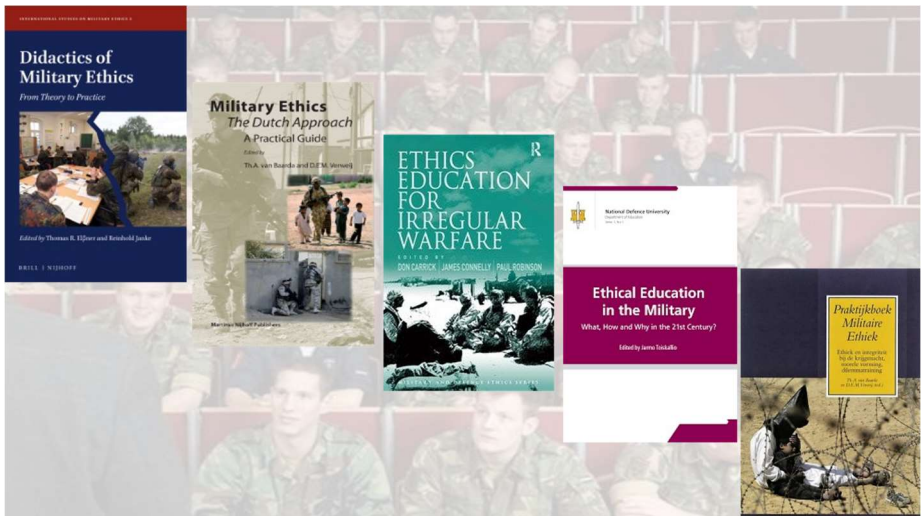# Military ethics education for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate) officers:

a continuous curriculum?

Kevin van Loon

Military ethics education for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate) Officers

A continuous curriculum?

by:

Major K.J.C.M. van Loon

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Appendices: 1 – 16 and, A, B and C

Note on omitted appendices:
A large part of the original appendices are not included for this publication, because they are too specific, detailed and contain large parts of Dutch language. The majority of them serve as part of the methodological substantiation of the results and conclusions: coded Dutch course documents and parts of coded transcripts. A few appendices provide detailed information regarding the applied research method.
Additional information is available at the author upon request.

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1.   Introduction

1.1 Military ethics education for Dutch Army officers

> *"Military members rarely enjoy the clarity and logical consistency for which ethical theory strives. Their world is often one of limited choices and divergent values. Thoughtful military ethicists appreciate these constraints and tensions, realizing that what works well in theory may sometimes fall short in practice, even with the best intentions. This problem is due, at least in part, to the problems that military ethics addresses. Political and military decisions are often constrained by circumstances that leave people with no genuinely good choices"* (Rhodes, 2009, p. 20).

This quote emphasises the crucial role of military leaders in regard to dealing with stressful situations, making the right decisions, conflicting values and moral dilemmas. Such leaders increasingly face political and public scrutiny, but most situations are not black and white. Guidelines and instruction cards cannot foresee and provide proper instructions for all situations. Military education aims to prepare and train these leaders to act right tactically, politically and also ethically, but what is the right way ethically? What if one's personal values are not aligned with organisational values? And how can leaders recognise situations in which values are at conflict?

For these reasons, cadets (candidate officers) and officers receive military ethics education. However, the foundations and didactic ways of educating officers differ greatly. Contrasting military, historical and cultural backgrounds, and different

philosophical perspectives and aims, affect nations point of views on the right way (Robinson, De Lee and Carrick, 2008). Of great importance are the military institutions which are leading and orchestrating educational programmes. The lack of consensus gives rise to the following questions: what aims do these institutes have? Based on what underlying theories? Which methods are used and what is the content (Robinson, 2007; Robinson *et. al*, 2008)?

In the Royal Netherlands Army (RNLA), officers do not only receive military ethics education during their initial training and education. While continuing their career, officers have to successfully attend the primary-, intermediate- and the advanced command and staff course (PCSC, ICSC, ACSC) where focus lies on specific relevant knowledge and competences necessary for promotion, including ethics. Besides these mandatory courses the Netherlands Ministry of Defence (NL MoD) also offers a Strengthening Moral Competence Course (SMCC). This course is semi-compulsory; but only a small part of RNLA officers attends it (Wortel and Bosch, 2011). Furthermore, the School for Peace Operations (SPO), incorporated military ethics education in their mandatory pre-deployment course (in Dutch: Missie Gerichte Opleiding - MGO).

Judging by the number of ethics programmes available, it would seem that the RNLA sets great store by military ethics education for its officers. But how is it structured within the organisation? And what is the function and position of the two most relevant influential institutes: Faculty of Military Sciences (FMS), and the Defence Central Organisation for Ethics and Integrity (COID)?

A regularly revised vision on leadership for Army officers exists, which forms the basis for a continuous curriculum on leadership and staff skills (Defence Leadership Vision, ECLD, 2014). However, it does not entail ethics. Although many argue that leadership and ethics are inextricably connected, it is mostly taught and written about separately (Bock, de, and Olsthoorn, 2016; Ciulla, 2004; Olsthoorn, 2017). This discrepancy between leadership and ethics gives rise to the following question: how is military ethics education for RNLA officers organised?

1.2. Central theme

A lieutenant is confronted with moral issues from day one, which stresses the importance of a thorough understanding of the relationship between behaviour, values, virtues and aims. Do Army cadets leave the academy with such a clear view of their role and the impact of ethics on daily leadership? And how are operational experiences of captains and majors put in ethical perspective, during their command and staff courses? This research aims to shed light onto the numerous military ethics training and education programmes for RNLA cadets and officers, in order to contribute with knowledge and development of ethics training and education and to provide recommendations for improvement. The central themes are *consistency* and *coherence*. Consistency is measured by comparing the design and content of various training and education courses to examine whether the teaching approaches are *similar* and based on *equal thoughts* and foundations. With coherence the comparison focusses on the *relationship* and *adjustment* between the training and education courses.

It is important to stress that large inconsistencies most likely enhance ineffectiveness, but variety on the contrary, could be beneficial; it provides a broader perspective as part of a coherent design. Thus, in this research inconsistency depends on deliberate choices and whether they are well thought-out and adjusted with other ethical programmes or not. To fulfil the purpose of this research the following central research question is formulated:

> *To what extend are military ethics training and education programmes for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate-)officers consistent and coherent?*

1.3 Relevance

Military ethics education has been given proper consideration in the previous paragraphs. There is no doubt about its relevance as part of shaping responsible officers, able to withstand difficulties on the 21st century battlefield. Moral competence became part of the military profession, hence the importance of military ethics education (Verweij, *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, research concerning contemporary military ethics education within its context is by definition relevant.

Answering the central research question contributes to the knowledge and development of military ethics education for (candidate-) officers within the RNLA. It stimulates further study in order to enhance effectiveness. Next to useful insights for instructors, practitioners, RNLA officers and academics, it adds insights to the theoretical part of military ethics education. Moreover, adding to the international discourse on this topic,

the outcome of this research could be interesting for international partners as well.

1.4   *Research strategy, sub-questions and structure*

This qualitative explanatory research consisted of analysing relevant academic theory of both civilian and military ethics education, which led to a research framework as theoretical perspective. The research objects – *initial, career and specific education for RNLA officers* – have been examined, compared and analysed based on this perspective. Figure 1 depicts this strategy in the research model.
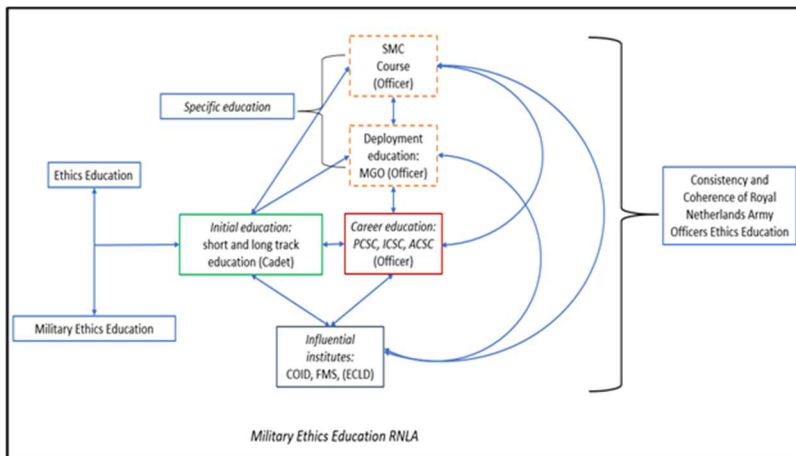
Figure 1: Explanatory research model

Based on this strategy the following research questions (RQ) were formulated:

RQ1:   What kind of military ethics education do current RNLA officer initial-, career- and specific training and education programmes contain?

RQ2:   What are the specific aims and underlying theories of these courses in regard to military ethics?

RQ3:   Are the courses mainly based on teaching theory or applied ethics?

RQ4:   What is the content of these courses and do they focus on peacetime or deployment situations?

RQ5:   Who is responsible for these courses and what are their teaching methods?

RQ6:   What is the role of, and what influence do the two most relevant institutes have on RNLA military ethics education for (candidate-) officers?

RQ7:   To what extent are coordination and a continuous ethics curriculum present?

STRUCTURE

Chapter two provides an overview of the relevant topics within academic literature, after which the research methods will be explained in chapter three. Chapter four presents the findings and chapter five answers the central research question and provides recommendations. Chapter six entails discussion and reflection. For clarity reasons some Dutch abbreviations are explained and used, referring to original names as used in the primary sources (Appendix 1).

2.   Theoretical perspective

2.1 Ethics

Ethics can be difficult to grasp. Before discussing civil and military ethics education it is important to determine ethics itself and its main theories. Coleman (2013) defines ethics as *"the branch of philosophy that addresses morality, in short the study of moral concepts*." Morality or moral concepts can be defined as the set of norms and values in a specific context and time. Various societies or religions for instance, determine good behaviour differently.

In general three levels of ethics exists. 1. Metaethics: understanding the nature of ethical concepts: *"what is good and what is bad?"* 2. Normative ethics: finding ethical rules which apply in all situations: *"which rules define good and bad?"* 3. Applied ethics, which concerns normative ethics within a specific context or profession: *"how to apply rules concerning good and bad?"* (Coleman, 2013). Thus, military ethics is a form of applied ethics.

The perspective of dealing with ethics is of great importance and depends on the ethical theory which one applies. In general, three main theories are distinguished: *consequentialist (utilitarian) theory*, *deontology (duty or rule-based ethics) theory* and *virtue ethics theory*. A description of their core elements follows below. Appendix A contains an extended version, including origin and main points of criticism.

CONSEQUENTIALISM (UTILITARIANISM)
This theory concerns the consequences of behaviour. Moral value is to be found in consequences of actions. The

consequence which serves the "most happiness" for all involved determines the right action. Central topic of this theory is thus maximising happiness for all people (universal). Classic consequentialism does not focus on intentions, in contrast to deontology, which focuses on obeying universally right principles regardless of its consequences (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013; Rhodes, 2009).

DEONTOLOGY (DUTY OR RULE-BASED ETHICS)

The deontological theory is about what behaviour is right according to universal moral duties. The most influential philosopher in this field is Kant (1724 – 1804). His ethics was purely secular and refrained from references to human nature, desires and emotions, because the basics of ethics is *"pure reason"*.

In order to act right, one needs to intrinsically want to act right. No other objectives but good will are allowed in this rhetoric (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010). To judge what is morally right Kant introduced a *'maxime';* a moral rule which seems right from a subjective individual pure reason perspective. To test if such a maxime is universally valid Kant added the *'categorically imperative';* it means that this maxime should be valid for all people in similar situations: all non-universalizable principles need to be rejected. (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013; McGavin, 2013; Rhodes, 2009).

VIRTUE ETHICS

This theory has a fairly simple question at its core: "*what is the life most worth living?"* It focusses on who a person *ought to be*, whereas the other theories focus on what people *ought to do*. It is about the individual who makes a decision and not the decision with

its consequences itself. The definition of a virtue can be described as follows: *"a virtue is a moral value, which is internalised in such a way, that it has become a personal character trait"* (Baarda*, et al.,* 2010, p. 453). Virtue ethics has moral education by character- and virtue development as a starting point. Next to character development it entails internalising values and the ability to choose right and to act on these choices (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013; Curren, 2016; Rhodes, 2009).

Being a study of moral concepts, ethics is common to all eras. Consequently ethics and its theories are always topic of debate and subject to change, since societies change. This research does not focus on such discussions, but on the effects of ethical theories on education: do different ethical underpinning theories imply different content, methods and focus?

2.2 Ethics education

Academic theory regarding ethics education reveals two main relevant points of discussion. First of all, the most common theme is whether to teach theoretical ethics or to shape ethical professionals, by teaching applied ethics (Bouchard and Morris, 2012; Hoven, van den and Kole, 2015). There is no consensus and arguments differ greatly. Amongst others, objectives, target-audience, educational level, available time, profession, culture, academic background and experience are of great influence on the debate (Hoven, van den *et al.*, 2015; Maxwell and Schwimmer, 2016). The majority of theoretical ethics support seemingly comes from philosophers. They argue that without a solid foundation one cannot develop ethical standards and moral competence. Theoretical background is necessary to categorise

issues, persons or arguments with a proper perspective. Lacking theoretical knowledge on the main ethical theories forces individuals to strictly follow rules or codes of conduct without understanding their underlying mechanisms (Baarda and Verweij, 2010; Bouchard *et al.,* 2012).

Proponents of applied ethics, mainly social psychologists, argue that by providing abstract theories, future professionals are not prepared for what society expects of them: make well-founded moral judgements. They say that in order to educate professionals, contextual case discussion, simulation and practicing ethics are essential. Moreover, providing a set of guidelines results in self-confidence, knowing that if ethically complicated issues occur, they know how to follow ethical codes to make right decisions. Precisely because the working environment of professionals are ethically complex, ethical codes based on relevant experience are important. (Escámez, Garcia Lopez and Jover, 2008; Hoven, van den, *et al.,* 2015).

The second frequently discussed theme involves direct versus indirect education. Is ethics an integrated aim of all courses and the teacher a moral role model (indirect education), opposed to direct ethics education, providing dedicated courses lectured by professionals? One of the arguments against direct education is the idea that such courses could degenerate into moralistic preaching and indoctrination. On the other hand, only relying on indirect education proved that ethics is easily overshadowed by specific sciences and does not receive enough attention (Escámez, *et al.,* 2008; Maxwell *et al.,* 2016).

Depending on those two points of discussion various teaching methods can be applied (Escámez *et al.*, 2008; Maxwell *et al.,* 2016):

1. Classroom instruction by ethical specialists, which can both focus on theory or applied ethics;
2. Teaching a code of conduct for a specific profession, in order to shape confident professionals who behave according societal and organisational standards;
3. Instruction by using an analytical framework which professionals can use to identify moral dilemmas and all involved interests;
4. Discussing moral dilemmas with the use of general and clear dilemmas. However, currently it is more common to use personal experienced dilemmas and stimulate students to share, because that seems to be more effective;
5. Realistic case simulation and roleplay to foster moral deliberation;
6. Stimulation of self- peer- and organisational reflection on behaviour, norms and values, aiming to enhance self-knowledge and reducing possible blind spots and conflicting perspectives;

A final comment concerns the appliance of moral judgement tests. Moral competence is often mentioned as one of the aims of an ethics course. Being able to measure such competence and its development would therefore be valuable. It creates insight into the baseline of a specific target-audience, but also provides the opportunity to examine course-effectiveness by executing pre- and after-course tests. However, good test results do not guarantee right conduct in real situations (Coleman, 2013). Appendix B provides information regarding two useful tests based on the moral competence development model of Kohlberg (Hofhuis, Verweij and Soeters, 2006; Williams, 2010).

2.3   Military ethics education

Military ethics education literature reveals great similarity with the previous paragraph. The two most debated topics; **teaching theory or applied ethics**, and **direct or indirect education**, are evenly present within the military debate. Robinson, De Lee and Carrick (2008) edited a book on military ethics education in *United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, Norway, Germany, France, Netherlands, Israel and Japan.* It confirms the abovementioned and demonstrates a variety in aims, methods and perspectives. Most military organisations are routed in theory-based education, focusing on the mainstream theories. In addition, just war theory (Aquinas & Walzer) is often taught (Appendix C). However, military ethics is applied ethics, the focus lies on dilemma training and discussing specific circumstances. This creates tension. Moreover, huge differences exists regarding integrating ethics in different courses and the effect of instructors, officers and teachers as moral role models.

The most important topic of debate concerns the **aim** of military ethics education. If the aim is not clear, it easily results in inconsistent and ineffective curricula. Jessica Wolfendale wrote an insightful piece (2008). She distinguishes two different aims: *functional* and *aspirational.* These aims are at odds with each other and if mixed or confused, the educational programme will be confusing too and possibly ineffective: *"Without a clear and thorough analysis of the purpose of military ethics education and training, military ethics programmes are likely to continue to be a mixture of approaches and styles, lacking internal consistency and coherent theoretical underpinnings, and taught by people with various credentials and from different academic, military, and religious backgrounds"* (Wolfendale, J.,

2008, p. 162). In short, the functional view aims to achieve military efficiency by ensuring that military personnel behaves correctly. Teaching military ethics thus focusses on how to behave within the profession as an officer. Changing character is not necessary, if students change their behaviour. The aspirational view on the contrary, aims to improve moral competence or character; to become good people and therefore good officers. Hence, character-building is essential. The chosen aim is of importance because it provides direction for the other points of discussion; it is the starting point for designing a course.

Next to the aim, **content and focus on peacetime or deployment situations** varies. Instructing a code of conduct is characteristic military content. Almost all militaries and even Services and units have a specific warriors creed or code of conduct, which aims to guide the behaviour and enhance the esprit de corps of their soldiers (Robinson, 2007). Not long after enlisting, soldiers are taught what code they need to memorise and how to behave accordingly. But what is its use for educating ethics and character-building? And what topics should also be included: philosophy, social-psychology, doctrine, practicing analytical models and just war theory? And should content be focused on peacetime or deployment situations?

Furthermore different **underlying theories** are discussed, but there is a tendency to teach and instil virtue ethics. A new theory is *value-based ethics*, introduced by Robinson (2008). It entails military ethics education based on soldiers representing a democratic state. This perspective focusses on ideals which are of great importance to a society, like freedom of speech and religion, rather than character-building with virtues like courage

and loyalty (Robinson, 2007). This also implies a different way of teaching (military) ethics.

Also of importance are the **responsible institutes or departments** and the variety of **teaching methods** they apply. Who is responsible for the planning and design? The editors distinguish three main groups: academics (philosophers and social psychologists), military officers and chaplaincy, which all approach ethics from a different angle. And which methods are applied: lectures, seminars, workshops, case-discussion, motivational speakers, decision-trees, and/or roleplay and simulation? Similar to civilian education, case-studies are the most favoured method, especially when personal input is allowed or expected.

2.4 Research framework

Based on the synthesis of these main (civil and military) topics, a framework has been developed to effectively collect the right data and apply the right perspective (Table 1). It provides a solid basis to compare the different ethics courses and programmes of RNLA (candidate-) officers, in order to examine their consistency and coherence, whether intended or not. Theory demonstrated the importance of the aim as starting point, consequently the first framework item concerns the aim. The appliance of this framework is explained in the next chapter.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK – TOPICS OF ACADEMIC DEBATE		
RQ2	**Aim**	*Aspirational or functional?* Enhancing individual self-knowledge, creating a better human being with character development, or shaping better RNLA officers according to organisational norms and standards.
	Underlying theory(ies)	*Is the course build on one or more of the following ethical theories?* - Consequentialist / utilitarian theory; - Duty ethics or deontological theory; - Virtue based theory; - value-based theory; *Or is the course based on a neutral stance towards all theories?*
RQ3	**Theory or applied ethics**	*Does the course focus on theory or appliance in practice? Is it mostly focused on laying a profound and theoretical foundation in order to create independently and critically thinking officers which are able to categorise behaviour on the one hand, or to specifically applying norms, standards and virtues to the military profession as a commander on the other hand? Or a mixture of both?*
RQ4	**Content and background**	*What content and backgrounds can be discovered in various courses and its supporting literature and educational material?*

	Focus on deployment or peace-time situations	*Is the main focus of the course deployment or peacetime? Or does it divide its attention?*
RQ5	**Responsibility and ownership**	*Who is responsible for the course and make decisions?* Are they: (RNLA) officer or instructor, military chaplain, or academics?
	Teaching methods	*Which methods are used?* Instruction and practice, imposing norms and standards, classical teaching, case discussion (general cases / personal reflective cases), simulation and role play, self- and peer-reflection? How many hours are available and which supporting literature is used?
RQ1	**Direct or Indirect education**	*Is the course an ethics education programme, or is ethics an integrated topic within a more general or specific course focused on other themes?*
RQ6 & RQ7	**References**	*To what extent does data refer to aims, underlying theories, content, methods, documents and teachers of other courses of the RNLA officer training and education periods? And what do documents and/or subject matter experts say with regard to the existence of a continuous curriculum?*

Table 1: research framework – the right perspective

3.   Research Methods

3.1 Embedded single case study

The conducted research is inductive and qualitative by nature, but does not aim to test or generalise theories or hypotheses. It aims to explain and describe *military ethics education for RNLA officers.* This single case study however, could be beneficial in a wider context and therefore it has inductive properties.

The research object has different sub-cases: *initial-*, *career-,* and *specific education.* Which for their part, are based on different elements: courses and programmes. According to Yin (2018), this is an embedded single-case design; consisting of multiple units of analysis. The complexity of relationships between these various elements underlines the relevance and focus of this research: *consistency* and *coherence* (figure 1).

Each element has been studied as separate unit of analysis from an identical perspective, after which the outcomes were compared. Specialist- and civil-military education programmes at the Royal Military Academy (RMA) were excluded. They are so different that including them would lead to comparing apples to oranges. Table 2 depicts the courses, programmes and institutes which were identified as specific research-element. The ECLD was also part of this research. Results demonstrated however, that it does not teach ethics and has a negligible influence on ethics education. Therefore it is left out.

Course	Responsible institute
Initial education	
Military instruction during General Military Training (GMT), for both short as long track cadets	RMA
Short officer training course, which lasts one year (in Dutch: Korte Officiers Opleiding – KOO)	RMA / FMS
Military scientific training course, which lasts four years (in Dutch: Militair Wetenschappelijke Opleiding – MWO)	RMA / FMS
Three tracks of the military bachelor (part of MWO): 1. War studies (in Dutch: Krijgswetenschappen – KW) 2. Military management studies (in Dutch: Militaire bedrijfswetenschappen – MBW) 3. Military systems & Technique (in Dutch: Militaire Systemen & Techniek – MS&T)	FMS
Career education	
Primary Command and Staff Course (PCSC), nowadays called the captains course, only attended by Army officers	Land Training Centre (LTC)
Intermediate Command and Staff Course (ICSC), often called the majors course, attended by officers of all Services	Netherlands Defence College (NDC)
Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC). Which delivers graduates who are willing and demonstrated to possess competences to reach the most senior officer	Netherlands Defence College (NDC)

ranks over time, attended by officers of all Services	
Specific education	
Semi compulsory train-the-trainer course: strengthening moral competence (SMCC) developed and provided by teachers from the FMS	FMS
Mandatory pre-deployment training facilitated by the SPO. (In Dutch: Missie Gerichte Opleiding (MGO)	SPO
Institutes	
Faculty of Military Sciences (FMS) Defence Central Organisation for Ethics and Integrity (COID	

Table 2: units of analysis with identified research elements

3.2 Data collection, coding and analysis
3.2.1 Data collection

Retrieving relevant and right data for each element was of great importance. Hence the appliance of source triangulation: desk research of course documentation and in-depth interviews with 12 instructors, teachers and subject matter experts. The research framework was operationalised in semi-structured interview questionnaires and a coding table.

The interviewees were selected strategically by stratified purposive sampling (Bryman, 2016). Interviewing an experienced instructor or teacher for every course was necessary, leaving no option other than purposively addressing interviewees. Because the PSCS does not contain any ethics education at all,

it was decided not to execute an interview. Additionally, documentation and representatives from the FMS and COID were selected. The interviews provided room to elaborate on certain topics and were recorded with consent. All audio-tapes were then transcribed manually. Appendices 2A until 3C contain a list of documentation, interviewees, questionnaires and the member-validation mail. Transcripts or more information are available upon request.

3.2.2 Data coding and analysis

The gathered data has been coded and analysed following the process described by Bryman (2016) and Rietjens (2014). First, data was reduced by selecting the relevant underlying documents. Relevant documents and transcripts were coded openly and axially by subtopic with the use of an operationalised coding table (Appendix 4). Sometimes an important topic was mentioned, but did not have a (sub)code; it then received a general code. Discussions regarding coordination and adjustment were distinctly present, so those were coded openly and later labelled as 'references.' Clear comprehensive matrices were not producible due to the large amount of relevant data. Therefore the most relevant coded information was merged into topical lists with selected *document passages* and *interview quotes*. Based on these topical lists the nine research themes could be compared very well. Similarities, differences and relationships became clear by underlining, highlighting or colouring specific text elements. Comparing results from RQ1 to RQ5 with conclusions from RQ6 and RQ7 ensured full comprehension.

3.3 Research quality

Studying such an embedded case-study enhances the importance of applying research methods which deliver valid answers. Validity of this research has been pursued by narrowing the research-scope and the appliance of one research perspective on all units of analysis. Source triangulation, purposive sampling and transcript-authentication increased outcome accuracy. Moreover, focusing on all reciprocal connections of separate courses and the influence of institutes, led to a more truthful image regarding consistency and coherence.

It was more difficult to ensure reliability. However, source triangulation and selecting multiple interviewees prevented outcomes based on biased opinions. Moreover, the research framework ensured focus and the right perspective. It also facilitates a design to reproduce this study. All records, transcripts and research-steps are described and saved, ensuring transparency. A nuance has to be made regarding the interviewees. Three of them switched position since their interview. Moreover, the ICSC has been redesigned and is now build up modular. Different interviewees would possibly result in different details, but conclusions in general would be similar.

This single case study did not intend to be generalisable, but it does have inductive properties. The conclusion and recommendations could be of value to other Services within the Dutch Armed Forces. Moreover, if societal context, culture and religion are considered, results are also of value for international military ethics educational institutes. They at least add to the debate of 'the right way' of teaching military ethics. To a lesser extent, for similar professions like civil and emergency services,

conclusions and recommendations could stimulate discussion and research. This also includes universities which do not have consensus on teaching theory or shaping professionals and direct or indirect education.

4. Results

This chapter provides results for all research questions in chronological order. Chapter five will draw conclusions and provide recommendations after which chapter six concludes with discussion and reflection

4.1 Ethics in current RNLA officer training and education programmes

This part describes the kind of ethics education which RNLA (candidate-) officers are taught during their career. It presents all units of analysis in sequential order as depicted in table 2. This is the cornerstone to build on; it provides the necessary baseline and context.

4.1.1 Initial education – the beginning of differences
Army cadets attend various curricula depending on their educational level and branch. A striking difference is the distinction between the military scientific education (MWO), lasting four years, and the short officers education (KOO), lasting one year. The difference in duration led to the more common used names of long- and short track training course.

Both courses focus on different target groups.
- *Short track:* applicants which already possess an applied science or university degree.
- *Long track:* young applicants which just received their pre-university diploma (secondary education).

Findings reveal great differences in ethics education for starting RNLA officers, but not only between the two tracks. Next

paragraphs describes ethics education during both tracks, supported by figure 2.

IDENTICAL START

Both tracks have an identical first half year, containing general military training (GMT) and leadership exercises, including *Leadership & Ethics 1* (L&E 1). L&E 1 encompasses basic leadership, communication and evaluation skills, next to three ethical topics: the code of conduct of the Dutch Armed Forces, diversity and gender and 'problem causers'. Besides teaching these topics, indirect education is not planned or integrated. Sometimes an ethical debate rises due to contextual circumstances, but this is not structural. These three topics are taught and discussed in two seminars which take five hours in total. This is 11.9% of the total amount of hours for L&E 1, which means that 88% contains leadership topics. Ethics self-study receives more time: 3 of 9 hours (course guide L&E 1; interviews with instructors). Moreover, an instructor demonstrated that most of these lessons are taught in the first two weeks by showing the week schedule of last year. MWO instructor: *"That is the basic course which they attend, which actually all takes place during the BO-1, thus we teach L&E1 only during the first four months and those ethics lessons are almost all taught in the first two weeks."*

SHORT OFFICERS EDUCATION (KOO).

The short-track's second half is a very compressed combination of applied science education and military exercises, partly executed by military instructors and partly by faculty teachers.
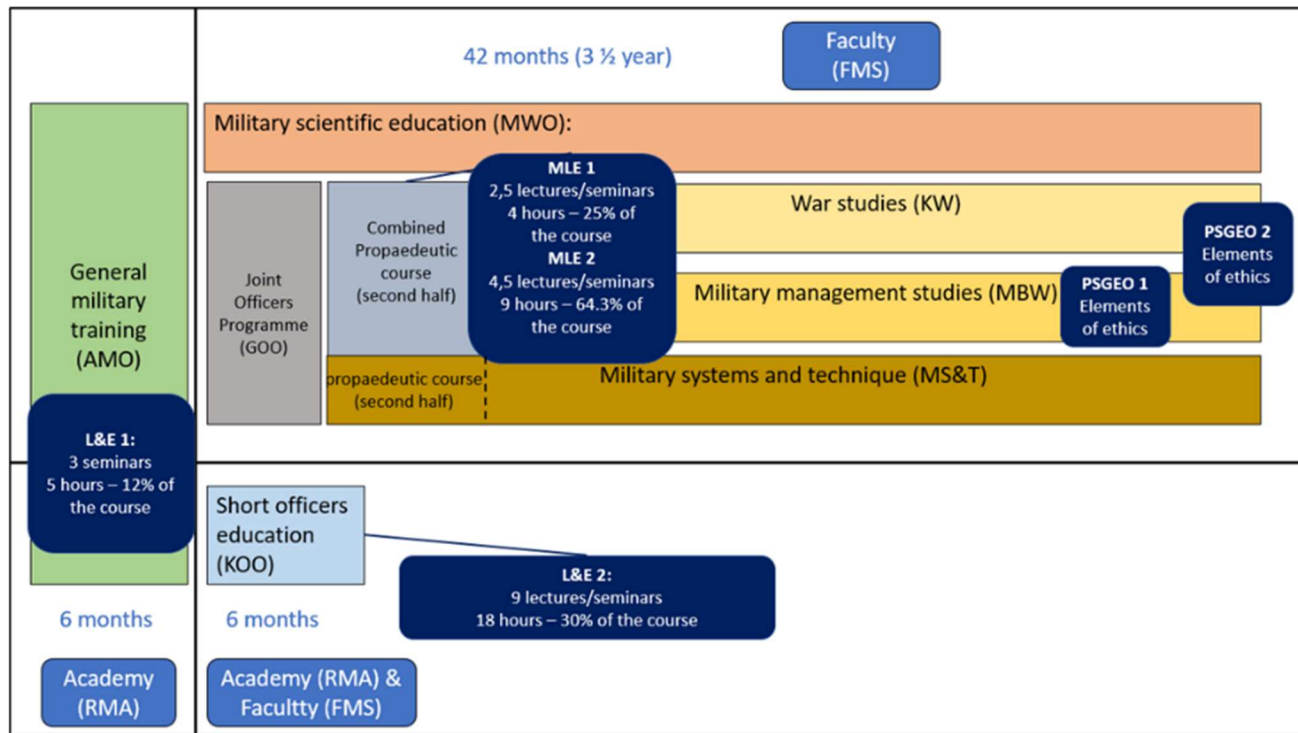
Figure 2: variety of military ethics education during initial training and education for Army cadets

Their second course containing direct military ethics education is *Leadership & Ethics 2* (L&E 2). It builds upon L&E 1 and besides leadership theories and techniques, it contains nine military ethics themes: power, military ethics, Ethical Awarenss Model (EAM) and dilemma training, moral disengagement, just and new wars, dilemma training, gender and diversity, morale and cohesion and moral disengagement within the unit. In this course the distribution between leadership and ethics is more balanced, but not even: 30% of course hours (18 of 60) concerns ethics. Again self-study hours distribution is slightly higher: 5 of 11 (course documentation and interviews).

MILITARY SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION (MWO)

Long-track cadets continue with a three and a half year bachelor period, which is regularly interrupted by military exercises. This bachelor has three sub-tracks: war studies (KW), military management studies (MBW) and military systems and technique (MS&T), which all contain the joint officers programme (in Dutch: Gemeenschappelijke Officiers Opleiding - GOO) as part of the propaedeutic year. After the GOO, KW and MBW cadets attend a combined second half of their propaedeutic year, whereas MS&T cadets focus on more mathematical and technical topics. This is the origin of a major difference in ethics education; the KW-MBW propaedeutic combination contains 21 hours of teaching *Military Leadership and Ethics* (MLE) and 147 hours of self-study, which MS&T cadets are lacking. MS&T cadets do not receive any other ethics education next to L&E1 in their first two weeks, despite RMA qualification and training profiles saying otherwise. MBW cadets on the contrary, receive even more ethics education than KW cadets, during *psychosocial*

dynamics of organisations which use force 1 and 2 which contains ethical elements (in Dutch: PsycoSociale dynamieken van een GEweldsOrganisatie – PSGEO). KW cadets choosing PSGEO 2 as an elective enlarge this variety. Military ethics *can* be a possible topic in all courses indirectly, however it is always in support of another theme (for example finance) and not structurally laid down in course documentation and therefore not taken into account. In conclusion, due to track and elective differences a great variety exists in ethics education for long-track cadets (FMS course guides KW, MBW and MS&T and interviews FMS personnel).

MLE

Being the only course focussing directly on ethics, MLE was analysed in depth. The course is divided into two blocks with a different focus. Military ethics is part of MLE 1, but focus lies with leadership. MLE 2 shifts focus to military ethics. MLE teacher: *"The first part contains more leadership and the second part more ethics."* However the common thread is that leadership and military ethics are inextricably connected, thus sometimes focus lies on leadership, but examples originate from moral dilemmas and during other classes focus lies on ethics, but cases are debated with leadership perspectives. Course guide: *"During MLE 1 cadets analyse military leadership issues based on general leadership literature. MLE 2 contains multiple periods which emphasise military ethics, but the position of the leader remains the central perspective."* Expressing in numbers is therefore difficult, but in general one can say that MLE 1 consists of one lecture and six seminars. 25% is about military ethics (4 of 16 periods). MLE 2 consists of one lecture, two guest lectures and four seminars. 64.3% concerns ethics (9

of 14 periods), some of which only being part of a guest lecture or seminar (course guide and plan MLE).

4.1.2 Career education – scarce and indirect ethics education

The primary, intermediate and advanced command and staff courses (PCSC – lieutenants/captains, ICSC – captains/majors and ACSC – majors and higher) aim to develop skills, competences and attitudes necessary for future ranks and positions within the Armed Forces. The question is: *do these courses contain military ethics education?* For the ICSC and ACSC the answer is positive (Figure 3). The PCSC remarkably, does not contain any ethics education since it was redesigned in 2018/2019 (head of responsible department and course schedule). Therefore it will not be described in detail.

ICSC

The ICSC target-audience consists of captains and junior majors from all Services. This 13-week course contains five modules next to military law and vocational training. At the time of research the last course 'old-style' was planned and a new mod-ular course was being designed. Since the ethical component would remain and the new design was not finished yet, this research focused on the 'old-style' course. It prepares students to successfully function at *preparing-policy* and *executing-policy* posi-tions. One of the modules is *Moral Professionalism* (MP): two and a half day direct military ethics education. It shows great resem-blance with the SMCC and covers 4.1% of the course (21,5 of 520 hours). Besides this module, incidental indirect ethics edu-cation occurs, but is not consciously integrated and structured.

Module Moral Professionalism

1 Safety Day
2 days seminars
(during war studies and management and business studies)
24 hours – 1.3% of the course

Random unstructured indirect education

2,5 day lectures/seminars
21,5 hours – 4,1% of the course
*Part-time alternative 2.3%

Random unstructured indirect education

No direct or
indirect ethics
education

ACSC
All Services

Not all Army officers:
only if opted and selected

47 weeks

NDC, FMS, ECLD and
external companies

ICSC
All Services

13 weeks

NDC, FMS and COID

PCSC
Army Only

4 weeks

LTC

Figure 3: military ethics education during Army career courses

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It is randomly part of debate during for example war studies and management and control (interview ICSC teacher).

The part-time ICSC is organised differently. Moral professionalism only lasts one and a half day in this alternative, covering 2.3% of the course. Due to this structure *ethics and emotions* is skipped and the COID lesson is halved (course guide ICSC; interview ICSC teacher). ICSC teacher: *"well, in general the idea and content are similar, but the intensity is different so to say…. Because during the part-time ICSC the 16 hour content is executed in 8 hours. That means that we usually skip a part; most of the times 'ethics and emotions.'"*

ACSC

This 47-week senior rank course is an executive master which focusses on security and defence, combined with character development. Military ethics is not a dedicated topic because it is taught as generic topic in the ICSC (former head of ACSC). It is a small integrated subject in two of the five modules nonetheless. War studies contains one day to discuss national and international law and testing actions ethically. It emphasises the competence of reaching a balanced moral judgement within the context of humanitarian law, reflecting on one's own ethical foundations and the link between ethical theory and humanitarian law (course guide War Studies, ACSC 2018-2019). Management and business studies contains the course '*foundations of public administration.*' Ethics is integrated in this course (one day), by focusing on integrity, loyalty-conflicts and theory regarding whistle-blowers (course guide Management and Business Studies, ACSC 2018-2019). In addition a 'social-safety-day' was integrated, following organisational developments. These ethics educational moments cover 1.3% of

the total course (roughly 16 of 1880 hours). The former head of ACSC: *"Ethics is not a dedicated scheduled topic, like war studies. However, discussions regarding dilemmas take place regularly, which is mainly part of the character-building process."* The ACSC certainly has indirect elements, but like previous courses it is not laid down in the course guide in order to consciously apply it. Despite the remark of the head of ACSC, also the character-building documentation does not refer to ethical training. Off course, due to a target-audience with large operational experience, ethical topics will inevitable be part of discussion (course guide ACSC 2018-2019; interview former head ACSC).

4.1.3 Specific course: pre-deployment training (MGO)

The pre-deployment training (MGO) is of relevance because every Army officer will be deployed sooner or later. Every soldier which is designated to deploy has to successfully complete the MGO, based on a Chief of Defense (CHOD) directive. It provides goals and topics which need to be taught or trained during the MGO (CDS Aanwijzing A700-1, November 2018). It orders the SPO to prepare, execute and evaluate the MGO-curriculum which needs to contain two lessons *Power and Ethics*. The end terms do not refer to power though. They are literally the six elements of moral competence as defined in the SMCC.

The course contains four hours of direct education, which is 11.4% of the complete course. A lot, considering the number of topics: 16 (LSP MGO; interview senior ethics instructor). Every class is differently composed (Service, rank, unit, age, gender, etc.) and all instructors use a generic PowerPoint to work with. This creates flexibility to adapt to

Figure 4: military ethics education during Army pre-deployment training

questions, but also mediocracy. Moreover, the instructor focusses on achieving end terms for students with the least knowledge and experience, resulting in officers possibly becoming demotivated or bored. Senior instructor: *"Thus, it does not matter if you are lieutenant-colonel or private. The learning goals are equal to all. That's where it starts already; most officers think of it as familiar and a piece of cake."*

4.1.4 Specific course: Strengthening Moral Competence Course (SMCC)
This nine-day course - commissioned by the Secretary of State in 2007 - entirely focusses on military ethics education by

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instructors, teachers and researchers from all Services. It is designed by FMS teachers as a pilot train-the-trainer course, aiming to improve knowledge and skills and the moral competence of all participants. The course consists of three times three days, making it easier for participants to rethink and reflect. Two trainers are continuously present to support attendees and observe their behaviour. After completing the course all attendants are invited once in one and half year to join an inter-vision-day (Bosch, *et. al.*, 2011). Non-commissioned officers (NCO's) were the initial target-audience, because most ethics instruction is executed by them. Later officers joined too, because they are expected to instruct or provide feedback with regard to military ethics if necessary. According to L&E course documentation RMA officers which instruct ethics are supposed to attend. Moreover, FMS teachers and for example COID employees became part of the target-audience (Bosch *et. al.* 2011; interview co-founder).

Since the start of the course it evolved into a solid and fundamental cornerstone for ethics education within the entire organisation. It is well attended, a trainers pool is created and the basic thought and blueprint of moral competence has gradually spread across the defence organisation.

4.2 Aim and underlying theory
4.2.1 Aim?

Results show a variety in aims from strictly functional, to a grey area and also more aspirational aimed courses. All courses are planned and executed for the Dutch MoD and are therefore functional by nature; they need to enhance effectiveness of

Dutch officers. The course-design however, can still contain specifically aspirational aimed learning goals.

Figure 5: military ethics education during the SMCC

Findings indicate a variety of course aims, but also disagreement. Both documents and interview responses differ greatly with regard to the same question: *is the course aim more functional or aspirational?* Whereas no document literally mentions *functional* or *aspirational*, the aim can be derived from specific used language. Figure 6 provides an overview of such language. Based on these or similar terms the following points can be derived from the researched documents: they all have functional characteristics. Three course guides (L&E 1, MLE and ACSC) have no clear

aspirational elements and two (L&E 2 and MGO) have mostly functional elements. Two courses (ICSC and SMCC) have both functional and aspirational characteristics (Table 3).

Many interviewees asked for clarification, where after a short discussion about aims and definitions led to an answer which seemed to have both aims in it, pointing out that reality is not so 'cut and dried.' FMS teacher: *"Well, eventually we do contribute to character-building as well. But if I had to choose, it is the first and not those character traits. It is more about transferring academic knowledge."*

FUNCTIONAL AIM: job specific, future officer, responsibilities of a military commander, in military (complex) situations, important for the Armed Forces, internalising a code of conduct, leadership, competences of a certified officer, organisational norms and values, 'have to conform', act according to defence policy, 'what is expected from an officer?' Relevant for military practice, professional attitude, during deployment and vocational training.

ASPIRATIONAL AIM: own ideas, formulate own opinion regarding functioning, self-examination and self-awareness, personal development, individual approach, thinking independently (without the lens of the Armed Forces), to stand for one's own values, being able to critically reflect, perspective as a human being, own personal values, strengthening individual moral competence, in-depth examination of one's own norms and values, views and possible prejudices and learning to put one's emotions into words.

Figure 6: specific language referring to functional or aspirational aim

Even a RMA instructor and a FMS teacher which teach during the same course (L&E) have different opinions regarding their course aim: the short track L&E 2 instructor proclaims that their

aim is functional, while the FMS teacher focuses on the aspirational side of ethics education.

▪ Instructor: *"What does the organisation expects from you and how are you going to do that?"*

▪ FMS teacher: *"And in this way they are stimulated to think. And it is not like we impose 'you have to behave like this.'"*

A similar difference is present in the answers of two MLE teachers, one more functional the other more aspirational:

▪ FMS teacher 1 - functional: *"Concerning moral disengagement, what is it actually? How to recognise it and what are your options as a leader?"*

▪ FMS teacher 2 – aspirational: *" Think about it, that is the approach. That is the idea, focussed on individuals themselves."*

	Documents	**Interviews**
L&E 1	Functional	Functional
L&E 2	Functional with aspirational elements	Functional & aspirational
MLE	Functional	Functional & aspirational
ICSC	Functional & aspirational	Functional & aspirational
ACSC	Functional	Functional & aspirational
MGO	Functional with aspirational elements	Functional & aspirational
SMCC	Aspirational & functional	Functional & aspirational

Table 3: aim of military ethics education: functional or aspirational

Besides L&E 1, results display a development towards character-building. This led to mixed aims, probably due to a gradual change of courses. Mixed aims, certainly within courses, cause unclear and potential contradictory messages: '*You need to behave according the norms and values of the Armed Forces. However at the same*

time You are stimulated to think for Yourself and have the courage to stand for Your own values. When does the organisation and society expect me to follow and when should I be reflective and deviate from norms?' Ultimately possibly leading to hesitation and indecisiveness.

4.2.2 Underlying theories

Only one course has a clear design based on one underlying theory (virtue ethics): the SMCC. A co-founder confirmed that virtue ethics is foundational: *"looking at the origin and the development goals, those are in line with…. Those are inspired by virtue ethics."* It does not mean however, that the other theories are not discussed. On the contrary they are important to create a wide and multi-layered perspective: *"… dealing with a dilemma in a moral responsible way, requires a kind of 'bird-eye view' from all those different perspectives."* The course design and methods are based on virtue ethics, which is different than its content. The module MP (ICSC) is based on the SMCC, and therefore didactically partly based on virtue ethics. An example is the presence of the *'Socratic attitude.'*

The other courses on the contrary, are didactically designed more instructional or academically and refer to several theories. Most of them have a neutral stance towards the appliance of the theories and stress the multi-layered perspective.

Looking into detail reveals differences in preference or perspective depending on teacher and target-audience (Table 4). In general it seems important to teach students all three theories with their origin, characteristics, advantages and disadvantages, in order to create a broad perspective and teach reflective skills.

	Documents	Interviews
L&E 1	No reference / theories not present.	Not known / theories not present.
L&E 2	One reference: not present due to lack of time (p. 21 course guide).	FMS teacher: all three present – no focus.
MLE	1 complete seminar 'virtue ethics' (p. 6 course guide).	All three present – no focus.
ICSC	Referred to as the three ethical theories (p. 16/17 Introductory dossier).	Virtue ethics is most present. And reference to SMCC.
ACSC	One reference as part of learning goal: "contrasting ethical theories" (course guide War Studies).	No reference.
MGO	No reference / theories not present	Only when necessary / asked for.
SMCC	MS Article 2009: one of the basic principles of the course: p. 473 and p. 480. MS Article 2019: all three present: p. 532.	Virtue ethics most present and inspiration for course lay out. However, other theories are also present (bird-eye view). Addition of M. Foucault's theory regarding power.

Table 4: presence of underlying theories.

It is arguable that the absence of theories in the most functional aimed courses – L&E 1, partly L&E 2 and MGO – and the

presence of *moral disengagement*, *the code of conduct* and *gender and diversity* in those courses can be seen as a deontological approach, based on certain (universal) principles which an Army officer has to adhere to. The presence of *problem causers*, *just war*, and *making the right decisions with regard to the defence organisation* can be seen as an utilitarian approach.

VALUE-BASED ETHICS?

Robinson introduced the term value-based ethics (2008), concerning democratic values of a society in which being a soldier represents being an agent of social justice. No documentation or interviewee referred to this term, and therefore it is clearly not present and not an underlying theory. However, one way to perceive current designs and teaching approaches is that they reflect what politicians and society expects form their military officers as guardians of democratic values. Therefore officers are provided with a broad, critical and reflective perspective, able to 'zoom-out' and behave according current societal norms. This reasoning puts value-based ethics, albeit unintended, as underlying idea.

4.3 Teaching theory or applied ethics?

Although military ethics being a form of applied ethics, it is interesting to examine all courses with the perspective of the most striking civilian academic debate: teaching theoretical ethics or to shape ethical professionals? Analysis of course documentation and interviews focussed on this contradiction. Table 5 provides a general overview of the findings.

	Documents	Interview(s)
L&E 1	Applied ethics (marginal theory)	Applied ethics
L&E 2	Combination: theoretical foundation, practical appliance	Confirm
MLE	Combination: theoretical foundation, practical appliance	Confirm, more focus on theory
ICSC	Combination: theoretical foundation, practical appliance: self-development	Confirm, practical appliance (self-development seems more important
ACSC	Applied ethics (small part theory)	Confirm, amongst others, personal development
MGO	Applied ethics (marginal theory)	Confirm
SMCC	Combination: theoretical foundation, practical appliance: self-development	Confirm

Table 5: theory or applied ethics

Three important points can be derived. Firstly, the more extensive courses (L&E 2, MLE, module MP ICSC, SMCC) have a combined focus. Next to providing a theoretical foundation, they focus on applying these theories on general ethical issues, specific cases and personal experiences. This tends towards applied ethics, but both documents and interviewees stress the importance of theoretical foundation.

- Course guide L&E 2, p. 3: "Delving more into theory is facilitated by introductory lectures per theme…."
- FMS teacher: "Thus it is really more about transferring knowledge than about shaping someone how to do it."

Secondly, there is a difference in applying ethics between L&E 2, MLE, and to a less extent the ACSC and MGO on the one hand, and the module MP (ICSC) and SMCC on the other. The first emphasise understanding theory by providing military cases and examples, which can include personal experiences, ensuring students being able to apply theories in their profession. While the latter focus on personal experiences and reflection as an individual, stimulating personal development and strengthening moral competence.

	Aim (documentation and interviews)	Theory / applied ethics (documentation and interviews)
L&E 1	Functional	Applied ethics
L&E 2	Functional + Aspirational	Combination
MLE	Functional + Aspirational	Combination (focus on theory)
ICSC	Functional + Aspirational	Combination (self-development)
ACSC	Functional	Applied ethics
MGO	Functional + Aspirational	Applied ethics
SMCC	Aspirational + Functional	Combination (self-development)

Table 6: aim vs theory or applied ethics

Thirdly, a correlation between the course aim and the focus towards teaching theory or shaping professionals seems to exist. As Table 6 shows, all functional aimed courses are mainly focused on shaping the military professional. Whereas the

courses with mixed aims demonstrate to have a combination of educating theory and using it as foundation to project it on practical cases.

4.4 Course content and focus
4.4.1 Content

Content findings show great similarity in all courses (table 7). There are some differences which seem to depend on the course aim. Predominantly functional courses focus on the code of conduct and analytical models to deal with dilemmas and prevention of moral disengagement. More aspirational courses focus on different ethical theories, philosophy, and social psychology processes. Some courses display a mixture of the abovementioned.

MORAL DISENGAGEMENT MOST PRESENT
The most dominant topic in all courses is moral disengagement. Some courses pay more attention to it than others, discussing sociopsychological processes which lie under this phenomenon, but all aim to increase understanding of disengagement, how to signal it and how to respond to, or prevent it. The L&E 2 and MLE guides even scheduled it twice (general and within an unit). Only the ACSC course guide does not refer to it. Furthermore, MLE contains a lot of cases concerning moral disengagement. Additionally, moral injury, relatable to moral disengagement, is a new topic which attracts more attention to processes of morality.

	Documents	Interviews
L&E 1	Code of conduct (1) Gender and diversity (1) Problem causers (addiction) (1)	Confirm
L&E 2	Military ethics (1) EAM and dilemma training (1) Moral disengagement (1) Just and new wars (1) Gender and diversity (2) Moral disengagement within unit (2) Developing moral competence (1)	Confirm Add: 7 steps model (2) code of conduct (4), social psychology (2) and moral injury (2)
MLE	Moral disengagement (3) Moral disengagement and leadership (4) Integrity (1) Diversity (3) Cultural competences and moral relativism (1) Military virtues (1) Just War (2) Moral injury (1)	Confirm Add: code of conduct (5) (one teacher, another teacher explicitly not, expert: process of creating a code of conduct)
ICSC	Moral behaviour alternatives and moral acceptability of own actions in military context (1) Code of conduct and norms and values Armed Forces (2) Moral disengagement (5)	Confirm, but code of conduct only as example or topic of discussion Add: - Part-time ICSC *does not* include ethics and emotions

	Social psychological processes (1) Dilemma training (2) Socratic attitude (1) Ethics and emotions (1) Integrity (2) Strengthening moral competence (2)	- Calls the module a mini-SMCC with similar topics - Philosophy (2) EAM (3) sometimes, but as example / topic of discussion
ACSC	Moral judgement and relation with ethical theories within context of international humanitarian law (1) Contrasting ethical theories (2 – virtue ethics) Integrity (philosophical (1), within public administration, and regarding leadership) (3) Loyalty conflict, whistleblowers (1)	Does not confirm but add ethical dilemma discussion and a specific safety day
MGO	Code of conduct (3) EAM (2) 7 - Steps model (1) Dilemma training (3) Developing moral competence (3) Moral disengagement (6)	Confirm Add: power (2) and ethics and attitude & behaviour Similarity with SMCC-course and learning goals of moral competence (5)
SMCC	**Strengthening moral competence (4)** Virtue ethics and other theories (3) Socratic attitude (2)	Confirm Add: philosophical vision (3) and social psychological processes (3)

	Moral disengagement (7)	Code of conduct (6)
	Ethics and emotions (2)	and/or EAM (4) only
	Integrity (4)	if necessary i.r.t target
	Power (1)	audience: as example or
	Personal mastery (1)	to discuss effectiveness
	Human rights (2 – int. nat. humanitarian law)	Just war
	Law and ethics (3 – just war)	
	Dilemma training (4)	
	Sexuality within MoD (4 – gender – diversity)	

Table 7: main ethical content in specific courses. The number behind the topic shows the frequency of that topic overall. The bold topics are most present and consistent.

CODE OF CONDUCT - DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

The code of conduct is relatively consistent present, but not always mentioned in the course guides; three times in course documentation, four times mentioned as *"standard"* or *"if necessary or topic of debate."* This difference results from a functional aim where instructors or teachers aim to let students internalise and live up to the code (L&E 1, MGO and partly ICSC), whereas a more reflective and critical perspective is applied during less functional aimed courses (partly ICSC, L&E 2, MLE, SMCC). The latter involving questions like, *what does it mean? What processes drive the creation of such a code and who are involved? And does understanding the code provide morally right answers for all situations?* Two exemplary quotes:

▪ FMS teacher: *"In lessons for both long- and short track I say 'we all know the code of conduct, you… name the elements of the code.'"*

- SMCC trainer: "…*Is it useful to say, 'yes but the code says …?'*"

4.4.2 Peacetime or deployment situations

Is ethics within the barracks, or while deployed, centre topic of a course? Table 8 presents the findings, which demonstrates variety. Most courses focus on deployment or wartime situations:

	Documents	**Interviews**
L&E 1	General (more peacetime oriented)	Depends on instructor More focus deployment / war because it is more appealing
L&E 2	Focus deployment / war	Confirm
MLE	Focus deployment / war	Confirm
ICSC	No focus, both seem equally important	Confirm, students experiences are leading
ACSC	Different focus within specific modules: war studies: deployment / war management and business studies: peacetime	Confirm (both modules have different context)
MGO	Focus deployment / war	Confirm
SMCC	No focus, both can be discussed: students experiences are leading	Confirm

Table 8: deployment or peacetime focus

(partially) L&E 1, L&E2, MLE, the module war studies (ACSC) and the MGO. This does not mean that no peacetime cases are discussed, and for example one FMS teacher tried to counter-

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balance with some peacetime situations, but the type of documented cases and the responses of the interviewees, clearly prove a tendency towards deployment or wartime context. A FMS teacher: *"Well, according to me most lessons are focused on missions and deployment… which stems mainly from the military articles which are provided."* Only one partial course, the module management and business studies, solely focuses on institutional ethics in peacetime: loyalty, integrity and whistle-blowers within public administration.

The module MP (ICSC) and SMCC however, do not intend to focus. They are led by the experiences of their students, being convinced that moral issues are everywhere in the organisation. The teachers ensure a mixture of both deployment- as peacetime topics. The following quote is illustrating: *"…it is about moral issues within the organisation. Thus, both in peacetime as while deployed…. We always ensure a balanced mixture"*

Remarkably, multiple answers of interviewees contained *"depends on the instructor or teacher",* which concerns knowledge, experience and affinity of instructors and teachers. Differences are clearly present, which enhances inconsistency.

4.5 Responsible departments and their teaching methods
4.5.1 Responsibility

Academic theory reveals three responsible departments that can be distinguished: academics, military officers and chaplaincy. It is also interesting to identify final responsibility and the level of decision-making regarding course duration, content and methods. Table 9 presents the responsible institutes and their

categorisation in one of the three departments, based on the combined analysis of documentation and interview responses.

Military ethics education for Dutch Army officers is a combined responsibility for both military officers and academics.

	Institute	Category
L&E 1	RMA (+FMS)	Military officers and NCO's
L&E 2	RMA + FMS	Military officers and NCO's + Academics
MLE	FMS	Academics
PCSC	LTC - **No ethics**	*Military officers* **No ethics**
ICSC	NDC + FMS	Military officers and Academics
ACSC	NDC (+ FMS)	Military officers (and Academics)
MGO	SPO	Military NCO's
SMCC	FMS	Academics (partially military officers in trainers pool)

Table 9: responsible institutes and categorisation in main groups

This concerns both teaching as developing content. In fact, two single courses – L&E 2 and the module MP (ICSC) – are the responsibility of both. Another two courses are mainly the responsibility of military officers, but a small role in teaching (ACSC) or advising (L&E 1) has been given to academics. Interviewee responses regarding the latter however, strongly suggest that academics do not interfere or advise as officially described. FMS teachers do not refer to L&E 1, or are not familiar with its content. Furthermore, multi-layered responsibility is present in some courses (L&E1 and 2, ACSC, MGO), risking miscommunication and misinterpretation between decision-makers and executers.

Interesting is the similarity in course aims and responsible department (see Table 10). More functional courses are the

responsibility of military officers and more aspirational courses the responsibility of academics. This underlines the importance of the aim of ethics education and its derived design.

	Aim (documentation and interviews)	Responsibility (documentation and interviews)
L&E 1	Functional	Military officers and NCO's
L&E 2	Functional + Aspirational	Military officers and NCO's + Academics
MLE	Functional + Aspirational	Academics
ICSC	Functional + Aspirational	Military officers and Academics
ACSC	Functional	Military officers (and Academics)
MGO	Functional + Aspirational	Military NCO's
SMCC	Aspirational + Functional	Academics (partially military officers in trainers pool)

Table 10: aim vs responsibility

A final observation concerns the difference between course documentation and actual execution; a difference between paper and reality. One example is the text box in the course guides

Requirements for teachers and members of the cadre	
1 per group of 15	Group instructors and platoon commanders must have managerial experience and must have completed the SMCC.

Figure 7: text box qualifications ethics instructors RMA

L&E 1 and 2. It prescribes that all instructors need to attend the SMCC. Both interviewed instructors however, with two years RMA experience, did not attend the SMCC or knew about its existence and content.

4.5.2 Teaching methods

A variety of teaching methods for ethics exists, varying from lectures to simulation. Findings show that all courses consist of some lectures combined with seminars or solely seminars, focussed on discussing theory and cases with class discussion (general discussion or small group discussion) as most common method (Table 11). Results also show the importance of case-studies and case discussion, and more involvement of personal experiences which stimulates attendees to think and reflect, as Robinson (2008) mentioned. This trend reflects the development in civilian education (Escámez *et al.,* 2008; Maxwell *et al.,* 2016).

Naturally, one of the methods consists of teaching and discussing a code of conduct, as described in the content paragraph. Our organisation has a variety of codes and creeds, but ethics education focusses on the MoD code of conduct. Almost all courses discuss this code, some aiming to internalise it (functional) and some aiming to reflect on it (aspirational).

A final remark can be made regarding the used literature or cases). Comparing data revealed four recurring cases, all in line with the most dominant topic; moral disengagement:

- Bandura: moral disengagement (MLE, partial MGO and SMCC);
- Zimbardo and Milgram (L&E 2, MLE, MGO and SMCC);

- Normvervaging in krijgsmacht en samenleving (L&E 2, MLE);
- My Lai (L&E 2, MLE).

	Documentation	Interviews	Test?
L&E 1	3 seminars: Class discussion, case discussion	1 seminar and 1 lecture: Confirmation including personal experiences in general	No test
L&E 2	5 lectures, 4 seminars: Direct teaching with limited interaction and class discussion, case discussion	Confirmation Confirmation, including personal experiences instructor	Written open book exam
MLE	2 lectures, 1 guest lecture and 11 seminars: class discussion and case discussion (both lectures contain video footage of a certain case: interaction limited) and students teach/present 6 seminars themselves	Confirmation Confirmation, addition: combination of direct teaching with self-work assignments	Two written exams, a presentation and a paper
ICSC	Seminars: Class discussion, small group exercises (amongst others, Socratic attitude)	Mixture of lectures and seminars: Confirmation and value of personal experience discussions	Written assignment: reflection on personal case

ACSC	No reference regarding method	Class discussion and case discussion	No test
MGO	2 seminars: Class and case discussion	Confirmation Confirmation, including personal experiences in general	No test
SMCC	Seminars, guest lectures: Individual intake interviews Class discussion and personal case discussion Theme-centred interaction Small group exercises (amongst others, Socratic attitude)	Confirmation, Confirmation, addition: Attendees co-decide in planning, methods and content during course during so called *'co-steer sessions.'*	No test

Table 11: teaching methods and testing

Reoccurrence signals importance and consistency but also the risk of duplication of earlier lessons, which would mean incoherency.

4.6 The role and influence of the FMS and COID

Examining the role of the FMS and the COID with regard to military ethics education, provides an answer related to responsibility. It is important to mention that results show that both the RMA (initial education) and the NDC (ICSC and ACSC) have a large influence on their ethics education. By having final responsibility for the course designs and integration of sub-courses, they ultimately decide on duration, focus and content. If the NDC for example, decides to remove ethics education entirely from the ICSC, it will be removed.

It is relatively easy to describe the role of the FMS and COID with regard to ethics education for Army (candidate-) officers, but rather difficult to be precise about their influence. The roles of both institutes are very clear. The FMS has the largest task. It contributes to multiple courses during Army officers' entire career, providing direct teaching for *initial-* and, *career education*, but it is also responsible for *specific education:* developing, executing and evaluating the SMCC (Table 12 and course guides). Next to education, the FMS is also expected to conduct research on (military) ethical topics, thereby stimulating education development.

The COID structurally provides guest lectures during *career- and specific education* (Table 12). The lectures focus on COID as department and organisational ethics and integrity. This is less than the FMS, however, the interview showed that

the COID contributes to ethics education next to these guest lectures in two ways. Firstly, it focusses on the periods in between the initial and career courses, by providing ethics and integrity education and workshops for Army units. The difference is that those are aimed at entire units or departments, instead of a specific target-audience with individuals. Secondly, the COID assists every institute with ethics or integrity training on request (interview COID experts).

FMS	COID
L&E 2 (initial education) MLE (initial education) Partially PSGEO and HRM (initial education) Module MP - ICSC (career education) Module MBS - ACSC (career education) SMCC (specific education)	Module MP – ICSC guest lecture (career education) SMCC guest lecture (specific education) *Army Lt. Colonel course guest lecture?

*Table 12: active roles of FMS and COID with regard to ethics education for Army officers. *Not part of research. A very recent development, according to interviewees COID.*

Overseeing all data and references demonstrates that the FMS has the largest influence on (direct) ethics education for Army (candidate) officers. It is actively involved in all educational moments except for the MGO. Furthermore, it has the most experts and knowledge concerning military ethics education and quite autonomously design ethics courses for initial or career curricula. Moreover, it has an advisory role for L&E 1 and are referred to as expert centre by the senior MGO ethics instructor.

The SMCC, also a responsibility of the FMS, developed towards a structural and effective course, thereby serving as a platform for the FMS to indirectly exert influence across the entire organisation. The idea of the SMCC was to incrementally spread ethical knowledge and skills across the organisation, which seems to have worked, looking at a variety of course and policy documentation referring to strengthening moral competence (course guides L&E 2, Module MP, power & ethics MGO, CDS A700-1, Armed Forces Officer Profile and education and training profile RMA). The majority of all interviewees (9 out of 14 persons) attended, or develop and coordinate the course and stresses its value. A strong side-effect of this course is the created network of trainers. The course is provided by trainers from a pool of 15, which work across the entire organisation. These trainers switch position every two or three years, increasing the need to attract new trainers. This led to a network of trainers, growing through the ranks, spreading their knowledge within the organisation (interview co-founder SMCC).

The COID has substantial influence, although less than the FMS. Not so much during guest lectures, but more through their lessons and workshops for Army units and their signalling function for the entire MoD. Moreover, the COID is creating a knowledge centre and is filling the gap for a reasonable amount of instructors which cannot attend the SMCC. Finally, the COID launched a moral judgement training and the concept of moral inter-vision (interview COID experts). Important initiatives, but not structural contributing to the ethics education of Army officers. On the other hand, the COID is of importance to the MoD staff and could advise to alter ethics education.

4.7 Coordination and continuous curriculum

This paragraph provides the results of examining course documentation and interview responses regarding internal and external coordination and the existence or absence of a continuous curriculum. Furthermore, interviewees were asked about other departments or institutes and their roles.

4.7.1 References

Course documentation and even more interviewees refer a lot to other institutes or courses. However, most of these references are limited to the direct course context or are bilateral and not structural. For example, references to L&E 1 in the L&E 2 course guide, references to the ICSC in the course guide of the ACSC, etc. Having the role and influence of the most relevant institutes in mind, it is not strange that most references concern the FMS. Also the COID is referred to for the same reason, but to a lesser extent.

4.7.2 Coordination, adjustment and absence of a continuous curriculum

Communication, coordination and adjustment are key to achieve coherence. The amount and content of references regarding cooperation and adjustment for ethics education reflects consistency, but above all coherence. As earlier paragraphs showed, those references do not guarantee actual comprehension of the coherence of ethics courses or execution of overall coordination and adjustment. Table 13 demonstrates references regarding cooperation and adjustment.

	Documents	Interviews
L&E 1	Extensive reference regarding cooperation and adjustment between RMA and FMS *Adjustment with L&E 2*	SHORT TRACK INSTRUCTOR: no coordination or adjustment at all LONG TRACK INSTRUCTOR: no coordination or adjustment.
L&E 2	Extensive reference regarding cooperation and adjustment between RMA and FMS *Adjustment with L&E 1*	SHORT TRACK INSTRUCTOR: no coordination or adjustment at all FMS TEACHER SHORT-TRACK: necessary bilateral coordination regarding FMS lectures during L&E 2 with RMA. Confirms the need for a structural overall coordination with involved institutes. *No adjustment (also not with L&E 1)*
MLE	No reference concerning coordination Just a reference about COID providing a guest lecture *No mentioned adjustment*	2 FMS TEACHERS: reference to internal FMS coordination, but could be improved States that there is little communication between RMA and FMS. *No adjustment with L&E 1 or module MP (ICSC)*
ICSC	Short references regarding cooperation and adjustment with both FMS and COID *Adjustment with SMCC*	NDC teacher: integrated bilateral preparation with FMS teacher: product is combined effort Bilateral coordination with COID for their course input. No coordination with other institutes

		Confirms the need for a structural overall coordination with involved institutes with possible steering role for NLDA and expertise role for FMS *Adjustment with* SMCC. FMS teacher: much bilateral coordination with NDC and COID for module MP *Adjustment with* SMCC.
ACSC	One general reference regarding guest lectures, including FMS (without topic) *No mentioned adjustment regarding ethics*	FORMER HEAD OF ACSC: no coordination regarding ethics *No adjustment regarding ethics, other than 'basic knowledge is provided during ICSC'.*
MGO	No references, other than DOPS and Services in general *No mentioned adjustment (indirect learning goals SMCC)*	Senior instructor: no structural coordination. If necessary request advice from COID or FMS. *Adjustment to SMCC.*
SMCC	No reference concerning coordination *No mentioned adjustment*	CO-FOUNDER: incidental bilateral coordination with ethics educational institutes RMA, RNI, however SMCC is not mandatory *No adjustment*
FMS	-	FMS EXPERT: incidental and bilateral coordination between FMS and RMA, no real coordination between FMS and COID, at most sharing information.

COID	-	COID EXPERTS: bilateral coordination with SMCC, and bilateral coordination with NDC for ICSC and FMS for MLE. *Adjustment to SMCC*
ECLD	-	Mostly bilateral coordination with mainly FMS, COID and NDC. No actual coordination with RMA.
RMA	-	TRAINING AND EDUCATION DEVELOPERS: refer to one structural coordination structure: 'OT – KOO/SOO', in which all courses are discussed, with both RMA and FMS representatives

Table 13: coordination and adjustment

BILATERAL AND INCIDENTAL COORDINATION

Results show absence of structural coordination and adjustment. Coordination occurs, but is mostly bilateral and focussed on preparation and execution of courses by institutes which have a role in it. However, some respondents said they do not perceive any coordination or adjustment at all, despite an extensive paragraph in their course guide (course guides L&E 1 and 2).

LACK OF CENTRAL DIRECTION AND SHARED VISION

Another observation concerns the remarks of the NDC teacher and multiple FMS teachers. They all miss a shared integrated vision and central direction through structured coordination. This leaves institutes with the responsibility for their courses, unable to zoom out and oversee the bigger picture. The NDC teacher

proposed an organisational structure in which the NLDA is responsible and has mandate to decide and in which the FMS fulfils an expertise role: *"There should be an overarching department which pursues and safeguards those general interests. And in the end the commanding officer of the NLDA should demand that certain elements be part of curricula in the initial and career education. But, it is convenient to have a FMS to rely on."* Such an idea is backed by FMS teachers, not with the NLDA or FMS in the mentioned roles per se, but pointing at the need to structure ethics education overall:

- "But according to me, it would be really nice if there would be a more shared vision. I do not know where this challenge belongs, which department, maybe the FMS, or elsewhere, but…"
- "Well, there is a need to structure."

ABSENCE OF A CONTINUOUS CURRICULUM

Central direction based on a shared vision could be achieved based on an integrated continuous ethics curriculum. Deliberate chosen variety could be of value when it is coordinated within such a coherent curriculum. Table 14 however, demonstrates the absence of such a structured continuous ethics curriculum. Analysing documentation, but more importantly respondents' input, proves that specific instructors and teachers or institutes are not familiar with other ethics courses during the career of an Army officer. They focus on their obligation only, which lead to isolated courses. This is negatively affected by the position-rotation system of military personnel. When finally familiar with their course design and content they start to change positions again. An illustrating quote: *"…anyhow, after three years a new commander starts and then it changes again. Or he is less alert or aware…*

and suddenly nobody attended the SMCC anymore.” This results in a short-term inward focus. To ensure adjustment and interconnectedness with other ethics courses would be an important step, almost impossible to achieve within two or three years. The remark of the NDC teacher regarding ethics education during the PCSC (Table 14), is exemplary for the absence of an overview, but also even within initial education the overall picture is not always clear:

- FMS teacher: *“I would not dare to say how the long track is build up in that period. No.”*
- Long track instructor: *“I do not know what cadets are taught in the bachelor, no.”*

Some interviewees indicated that a continuous curriculum indirectly exists, due to the presence of FMS teachers in all various initial and career courses, or by saying that the SMCC has an effect which creates a tendency towards such a curriculum. This is not reflected in the answers of other respondents though. Moreover, the connotation of 'continuous' suggests education which builds upon the previous courses and deepens knowledge. A FMS and NDC teacher on the contrary referred to 'continuous' as in multiple moments of repetition during officers' careers. Other respondents pointed out that such a curriculum is going to be developed. Interestingly both the RMA and COID discussed this independently of each other, which reflects the need for central direction.

	Documents	Interviews
L&E 1	**No continuous ethics curriculum**	SHORT TRACK INSTRUCTOR: partly within RMA, but low quality: **absent**

	Only within short-track education with regard to L&E 2: *continuous curriculum development professional attitude and behaviour*	LONG TRACK INSTRUCTOR: **absent**
L&E 2	**No continuous ethics curriculum** Only within short-track education with regard to L&E 1: *continuous curriculum development professional attitude and behaviour*	SHORT TRACK INSTRUCTOR: partly within RMA, but low quality; **absent** FMS TEACHER SHORT-TRACK: **absent** / indirectly exists because multiple FMS teachers educate within initial and career courses: the 'continuous' is repetition not actual 'continuing'
MLE	**No continuous ethics curriculum** Only within long-track education with regard to bachelor: *academic curriculum PSDEO*	2 FMS TEACHERS: **absent** / refers to development of general continuous character-building curriculum, which is not an ethics curriculum
ICSC	**No relevant reference regarding continuous ethics curriculum**	NDC TEACHER: **absent,** however **partly exists** due to multiple moments in career repetition of ethics education (not continuing)* FMS TEACHER: **absent** / stresses the **lack of a shared vision** / does see effect of SMCC: more line in ethics education.

ACSC	Appendices in the course guide refer to initial education and ICSC with regard to war studies and management and business studies; **it does not mention ethics however**	FORMER HEAD OF ACSC: **absent** / refers to development of general continuous character-building curriculum, which is not an ethics curriculum.
MGO	**No relevant reference regarding continuous ethics curriculum**	SENIOR INSTRUCTOR: **absent**
SMCC	**No relevant reference regarding continuous ethics curriculum**	CO-FOUNDER: **absent** / stresses the **lack of a shared vision** / does see effect of SMCC: more line in ethics education
FMS	-	FMS EXPERT: only within FMS: **absent**
COID	-	COID EXPERTS: **absent**, but in process to start development from within COID
RMA	-	TRAINING AND EDUCATION DEVELOPERS: **absent**, but intention to develop one

Table 14: does a continuous ethics curriculum for Army officers exist.
* NDC teacher referred to ethics education during the PCSC, but this researched proved that the PCSC does not contain ethics education at all.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

This research examined the extent of consistency and coherence of military ethics education for Dutch Army (candidate-) officers. Creating a specific research perspective based on the analysed main topics in both civilian as military academic literature, set the necessary conditions to carefully and methodologically examine and compare all relevant ethics education during *initial-, career- and specific* training and education. This research framework provided nine subtopics: *aim, underlying theories, theory or applied ethics, content, deployment or peacetime situation, responsibility, teaching methods, direct or indirect education and references.*

Previous chapters provided an explanatory and comparative view of all ethical educational moments. This forms the foundation to draw conclusions regarding *consistency (similarity and equal ideas)* and *coherence (relationship and adjustment, including existence or absence of a continuous curriculum).* In conclusion, the answer to the central question of this research is:

> Military ethics training and education programmes for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate-) officers during their education and career are **marginally consistent** and **not coherent**.

This conclusion will be explained in the following paragraphs, where after some recommendations are made.

5.1 Conclusion

No RNLA officer is educated in military ethics identically or even similarly, despite guiding documents, such as the Armed Forces officer profile (2015) and the RMA training profile. Variety in study tracks during initial education creates great difference in entry-level officers. Long and short track courses differ with regard to topics and focus. In addition, all bachelor tracks contain different ethics education. The most striking conclusion is the fact that MS&T cadets only receive five hours military ethics in their first two weeks.

Contrary to what many still think, the PCSC does not contain ethics education, which means that RNLA officers only receive 2,5 day ethics education after 12 years of active duty (or more) during their ICSC, meaning that the first hours focus on repetition. The part-time alternative only provides one day compressed ethics education, enlarging differentiation. Apparently such differentiation is acceptable. More remarkably, this is the only ethics educational moment during active service. The ACSC is not attended by all officers and its ethics education is marginal. The only exception are those who are deployed (four repetitive mission centred hours), but most importantly those who attend the SMCC. The latter group is relatively small but those individuals gain extensive knowledge regarding ethics and moral competence.

Additionally, indirect education during all researched courses is present but not consciously organised and laid down in character-building documents (or course guides) and therefore never in the same form, context and frequency. If and

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how many times ethics is indirectly educated depends entirely on the situational context: teacher's background, (operational) experience of participants, willingness to share, perception of social safety, news items and preferences. Particularly this fact contributes to inconsistency and increased differentiation.

MARGINAL CONSISTENCY

The process of analysis put the following problem forward: how to deal with valuable and necessary variety which technically could be labelled as inconsistency? Opposed to real inconsistencies, which stem from isolated ideas, deviation from course documentation or lack of adjustment and coherence. Whether educational parts are labelled 'valuable variety' or 'inconsistent', depends on their design: are they deliberately designed as a varying element or coincidentally? However, even when coincidentally designed, it could still be of value. Therefore, the terms 'deliberate variety' and 'coincidental variety' are applied: both being positive for ethics education, due to its added value. It provides officers a broad and reflective perspective. But to be effective coherence is essential.

Having this in mind and combining it with results from chapter four leads to the conclusion that military ethics education for RNLA officers is quite inconsistent, partly due to coincidental variety. Next to programme diversity, which unmistakably creates inconsistency, out of seven subtopics, only two show large consistency: *content* and *teaching methods*, and also those reveal some inconsistencies. Course content is not exactly similar and when it is quite comparable, the aim, perspective and depth of discussion do differ. Teaching methods are most consistent, showing a change from lecturing to seminars with

class and case discussion, often including personal experiences, similar to the international trend. Also consistent is the absence of roleplay, simulation and exercise integration. Only testing shows great diversity.

Two topics demonstrate coincidental variety: teaching extensive theory and applying it on cases as well, and discussing both peacetime and deployment situations. This variety aims to stimulate reflection and provide different points of view, but coherence is vital to achieve such integrated goals and to prevent contradictory messages, imbalanced programmes, or unnecessary repetition of topics. Therefore, it is important to stress that variety is only of value, when well thought-out and if adjusted. Table 15 provides a summarised overview of sub-topics and their extend of consistency.

	Consistency	Remarks
Aim	No	A great variety on aims and perceptions, resulting in mixed messages and possibly confused students
Underlying theory	No	Most functional aimed courses have utilitarian and deontological characteristics, while the SMCC and module MP (ICSC) are based on virtue ethics The majority teaches all three but do not use it as underlying theory (critical reflection and instruction or academic theories are underlying)

Theory or applied ethics	No – Coincidental variety	Although military ethics is applied ethics, differences exist between solely applying ethics based on (personal) case discussion and extensive theoretical teaching which is used to reflect on either (personal) cases or personal character and conduct.
Content	Yes, however	Differences between aim, perspective and depth of discussion.
Focus on peacetime or deployment	No – Coincidental variety	Tendency towards deployment / war time but significant differences. Great influence of instructor / teacher possibly deviating from course plans (depending on their personal experience, knowledge and affinity). COID role during multiple courses: peacetime focus.
Responsibility	No	Military officers or academics, or a combination: it differs per course. Moreover, difference between documentation and reality exists due to different individual knowledge, experience and affinity, but also dual and multi-layered responsibilities. Consistent: no prominent role for chaplaincy.

Teaching methods	Yes.	Focus on seminars with class and case discussion including personal experiences No roleplay / simulation or exercise integration Inconsistent: diversity on test method / test at all

Table 15: (in)consistency per sub-topic

Based on these findings which show marginal consistency, four important conclusions need to be addressed. Firstly, every RNLA officer which starts on his/her first position is highly likely educated differently than his/her colleagues. The MS&T officer is barely educated at all, for instance. Focus during career courses lies on indirect education, which is not explicitly and structurally laid down in course documentation and therefore always inconsistent. This stresses the urgency to rethink the necessity and place of ethics education for RNLA officers and its aims and derived designs to effectively spread it across officers careers.

Secondly, one of the most important findings is the discussion regarding the course aim. Is teaching how to behave as an officer sufficient? Or does one needs to change its character in order to become a morally right leader? Discussion started already while interviewing, reflecting the absence of consensus. A variety of functional, less functional and aspirational courses exists, which could be of value if coherently and reflectively integrated. But more important, problematic are internal course aims which are often a mixture of both, leading to an inconsistent and possibly contradictory message which can have large consequences on the battlefield; hesitating officers

which do not grasp what society and the MoD expects from them, leading to indecisiveness or wrong choices.

The emergence of mixed aims is, amongst others, a possible result of incremental change of courses; scratching and adding elements for too long. For education to be effective it starts with having a clear aim, after which the course set-up, including content, underlying theory, methods and focus can be designed. These findings are similar to those of Jessica Wolfendale (2008). The importance of this point is reflected by the following addition. This research showed that military officers mainly seem to have functional aims and teach applied ethics with the EAM, whereas academics mostly seem to have aspirational aims and teach both theory and applied ethics and focus on personal reflection. Thus, decisions on course aims also entails selecting the right department, or selecting a department ensures the appliance of a certain aim.

Thirdly, content consistency demonstrates a large emphasis on moral disengagement, appearing in all courses except but one. It seems that its importance comes from the intention to prevent moral disengagement and its consequences. Officers have an important role in preventing moral disengagement: they have to display appropriate behaviour and signal and intervene if necessary. More importantly, opposed to preventing it, officers could have a catalysing effect when they join or stimulate excessive behaviour. Hence the dominant presence of moral disengagement in ethics education for officers.

Other recurrent topics are moral competence, integrity, dilemma training and EAM, diversity/gender/sexuality and just war. The code of conduct is the second most common topic, however the aim of discussing it differs greatly. Mostly military

instructors and teachers aim to functionally internalise the code, expecting (candidate-) officers to behave accordingly, while academics tend towards a more aspirational reflection on the code and its use. The same comparison can be made for analytical models (EAM and 7-steps); where instructors functionally focus on 'successfully' applying such models in moral dilemma situations, academics less functionally aim to transfer knowledge about ethical theories, social psychological processes and philosophy in order to reflect on the usefulness and limits of such decision tools.

Fourthly, inconsistency also stems from individual behaviour of instructors and teachers. Multiple times respondents referred to *"depends on the instructor or teacher"*, mentioning the level of knowledge, experience and affinity which could lead to ineffective transfer of knowledge or deviation from course guides, methods or exemplary cases. Thus, providing the right knowledge by educating instructors and teachers and sticking to course guides is important.

Furthermore, a dual and/or multi-layered responsibility, like L&E 2, or communication and translation of the Armed Forces officer profile down the line, adds to this issue of difference between documentation and reality and leads to miscommunication, misinterpretation and friction, ultimately leading to inconsistent messages to target-audiences.

LACK OF COHERENCE

As the previous paragraph shows, RNLA officers ethics education is marginal consistent. The lack of a shared vision on course aims and a consequently derived course design, next to the absence of central direction increases inconsistency and

coincidental variety, but above all it restrains coherent adjustment between courses. Although course documentation and mainly interviewees refer much to other courses or institutes, knowledge of other ethics courses is mostly absent and coordinating structures and actual adjustment are limited present. All interviewees confirm that most coordination is bilateral and incidental and some even emphasise the need for an overarching structure with central aims and direction. They perceive courses and education as bottom-up initiatives within fairly isolated programmes. Moreover, responses show difficulties overcoming disagreement and sometimes even feelings of distrust.

The presence of a well-thought-out continuous ethics curriculum would help gain coherence and thereby possibly consistency. Moreover, it could structure and deliberately design valuable and necessary variety regarding certain topics within a common thread; variety cannot sort effect without proper coordination and adjustment. Unfortunately such a curriculum is currently absent. Actually, some curricula are not adjusted and integrated internally.

Two factors do contribute to coherence though. First of all, involvement in initial, career and specific ethics education of the two most influential institutes: FMS and COID. Although inconsistency and incoherence increases because of different perspectives and interests of both institutes, it seems that more consistency and coherence exists within the periods in which the same teachers or advisors of those institutes are active. Secondly, the SMCC gradually sorts more effect within the entire organisation, with moral competence being referred to in policy- and course documentation. It stimulates discussion regarding

ethics education and more importantly, it aims to creates a central view which is starting to pay off.

In conclusion, coherence should be the starting point to rethink and redesign ethics education with input of all stakeholders in order to train and maintain effective morally right leaders.

5.2 Recommendations

The conclusion provided knowledge and insights in current RNLA (candidate-) officer education. This research also aimed to provide insights to increase effectiveness. Based on the conclusions the following recommendations are put forward. The foremost deals with the lack of a shared vision and central direction. It would be wise to design a coherent continuous military ethics curriculum, starting with clear aims, based on the (renewed) qualification profile which needs to be clear with regard to ethics for all career periods and accepted by all institutes. It could be useful to apply the research framework of this research while designing. It is important to determine the course aims by answering the question: *is teaching how to behave as an Army officer sufficient? Or does a (candidate) officer needs to improve its character in order to be an effective and morally right military leader? And does the answer to this question change while climbing the ranks?* Building such a continuous curriculum provides the opportunity to overcome disagreement by involving all relevant institutes in the process of design, implementation and evaluation (RMA, NDC, FMS, COID and possibly ELCD and Chaplaincy). This also provides the opportunity to discuss and structure necessary variety. The following points are essential prerequisites for such

a curriculum, or opportunities to seize while redesigning ethics education for RNLA officers.

- An overarching organisational structure with common acceptance is required; one institute responsible for central direction with authority and mandate. Which institute this should be, is topic of debate. The NLDA seems suitable, due to its place in the organisation, but lacks expertise. The FMS and COID could very well function in such way, due to its current involvement and influence (COID lesser extent) in ethics education and their expertise, but do not have to right position yet.
- All relevant institutes need to actively partake in the design and together come to a balanced curriculum, based on shared ideas of what MoD and society expects from our officers. Part of the design process should be thinking about the role and place of necessary valuable varieties and the way they are explained to students.
- Underlying theories, content, responsible category, methods and focus should be coherently derived from a clear aim of ethics courses: functional or aspirational. These aim can differ over time, but functional and aspirational aims within a single course seem counterproductive.
- After implementation, those institutes should all attend structured coordinating meetings, in order to maintain a coherent curriculum.
- The curriculum calls for one focus: ethics, and separation from leadership curricula, because this research demonstrates a strong tendency to focus on leadership, leaving ethics overshadowed (similar to civilian ethics education related to primary themes). Off course both

themes are interconnected, certainly for officers, but by designing a single ethics curriculum in which moral leadership and the role of a commander still can, and needs to be discussed, the tendency to focus on leadership is diminished.

- While developing and evaluating such a curriculum, ensure that military personal holding relevant ethics educational posts stay posted, in order to maintain knowledge and experience (job description).
- Repair the deficient of ethics education for the MS&T track.
- Include ethics education in the captains course (PCSC), because 12 years (or longer) between initial- and career ethics education is ineffective.

A second recommendation is the structural improvement in policy, frequency, capacity and funding of the SMCC. This research reveals incremental positive effects of the course, however it did not reach its full potential yet. The course is not attended by all instructors and teachers, but also not yet seen as a prerequisite in order to teach or coach on ethics. Moreover, its frequency and capacity cannot fulfil a growing organisational demand and specifically RNLA - personal is the most notable absentee. The design of the SMCC could be of use while rethinking and redesigning the continuous construct of ethics courses.

Thirdly, it seems necessary to further examine indirect ethics education and make it explicit, in order to contribute to a coherent and didactic right educational construct. After all, if a coherent continuous curriculum is implemented and indirect education is not adjusted (including teachers as role models), then still possibly different messages are sent, decreasing

effectiveness. A mandatory SMCC for all instructors and teachers (not only for ethics, but for all courses), could be an interesting option to address the right indirect education.

Fourthly, it would be interesting to examine and test the added value of structurally applying moral judgement tests during initial, career and specific education. It could also possibly serve as an evaluation tool by comparing test results before and after a course.

Fifthly, it seems relatively easy to enhance learning effects by implementing simulation and discussion in already planned exercises, adjusted to relevant ethical topics at that point of training and education. This teaching method is currently not applied, but could be very effective because acting ethically right is different than talking about right ethics.

Lastly, the idea of value-based ethics (Robinson, 2008) as an underlying theory should be discussed. It is arguable that the point of view of many teachers resembles the core idea of this new appointed ethics theory: soldiers as agents of social justice, defending their democratic values.

6. Discussion & Reflection

It is important to discuss some limitations of this research. First of all, while integrating all analysed conclusions regarding consistency, it became clear that the term 'inconsistent' has a negative tone by definition. This was not anticipated and put forward the problem of necessary educational variety which according to the research framework should be labelled as inconsistent. This seemed misleading and not right. Coherence is of the essence for this variety to be effective. Therefore, the terms deliberate and coincidental variety were introduced in the conclusion.

Secondly, as research was conducted, it became clear that the Dutch chaplaincy did not have a large role in ethics education for RNLA officers. But a small overlap, mainly during initial education, seems to exist. Due to this small role and time constraint it was decided to leave further research on the pastoral care course and the opinion of responsible chaplaincy representatives out. Therefore, additional research could be of value.

Thirdly, multiple respondents changed positions already and minor course alterations could be executed. Reproducing this research would therefore reveal slightly different outcomes. However the overall conclusions and recommendations stay valid nonetheless.

Fourthly, while analysing data, the existence of a Lt. Colonels course was discovered. This very recent commenced career course was also left out of this research, because it was

discovered too late in the research process. Further enquiry on this course would also contribute to the research results.

Fifthly, the outcome of this research did not include much on the connectedness of leadership and ethics itself. However, it demonstrated the tendency of instructors, teachers and students, to focus more on leadership than ethics when both topics are part of a single course (L&E and MLE).

Sixthly, in addition to this research it would be very interesting to examine the effects of ethics education and integrate those results in the design of a continuous curriculum. In order to do that, various target-audiences, of all courses should be tested and a specific selection could be surveyed and/or interviewed. A particular designed moral judgement test before and after a course could be of use.

Seventhly, if a continuous ethics curriculum based on a shared vision seems a long way ahead, the sub-recommendations for it to be effective could be studied and possibly achieved individually. In other words, they are of relevance whether continuous curriculum initiatives are taken or not.

Finally, this research took longer than expected. Besides non-research reasons, learning how to conduct semi-structured interviews and transcribing and coding them were of great value, but also consumed a great amount of time. Moreover, the process of analysing the large amount of relevant document passages and interview quotes was another meaningful experience.

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Appendices:

English		**Dutch (Nederlands)**	
ACSC	Advanced Command and Staff Course HDV	Hogere Defensie Vorming
AFPS	Armed Forces, Politics and Society	KPS	Krijgsmacht, Politiek en Samenleving
COID	Defence Central Organisation for Ethics and Integrity	COID	Centraal Orgaan Integriteit Defensie
EAM	Ethical Awareness Model	EBM	Ethisch BewustwordingsModel
ECLD	Defence Expertise Centre for Leadership Development	ECLD	Expertise Centrum Leiderschap Defensie
GMT	General Military Training	AMO	Algemene Militaire Opleiding
FMS	Faculty of Military Sciences	FMW	Faculteit Militaire Wetenschappen
FPA	Fundamentals of Public Administration	GOB	Grondslagen Openbaar Bestuur
ICSC	Intermediate Command and Staff Course	MDV	Middelbare Defensie Vorming
ISS	International Security Studies	IVS	Internationale Veiligheidsstudies
L&E	Leadership & Ethics	L&E	Leiderschap & Ethiek
LTC	Land Training Centre	LTC	Land Training Centre
MBS	Management and Business Studies	BBW	Bedrijfs en bestuurswetenschappen

MLE	Military Leadership and Ethics		MLE	Militair Leiderschap en Ethiek
MMS	Military Managements Studies		MBW	Militaire bedrijfswetenschappen
MS&T	Military Systems & Technique		MS&T	Militaire systemen & Techniek
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer		OOFF	Onderofficier
NDC	Netherlands Defence College		IDL	Instituut Defensie Leergangen
MoD	Ministry of Defence		MvD	Ministerie van Defensie
PCSC	Primary Command and Staff Course		PV	Primaire Vorming
PSGEO	Psychosocial dynamics of organisations which use force			
RNI	Royal Naval Institute		KIM	Koninklijk Instituut voor de Marine
RMA	Royal Military Academy		KMA	Koninklijke Militaire Academie
RNLA	Royal Netherlands Army		KL	Koninklijke Landmacht
RQ	Research question		OV	Onderzoeksvraag
SMCC	Strengthening Moral Competence Course		VME	Verdiepingscursus Militaire Ethiek
SPO	School for Peace Operations		SVV	School Voor Vredesmissies
WS	War Studies		KW	Krijgswetenschappen

APPENDIX 2A – LIST OF (COURSE) DOCUMENTATION

Document type	Title (original name in Dutch)	Version
Royal Military Academy (RMA)		
Course guide	Vakleerplan Leiderschap & Ethiek -1	November 2016
Course guide	Vakleerplan Leiderschap & Ethiek -2	November 2016
PowerPoint Presentation	L&E 11 – Gedragscode Defensie	September 2018
Class schedule	Schema Introductiebivak, inclusief L&E lessen	September 2018
Training end terms document	Eindtermen beroepsopleiding	January 2019
Instruction Card	Instructie Kaart 2-1250. Uitreikstuk LeiderschapsTraining en Vorming (LTV) ten behoeve van de leidinggevende	Second edition
Qualification Profile	Kwalificatieprofiel KL Officier	December 2013
Training Profile	Opleidingsprofiel KMA – De officier van de Nederlandse Krijgsmacht	February 2018
Faculty of Military Sciences (FMS)		
Course guide	Studiegids Militaire Bedrijfswetenschappen (MBW)	Academic year 2018 - 2019

Course guide	Studiegids Krijgswetenschappen (KW)	Academic year 2018 - 2019
Course guide	Studiegids Militaire Systemen en Techniek (MS&T)	Academic year 2018 - 2019
Code of Conduct	Vorige Gedragscode Defensie	Valid until Dec-2018
Course Plan	Vak opzet Miltair Leiderschap en Ethiek (MLE)	Academic year 2018 - 2019
Course guide	Studiehandleiding MLE	Academic year 2018 - 2019
Netherlands Defence College (NDC)		
Profile	Profielschets Officieren	Versie 1.1 February 2015
Introductory dossier	Introductiebundel MDV	Versie 1 February 2019
Course guide	Studiegids HDV 15, inclusief alle bijlagen	Versie 1 2018 - 2019
Defence Centre of Expertise for Leadership Development (ECLD)		
Explanatory note	Toelichting Visie Leidinggeven Defensie	March 2015
Infographic	Infographic Visie Leidinggeven Defensie	2015

Defence Central Organisation for Ethics and Integrity (COID)		
Code of Conduct	Huidige Gedragscode Defensie https://www.defensie.nl/downloads/publicaties/2018/12/04/gedragscode-defensie	Published 4th Dec 2018
Application form	Aanvraagformulier Training Morele Oordeelsvorming	V5.61 (Current)
Fact Sheet	Fact Sheet Training Morele Oordeelsvorming en Moreel Beraad	2017
Protocol	7-stappen plan voor morele oordeelsvorming	2016
School for Peace Operations (SPO)		
Learning Support Package (LSP)	LSP – Missie Gerichte Opleiding (MGO) Combinatie	October 2016
CHOD directive	CDS Aanwijzing A-700/1 Gereedstelling Individuele Militairen	November 2018
Standard PowerPoint Presentation	Standaard PowerPoint presentatie – Les macht en ethiek 1 & 2	March 2019
Strengthening Moral Competence Course (SMCC)		
Course guide	Uitreikstuk Verdiepingscursus Militaire Ethiek *Cursus daadwerkelijk gevolgd in voorjaar 2019*	March 2019
Publication in Military Spectator	Versterking van de Morele Competentie	2009

Primary Command and Staff Course (PCSC)		
Qualification Document	Behoeftestelling Kapitein KL	February 2016
Trainings Proposal PCSC	Opleiding & individuele Training (O&iT) - Voorstel Kapiteinsopleiding	Versie 1.0 – October 2019
Email - Reply	Beantwoording opleidingsdocument: geen militaire ethiek lessen.	May 2019

APPENDIX 2B – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

	Position	Military Ethics Contribution / Education	Interview date
	Royal Military Academy (RMA)		
1	Instructor long-track company	Multiple lessons during General Military Training (GMT)	06-06-2019
2	Instructor short-track company	Multiple lessons during GMT and multiple lessons during L&E course	21-06-2019
3	Training developer and educationalist **_Two positions/persons_**	Administer, manage and develop course guides and curricula for all initial education tracks at RMA (including L&E)	25-04-2019
	Faculty of Military Sciences (FMS)		
4	University lecturer	Teaches for bachelor module MLE 1 and 2	03-05-2019
5	University lecturer	Teaches for bachelor modules MLE 1 and 2 and Armed Forces, Government and Society (AFPS), L&E 2 for the short track officers education, and	09-05-2019

		Fundamentals of Public Administration (FPA) for the Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC)	
6	Professor of Military Ethics	Coordinates military ethics education for bachelor and master programs. Moreover, very experienced subject matter expert, who contributed to the development of military ethics courses from the very beginning	08-05-2019
Netherlands Defence College (NDC)			
7	Former Head of Advanced Command and Staff Course	Leads and coordinates curriculum of ACSC	21-05-2019
8	Teacher module moral professionality	Coordinates and teaches the module moral professionality which is part of the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (ICSC)	21-05-2019
Defence Centre of Expertise for Leadership Development (ECLD)			
9	Former head of knowledge centre ECLD	Responsible for gathering relevant knowledge regarding leadership and	07-05-2019

		structuring development of defence leadership vision	
	Defence Central Organisation for Ethics and Integrity (COID)		
10	Prospective head of the COID knowledge centre and former integrity advisor COID, specifically Army (currently Joint Support Command advisor) **Two positions/persons**	Responsible for gathering relevant knowledge regarding integrity and moral issues, both theoretical as linked to current military practice. Moreover advising ministry and defence departments on integrity and ethics. Advising Army on integrity issues and teaching about ethics and integrity	29-05-2019
	School for Peace Operations (SPO)		
11	Senior instructor military ethics	Provides the military ethics lessons which are part of the mandatory mission-specific training and education programme	09-04-2019
	Strengthening Moral Competence Course (SMCC)		
12	Co-founder / assistant professor FMS	Coordinates, evaluates and improves SMCC. Teaches particular topics and	10-05-2019

| | | provides feedback to junior course leaders. Besides SMCC, teaches during the module moral professionality in the ICSC. | |

With the exception of the training developer at the RMA, everyone has had multiple years of experience in their position in relation to military ethics.

General mail set-up for addressing selected interviewees

Good afternoon *[name]*,

As an MSS student, I am in the stage of writing my thesis.
With this mail I would like to ask you if you would be willing to participate in my thesis research. You hold an essential position and are an expert when it comes to military ethics education to (aspiring) Army officers.

The coherence and alignment between the different ethics education programs to Army cadets and Army officers during their career is the central topic of my thesis.

As a *[position]*, you are a very relevant source for my research.

First of all, I would like to ask you if you can give me access (digitally) to the relevant current educational documents regarding (military) ethics education within *[relevant institute]*?

In addition, I would like to ask you if you would like to participate in a semi-structured interview, in which I am interested in some specific topics, but also in your opinion regarding the central theme.

In the attachment you will find the objective and main question of my thesis, as well as the topics I want to explore by studying documentation and interview transcripts

For the sake of completeness, I have also attached my complete Individual Research Proposal (IRP).

Regarding the interview:
Duration: 1 to 1.5 hours.
Location: according to your preference.
Technique: semi-structured interview with dictaphone: complete recording.

Processing:	transcribe and add as primary source. Comparison with other interviews and documentation.
Feedback:	transcription and use of quotes - feedback before publication.
Anonymity:	I can keep the source anonymous, but given the nature and specific context of the study, it is relatively easy to trace who was interviewed.

Is it a problem if anonymity can only be partially guaranteed? I assure you that nothing will be published without your permission.

Thank you very much in advance for your input. If you have any questions, please ask.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin

Appendix by send email:

Central theme

From day one a Lieutenant is confronted with leadership- and moral issues, which stresses the need of a thorough understanding of the relationship between behaviour, values, virtues and aims. Do Army cadets leave the Academy with such a clear view of their role and how ethics affects their daily leadership? And how are the experiences of Captains and Majors put in perspective of ethics, during their mandatory command and staff courses?

Therefore, this research aims to shed light onto the construct of the numerous military ethics training and education programs for RNA cadets and officers, in order to contribute with knowledge to- and development of, this ethics training and education and to provide recommendations for improvement if possible. Both the courses of the initial academy education, as the courses during RNA officers' careers are examined. The central themes are *consistency* and *coherence.*

With consistency, the content of the various training and education courses is compared to investigate if the various

teaching approaches are similar and based on *equal* thoughts and foundations. With coherence the comparison focusses on the *relationship* and *adjustment* between the several training and education courses. A secondary, possible outcome is knowledge regarding the relationship between leadership and military ethics in the training and education programs. In order to fulfil the purpose of this research the following central research question is formulated:

> *To what extent are military ethics training and education programs for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate-)officers consistent and coherent?*

This question guides the research of all mandatory military ethics educational topics in regard with RNA (candidate-) officers, focusing on different elements such as aims and methods, all seen from an overarching perspective of consistency and coherence.

Train the
Trainer
(Officer)

Specific education

Deployment
education
(Officer)

Ethics Education

Initial education:
Instruction and bachelor
(Cadet)

Advanced
education:
PCSC, ICSC, ACSC
(Officer)

Military Ethics Education RNA

Influential
institutes:
COID, ECLD, FMS

Consistency and
Coherence of Royal
Netherlands Army
Officers Ethics
Development

Military Ethics Education RNA

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Interview topics regarding specific military ethics education program:

Aims - Educate towards the occupational context OR person development?

Content and background - Philosophy (Socratic attitude / Freud?), Social Psychology (moral disengagement?), Doctrine, Code of Conduct, / Ethical Awareness model, Just War theory?

Underlying theories - Consequentialism (utilitarianism), Duty Ethics (deontology), Virtue Ethics, social/ democratic value ethics?

Or none/ mix/ neutral.

Responsibility and ownership - who makes decisions, who coordinates, who determines what methods, etc. (RMA / FMS / Institutes / Chaplaincy?).

Teaching methods - instruction and practice, impose norms and standards, frontal, classroom, case discussions, general or personal cases, simulation / role play, etc.

Emphasis on **peacetime or deployment**

Emphasis on **theory or applied ethics** - thought: 'with a good theoretical foundation and self-insight one is well prepared for future situations' OR, 'learning to apply theory in practice using examples; how should or could you react in specific situations'.

References - to what extent do the above topics refer to other ethics education programs.

Appendix by send email: Individual Research Proposal (IRP)

The IRP was also added for additional context. It is too much to add the complete research proposal. More detailed information is available upon request.

	Mandatory Academy Education		Advanced Education			Specific Education		Influential Institutes			
	Instruction Short/Long term	Bachelor Education	Primary CSC	Intermediate CSC	Advanced CSC	SPO Pre deployment training	SMCC	FMS	ECLD	COID	Chaplaincy (Academy)
Aims											
Content and background											
Underlying theory(s)											
Responsibility and ownership											
Pedagogical methods											
Focus on deployment or peace-time situations											
Theory or applied ethics											
Direct or Indirect education											
References											

Example matrix

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APPENDIX 3A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW– TEACHERS & INSTRUCTORS

General Questions (who is the primary source)

1.   Can you, briefly introduce yourself, including:
a. your education and (academic) background
b. your career / work experience before the current position
c. your current job/position
2.   To which Army cadet / officer (military) ethics education programs do you contribute?
3.   What does that contribution involve? (lesson / curriculum / course / research / evaluating and instituting ethics education)

Theme Specific Questions
The following questions relate to your specific contribution to military ethics education for Army cadets and/or officers. If you are making multiple contributions for different teaching programs, please tailor the following questions to each specific program.
Answers from documentation:
▪ How many hours does the ethics program/lessons consist of:
▪ How much is that relative to complete training:
▪ By what materials is the program / lessons supported (books, instructional cards, case histories):
▪ How many teachers/instructors contribute to this program.
4.   Documentation shows the above. Is it the same in reality? Why?
5.   a. Does the training aim to educate/develop cadets/officers:
- in the professional context (how to behave as an officer)?
- Or as a person/character (self-reflection and insights into behavior in general)
b. Where is it evident? How?

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6.   What is the content and background of the training/ course/ program?

Philosophy (Socratic attitude / Freud), Social Psychology (moral disengagement), Doctrine, Code of Conduct, / Ethical Awareness model, Just War theory?

7.   What underlying ethical theories underpin the training / course / program?

Consequentialism (utilitarianism), Duty Ethics (deontology), Virtue Ethics, social/ democratic value ethics? Or none/ mix/ neutral.

8.   Who is responsible for content and alignment with other parts of the training/ education?

a) Who determines the (learning) goals?

b) Who determines content?

c) Who determines the method?

d) Who aligns/integrates into the whole (1 up)?

e) Who determines changes as a result of evaluations?

f) What is the role of institutions: FMS / Chaplaincy / COID / ECLD / NDC?

9.   What teaching methods are used?

Instruction? Practical exercises? Explain and impose norms / standards, frontal classroom teaching (lectures), working lectures, case discussions, simulation, role play. Own personal case studies/reflection?

10.   a. Is the emphasis on peacetime situations or rather war, deployments and the role as peacekeeper? Or is there no focus: everything is covered?

        b. And is there a distinction to be made in specific subjects that receive attention?

(dealing with local population, or relation to ROEs, or dealing with stress and emotions, etc.).

11.   Is the emphasis on theory education or rather applied ethics?

Thought: 'with a good theoretical basis and self-insight one is well prepared for future situations' OR, 'learning to apply theory in practice using examples; how should or could you react in specific situations': (following norms/standards).

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12.   a. In your opinion, to what extent does your program/course relate to other programs focused on ethics education for Army - cadets and/ or officers?

b. Does alignment take place? What kind of alignment?

c. Is there a continuous curriculum for military ethics for the Army officer?

13.   Question regarding the institutes:

a. What is the role of the ECLD regarding ethics education?

b. What is the role of the FMW regarding ethics education?

c. What is the role of the COID regarding ethics education?

d. What is the role of the Chaplaincy regarding ethics education?

e. What is the role of the RMA regarding ethics education?

f. What is the role of the Army Command Staff regarding ethics education?

g. What is the role of the NDC regarding ethics education?

APPENDIX 3B SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW – INSTITUTE SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

General Questions (who is the primary source)

1.   Can you, briefly introduce yourself, including:
a. your education and (academic) background;
b. your career / work experience before the current position;
c. your current job/position.

Specific Questions
2.   What do you think is the role of your institute regarding military ethics education for Army (aspiring) officers?
3.   What are/ is the purpose(s) of your institute regarding military ethics education?
4.   How do those roles and aims relate to other institutes? (ECLD/COID/FMS/Chaplaincy/RMA/NDC/LTC) – Army Command?
5.   How do those roles and aims relate to other military ethics education moments?
6.   Does alignment take place? If so, incidental or structural and bilateral or integrated?
7.   Is there coordinated consultation?
8.   Does your institute teach military ethics? And to Army cadets/ officers?
9.   Does your institute determine/direct the content of certain education programs for Army cadets/ officers? If yes, what education and in what capacity?
[If applicable]:
10.   a. Does your institute aim to develop cadets / officers:
▪ in the professional context (how to behave as an officer)?
▪ Or as a person/character (self-reflection and insights into behavior in general)
        b. Where is it evident? How?

11.   Does your institute emphasizes on theoretical knowledge / cognitive development and character development or rather applied ethics in relation to the organization?

Thought: 'with a good theoretical basis and self-insight one is well prepared for future situations' OR, 'learning to apply theory in practice using examples; how should or could you react in specific situations': (following norms/standards).

12.   a. Is the emphasis on peacetime situations or rather war, deployments and the role as peacekeeper? Or is there no emphasis: everything is covered?

        b. And is there a distinction to be made in specific subjects that receive attention?

(dealing with the local population, or relationship to ROEs, or dealing with stress and emotions, etc.)

Good afternoon *[name]*,

With this mail I would like to draw your attention to the transcript of your interview for my thesis on military ethics education to KL officers.

 The transcripts have been developed from the audio recordings over the past six months.

 Next to my regular work, I have spent the past six months coding the transcripts. I also somewhat underestimated the literal transcribing in time. So it has taken a while, but in the context of quality aspects of research, I think it is important to perform *a member check* of all transcripts before I start to complete my data analysis.

 This means that I want to ask you to read the transcription and indicate whether you recognize yourself in the given answers and give me your consent. If you do not recognize yourself, I would like to ask you to indicate as precisely as possible which part(s) it concerns. If you recognize yourself, but do not want certain parts to be used in the thesis, I kindly request to indicate those parts as specifically as possible.

 In doing so, I would like to emphasize that as part of research ethics, I am anonymizing you as a source and only quotes will be used if relevant to the research. However, for some positions it is possible to infer from quotes which institute or which position was responsible for it. I kindly request, if possible, to mail your response no later than January 17.

 If you have any further questions or comments, please let me know.

Your Sincerely

Kevin van Loon

CODING TABLE	
Aims	*Aspirational or functional:* **A1** – Aspirational **A2** – Functional
Content and background	*What content and backgrounds can be discovered in various courses and its supporting literature and educational material?* **B1** – Philosophy **B2** – Social Psychology **B3** – Doctrine **B4** – Code of Conduct **B5** – Analytical model (Ethical Awareness Model or 7 steps, other) **B6** – Just War theory.
Underlying theory(ies)	*Is the course build on one or more of the following ethical theories?* **C1** – Consequentialist / utilitarian theory [Bentham / Mill]; **C2** – Duty ethics or deontological theory [Kant]; **C3** – Virtue based theory [Aristotle]; **C4** – (societal) value based theory [Robinson]; *Or is the course based on a neutral stance towards all theories?*
Responsibility and ownership	*Who is responsible for the course?* **D1** – Responsibility **D2** – Decision on content
Teaching methods	*Which methods are used?* **E1** – Classical teaching **E2** – discussion / cases **E3** – Simulation / role play **E4** – Duration of course
Focus on deployment	*Is the main focus of the course related to ethical issues in regard with deployments or to ethical issues in regard*

or peace-time situations	with peace-time situations on the barracks or during exercises? Or does it divide its attention to both topics? **F1** – Deployment **F2** – Peace-time
Theory or applied ethics	*Does the course focus on both theory and appliance in practice? Or is it mostly focused on laying a profound and theoretical foundation in order to think independently and critically and to create the ability to categorize behaviour on the one hand, or to specifically applying norms, standards and virtues to the military profession as a commander on the other hand?* **G1** – Theory **G2** – Applied ethics
Direct or Indirect education	*Is the course an ethics education program, or is ethics an integrated topic within a more general or specific course focused on other themes?* **H1** – Direct **H2** – Indirect
References	To what extent does data refer to aims, content, theories, methods, documents, teachers of other courses of the RNLA officer training and education period? **I1** – Literature **I2** – teacher / institute **I3** – education / course

Consequentialism (utilitarianism)
This theory concerns the consequences of behaviour and moral value is to be found in these consequences of actions. The consequence which serves the "most happiness" determines the right action. If there are two choices, one should choose the option which optimizes the happiness for as much persons involved as possible (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010; Coleman, 2013; Rhodes, 2009).

Central topic of this theory is maximising happiness for all people (universal). Classic consequentialism does not focus on intentions, in contrast to deontology, which does focus on obeying universally right principles regardless of its consequences.

Two important founders of consequentialism are Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) and John S. Mill (1806 – 1873). Bentham wrote that humans has two rulers: pain and pleasure. To find the moral right thing to do is the avoidance of as much pain as possible and at the same time to pursue as much pleasure as possible (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013; Rhodes, 2009). Bentham purely focusses on quantity of pain and pleasure and thereby specialises the following factors: the intensity, timespan, certainty and availability or achievability. The inclusion of as many persons involved is of importance and thereby Bentham creates an economical approach: the number of persons and their degree of pleasure constitutes the credit side, and the number of persons and their degree of pain constitutes the debt side. Morally right is the choice with the highest margin, regardless of the side you are on yourself.

Mill however, disagrees, because he points out that there are higher and lower forms of pleasure, which needs to be taken into account. Items and actions need to be judged also on their intrinsic value. In other words quality does matter, in contrast to

the quantity claim of Bentham. (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Rhodes, 2009).

The main points of critics on consequentialism theory are:

- The fairly hedonistic nature of striving to pleasure versus avoiding suffering;

- Exceptions to the rule come to mind which would not be morally good, such as doing a friend a favour without asking something in return, or confronting children with bad behaviour or punishing them in order to raise them well;

- How to measure and rate the consequences of all alternatives? Interpretations and assumptions are lying in wait. And how to deal with uncertainty of consequences?

- How much individuals are involved? Utilitarianism distinguishes itself with a universal character, whereas other consequentialists claim that such principles are beyond reason. Why is it not morally right to defend your family at the expense of unknown?

- A final issue is the pursuit of pleasure as central theme. Values such as justice or honesty could be violated or outranked in the pursuit of pleasure or avoidance of suffering.

(Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013;)

Deontology (duty or rule-based ethics)

The deontological theory, also referred to as duty ethics, is about what behaviour is right according to universal moral duties. The most influential and foundational philosopher in this field is Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804), who developed the deontological theory in the period of the Enlightenment. His ethics was purely secular, which offended prevailing ecclesiastical views, but also refrained from references to human nature, desires and emotions, because the basics of ethics is "pure reason", and religion and emotions are subjective (Baarda, *et al.*, 2010; Coleman, 2013; McGavin, P.A., 2013; Rhodes, 2009).

In order to act right, one needs to intrinsically want to act in the right way. No other objectives but good will are

possible in this rhetoric. Someone who does not aim to achieve another goal, who does not refrain from acting due to possible punishment as consequence, or who is not seduced by rewards, who acts from an inner conviction, possesses "pure reason" or good will (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010).

To judge what is morally the right thing to do Kant introduced a "maxime"; a moral rule which seems right form a subjective individual pure reason perspective and thus needs to be obeyed. To test if a particular maxime is actually valid Kant added the "categorically imperative"; it means that a certain maxime should be valid for all people in similar situations: the categorically imperative tests the universality.

The main points of critics on deontological ethics theory are:

- The lack of compassion and emotion and thereby the difficulty to reach universal moral duties, based on purely reason. For example: to help the poor from a caring point of view has no moral value based on Kant's deontology.

- The categorically imperative has received criticism, due to the fact that one could be forced to choose between two moral duties. The term categorically does not suffice. Although Kant argues that within his philosophy there is no space for contradicting duties. The appliance of duty hierarchy would be a solution.

- The human dignity thoughts of Kant, where respecting other individuals is a goal in itself, reveals a problematic issue with organisational hierarchal and authority structures.

(Baarda, *et al.,* 2010; Coleman, 2013).

Virtue ethics

This theory has a fairly simple question for all human beings at its core: "what is the life most worth living?" It focusses on who a person ought to be, whereas the other theories focus on what people ought to do. It is about the individual who makes a decision and not the decision with its consequences itself.

The definition of a virtue can be described as follows: "a virtue is a moral value, which is internalized in such a way, that it has become a personal character trait" (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010, p. 453). Virtue ethics has moral education by character- and virtue development as a starting point and focusses on human beings to live a moral just life. Next to character development it entails internalizing values and the ability to choose right and to act on these choices.

The theory dates back to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. It is about eudaimonia: achieving a flourishing life. According to Aristotle a right choice is the point in the middle between two extremes. An often used example is the virtue of courage; which lies between cowardness and recklessness (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010; Coleman, 2013; Curren, 2016; Rhodes, 2009).

The main points of critics on virtue ethics theory are:

- The teaching of virtue ethics stimulates character development, thereby focusing on personal convictions, which can be seen as intrusive and pretentious. Difference in values, or even worse a collision of values, of an individual and the organisation he or she works for, could be problematic: does one need to detach personal values in order to embody the organisational values?

- It can be hard to grapple, due to its abstract definitions and the high level of importance of the individual which could degenerate into subjectivism. Who decides what virtue is internalized? And what is the right middle between two extremes? It also does not provide a right answer to all questions, like the other theories suggest if their method of reasoning is followed. Particularly in professional work environments, like education, health care, guardianship and also the military, employees sometimes prefer decision trees, rules, and codes of conduct which prescribes how to act and behave in certain situations.

- Virtues are not universal. They are bounded by their society, culture, religion and era. Therefore, virtues of professional teachers in the Western world could differ greatly

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with virtues of Asian teachers. Moreover, the development of Western military virtues and codes of conduct over time shows in itself difference in virtues, due to development of societies, cultures, technology and religion.

Moral competence development model by Kohlberg

1.   Preconventional level – rules and societal expectations are externally imposed:

Phase 1: obedience and punishment;

A person follow rules, because otherwise he/she will be punished. Actions which does not result in punishment are therefore allowed or even experienced as good. Awareness of other people's interests is lacking.

Phase 2: selfish interests;

A person is aware of other people's interests but they are inferior to his/her own interests.

2.   Conventional level – individual identifies himself with expectations of others:

Phase 3: approval;

Adjustment of behaviour to expectations and approval of others. Judgement of others is more important than self-interest.

Phase 4: societal and institutional rules;

       Adjustment of behaviour to specific societal- organisational norms and rules.

3.   Postconventional level – independent posture towards rules and expectations of others:

Phase 5: human rights, and social contracts:

Doing the right things according to what society thinks is worth pursuing, but critical posture towards rules if further development or prosperity is limited by them.

Phase 6: universal ethical principles:

Some ethical principles are universal and more important than laws and institutional obligations.

Moral competence tests: Defining Issues Test (DIT) and Moral Judgement Test (MJT)

DIT:

The defining issues test originates from Kohlberg's theory of moral development as a written alternative for in depth interviews, in order to gain similar results (Thoma and Dong, 2014; Williams, 2010). The focus of the measurement is assessing the understanding and interpretation of moral issues. This test developed over the years and became more reliable, but its results are mainly focused and valuable in regard to the difference between phase 4 and 5. Or in other words, the shift from the conventional and maintaining norms level, to the post-conventional and societal and universal principles, level. Furthermore, the DIT is more about macro morality - deliberation in regard with societal or worldwide moral conceptions-, than micro morality - daily moral issues with a small scope (Thoma, *et al.,* 2014; Williams, 2010).

The test consists of five shortly described moral dilemmas and twelve arguments regarding this dilemma to be ranked based on a 5-point scale of importance. The four most important rated arguments are derived to categorize moral development according to Kohlberg's model. Criticism on the 'hard' defined stages has been countered by researchers (Rest, amongst others), by applying the DIT and arguing that it proves a more gradual developmental model from a simple and self-centred appreciation to a more complex and societal moral conception (Thoma, *et al.,* 2014; Verweij *et al.,* 2007). Moreover, an individual can have multiple conceptions at any given time, and can have developed more in regard to one specific topic than other topics.

Besides providing data on moral judgement capabilities, the DIT can also derive data on the progress of the development process: is it consolidated at a particular phase or is it in transition from one phase to another? Other secondary

interesting data can include decisiveness, religious orientation and the correlation between output and scientific background, age, gender, level of education and experience with moral dilemmas, etc. According to DIT statistics age and level of education seem to be the most important variables for increased moral reasoning competency (Maxwell *et al.,* 2016; Thoma, *et al.*, 2014; Verweij *et al.,* 2007).

MJT:

The Moral Judgement Test, developed by Lind (1998) is similarly as the DIT based on Kohlberg's development model: "The Moral Judgment Test (MJT) has been constructed to assess subjects' moral judgment competence as it has been defined by Lawrence Kohlberg: „the capacity to make decisions and judgments which are moral (*i.e.*, based on internal principles) and to act in accordance with such judgments" (Kohlberg, 1964, p. 425; emphasis added)." (Lind, 1999, p. 2).

The test has a similar aim as the DIT, but its method is different. It consists of four descriptions of moral dilemmas and its solutions. Respondents have to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the decisions of the main characters in the dilemma. Each dilemma has six arguments pro and six arguments contra, its solution, all related to one of the phases of Kohlberg's model. Thereby it measures moral consistency and the degree of applying moral principles when judging.

Also, this test can offer data on other topics than moral development and knowledge of organisational or societal principals. Introducing variables like age, gender or military rank and education can provide information on moral judgement capability in regard to those variables.

An important remark has to be made in regard with the latter part of Kohlberg's definition. Displaying knowledge of, and deliberating on moral topics well, does not mean that an individual will also act accordingly when confronted with a real

moral dilemma. Test makers could for instance give socially desirable responses (Verweij *et al.,* 2007).

General remarks:

Some remarks have to be made. Both tests are based on Kohlberg's or Rest's theory (a derived, nuanced theory - four component model - based on Kohlberg), which have a deontological character describing a development towards internalising universal principles (McGavin, 2013; Thoma, *et al.,* 2014; Verweij *et al.*, 2007). Applying these tests delivers the most reliable data for looking at problems with a deontological perspective. Its sixth and most developed phase describes universal ethical principles, whereas individuals which were taught virtue ethics have a divergent perspective which allows persons to be as developed as phase 6 but having contradicting virtues and principles.

Moreover, if a person answers questions based on a written moral dilemma, not experiencing the real situation, it does not guarantee that he or she behaves the same if encountered with a real dilemma (Verweij *et al.,* 2015). Nevertheless, he or she, does have gained knowledge on the possible conflicting values and interests and the pros and cons of solutions in such a moral dilemma.

APPENDIX C – JUST WAR THEORY AND DOCTRINE OF DOUBLE EFFECT (DDE)

Just war theory
A widespread theme within military ethics education is closely related to law; just war theory (jus ad bellum). It deals with theory which argues that states (including non-state groups) in some cases are justified in engaging in armed conflict, having met all conditions and tried all options before using their arms and adjusted to the proportionality principle during their intervention (Coleman, 2013; Olsthoorn, 2011).

Doctrine of Double Effect
The Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE), was introduced by Thomas Aquinas and developed by Michael Walzer. It could be labelled as combining consequentialism and deontology. It entails that there is a moral difference between a person's intention of his actions and foreseen consequences of these actions that are not intended. This is a very important doctrine for soldiers, due to its application in regard with collateral damage. In general for military action to be justified it needs to meet the following prerequisites (Baarda, *et al.,* 2010, p. 450; Coleman, 2013, p. 22; Olsthoorn, 2011, p. 83):
▪ The act is good in itself or at least morally indifferent, which means, that it is a legitimate act of war;
▪ The direct effect is morally acceptable: the good effect must come directly from the action, not through the bad effect;
▪ The intention of the actor is good; to bring about the good effect and not the bad. It is nuanced by Walzer in order to prevent that everything can be justified: *"the evil effect is not one of the ends, not is it a means to the ends, and aware of the evil involved, one seeks to minimise it, accepting costs to himself"* (Baarda *et al.*, 2010, p. 451);

The good effect must be sufficiently good to compensate for allowing the evil effect.

Members of the military are expected to make the morally *'right decisions'*. Society demands from its soldiers to be morally competent professionals. This responsibility becomes immediately effective when positioned as a young lieutenant. It is compounded by the battlefield of the 21st century, as characterized by strategic compression, complex environments, conflicting values and technological developments.

Education in military ethics is a key element to prepare the military. This research offers an analytical framework with which one can discern the (in)consistency and (in)coherency of ethics educational programmes, including the (in)consistency between various programmes. This is done given the fact that for many cadets, midshipmen and officers such programmes will not serve as job training but as career development education, as they climb through the ranks. The key benchmarks are: aims, content, underlying theories, teaching methods, responsibility, theory or applied ethics, peacetime or deployment focus, internal stakeholders and coordination measures. The ethics education at the Netherlands Defence Academy serves as a case study. The inconsistencies thus discovered at the Netherlands Defence Academy seem to be discernible in the educational programmes of other militaries as well.

This thesis has been awarded the second prize of the year 2021 in EuroISME's annual contest for the best student's thesis. EuroISME will annually publish the winning theses in two or more languages. For information about the contest, please visit www.euroisme.eu

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