

Section notes

Physical Recreation



This leaflet provides a basic outline of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, with particular emphasis on the Physical Recreation section and what is involved in acting as an Award Assessor or Activity Coach. More information can be obtained from the participant's Award Unit.

What is the Award?

The Award enables 14-24 year olds to learn practical skills that are valuable to their personal and professional development.

It is comprised of three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Participants set themselves challenging personal goals in four sections: Service, Skills, Physical Recreation and Adventurous Journey at each level in order to achieve their Award. At Gold level, participants also complete a Residential Project.

Throughout the programme participants can develop existing interests, but you should encourage them to do something new that would be challenging and enjoyable. Once participants have set their goals they strive to achieve them, showing improvement throughout their Award journey.





What is an Award Assessor or Activity Coach?

An Assessor or Activity Coach is an adult volunteer who conducts specific training for participants in any section of the Award. They will act as a mentor, instructor and supervisor. The correct term for the person who sign's off a Participant's section, either online or in their Record Book, is an Assessor.

They should have considerable knowledge and experience of the chosen activity and be able to listen and help with a participant's thoughts, concerns and questions. They should encourage participants throughout the activity, assisting them from start through to completion by regularly meeting with them and discussing their goals.

They should check that the young person participates regularly over the minimum time period and shows improvement while striving to achieve their goals. At the end of the process, they will be required to approve the participant's Award activities and to sign off this section.

Physical Recreation section

This section of the Award aims to improve the health, team skills, self-esteem and confidence in participants through training and perseverance in their chosen activity. This section is based on the belief that a healthy body is a good end in itself and can often help to develop a healthy mind. Participants may take up a completely new activity, or seek to improve their ability in an activity that they already do.

The specific benefits will obviously depend on the type of Physical Recreation chosen. Some general benefits include developing a healthy lifestyle, increasing self-esteem, experiencing a sense of achievement, encouraging teamwork and enjoyment.

Participants learn by doing in keeping with the Award methodology of experimental learning. By introducing young people to enjoyable physical activity, they will hopefully develop long-term beneficial habits.



Time requirements

The average minimum time spent on the Physical Recreation section over this time period is one hour per week. However, no more than a quarter of the time spent completing the section should be spent on training. In a structured environment, the weekly sessions may be much longer than one hour and participants should be involved for the entire session.

	Minimum time	If Physical Recreation is chosen as the longest section
Bronze	3 months	6 months
Silver	6 months	12 months (non Bronze holders only or direct entrants)
Gold	12 months	18 months (non Silver holders only)

Plan

Working with their Award Leader, participants should choose a physical activity that interests them and in which they can show improvement over a period of time. It is often helpful, where possible, to link in with a club or follow a programme of a national governing body for a sport in order to provide structure to the activity, but it is not a requirement.

Participants may choose a physical activity that they do on their own or as part of a team. Although the Award itself is non-competitive, competitive sports are perfectly acceptable for Award purposes. In the case of a team sport, it is the individual participant's personal effort and commitment that counts.

The Assessor will need to discuss and help the participant to set themselves individually challenging and realistic goals. These goals should be achievable in the timeframe of the Award and should take into account the starting ability of the participant.

If the initial choice of activity proves to be unsuitable, participants may choose another activity and count the time spent towards their overall minimum time requirement. This needs to be done in consultation with the Award Leader and new goals need to be agreed.

Do

Participants should carry out the Physical Recreation activity subject to the time requirements, providing evidence during the activity to contribute to a diary or online equivalent. The participant and Assessor should attend regular meetings to ensure continued support to the participant.

Review

The Assessor should review the activity and sign off the section when completed. The participant will provide them with the necessary documents to sign off. The Assessor should check that the minimum time requirements have been met or exceeded, and that the participant showed reliability and commitment. This should offer a chance for the participant to critically reflect on their experience, review the high and low points and what they have learned for the future.

Signing off the section

The Assessor will need to verify that the participant has been showing regular commitment to their activity over at least the required minimum time, and has shown improvement from their initial level of ability. The specific targets which were agreed at the start of the process, or revised ones if applicable, should have been achieved. A diary or journal is very usual for this.

However, if the participant has not demonstrated the commitment and progress required to complete their activity, the participant should be encouraged to continue. When the agreed goal is achieved, the Assessor should sign the section as completed.



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