

Doing the DofE.

Guidance for leading and participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award during the pandemic.

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Welcome

This guidance will help you make sure your delivery of the DofE programme within the Scouts is safe and follows the The Scouts' Framework. More Scout guidance is available [here](#).

This guidance should read in conjunction with The Scouts' Framework, which explains the overall process.

Background

To help young people to complete their Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), the Scouts and the DofE have provided flexibility to programmed rules, to help young people to achieve their awards during the pandemic. This guidance outlines permitted activity at each readiness level, incorporating flexible programme changes.

You can find out more by visiting:

- [The Scouts Programme flexibility pages](#)
- [The DofE with a difference pages](#)

Any DofE activities organised and delivered within the Scouts must be delivered following Scouts rules.

Things to consider

The key considerations will include:

- The Scouts framework for face-to-face activities is connected to readiness levels provided by the National Youth Agency (and equivalents in other nations). Readiness levels detail what activity is safe and permissible.
- Residential activities organised and facilitated by the Scouts, that involve multiple households and international trips, are only permitted at the green readiness level. This includes DofE expeditions and residential experiences.
- Sections planning to return to face-to-face Scouting must consider if they will be offering DofE activities within their programme as part of the restart process. This should include which activities will be run at which award level. Information should be included in the risk assessment and request to restart plans. This will be reviewed by the relevant Commissioner and Executive Committee who will need to give approval for the activities to start. Any Districts or Counties who run DofE away from the Unit setting will need to apply for approval to restart from their relevant Commissioner and Executive Committee.
- If you are planning for an expedition to take place before the end of the expedition season on 31st October 2020 or you have plans for young people to take part in a residential experience, you must make this clear in your plans and risk assessments. This will only be possible if you are in a jurisdiction which is at **Yellow** readiness level.
- When participants are in the care of the Scouts, you can follow our guidance on First Aid [here](#). When participants are under the care of an external organisation, including when they are taking part in the volunteering, skill or physical section of the award, parents and carers must ensure that they are happy with the safety measures that are being put in place to safeguard their young person.

DofE 2020 Certificate of Achievement

- The DofE will give a 2020 Certificate of Achievement to anyone who has completed the Volunteering, Skill and Physical section of their Award.
- At Bronze level, participants who have completed their Volunteering, Skill and Physical and as a result achieve the 2020 DofE Certificate of Achievement and completed the Award and can move on to the next section.

Expedition seasons

- The 'expedition season' runs from March – End October. Age flexibilities allows for expeditions to be taken in March 2021 should participants miss the opportunity attend an expedition in 2020. Taking young people on expeditions outside of the usual expedition season can bring additional risks and this should only be considered in exceptional circumstances, when Leaders and Commissioners have the confidence that young people are capable to navigate harsher conditions. The safety of young people is of paramount importance.

Returning home during an expedition

- The DofE have released [guidance](#) stating that young people can return home overnight during an expedition of any award level (Bronze, Silver and Gold). We support this flexibility and have outlined below a checklist of some key considerations which you must include in your risk assessment before taking young people on an expedition.

Using DofE Approved Activity Providers (AAPs) for the expedition section

- Members may independently and individually book onto open expedition opportunities through AAPs. This CANNOT be organised by the Scouts at any level. This includes the individual (if over 18) or through parents/carers (for those under 18) **booking onto an open expedition opportunity**. Individuals take responsibility for their own safety, safeguarding and insurance checks. This will allow members who have already booked to continue with their plans to attend expeditions provided by AAPs; or for others to seek to book if they are wishing to complete a section of the award using a more conventional expedition than is currently permitted within the Scouts. This does not apply to expeditions for scout awards.

Activities organised by the young people not the Scouts

- Young people choose the activities to do for each section of their award and need the agreement of their leader to ensure that the activities meet the requirements of the DofE and do not go against the ethos of the Scouts. Activities undertaken within the Scouts (organised, facilitated or directly involving other members or a direct benefit to the Scouts) must be done following Scouts rules.
- Activities which are organised independently of the Scouts are done as an individual with parents (or the individual if over 18) taking responsibility for safety, safeguarding and insurance checks. This includes the volunteering, physical, skill, expedition and residential section.

Risks and mitigating actions

The table below outlines the acceptable level of activity at each readiness level for Scouts activities. This does not include activities organised by young people independent of the Scouts.

Operating Level	Permitted Activity	DofE Permitted Activity	Key Risks	Key Controls	Who is responsible for making sure this happens
Red	<p>No face-to-face Scouting activity allowed.</p> <p>Scouting can be virtual (online/video/phone).</p> <p>Scouting can take place at home/with family e.g. using The Great Indoors resources.</p>	<p>No face-to-face activity allowed. No overnight activity including expeditions and residential experiences allowed.</p> <p>Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections of the DofE Awards can be completed virtually. The DofE have released ideas on how you can do this virtually here.</p> <p>Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections can take place at home/with family. The DofE have released flexible guidance to allow family members to act as Assessors. Family members should only be assessors, after receiving confirmation, from the Leaders delivering DofE for their young person, this decision must be documented.</p>	All DofE activities conducted independently or virtually.	Ensure all parents aware of the changes in programme and guidance on staying safe online. (See the Staying Safe Online page on scouts.org.uk)	<p>DofE Leaders / County DofE Adviser to ensure young people are supported with continuing their DofE through this time.</p> <p>DofE Leaders or Assessors should agree that a family member can act as an Assessor.</p>

<p>Amber</p>	<p>Scouting activities in outdoor spaces can resume in small groups, subject to following government guidance.</p> <p>Groups in England and Scotland may meet in small groups indoors.</p> <p>No residential activities can take place.</p>	<p>No overnight activity including expeditions and residential experiences allowed.</p> <p>Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections can take place in outdoor spaces in small groups.</p>	<p>The risk of transmission of the coronavirus is much higher indoors than outdoors.</p> <p>Groups in England and Scotland may use indoor spaces but outdoor spaces still preferable.</p> <p>Buildings need to be assessed as safe to use following a period of non-use.</p>	<p>Government guidance followed, limitations on number of people in spaces and cleaning / hygiene systems and face coverings.</p> <p>Ensuring the programme allows for small group use of outdoor or indoor spaces (as applicable in your location)</p> <p>Follow guidance on Planning a safe and enjoyable programme and finding a safe place to meet.</p> <p>Check hygiene protocols are consistent, clear and understood (including signage).</p>	<p>Executive Committees and Commissioners</p>
<p>Yellow</p>	<p>Outdoor Scouting can be expanded and indoor Scouting in small groups can resume, subject to following government guidance.</p> <p>Camping is permitted within guidelines in some nations, following relevant social distancing rules.</p> <p>No indoor residentials are permitted.</p>	<p>No overnight activity including expeditions and residential experiences allowed.</p> <p>Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections can take place in outdoor or indoor spaces in larger groups.</p>	<p>The risk of transmission of the coronavirus is much higher indoors than outdoors.</p>	<p>Government guidance followed, limitations on number of people in spaces and cleaning/ hygiene systems and face coverings.</p> <p>Check hygiene protocols are consistent, clear and understood (including signage).</p> <p>Detailed guidance on sleeping, catering, hygiene, waste</p>	<p>Executive Committees and Commissioners</p>

				management and programme for camping are in development to be ready for Yellow. Current indications are that England will allow limited camping in yellow but Scotland will not.	
Green	<p>Following government guidance, all Scouting activities may resume.</p> <p>Residential experiences and camps can take place.</p>	<p>All DofE Award sections, including expeditions and residential experiences are allowed.</p> <p>The DofE have released some flexible guidance on expeditions*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DofE expedition teams can attend back-to-back practice and qualifying expeditions. • Where it is not possible for Gold level expeditions to be run in wild country, expeditions can be run in non-wild country. For example, another area under different jurisdiction may reach 'Green' readiness level sooner than England. This means that residents of this area, could participate in an expedition within local countryside, despite not being wild country land. • As Gold expeditions do not need to take place in Wild Country, Silver and Bronze level expeditions may take place in the same area. <p>*Note: The DofE have released guidance stating that young people can return home to sleep during an</p>	<p>Be prepared that we could return to the Yellow stage at late notice, which could mean short notice cancellation of expeditions and residential.</p> <p>People may still be nervous about participation.</p>	<p>Have contingency plans prepared.</p> <p>Ensure strong, visible hygiene practices are still in place.</p> <p>Clear communication to participants and parents about how activities will be run safely.</p>	Executive Committees and Commissioners

		expedition of any award level. The Scouts believe that exploring and setting up camp in a new area, away from home, allows participants to gain new skills which they wouldn't gain through any other opportunity. Therefore we would strongly encourage that every effort is made for young people to take part in an expedition where they stay away from home.			
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Your DofE COVID checklist

This should apply to all levels, but if in conflict, default to Amber. Some of this guidance can be found in other guidance, which we've linked to below.

Include a detailed plan on how you will run the DofE programme in your return to Scouting plan and risk assessment.	
Explicitly state that you would like to run an expedition or residential experience, with detail on how you will ensure a safe overnight experience (only in levels where overnight activities are allowed).	
Receive approval from the appropriate Commissioner and Executive Committee to run any part of the DofE programme, including residential experiences and expeditions.	
If necessary, agree in writing with parents or family members that they can be an Assessor for the Volunteering, Skill or Physical section of the DofE Award.	

Checklist: Returning home during an Expedition or Residential experience

This checklist includes additional considerations to follow should you decide to run an 'expedition' during the Amber and Yellow Readiness levels, in which young people can return home for the night to sleep.

An understanding on how you will ensure that all participants and leaders can remain socially distanced during the expedition. You may want to consider how the group will remain at a distance in scenarios like map reading, entering fields, travel to and from the expedition location and cooking, food preparation and availability of water.	
Consideration for the suitability and challenge that the chosen routes will provide to the group, whilst enabling the expedition to take place do these still challenge the group and allow for progression from the previous level.	
A detailed plan and information session with the young people, to discuss how they will manage safety and hygiene on the trip. You may want to consider if you will bring masks and/or hand sanitiser.	

An agreement with the young people that they are happy to participate in an expedition in which they return home each night, rather than participating in the traditional experience.	
An agreement with parents/carers that they are happy for young people to take part. You may also want to agree travel arrangement for each evening.	
A detailed plan and/or alternative routes to manage local lockdown scenarios which affect your route.	