

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE)



Item Code FS120301 Dec/09 Edition no 9

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Overview

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is a programme of activities for 14-25 year olds. The programme is accessible to all young people regardless of their background or ability.

The Scout Association have been involved in delivering DofE programmes to young people along side it's own since 1960 when the DofE was established.

The requirements for the Chief Scout's Platinum and Diamond Awards, and the Queen's Scout Award are linked to the Bronze, Silver and Gold DofE Awards, and the DofE programme should play an integral part in the Programme for those in the Explorer Scout and Scout Network Sections.

There are three levels; Bronze for those aged 14 and over, Silver for those 15 and over and Gold for those 16 and over. There is the option to permit young people to start their Bronze Award a few months before their 14th birthday if they are working with a group who are mainly 14 or over.

The DofE Manager of the Operating Authority (The Scout Association) must approve this in writing prior to the young person registering.

The upper age for completion of all levels is the 25th birthday.

Young people can start on whichever programme best suits them (so long as they meet the minimum age requirements), however, if they progress through the levels, some reductions in time requirements are given for higher levels.

Each of the DofE programmes is divided into four sections: Volunteering, Expeditions, Skills and Physical. For the Gold there is an additional section - the Residential.

When choosing which activities to carry out within each section of the programme, the level should be considered along with the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual development of the young person to ensure that it is suitable. Prior to starting the young person should make a plan and set personal goals, this make sure that all activities are acceptable and that the young person has the right support throughout the process.

Volunteering

The aim of this section is to encourage volunteering, and is based on the belief that members of the community have a responsibility to each other. Young people should receive briefing and training in appropriate skills, and have some knowledge of the needs of those whom they are assisting.

Although the specific benefits depend on the choice of activity, the volunteering section should offer the participants the opportunity to:

- give personal commitment
- appreciate the needs of others and contribute to their well-being
- trust and be trusted
- understand personal strengths and weaknesses
- increase self-esteem
- overcome prejudice and fears
- generate positive community action
- care for the environment
- accept responsibility

If the form of volunteering requires attendance at a training course or the gaining of a qualification, then this should be completed, however this can not take up more that $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total required time. The volunteering must cover the minimum number of months for each level of DofE and all forms of volunteering require some form of practical involvement (at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time required).

The Scout Information Centre

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scout.org.uk www.scoutbase.org.uk

Expeditions

The aim of the expeditions section is to encourage a spirit of adventure and discovery. All ventures involve self-reliant journeying in the countryside or on water, conceived with an aim and undertaken on foot, by cycle, on horseback, or in canoes or boats by participants' own physical effort and without motorised assistance. Prior to the qualifying venture Participants must undertake training (the syllabus is outlined in the Welcome Pack, Handbook and on the website) and practice journey(s). The duration of the venture varies depending on the level of the programme. At each level a minimum number of hours per day must be spent doing planned activity, this should be a combination of journeying and exploring.

The expeditions section should provide opportunities to:

- demonstrate enterprise
- work as a member of a team
- respond to a challenge
- develop self-reliance
- develop leadership skills
- recognise the needs and strengths of others
- make decisions and accept the consequences
- plan and execute a task
- reflect on personal performance
- enjoy and appreciate the countryside

All expeditions must be carried out in accordance with Policy, Organisation and Rules.

Skills

The aim of this section is to encourage the discovery and development of practical and social skills and personal interests. It should encourage young people to pursue activities within a wide range of practical, cultural and social environments and develop social, life and vocational skills.

The skills section should offer participants the opportunity to:

- develop practical and social skills
- meet new people
- Organise and manage time
- discover how to research information
- set and respond to challenge
- work with others
- enjoy sharing
- discover new talents

Involvement in this section is measured in months, with an expectation of an average involvement of at least one hour per week. There

is flexibility as to how the hours are spent within the total time span as long as there is regular involvement throughout. The list of suggested activities on the DofE website is not exhaustive. The programmes are for guidance only and are not intended to be a rigid syllabus.

Physical

The aim of this section is to encourage participation and improvement in a physical activity. The physical section should provide opportunities to:

- enjoy keeping fit
- improve fitness
- discover new abilities
- raise self-esteem
- extend personal goals
- respond to a challenge
- derive a sense of achievement

Performance is measured by participation and improvement over the minimum period of months for each particular award. Participants should average at least an hour a week over the total period of involvement.

Each participant should negotiate their programme with the mentor/instructor/coach and then agree the content and appropriate targets or goals.

Residential (an additional requirement at Gold level)

The aim of this section is to broaden young peoples' experience through involvement with others in a residential setting. The residential project should give the young people the opportunity to:

- meet new people
- experience an unfamiliar environment
- build new relationships and show concern for others
- work as part of a team towards shared goals
- accept responsibility for self and others
- develop communication skills
- show initiative
- enjoy living and working with others

The project must last at least 5 days and 4 nights and only a small minority of those taking part should be previously known to the participants. Opportunities enabling young people to fulfill these conditions are varied and include Outward Bound courses and Youth Leadership training courses, as well as conservation work with The

National Trust or Canal Camps etc. Residential opportunities are often advertised on the DofE website and magazine, or could be found within Scouting. Further information may be found in the DofE Handbook.

Note – Attendance at a World Scout Jamboree event or similar as a member of a unit is not acceptable for the residential section of the DofE, however attendance as a member of the International Service Team is acceptable.

Methods

There are some differences in the methods of The Scout Association's Programme and that of the DofE, so care should be taken to see that all the requirements of each are met. It is essential that Scout participants keep within the DofE's conditions and that they do not assume that only Scout criteria apply.

How to Enter

Entry into the DofE is by the purchase of a Welcome Pack from your County Adviser for DofE (England), or Country Office (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) When this is issued the date is recorded in the record book. Activities followed prior to this date may count if undertaken during the preceding three months (so long as the minimum age requirements are met). For more details on this, refer to the DofE Handbook.

It is important to note that no qualifications gained before enrollment to the DofE are permitted to count.

Completion

Once DofE programmes have been completed, the record books must be checked, before the young person can be presented with their pin badge and certificate at a local presentation. Cloth badges for the uniform are obtained from County/Area or District Badge Secretaries, these cloth badges can be worn on the Scout uniform.

At **Bronze / Silver** level on completion of the DofE, the record book should be signed by the the County Adviser or Country Office (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland).

At **Gold** level once the requirements of the DofE have been fulfilled, the young person must fill out Gold Award notification forms, available from <http://www.DofE.org> . These must then be

submitted with the record book to the County Adviser (England) or Country Office (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) for checking before being sent to the DofE Manager for The Scout Association for confirmation of the Award. These are then sent to the County Commissioner for a local presentation, whilst the record books are returned to the County Adviser (England); or both are returned to the Country Office (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland).

At a later date the young person will be invited by The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Head Office to a national presentation where their certificate will be presented to them.

Programme and Development Department

The Programme and Development Department takes a supervisory role and assists with problems that cannot be resolved locally. It also provides a link with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award national office.

Enquires concerning the operation of the Award and matters of policy should be addressed to the Award Officer for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, The Activities Office, Programme and Development Department, Gilwell Park, Bury Road, Chingford, London E4 7QW.

Welcome Packs and DofE Handbooks along with promotional literature are available from the Award Scheme Limited via your County Adviser. The Scout Information Centre also stocks Award Handbooks and other resources for leaders.

Publications Cross Reference

DofE Handbook, Sixth Edition (Duke of Edinburgh's Award, 2008)

<http://www.DofE.org/>

www.scouts.org.uk/dofe