two-year-old Roni Nokelainen became the first Officer Cadet from Finland to graduate from Sandhurst. Nokelainen emphasised the value of international experience, shared training, and the opportunity to bring to the Finnish Army – NATO's newest member – the model of British leadership development.
- **First Complete French Officer:** A French cadet completed for the first time the entire 44-week Commissioning Course cycle.
- **First Female "Piper":** Officer Cadet Iona Mitchell, 22 years old, made history by becoming the first woman to hold the role of official piper (piping duty) to escort the Sovereign's Representative and the Commandant of RMAS through the Old College Square.



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A Symbolic Moment for Mixed Leadership

Representing His Majesty the King was the Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Roly Walker KCB DSO. The moment carried strong symbolic value: General Walker had graduated from Sandhurst in 1993 within the very first integrated course between men and women. Returning today to preside over the parade of the **100th integrated course** marks the consolidation of a thirty-year journey of inclusion and modernisation.

In his address, General Walker reminded the new officers of the current geopolitical context and the value of collective defence within NATO, emphasising the clarity of their mission in an era of deterrence and active defence.