

# A guide for parents, guardians and carers



Developing young  
people for life and work



*"I've found everyone who has completed their Award has become more confident and shown a maturity that makes them stand out and helps them progress in their careers."*

**Dean Lightwood**

Head of Operations, Lloyds Banking Group.

## What is the Award?

Anyone aged 14-24 can do an Award programme at one of three progressive levels which, when successfully completed, leads to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

There are four sections to complete at Bronze and Silver level and five at Gold. With assistance from Leaders, your child will select and set objectives in each of the following areas:

- **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community. This cannot be for a business or family member but can be for a charity or for a not-for-profit organisation. Examples:
  - Raising money for a charity
  - Being a football coach
  - Helping at an after-school club.
- **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities. Examples:
  - Joining a local athletics club
  - Improving their martial arts skills
  - Taking weekly dance lessons.
- **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests. Examples:
  - Learning how to juggle
  - Improving musical skills
  - Build a website, blog or video diary.
- **Expedition:** planning, training for and completing a supervised adventurous journey as one of a team in the UK or abroad. It can be by canoe, kayak or boat; on foot; on horseback; by wheelchair or by bicycle.
- At Gold level, participants must do an additional fifth **Residential** section, which involves staying and working away from home doing a shared activity. Examples:
  - Assisting at a kids' summer camp
  - Helping deafblind young people and adults to enjoy a holiday in France
  - Joining a conservation camp.

Inspiring ideas for activities are available at  
[theawardni.org](http://theawardni.org)



## Where to do the Award

Award programmes are delivered under licence by over 1,200 partners (Licensed Organisations) who offer them through centres from youth clubs, voluntary organisations, schools and colleges to young offender institutions and businesses.

To find out where the Award is run near you, ask your child's teacher or youth leader, or go to [theawardni.org](http://theawardni.org).



## Why should they do their Award?

**When your child does their Award programme they'll develop the skills and attitudes they need to become more rounded, confident adults. Qualities that colleges, universities and employers are attracted to.**

So when you support your child's pursuit of their Award, you're investing in their future.

You can expect to see your child develop in the following areas as they work through their Award programme:

- Self-belief
- Self-confidence
- A sense of identity
- Initiative
- A sense of responsibility
- A real awareness of their strengths
- New talents and abilities
- The ability to plan and use time effectively
- The ability to learn from and give to others in the community
- New friendships
- Problem solving, presentation and communication skills
- Leadership and teamworking skills.

## Costs

**To take part in the Award, participants pay a nominal fee for a Welcome Pack, which includes their Participation Place. This fee is their contribution towards the Charity's costs in running their Award programme.**

They will receive:

- A Welcome Pack
- Their online eDofE account
- Their Reward Card
- A choice of certificate and badge (and medal if they choose a Gaisce – The President's Award Certificate) on approval of their Award.

The fee represents a very small proportion of the overall cost of participation/running the Award, which is supported by the funds raised by the Award Charity. The current charge for participation can be found at [DofE.org/costs](http://DofE.org/costs). Licensed Organisations and/or centres may add a small administration fee to this amount and they **must** explain this clearly to you.

It is often the chosen programme activities, such as the type of expedition, not the cost of enrolment that can make the greatest financial demands. Devising a programme that matches resources is part of the challenge.

Please check that the activity choice has been approved by the Leader before any money is spent on it.

## How long does it take?

To achieve an Award young people must show persistence, commitment and personal development.

It's not something that can be achieved through a short burst of enthusiasm in one weekend! However, they may easily fit their Award activities around their school, college or work commitments, carrying them out in their own personal time. It can be done partly as one of a range of options in supported/core time or as part of an after-school or lunchtime programme. They may choose to use something they are already doing as an Award activity – or go for something completely new.

### Bronze (14+ years old)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, train for and complete a 2 day, 1 night expedition
Participants must also undertake a <b>further</b> three months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skills section.			

Each progressive level demands more time and commitment from participants. There is no real time limit when it comes to completing an Award programme.

As long as they are under 25 years old when they complete all their activities in their programme, they're free to work at a pace that they're comfortable with to achieve their Award.

This chart shows the **minimum** time participants must do their programmes for. **Whilst timescales are given in months, participants need to give a regular commitment averaging at least an hour a week during this time.**

### Direct entrants

Direct entrants are young people who have not achieved the previous level of Award.

### Silver (15+ years old)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
6 months	One section for 6 months and the other section for 3 months		Plan, train for and complete a 3 day, 2 night expedition
If participants have not achieved their Bronze Award they must undertake a <b>further</b> six months in either their Volunteering or the <b>longer</b> of their Physical or Skills sections.			

### Gold (16+ years old)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition	Residential
12 months	One section for 12 months and the other section for 6 months		Plan, train for and complete a 4 day, 3 night expedition	Undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from home for 5 days and 4 nights
If participants have not achieved their Silver Award they must undertake a <b>further</b> six months in either their Volunteering or the <b>longer</b> of their Physical or Skills sections.				

## Supervision

**All Award Leaders and Expedition Supervisors undergo checks and training through their Licensed Organisation to ensure young people have access to a high quality programme.**

However, given the scope and breadth of Award programmes, your child may choose to undertake activities that are not directly managed or organised by their group, centre or Licensed Organisation (i.e. at their local gym or conservation group).

If this is the case, you, as their parent/guardian/carer, are responsible for ensuring that the activity is properly managed and insured, and that the adults are suitably qualified and checked.

Remember too that, when using online technology, you should ensure that your child is aware of how to keep safe and how to get help if needed. See [ceop.gov.uk](http://ceop.gov.uk).

Award Leaders are sensitive to all participants' individual cultural, religious, physical and other requirements. Consequently, they can organise activities suitable for participants' needs and schedule them around important religious events etc. as appropriate.

### Approved Activity Providers (AAPs)

The Award licenses a range of organisations that provide expedition, volunteering and residential opportunities for participants. Young people can find a list of these, and 'open expeditions' run by the Award, at [DofE.org/finder](http://DofE.org/finder).

## Insurance

The Award provides limited personal accident insurance which covers payment of a certain benefit(s) in the event of a participant or adult helper sustaining accidental bodily injury whilst taking part in an approved Award activity.

As a condition of their licence, each Licensed Organisation must also arrange Public Liability Insurance, which will cover any claims against them for injury or damage caused to, or by, young people and adults doing an Award programme.

However, please note that the insurance does not provide cover for any personal belongings or equipment damaged or lost whilst doing an Award activity. It will also not cover your child for any injury or damage caused to them whilst undertaking an activity arranged by you with an external organisation, you will need to check what cover is provided by the activity provider.

For more information regarding insurance, please visit [www.Award.org/go/insurance](http://www.Award.org/go/insurance).







*"My son was having trouble making friends at his new school. When he joined the Award group, though, he quickly found like-minded boys and made some really good mates as they trained for their expedition and did their volunteering work together as a team. He's now really motivated at school and has a new lease of life!"*

**Jayne Maythorpe**, parent

## Can you help?

Whatever activities your child has chosen to pursue for their Award programme, they will need your support and guidance to help them through. You may also need to encourage them to keep their eDofE pages up-to-date.

You may feel that you have other skills to offer. In which case, why not volunteer with your local Award group?

You don't need special qualifications to be an Award helper – from giving guidance and advice or training and assessing young people's progress, to driving a minibus or helping with administration, there's a role for everyone.

Each organisation will undertake appropriate safeguarding checks of all adults working with young people.

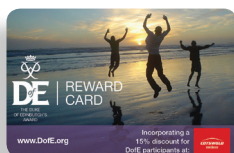
You could also fundraise to support your local Award group, other more disadvantaged groups in your area, or for the Charity nationally.



## The Welcome Pack and eDofE

Once they've chosen to start their Award, your child will be sent their sign in details for eDofE (our online record keeping system) and a **Welcome Pack** which includes their...

- Participant's Handbook
- Assessor Guidance & Report cards booklet
- Merchandise leaflet
- Welcome letter
- Reward Card (giving 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoor, the outdoor equipment retailer, in stores or online).



Using eDofE and/or the Assessor's Report cards, participants have to prove what they've done for each of their sectional activities. They can upload their evidence on to eDofE by scanning in their signed Assessor's Report cards (or their Assessor can complete their report online), as well as pictures of them doing their activities, signed notes from their Assessor, movies... anything they can think of to prove their hard work!

The Award Leader would need to approve the choice of Assessor before the activity is started. The Assessor may not be a member of the participant's immediate family. See [theawardni.org](http://theawardni.org).

Their Leader will then sign off each section as and when they have proved their commitment to their activities for the necessary time period. Your child's Licensed Organisation will approve their final Award. At Gold the DofE/JAI Office will give final approval on the Gold Award.

For advice on expedition kit, plus details of discounts and offers for Award participants, see [DofEShopping.org](http://DofEShopping.org).



### There are several ways you can get more detailed information:

- Talk to your child's Award Leader or Co-ordinator
- Contact a Licensed Organisation via [DofE.org/takepart](http://DofE.org/takepart)
- Visit our website: [theawardni.org](http://theawardni.org)
- Email us: [info@Award.org](mailto:info@Award.org)

### Local contact:

*"Employers know that the Award turns young people into great employees. What's so clever is that it is as relevant today as it was 50 years ago. The Award is a great way for young people to differentiate themselves and develop the maturity needed to do well at work."*

**Karren Brady**

Vice-Chair West Ham Football Club,  
and BBC's *The Apprentice* regular.