ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS

PROFICIENCY LEVEL FOUR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 3

EO C407.01 – PREPARE FOR A MERIT REVIEW BOARD

Total Time:	90 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-804/PG-001, *Proficiency Level Four Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Prepare to conduct merit review boards IAW CATO 13-02, *Cadet Rank Promotions*.

The practice merit review board in TP 3 should be composed of adults who have competent interview skills (officers, civilian instructors and volunteers). Senior cadets should only be used as a last resort.

Obtain the materials for conducting a merit review board for a promotion interview.

Prepare interview questions, marking sheets and candidate scoring sheets (to be created locally) for TP 3.

Arrange for assistant instructors for TP 3.

Obtain a copy of CATO 13-02, *Cadet Rank Promotions*, for each member of the merit review board for promotion.

Photocopy Attachments A and B for each cadet.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TPs 1 and 2 to present preparations for merit review boards and to summarize the teaching points.

An in-class activity was chosen for TP 3 as it is an interactive way to provoke thought and stimulate interest among the cadets.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

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OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to prepare for a merit review board.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to prepare for a merit review board to help them succeed in gaining opportunities through competitive application processes.

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Teaching point 1 **Identify occasions requiring a merit review board.**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

Merit review boards have two important benefits:

- they provide selection recommendations that are fair and open, and
- they provide cadets with a valuable life skill.

Opportunities to conduct merit review boards include:

- promotions,
- awards,
- scholarships, and
- Cadet Summer Training Centre (CSTC) training opportunities, and
- CSTC staff appointments.

PROMOTIONS



CATO 13-02, *Cadet Rank Promotions*, is the authority for this training.

Promotions to higher cadet ranks and appointments within the squadron provide opportunities for merit review boards. Promotion merit review boards have many benefits for the squadron, including:

- giving the candidates incentive to learn details of the rank or appointment responsibilities;
- ensuring that the best candidate is selected; and
- satisfying all members of the squadron that the best available cadet is leading them.

AWARDS

Some squadrons may conduct a merit review board for important awards. Most often, recommendations for awards are made by a board of staff members who are familiar with the work of all candidates. In all cases, recommendations are given to the CO. The CO is the final arbiter of awards.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship candidates are often selected by the person or entity that is providing the scholarship funding. Squadrons may choose to hold a merit review board for such a purpose.

CSTC TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

When a squadron has multiple excellent candidates for a limited number of course spaces, selection of candidates must be done in an open manner. The CO requires recommendations that are both unbiased and clearly seen to be unbiased. While staff members can and often do provide effective recommendations, the merit review board provides an unbiased option.

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CSTC STAFF APPOINTMENTS

When staff cadets arrive at a CSTC prior to the start of summer training, they may be interviewed by a board. This usually takes one of two forms:

- cadets are interviewed by a panel of officers to determine which CSTC position they are most suited; and
- senior cadets are interviewed by a merit review board for warrant officer positions.

In either case, the interview skills learned at a squadron will prove vital to the cadet.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What are two important benefits of merit review boards?

Q2. What are five occasions in which a cadet might encounter a merit review board?

Q3. What benefit does a squadron get from holding promotion merit review boards?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. Merit review boards have two important benefits:

- providing selection recommendations that are fair and open; and
- providing cadets with a valuable life skill.

A2. A cadet might encounter a merit review board for:

- promotions,
- awards,
- scholarships,
- CSTC training opportunities, and
- CSTC staff appointments.

A3. Promotion merit review boards have many benefits for the squadron, to include:

- giving the candidates incentive to learn details of the rank or appointment responsibilities;
- ensuring that the best candidate is selected; and
- satisfying all members of the squadron that the best available cadet is leading them.

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Teaching point 2 **Describe how to prepare for a merit review board for promotion and tips for a successful interview.**

Time: 20 min Method: Interactive Lecture

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A MERIT REVIEW BOARD FOR PROMOTION

A candidate for a merit review board for promotion should:

- think about potential questions that could be asked and prepare answers to these questions;
- talk to others who have been through the process to find out what to expect; and
- participate in any opportunity to practice for a board, such as practice merit review boards.

Dress Requirements

The interview candidate shall identify dress requirements ahead of their interview. The uniform must be worn in accordance with the cadet dress instructions in the relevant Cadet Administration and Training Order (CATO). Dress shall be maintained to a high standard.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

Importance of Bearing

Many candidates exhibit high standards of dress and high levels of knowledge. The final selections will therefore be based partly on the winning candidates' bearing.

Unless given other instructions, the candidate will enter facing the board, wearing headdress, and salute. Wait until offered a seat and remove headdress when seated.

During the interview, do nothing that may distract the interviewers, to include:

- biting one's lips;
- squirming;
- scratching;
- chewing gum;
- twisting fingers;
- playing with hair;
- checking the time;
- yawning—make sure to have a good night's sleep before the interview; and
- taking anything into an interview that has any chance of distracting the interviewers.

Hand gestures while speaking may also distract interviewers.

Sit with an open posture and legs and arms uncrossed.

The members of the board want the cadet to feel comfortable and relaxed. Try to be so, while maintaining respect and decorum. A confident candidate sits up straight, calmly looking the interviewer straight in the eye without fidgeting. Nodding or shaking the head does not constitute an answer of any kind. All replies must be verbal.

Candidates must be prepared to introduce themselves.

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Remember that the interviewers are also going through a process for which they have made long preparations and to which they attach great importance. The candidate being interviewed is, in many ways, part of a team that includes the interviewers. All members of this team are expected to maintain respect, decorum and friendliness.

When the interview is completed, stand, replace headdress, make firm eye contact, salute, and smartly depart the room. The board members may or may not offer to shake hands. Follow their lead.

Merit Review Board for Promotion Questions



Distribute a copy of Attachment A to each cadet.

IAW CATO 13-02, *Cadet Rank Promotions*, question areas at a merit review board for promotion may include:

- candidates recounting their achievements through cadet training (eg, squadron program, CSTC program);
- candidates explaining what previous positions of leadership they have held (eg, at cadets, at school) and how they performed in related situations;
- personal goals and / or their goals for the squadron;
- scenario-based questions that relate to typical squadron situations where the candidate shares how they might approach / deal with the situation; and
- candidate achievements outside of the cadet squadron setting (eg, at school, in their community, sports teams, extracurricular activities).

Candidates are expected to take their time when formulating answers but the answer should be as direct as possible. Ask for clarification when necessary. A comprehensively correct answer, formulated carefully and delivered in a relaxed, friendly manner is best.

If the candidate does not know the answer to a question it is best to say so, in as direct a manner as possible, so the interviewer moves on to another topic where the candidate has better knowledge. This will help minimize both the psychological impact of the missing information and the damage to the candidate's mark. Shoulders must never be shrugged during an interview.



Distribute a copy of Attachment B to each cadet.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS:

Q1. How will a candidate know which uniform to wear for a merit review board interview?

Q2. When should a candidate take a seat in an interview?

Q3. What should candidates say if the answer to a question is unknown?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. The interview candidate shall identify dress requirements ahead of their interview.

A2. When offered a seat.

A3. It is best to say they do not know, in as direct a manner as possible.

Teaching point 3 **Have the cadets participate in a practice merit review board based on the instructions given in TP 2.**

Time: 55 min Method: In-Class Activity



The practice merit review board should be composed of adults who have competent interview skills (officers, civilian instructors and volunteers). Senior cadets should only be used as a last resort.

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to have the cadets participate in a practice merit review board.

RESOURCES

- Annex B of CATO 13-02, *Cadet Rank Promotions*,
- Questions for each type of practice merit review board for promotion, prepared locally,
- Marking sheets designed for the locally-prepared questions,
- Candidate scoring sheets, prepared locally,
- Electronic calculator,
- List of practice merit review board candidates showing the type of board, and
- Pens / pencils.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

In a quiet room:

- place a table and a chair for each interviewer and one chair facing the merit review board for the candidate;
- arrange the lighting to provide the interviewers with a good view of the candidate;
- have the candidate's back to any window or opening to avoid distraction;
- arrange a secure holding area for candidates prior to their interview;
- arrange a separate holding area for candidates following their interview; and
- arrange for a messenger to bring each candidate for their interview as directed by the merit review board.

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ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Introduce the practice merit review board members to their room before the activity begins.
2. Ensure that each practice merit review board member has individual resources as needed.
3. Introduce the messenger to the practice merit review board.
4. Explain that the board members will tell the messenger when to bring each candidate.
5. Explain that candidates will be guided to a separate holding area after being interviewed.
6. Have the practice merit review board interview each candidate using the prepared questions.
7. Ensure that there is no contact between candidates who have completed the interview and those who are still waiting.
8. When all candidates have been interviewed, have the board members debrief each candidate individually.
9. Allow each candidate to keep the marking sheets.
10. When all candidates have been interviewed and debriefed, thank the members of the practice merit review board for their time and effort.

SAFETY

Nil.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

The cadets' participation in the activity will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in the practice merit review board will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Have the cadets prepare for a merit review board.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Effective preparation for merit review boards will help you obtain important opportunities. These skills will also prove invaluable throughout life.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Cadets will be given scenarios to prepare for a merit review board at the end of TP 2.

In the future, some nationally directed and regionally directed activities may require merit review boards.

When scheduling this lesson, allow at least two weeks between TPs 2 and 3.

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REFERENCES

A0-133 CATO 13-02 Director Cadets 3. (2008). *Cadet rank promotions*. Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

A3-006 CATO 55-04 Director Cadets 3. (2005). *Air cadet dress instructions*. Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

C0-416 Air Cadet League of Canada BC Committee (2009). *Sponsoring committee resources: Mock boards*. Retrieved March 4, 2009, from http://www.aircadetleague.bc.ca/SponCommResources/Mock_Boards.PDF

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EXAMPLE QUESTIONS TO EXPECT AT A MERIT REVIEW BOARD FOR PROMOTION

Question areas may include:

- your achievements through cadet training (eg, squadron program, CSTC program);
- previous positions of leadership held (eg, at cadets, at school) and your performance in related situations;
- personal goals and / or your goals for the squadron;
- achievements outside of the cadet squadron setting (eg, at school, in the community, sports teams, extra-curricular activities), and
- scenario-based questions that relate to typical squadron situations and how you might approach / deal with the situation.

All candidates will be asked the same questions, which could be similar to the following examples:

- Describe your current squadron responsibilities.
- Describe your involvement in squadron teams, band and drill, flag party or clubs.
- What leadership positions have you held in any organization?
- What do you consider your own strengths / weaknesses?
- If you had to change something about yourself, what would it be?
- How did you become interested in the cadet movement?
- On an average evening, how much time do you dedicate to homework?
- For what do you use your home computer? (eg, games, research, emails)
- Where are you headed in life?
- Do you plan to take any post-secondary school education?
- What discipline or education do you wish to pursue?
- Do you have a part-time job and, if so, does it compete with cadets or school?
- What community related-activities do you participate in?
- What targets have you set for your personal growth or improvement?
- Do you participate in any organized school teams / groups (eg, band, football)?
- Are you involved with any citizenship activities in your community outside of cadets?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- Scenario-based questions:
    - You have been given responsibility for a group of cadets, some of whom require motivation in uniform care. What will you do?
    - You are in charge of drill instruction and one of your assistant instructors keeps touching cadets when correcting them, despite your instructions to not touch. What do you do?

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PREPARATION FOR A MERIT REVIEW BOARD FOR PROMOTION

A candidate for a merit review board for promotion should:

- think about potential questions that could be asked and prepare answers to these questions;
- talk to others who have been through the process to find out what to expect; and
- participate in any opportunity to practice for a board, such as practice merit review boards.

Dress Requirements

The interview candidate shall identify dress requirements well ahead of their interview. The uniform must be worn in accordance with the cadet dress instructions in the relevant Cadet Administration and Training Order (CATO). Dress shall be maintained to a high standard.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

Importance of Bearing

Many candidates will exhibit high standards of dress and high levels of knowledge. The final selections will therefore be based partly on the winning candidates' bearing.

Unless given other instructions, the candidate will enter facing the board, wearing headdress, and salute. Wait until offered a seat and remove headdress when seated.

During the interview, do nothing that may distract the interviewers, to include:

- biting one's lips;
- squirming;
- scratching;
- chewing gum;
- twisting fingers;
- playing with hair;
- checking the time;
- yawning—make sure to have a good night's sleep before the interview; and
- taking anything into an interview that has any chance of distracting the interviewers.

Hand gestures while speaking will also distract interviewers, making a negative impression.

Sit with an open posture and legs and arms not crossed.

The members of the board want the cadet to feel comfortable and relaxed. Try to be so, while maintaining respect and decorum. A confident candidate will sit up straight, calmly looking the interviewer straight in the eye without fidgeting. Nodding or shaking the head does not constitute an answer of any kind. All replies must be verbal.

Candidates must be prepared to say some introductory words about themselves.

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When the interview is completed, stand, replace headdress, make firm eye contact, salute, and smartly depart the room. The board members may or may not offer to shake hands. Follow their lead.

If the candidate does not know the answer to a question it is best to say so in as direct a manner as possible so the interview moves on to another topic where the candidate has better knowledge. This will minimize both the psychological impact of the missing information and the damage to the candidate's mark. Shoulders must never be shrugged during an interview.

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