



The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Guidance for Interact volunteer placements

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Introduction

This document was created to assist Rotarians who are delivering volunteer placements to The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) participants via Interact club activities. The information contained in this document covers the Award, expectations of Assessors and requirements of volunteer placements. This document is aimed at Interact district officers, Interact club officers and national Interact coordinator on the Youth Services committee.

As of 2015, Interact is an Approved Activity Provider (AAP) for the Volunteering section of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This means that certain Interact activities can be used for the Volunteering section of the DofE, providing that it meets certain criteria of duration and content.

As a Rotarian looking after an Interact club, you will assess the activities to ensure the participant has fully completed their challenge with success.

Your motivation and support are the keys to helping an Interactor to do the best they can and enjoy the experience. It should be a positive experience for all.

Contact

If you have any questions, please contact the following people:

The RIBI Projects Manager cds@rotarygbi.org 01789 765 411

or the Chair of Interact via the Youth Services Committee:

interact@rotarygbi.org.

Or AAP Officer – Volunteering and Residential, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award:

aap@dofe.org 01753 727400

Background to The Duke of Edinburgh's Award:

- Young people can achieve their Bronze, Silver and Gold Award through Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition, and at Gold level Residential, activities which they set themselves.
- A developmental journey. They will learn many new skills along the way and become more confident in themselves.
- Participants set own goals. They decide where they are going and how they are getting there with your help. This creates self-reliance.
- For 14-24 year olds Young people can start their Bronze at 14, Silver at 15 and Gold at 16.
- At any one time, there will be 300,000 young people participating in the DofE. Vast majority are at Bronze, 25% achieve Silver and 10% achieve Gold.
- 5 million awards have been handed out to date.

It is available in 80 countries under various names through the International Award.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award roles

Specific roles are assigned to deliver the DofE Award.

DofE Leader

Responsible for a group of young people doing their DofE. Typically a teacher, Scout leader or youth club leader.

Assessor

This role is the most relevant to Rotary (unless you are already a leader or fulfilling another role) as this role will observe and write the Assessor report for the participant. As an Approved Activity Provider for Volunteering, Rotary must make sure all participants comply with requirements for the relevant Award. More information on this role is further on in this document.

DofE Awards

The information below is relevant to Rotary's role as a volunteer provider. There are other elements to the DofE (Skills, Physical, Expedition) which have not been included as Rotary will not be delivering these areas.

Bronze (age 14 and over)

- Volunteer for three to six months, 1 hour a week for at least 12 weeks. The volunteering must be conducted in this way to ensure the participant regularly attends. It is not permissible to condense the volunteering to 12 hours in one day or week.
- Award received at local level.

Silver (age 15 and over)

- Six to twelve month volunteering placement, for a minimum of 1 hour a week. The volunteering must be conducted in this way to ensure the participant regularly attends. It is not permissible to condense the volunteering.
- Awarded received at local level.

Gold (age 16 and over)

- 12 to 18 month volunteering placement for a minimum of 1 hour a week. The volunteering must be conducted in this way to ensure the participant regularly attends. It is not permissible to condense the volunteering.
- Award presented at St James Palace, Holyrood Palace and Hillsborough Castle by either HRH The Duke of Edinburgh or HRH The Earl of Wessex.

If the participant is already volunteering regularly, this could be backdated as far as three months to fulfill award requirements provided the weekly attendance is evidenced. Young people should check with their DofE Leader.

Volunteering activities

- The DofE participant must set their own goals. Discuss this with them to make sure goals are relevant and achievable. Your support in this area has a huge impact.
- The participant must develop compassion by giving service to others.
- The provider must check all health and safety aspects to keep the participant safe. This includes risk assessments, DBS checks for people working with the Interactor and first aid certificates if required. Follow the correct policies set out by Rotary.
- The activity must be done regularly, ideally a minimum of 1 hour a week. The volunteering must be conducted in this way to ensure the participant regularly attends, is on time and is committed. It is not permissible to condense many hours in one day.
- An Assessor, in Rotary's case this would be a Rotarian, must see the volunteer fairly regularly and be able to write the Assessor's report at the end of the time volunteering.
- The participant should be encouraged to come back and volunteer regularly after completion. Volunteering does not just have to be for the DofE.

Volunteering placement advisory

- Training for the volunteer activity must not take up more than 25% of the placement time.
- Helping people in the community or an individual e.g. assisting elderly person with shopping, children reading, helping people with special educational needs.
- Must **not** replace the work done by a paid member of staff or be with a commercial organisation e.g. a business.
- Participants aged 14-16 find it hard to secure a placement due to age. Ensure placements are possible.
- Can be team volunteering e.g. in school or part of Interact project.
- Can run project by selves.
- Can be community action or a campaign e.g. addiction support, road safety, water safety, accident prevention.
- Can include coaching or teaching e.g. leading a voluntary group such as Interact, dance teacher, music, sport.
- Can have a positive impact on the environment or animals.
- Can help a charity or community organisation such as a youth group.
- Visit www.dofe.org/volunteering for further guidance.

DofE Assessor – role and report writing

- The Assessor does not have to be formally trained, just able to be present during the placement to monitor the completion of activities. This role would usually be fulfilled by a Rotarian. The Assessor must have an understanding of the activity in order to assess if it has been completed properly.
- The DofE participant must introduce themselves to the Assessor to ensure proper observation and setting of goals.
- The Assessor must talk to the participant about their goals to ensure they are reasonable and achievable through the placement.
- The Assessor MUST ask how long the participant expects the placement to last.
- Their report can be submitted via the DofE website, using the participants ID number or via a paper book. The report is sent to the DofE leader who checks it first before sharing with the participant. The website is here: <http://www.dofe.org/assessor/>
- There is a paper book which can be submitted and a headed letter is also accepted.
- The report validates the experience by confirming attendance and performance. It is independent and the Assessor must not be a friend or member of the family of the participant.
- The report must: describe the activity; say if the Award level is Bronze, Silver or Gold; describe the achievement e.g. what was the goal, skills acquired, memorable events; be positive, personal and encouraging.
- Any problems must be identified early on and dealt with, not left until the report writing stage.
- There is an online training course available for more general information about the DofE.

Completion and achievement

- The DofE Leader approves of the placement and the activities within.
- Young people record their activities online through eDofE.
- Participants receive their DofE Award upon completion of all sections. In doing so, your Interactor has completed a milestone in their self-development journey. Put it on your Interact club's Twitter and Facebook page and let your district PR officer know. They can inform Rotary.
- Please also tell the RIBI Project Manager who would like to know how the DofE relationship is progressing. Record keeping is a key requirements of the agreement between DofE and Rotary.

Safety first

All placements and activities must be fully risk assessed using the Rotary risk assessment form and all Rotary child protection policies must be followed. Information is available on the rotary.org website in the members' area. If you have any questions, please contact your District Interact Officer.

Rotary is committed to ensuring the safety of all children and vulnerable adults. Everyone involved with the participants must have Disclosure and Barring Service certification checks and, if required, first aid certificates.