

# DofE - Expeditions



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This factsheet explains the Expeditions section of The DofE; and puts it into a Scouting context.

## The Aim of the Expedition Section.

To inspire young people to develop imitative and a sprit of adventure and discovery, by planning, training for and completing an adventurous journey as part of a Team.

## Outline Conditions

Expeditions – are a combination of journeying and project work, with journeying as their principle component. The length of the expedition varies depending on the level of award. These can be in the UK or Overseas

## Methods of Travel

At each level the journey may take place on land by foot, cycle or horse; or on water by canoe, sail or rowing boat. Motorised travel is not permitted.

## The Process

The expedition consists of many parts; training, team building, preparation and presentation should hold equal importance in the section.

After an initial briefing, participants must undertake appropriate training (guidance can be found in the DofE Handbook and the Expedition Guide). The Common Training Syllabus for each level of Award is set out on the DofE website.

The DofE have five steps to the Expedition process, which are:

- 1 Preparation – The team need to research what they want to do, who they are going to do it with, how they are going to travel and what they are going to study or achieve on route, then agree it with a Leader. At each level the environment they visit gets tougher and there are few other conditions your journey should match.

- 2 Training – The team need to make sure they are trained in the mode of travel and have completed the Expedition Training Framework.

- 3 Practice Expedition – At each level the team must do enough practice to ensure they can travel safely and complete their qualifying expedition. Silver and Gold practice expeditions must include at least 2 consecutive nights away.

- 4 Qualifying expedition, debrief and presentation – the best bit – actually doing it! The team must go on their journey, observed by an accredited DofE Assessor. The Assessor will debrief the team and the team will need to prepare and give a presentation on their aims and experiences.

- 5 Assessment – To complete their DofE programme the team must meet their Assessor to talk about what they have done and make sure they sign it off.

## The Venture

Participants must undertake sufficient practice journeys to enable them to complete their planned qualifying venture. These should both be after the training has been completed.

The Team's Supervisor must continually assess the competence and confidence of the team and, if necessary help them to undertake additional training and practices.

Please note, that within an Expedition Team – you cannot have a mixture of Young People who are carrying out a Practice Expedition and a Qualifying Venture. You may have people in a Team undertaking a Qualifying Venture who are not under assessment but they must have completed all the required training and practice expedition and be at the same level. (this may happen for example of you have an Young Person who only wants to carryout only their Scouting Awards).

## 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

You cannot also have someone in a Qualifying Expedition who has already completed the expedition section of the same level or higher.

The qualifying venture must have an aim (other than to walk a DofE expedition) and be undertaken in a group numbering between four and seven (eight for ventures using tandem modes of travel).

All participants must complete a report or presentation related to the purpose of the venture and the aim of the Section.

### Summary of requirements

For all ventures, the environment should present an appropriate challenge based on the experience and ability of the participants.

- Bronze – Two day / one night expedition with at least six hours planned activity every day, in normal rural countryside or on appropriate water.
- Silver – Three day / two night expedition with at least seven hours planned activity each day in normal rural or open country or on appropriate water.
- Gold – Four day / three night expedition with at least eight hours each day planned activity in wild or open country or on appropriate water.

At least half the amount of planned activity must be spent journeying!

Planned activity includes a combination of journeying and exploring, but excludes overnight accommodation (pitching and striking Camp) and catering i.e Lunch break. Please note that although distances are suggested, it is the planned activity that is the main DofE requirement as part of the assessment.

In addition to the requirements there are 20 conditions that an assessor checks as part of the assessment:

- Your expedition must be by your own physical effort, without any motorised or outside assistance.
- Your expedition must be unaccompanied and self-reliant.
- Your expeditions must be supervised by an adult who is able to accept responsibility for the safety of you and your team.
- Your expedition must have an aim.
- You must be properly equipped for your expedition.

- You must have completed the required training and practice expeditions.
- You must undertake at least one practice expedition at each level of the programme. You should do this in the same mode of travel and in a similar environment to the qualifying expedition.
- You and your team must plan and organise your expedition.
- You must be assessed by an approved accredited Assessor to the DofE.
- There must be between four and seven people in your team (eight people may be in a team for modes of travel which are tandem).
- You must be within the qualifying age of the DofE programme level.
- All the people in your team must be at the same level of assessment.
- Your team must not include anyone who has completed the same or higher level DofE expedition.
- Your overnight accommodation should be camping.
- Your expedition must be the minimum number of days required for your DofE level.
- Your expedition should normally take place between the end of March and the end of October.
- Your expedition should be in the recommended environment for your DofE level.
- You must do the minimum hours of planned daily activity for your DofE level.
- You should cook and eat a substantial meal each day.
- You must create and deliver a presentation after your expedition to complete the section.

### Practice journeys for all ventures

In order that the leader or instructor has the opportunity to judge the participants' experience and competence, at least one practice journey must be undertaken at each level of the award.

This practice journey must not be over the same route or in a similar vicinity to the route to be used during the qualifying venture. The conditions should be as similar as possible to those anticipated for the qualifying venture and undertaken in terrain which is equally demanding. For qualifying ventures in wild country, this practice journey must be in a recognised Wild Country Area. Unaccompanied practice journeys must be supervised, and if in wild country, the appropriate DofE Assessor Network informed using the standard notification form (DofE Green Form).

## Notification

Before **all** ventures in wild country it is important to complete a 'Green' Notification of Venture in Wild Country form as early as possible. The reason for this is to notify the appropriate DofE Wild Country Assessor Network of where you will be and when you will be there. This helps the Assessor Network to monitor the usage of the wild country area by DofE groups and also to advise you of any potential issues in the area you will be operating.

For Qualifying Ventures, DofE Wild Country Assessor Networks will usually provide Assessors if the notification process is followed (A fee will be payable see individual Services / networks). Panels may also be able to provide assessors for Bronze and Silver ventures.

Please remember that if the venture is being under-taken through The Scout Association as an Operating Authority, the Supervisor or a member of the team must hold a relevant Adventurous Activity Permit for the activity taking place; and a Nights Away Permit.

## Assessment Requirements

All Qualifying Ventures should be assessed by either a member of the appropriate DofE Wild Country Assessor Network (if in Wild Country) or by an adult who has been approved by the Operating Authority (The Scout Association) and has completed the DofE Assessor accreditation scheme, who will have an Accredited Assessor ID and Number issued.

Please Note;

- At Bronze and Silver level, Assessors should not have been involved in any training or instruction of the Team.
- At Gold level, the Assessor must be independent of your DofE Group and not associated with the team in any way.

## Expeditions Abroad

The requirements of the expedition are the same whether conducted abroad or within the United Kingdom. If the expedition takes place outside of the United Kingdom The Operating Authority (The Scout Association) should be notified at least 12

weeks in advance using the Notification Form for Expeditions Abroad (Blue Form).

In addition to this, as a Scouting expedition you will also be required to obtain a Visits Abroad Pack from your Assistant County / Area Commissioner (International) and complete and return the Travel Abroad Form for your expedition. A copy of the Travel Abroad form should accompany the Blue Form being sent to Scout Headquarters. .

## Variations in the conditions

Where participants have individual needs that mean one or more of the 20 conditions cannot be met, it is possible to apply for a variation to enable the young person to complete their DofE expedition section. Forms for this are available at [www.dofe.org/expedition](http://www.dofe.org/expedition) . At Bronze and Silver they must be approved by the Scout Association as Operating Authority, for Gold the variation must be approved by National Office via Gilwell Park. A copy of the approval for variation should be attached to any expedition notification forms submitted. All variation request forms should be sent to [dofe@scout.org.uk](mailto:dofe@scout.org.uk).

## Links

It is possible and desirable to fulfil requirements for sections of Chief Scout and Queen's Scout Awards at the same time as for young persons DofE Award. The Queen's Scout Award Expedition is very similar to the Expedition section at Gold, The Chief Scouts Diamond Award to the Silver and the Chief Scouts Platinum Award to the Bronze. However, when trying to do this it is essential to check beforehand and ensure that you are meeting all of the criteria for both Awards.

It is also possible to combine the DofE Gold expedition with the Explorer Belt expedition. This is only recommended if it is in the best interests of the young person. However the DofE expedition conditions must still be met and the trip should be planned to meet both sets of criteria, a tricky balancing act for some trips and one which makes some trips more suited to only one award.

### **Further Information**

For more detailed information it is important that you consult the DofE Leader Handbook and the Expedition Guide. If you do not have copies of these, talk to your County DofE Adviser (England), or Country Office; (Wales, Scotland/Northern Ireland); or order from ASL (see DofE Web site for Details)

The DofE also have a training and information software package called EX<sup>2</sup>. More details are available on the DofE website.

It is vital you make sure you are fulfilling all the detailed requirements of both awards to avoid disappointment later.

Expedition Training Framework

Full details of the Common Training Framework and Extra Details for Expedition on Horse and by Paddle can be found at:

[http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/Doing\\_your\\_DofE/Your\\_DofE\\_programme/Sections/Expedition/Expedition\\_training/Expedition\\_training.aspx](http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/Doing_your_DofE/Your_DofE_programme/Sections/Expedition/Expedition_training/Expedition_training.aspx)

### **Resources**

The DofE has produced a number of Resources to help you as a Leader with the Expedition Section;

They are a Expedition Section session planning sheet – to help you introduce the Expedition section of the DofE and also a Programme Planner for you to work with and get the Young Person to plan the Expedition section of their DofE Programme.

These can be downloaded from <http://www.dofe.org/go/downloads>

### **Publications Cross Reference**

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

Expedition Guide (The Duke of Edinburgh's Award)

[www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org)

[www.scouts.org.uk/dofe](http://www.scouts.org.uk/dofe)