



## **A Guide to Running DofE in The BB**



## **Running The DoFE Award Within The Boys' Brigade**

This guide provides you with basic information about the DofE programme and how it is organised within The Boys' Brigade. Full details on the conditions and requirements are set out in The Handbook for DofE Leaders available from the shop [www.DofEshop.org](http://www.DofEshop.org).

### **About DofE programmes**

A Duke of Edinburgh's Award is so much more than a 'pat on the back' for completing a programme of activities. It is recognition of a young person's successful journey of self-discovery and development, renowned by employers and universities for the qualities young people have who've achieved a DofE Award develop.

Its balanced programme develops the whole person - mind, body and soul, in an environment of social interaction and team working.

There are three progressive levels of DofE programmes which, when successfully completed, lead to Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

To achieve each one, participants must complete a programme of activities in four or five sections that involve helping the community/environment, becoming fitter, developing new skills, planning, training for and completing an expedition and, for Gold only, working with a team on a residential activity.

With your help, participants select their own programme of activities and set themselves goals or targets. It's not a competition or about being first. It's all about self-development.

### **mission**

To inspire, guide and support young people in their self-development and recognise their achievements.

### **guiding principles**

At the DofE we strive to achieve our mission through personal development programmes and the assessment and presentation of Awards.

All our programmes are driven by the following ten guiding principles, which are at the heart of everything we do:

1: **Non-competitive** - A DofE programme is a personal challenge and not a competition against others. Every participant's programme is tailor-made to reflect their individual starting point, abilities and interests.

2: **Achievable by all** - A Duke of Edinburgh's Award is achievable by any young person who chooses to take up its challenge, regardless of ability, gender, background or location.

3: **Voluntary** - Whilst DofE programmes may be offered within school, college, work time, custody or extra-curricular activity, young people choose to do a programme and commit some of their free time to undertake their activities.

4: **Personal development** - A DofE programme inspires personal and social development. The value to young people is dependent on personal commitment, the learning process and the quality of the experience.

5: **Personalised** - Young people design their own programme, which can be tailored to suit their personal circumstances, choices and local provision. They start at whichever level suits them best and they can take as long as they wish (within the age limits) to achieve an Award.

6: **Balanced** - Our aim is to ensure that participants experience development of the whole person; mind, body and soul. By undertaking activities focusing on at least four different aspects of development, young people complete a balanced and wide-ranging programme.

7: **Progressive** - At each level of engagement, a DofE programme demands progressively more time, commitment and responsibility from the participant.

8: **Achievement** - focused Before starting an activity, young people are encouraged to set their own challenging goals. If they aim for these goals and show improvement they will achieve a Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

9: **Demands commitment** - A DofE programme demands persistence and commitment and cannot be completed with a short burst of enthusiasm. Participants are encouraged to continue with activities and to maintain their interest beyond their programme requirements.

10: **Enjoyable** - Young people and Leaders should find participation enjoyable, fulfilling and rewarding. There is an abundance of resources available to help you to run your DofE groups such as The Handbook for DofE Leaders, Quick Reference Guide, sectional leaflets, the DofE DVD, and the Programmes Pack.

Please visit [www.DofEshop.org](http://www.DofEshop.org) to order these and more.

Make sure you make good use of all of the free downloads available on the eDofE resources zone and on the DofE and BB websites too [www.DofE.org](http://www.DofE.org) and <http://boys-brigade.org.uk/dofedownloads.htm>

### Age requirements

There is no real time limit when it comes to completing a DofE programme. As long as participants are under 25 years old when they complete all their activities in their programme, they are free to work at a pace that they're comfortable with and can achieve their Award.

### The minimum timescales for each level are:

Level: Direct entrants Previous Award holders

Bronze 6 months n/a

Silver 12 months 6 months

Gold 18 months 12months

Direct entrants are young people starting their DofE programme at either Silver or Gold level, who have not achieved the previous level of Award.

### **Bronze Award (14+ years old)**

Three parts of the programme, Volunteering, Physical and Skills, each require a minimum of three months to complete, whilst the Expedition involves planning, training for and undertaking a two-day (one night) expedition.

Participants must also decide whether to spend a further three months on the Volunteering, Physical or Skills section.

The decision is entirely theirs. It must be made at the start but can be reviewed later. It is possible to allow a young person to start their Bronze programme shortly before their 14th birthday, if they are part of a larger group that is aged 14 plus.

This often happens when friends or a school year group decide to embark on their adventures together. However, for this to be allowed, you must be sure that the young person is sufficiently mature to do their programme and also gain approval from your DofE Licensed Organisation.

To achieve their Award, participants must have completed their programme and be at least 14½ years old.

### **Silver Award (15+ years old)**

Participants spend a minimum of six months volunteering. For the Physical and Skills sections, they must spend a minimum of six months on one and three on the other. The Expedition involves planning, training for and undertaking a three day (two night) expedition.

The decision on which section to do for the longest time is totally theirs. If they have jumped straight into their Silver programme they'll need to do a further six months either volunteering or doing whichever of the physical or skills activity they spent more time on. This decision must be made at the start but can be reviewed later.

To achieve their Award, participants must have completed their programme successfully and be at least 15½ years old if they already have Bronze.

Direct entrants must be at least 16 years old before they complete their Silver programme. LOs sometimes let young people who have achieved their Bronze Award make a start on their Silver Award before their 15th birthday. However, in such situations you must consult your LO before agreeing anything.

### **Gold Award (16+ years old)**

Participants must be at least 16 years of age to start their DofE programme at Gold level. No activities can count until their 16th birthday.

Participants spend a minimum of 12 months volunteering. For their Physical and Skills sections they must spend a minimum of 12 months on one and six on the other. Again, they decide

which section to do for the longer time. They'll plan, train for and complete a four day (three night) expedition. The biggest difference at Gold is that participants must do an additional, fifth section – Residential. This is an activity away from home for five days and four nights with people they do not already know.

Direct entrants must spend a further six months either volunteering or doing whichever of the skills or physical activities they spent the most time on.

**This decision must be made at the start but can be reviewed later.**

To achieve their Award, participants must have completed their programme successfully and be at least 17 years old if they already have their Silver Award. Direct entrants must be at least 17½ when they complete their programme.

## **Maximum Age**

The upper age limit for the completion of all programmes is a young person's 25th birthday. Extensions to the upper age limit can only be considered when illness, accident or unavoidable circumstances make it impossible to complete a programme by the age of 25. In such situations, your Regional HQ must send a written request to your DofE Regional/Country Office. If the application is successful, extra time will be allowed. This must not be exceeded.

## **Activities undertaken prior to entry**

One activity done before a young person starts their DofE programme could count towards the achievement of an Award if it was done during the preceding three months, or six months if done with an Approved Activity Provider.

All activities must have been done in accordance with DofE programme principles, conditions and age requirements.

## **Volunteering**

Aim To inspire young people to make a difference within their communities or to an individual's life and develop compassion by giving service to others. From DJing at the local hospital to assisting at an animal shelter, from renovating a heritage site to coaching sports at a youth club – the options are almost limitless.

## **Principles**

People have a responsibility to each other. By volunteering, communities are improved and strengthened.

Young people are passionate about many things and should be encouraged to make a positive contribution to something they care about.

The commitment to volunteering should be recognised; therefore young people are rewarded for this activity with the completion of a section of their DofE programme.

## Benefits

### Through volunteering, participants:

- Learn about their community and feel a sense of belonging and purpose.
- Learn to take responsibility for their communities and their own actions by committing and persevering with an activity.
- Build new relationships with members of their community, decreasing fears and prejudice and increasing community cohesion.
- Further understand their own strengths and weaknesses by evaluating their own progress and building confidence and self-esteem.
- Get a chance to develop Teamwork and leadership skills, increasing their employability and work experience.
- Have the opportunity to trust others and in turn be trusted.
- Enjoy new adventures.

## What is required?

Volunteering is simple. It's about choosing to give time to do something useful, without getting paid. It can be helping people, the community or society, the environment or animals.

## Team volunteering

We know the benefits of doing an activity in a team are significant for young people. Therefore, why not encourage young people to identify a local need, plan how to meet it and then do their volunteering together?

## Preparation

Young people plan their volunteering experience and complete their programme plan.

## Training

Participants undergo any training necessary to allow them to undertake their practical volunteering activities. It should take place towards the beginning of the time period and take up no more than a quarter of the overall time.

**For participants who choose The Boys' Brigade for the Volunteering Section the following training must be undertaken:**

Building Your Skills Course for **Bronze Level**  
Skills for Queen's Badge Course for **Silver Level**  
Youth Leader Training or KGV1 Course for **Gold Level**

## Assessment

The young person meets with their Assessor to discuss and record their experiences, how they developed and reached their goals.

## Activity

Participants do their practical volunteering activity regularly, averaging at least an hour a week, for the planned time.

## Physical

### **Aim**

To inspire young people to achieve greater physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle through participation and improvement in physical activity. From hockey to dance, rock climbing to swimming, wheelchair basketball to yoga – almost any dance, sport or fitness activity can count.

### **Principles**

- Involvement in some form of enjoyable physical activity is essential for young people's physical health.
- Maintaining physical health is important to mental and emotional well-being
- A lasting sense of achievement and satisfaction is derived from meeting a physical challenge.
- Physical activities are enjoyable in themselves and can lead to the establishment of a lasting, active lifestyle.

### **Benefits**

**Through doing physical activities, young people will:**

- Enjoy keeping fit by choosing an activity which they enjoy.
- Improve fitness by taking part in a physical activity on a regular basis.
- Discover new abilities.
- Raise self-esteem through improvement of performance.
- Extend personal goals by involvement and sustained interest.
- Set and respond to a challenge by extending physical fitness and performance.
- Experience a sense of achievement from meeting a physical challenge.

### **So what is a physical activity?**

In short, anything that requires a sustained level of physical energy and involves doing an activity. For example, playing a sport regularly and showing personal improvement would count. However, learning to become a coach in the same sport would be a Skills section activity, whilst being a volunteer coach count for the Volunteering section.

Participants must choose a physical activity and with your help set an appropriate challenge. They can choose one they are currently doing or go for something new. The key is to show progression and sustained interest over time. Ultimately, participants must prove that they have broadened their understanding and increased their expertise in their chosen activity.

If your participant is unsure which category an activity falls into, or whether it's acceptable, they must get approval from you. Generally this will be relatively straightforward if the activity has a national governing body or if it is recognised by UK Sport, the Central Council of Physical Recreation or the relevant Sports Council.

## **Preparation**

Young people plan their physical activity and set their goals. This includes what sport, dance or fitness activity they want to do, where they'll do it and for how long.

## **Training**

Participants undergo any training or briefing necessary to allow them to undertake their physical activities. Training may form part of the activity.

## **Assessment**

The young person meets with their Assessor, to discuss and record their experiences, including their effort, perseverance and achievement.

## **Activity**

Participants do their physical activity regularly, averaging at least an hour a week, for the planned time.

## **Skills**

### **Aim**

To inspire young people to develop practical and social skills and personal interests. From podcasting to playing a musical instrument, fine art to website design, cookery to learning to drive. The sky's the limit!

### **Principles**

By choosing to develop a particular skill young people realise their unique potential and gain greater self-esteem.

Everyone has the ability to learn. Young people should have the opportunity to develop skills. All young people have unique potential and should value themselves. Developing a skill will help them realise this.

### **Benefits**

**By learning a skill, participants will:**

- Develop a new talent.
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Develop practical and social skills — by working alongside enthusiastic individuals who share their skills and knowledge.

- Develop better organisational and time management skills.
- Sharpen research skills — by using libraries, the internet and the local community, they will have to identify and source help and guidance.
- Learn how to set and rise to a challenge.
- Participants must choose an activity and with your help set an appropriate challenge. They can choose to improve an existing skill or develop a new one. The key is to show progression and sustained interest over time.

Ultimately, participants must be able to prove that they have broadened their understanding and increased their expertise of their chosen skill. Activities can be undertaken on either an individual or group basis.

Most DofE groups/centres are only able to offer a small selection of activities that count as a skill. If a young person wishes to try something else they can organise it themselves and check the details with you for approval. This must be done before they start.

### **As a DofE Leader you must ensure that a participant's choice:**

- Focuses on one specific theme or activity.
- Enables their Assessor to easily measure progression over a period of time.
- Is undertaken in accordance with appropriate safe working practices and legal requirements.
- Is normally done in their own time.
- Reflects their individual interests, talents and capabilities.

### **Preparation**

Young people choose to improve an existing skill or develop a new one. They research their choice, plan what to do, how long for and set their objectives.

### **Training**

Participants undergo any training necessary to allow them to undertake their skills activity. The skill chosen could be a course, in which case training will be the full activity.

### **Assessment**

The young person meets with their Assessor to discuss and record their experiences, what they learnt and how they met their goals.

## **Expedition**

### **Aim**

To inspire young people to develop initiative and a spirit of adventure and discovery, by planning, training for and completing an adventurous journey as part of a team. From cycling in the Galloway Hills, walking in the Brecon Beacons or canoeing down the Thames to sailing

in the Mediterranean, horse riding in Chile or walking in the Alps, the expedition can be as far flung or as close to home as participants want it to be.

## **Principles**

Participation in shared experiences in the outdoor environment can develop initiative, teamwork, communication, leadership, problem solving and organisational skills.

Experiencing and overcoming challenges together develops emotional strength and empathy for others.

## **Benefits**

**Through participation in an expedition young people:**

- Gain an appreciation of and respect for the outdoor environment.
- Learn the value of sharing responsibility for success, through leadership, teamwork, self-reliance and co-operation.
- Learn the importance of attention to detail and organisational ability.
- Develop and demonstrate enterprise and imagination.
- Become more self-reliant.
- Become more able to overcome both expected and unexpected challenges.
- Recognise the needs and strengths of others.
- Improve decision-making skills and the ability to accept consequences.
- Gain the skills to reflect on personal performance.
- Learn to manage risk.
- Learn through experience.

## **What is involved?**

The Expedition section involves planning, training for and completing an unaccompanied, self-reliant expedition with an agreed aim.

All participants must do at least one practice expedition and a qualifying expedition (the one that is assessed) in order to complete the section. Expeditions must be completed by the participants' own physical efforts with minimal external intervention and without motorised assistance. The route should be a continuous journey.

This flowchart gives a simple overview of the steps involved for a young person to complete their Expedition section. Each step is explained in more detail on the following pages.

## **Preparation**

Participants plan an expedition. This includes team members, its aim, how they will travel and the environment they intend to travel through. Expeditions may be undertaken by foot, bicycle, sailboat, canoe, kayak, wheelchair or on horseback.

## **Training**

Participants undergo training in expedition skills and their chosen mode of travel.

## **Practice expedition**

Participants must undertake sufficient practice expeditions to enable them to travel safely and complete their qualifying expedition.

## **Qualifying expedition, debrief and presentation**

Once prepared, participants undertake their expedition, which will be observed by their accredited Assessor. On completion they will be debriefed by their Assessor and then prepare and give a presentation of their expedition which covers their aims, experiences and outcomes.

## **Assessment**

This is completed by their Assessor following the qualifying expedition and also by the person who saw their presentation, either in their Keeping Track booklet or on their eDofE account.

The detailed requirements for the Expedition section can be found in The Handbook for DofE Leaders, Expedition Guide and EX2 available from the DofE shop. The 20 conditions for the qualifying expedition are included in the Resource Zone.

## **Residential (Gold level only)**

### **Aim**

To inspire participants through a concentrated involvement with people they don't know, who are usually from different backgrounds, and bring alternative views to the challenges they will face. The Residential section broadens their experiences by empowering them to make a difference in a team-based residential setting.

The powerful positive impact on a young person of a well-structured residential experience is widely acknowledged.

For the DofE this is a fundamental element of Gold DofE programmes, often providing the most important transformational experience for those involved. Participants could base their experience around an existing interest, for example taking part in a sailing course, developing their photography skills or working on a conservation project. Alternatively they could try something completely new – like working at a kids' summer camp, learning French in Paris or helping to rebuild a school in the Gambia.

Residential experiences take young people outside their normal environment and enable them to separate themselves from their daily routine.

It is a chance to step outside their comfort zone, gain new skills for life, enjoy new experiences and have fun.

By finding opportunities that interest them away from their usual group of friends, they will develop initiative and planning skills.

By taking part in a residential, young people will broaden their horizons and develop maturity and independence.

Interaction with people from different walks of life, ages and backgrounds promotes respect and understanding.

Completion of shared objectives will develop social and team working skills and better prepare them for adulthood.

**Through completing the Residential section, young people will:**

- Meet people.
- Develop the confidence to thrive in an unfamiliar environment.
- Build new relationships and show concern for others.
- Work as part of a team towards shared goals.
- Accept responsibility for themselves and others.
- Develop communication skills and effective coping mechanisms.
- Develop respect and understanding for others.
- Show initiative.

**Develop the skills and attitudes to live and work with others.**

**What is required**

Participants undertake a shared activity or specific course with people they don't know in a residential setting away from home and in an unfamiliar environment. Evenings are often as much a part of the experience as the daytime activities.

**Preparation**

Young people identify a residential activity they're interested in doing, where it's taking place and who they'll do it with. They'll set themselves personal goals and let the activity provider know they want their participation to count for their DofE programme.

**Training**

Participants undergo any training/preparation necessary to allow them to take part in the residential.

**Assessment**

At the end of the residential activity, the young person meets with their Assessor to discuss, record and review the quality of their experience.

## How long for?

The residential activity should normally take place over at least five consecutive days with a minimum of four nights spent away. In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the LO, this commitment can be spread over two weekends. However, it must involve at least four nights away within a 12 month period, during which the same activity is pursued.

## Who they can do it with

This section offers a high degree of flexibility but it must be done with an organised group, registered charity or Approved Activity Provider.

They must join a residential activity individually and not as part of an existing group of friends. It is acceptable to know a few of the others taking part, but the vast majority should not be people already known to the participant. This is because developing the social skills to establish new friendships and working relationships is an essential part of this section. School or youth group trips are therefore not acceptable.

Participants generally select a project or activity that will see them stay at an activity centre, with a charity, at a youth hostel or camp, but it could be completely different, for example on a tall ship, boat or barge. Staying with friends or relatives is not acceptable.

There are no age restrictions on the people they can do their residential activity with. For example, conservation projects can attract volunteers of all ages from all over the UK, and your participant may be the only one under 25 or doing their DofE.

As their DofE Leader, you and their chosen activity provider should agree in advance that the opportunity meets the section requirements. If your participant is under 18, you need to ensure that safeguarding principles are paramount.

The activity should provide opportunities for broadening interests and experiences. It is ideal for trying something new, or it can be related to existing interests or activities followed in other sections of a programme. For example, a participant may run an after-school club for children.

## Participation Places/ Welcome Packs

Welcome packs/participation places can be ordered by phoning you regional HQ or by using the order form on the BB Website <http://boys-brigade.org.uk/dofeorderform201213.pdf>

## Registering Participants and Approving Awards/Recognising achievement

As of 1st April 2013 all participants must be registered and awards completed using the online eDofE system with the only exception being the old DEA Record Books.

**PARTICIPANTS USING OLD DEA RECORD BOOKS SHOULD STILL COMPLETE USING AN APPLICATION FOR WHICH CAN BE FOUND ON THE BB DOFE DOWNLOADS PAGE:**

<http://boys-brigade.org.uk/dofedownloads.htm>

If your company is not registered on eDofE please register by visiting <http://boys-brigade.org.uk/edofecentreenrole.htm> and completing the online form.

**For further information and resources on how to get started and using eDofE please visit <http://boys-brigade.org.uk/dofeedofe.htm>**

## Completions & approvals

A participant has achieved a Bronze or Silver Award when the Licensed Organisation confirms that all relevant conditions have been met, based on the information recorded in eDofE.

At Gold, your Regional HQ will check the Award before forwarding it to the appropriate DofE Regional/Country Office for final confirmation.

Once an Award is approved participants should be encouraged to create their Achievement Pack.

## Certificates, badges and Award presentations

Bronze and Silver Award holders receive a certificate and both lapel badge and BB Uniform Badge (**these are included in the price of the welcome pack**). Gold Award holders receive a certificate and can choose either a badge or a brooch, they will also receive a Gold BB Uniform Badge. Images of these can be found at [www.DofE.org/gold](http://www.DofE.org/gold)

It is encouraged that for Bronze and Silver Awards a local presentation is organised. Remember, you must wait until the Awards have been authorised and granted by your before organising the presentation.

Gold Award holders are invited to a national presentation at one of the Royal Palaces in the presence of either HRH The Duke of Edinburgh or HRH The Earl of Wessex. These are held throughout the year in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The date of their Gold Presentation may be some time after the participant's Award is confirmed but they'll receive an invitation as soon as possible. For details of Gold Award Presentations please see [www.DofE.org/gap](http://www.DofE.org/gap)

# The Structure of the DofE Within The Boys' Brigade

## **DofE centre**

The location where the DofE is run e.g. Church Hall. There may be one or more groups at a centre depending on the size of the centre/number of participants.

## **DofE Co-ordinator and DofE Leaders**

**DofE Co-ordinator:** This person sets up and manages the DofE in a centre. They set up and support Leaders and oversee the groups.

**DofE Leader:** leaders guide and encourage young people, agree their programme choices and sign off evidence and sections in eDofE.

## **DofE Battalion Ambassador's (England & Wales)**

This is a person involved in the promotion, guidance, distribution of National updates and training of DofE within your Battalion.

**Please note, these roles are not mutually exclusive.**

## **Licensed Organisation (LO) The Boys' Brigade**

The Boys' Brigade holds the licence to manage the delivery of DofE programmes and verify Awards.

## **DofE Manager**

### **Each Region has it's own DofE manager**

This is person who is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the DofE. A DofE centre's contact may be a local Co-ordinator or administrator at BB HQ rather than the DofE Manager.

Scotland - Bill Stevenson [bill.stevenson@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:bill.stevenson@boys-brigade.org.uk)

Northern Ireland – Kenneth McLaughlin [kenneth.mclaughlin@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:kenneth.mclaughlin@boys-brigade.org.uk)

England & Wales – Robert Powell [robert.powell@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:robert.powell@boys-brigade.org.uk)

## **The DofE Charity**

Head Office and Regional/Country Offices deal with overall policy and central administration. A Board of Trustees governs the DofE Charity. It determines the criteria and maintains the integrity and quality of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Trustees and approximately 100 Staff.

It will be mainly The Boys' Brigade HQ that will have contact with your DofE  
Regional/Country Office or, in the case of National Operating Authorities, with Head Office.