



What is the DofE?

Your DofE programme is a real adventure.
It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from.
You just need to be aged between 14 and 24.

You can do DofE programmes at three levels:

- **Bronze** (aged 14+)
- **Silver** (aged 15+)
- **Gold** (aged 16+)

...which lead to a Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

You achieve an Award by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections:

- **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community.
- **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities.
- **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests.
- **Expedition:** planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK or abroad.
- At Gold level, you must do an additional **Residential** section, which involves working and staying away from home doing a shared activity.

Time and age requirements

Level:	Minimum period of participation by:	
	Direct entrants	Previous level Award holders
Bronze	6 months	n/a
Silver	12 months	6 months
Gold	18 months	12 months

Direct entrants are young people starting their DofE programme at either Silver or Gold level, who have not achieved the previous level of Award.

Bronze Award (14+ years old)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, train for and complete a 2 day, 1 night expedition

*All participants must undertake a **further** 3 months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skills section.*

Silver Award (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
<i>Direct entrants must undertake a further 6 months in the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.</i>			

Gold Award (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

*Direct entrants must undertake a **further** 6 months in either the Volunteering or the **longer** of the Physical or Skills section.*

Choosing activities

There is a massive choice of activities that count towards DofE programmes. You can select practically any activity you want – as long as it's legal and morally acceptable.

- Activities are placed in specific sections for a reason.
- You need to choose activities you are going to enjoy.
- Activities could be something that you are already doing or perhaps one you've always wanted to try.

Choosing activities

Think about what you want to do for each section, and check with your DofE Leader that your choices can be counted.

Use the helpful lists and category finder on **www.DofE.org/sections**.

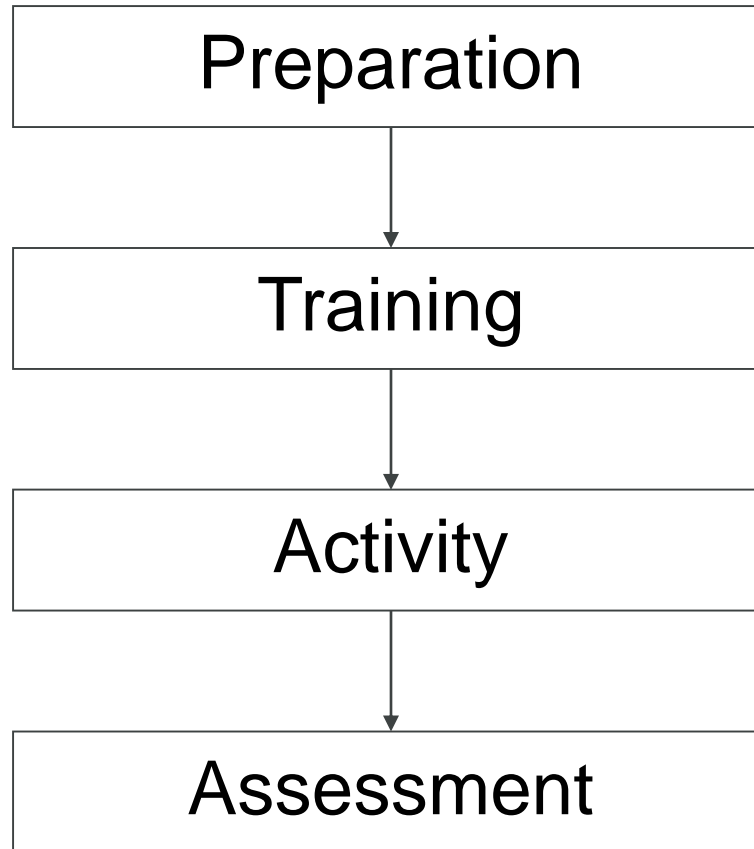
Starting the next level

You should achieve your Award before you start on the next level.

You may start on a section of the next level if you:

- Have reached the minimum age of entry.
- Obtain a Participation Place for this level.
- Have completed that section of the previous Award.
- Are not working on all three levels at the same time.

The steps for the sections



Volunteering

Aim

- To inspire young people to make a difference within their communities or to an individual's life and develop compassion by giving service to others.



Benefits

- Learn about their community and feel a sense of belonging and purpose.
- Learn to take responsibility for their communities and their own actions.
- Build new relationships.
- Further understand their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop teamwork and leaderships skills.
- Trust others and be trusted.
- Enjoy new adventures.

What is required?

- Volunteering is simple. It's about choosing to give time to something useful, without getting paid.
- Team volunteering can be beneficial to you and to the project you choose.
- At least 3/4 of the activity needs to be practical volunteering, so only a 1/4 can be training.
- Training courses, therefore, must either:
 - Change their content to include practical volunteering e.g. raising awareness of the project.
 - Count towards the Skills section – e.g. Life skills category.

Volunteering categories

- Helping people
- Community action and raising awareness
- Coaching, teaching and leadership
- Working with the environment or animals
- Helping a charity or community organisation

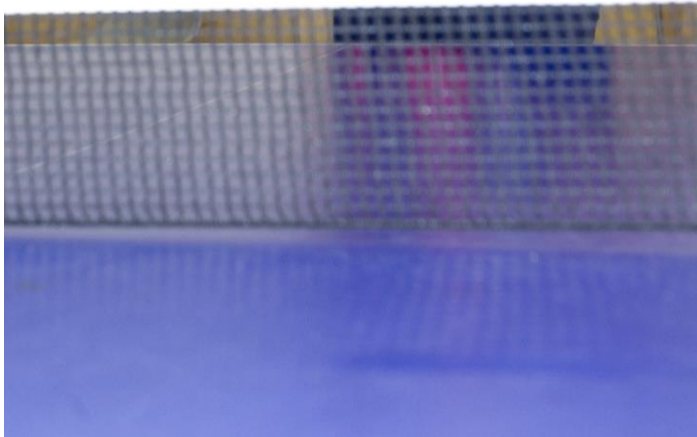


Physical



Aim

- To inspire young people to achieve greater physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle through participation and improvement in physical activity.



Benefits

- Enjoy keeping fit.
- Improve fitness.
- Discover new abilities.
- Raise self-esteem.
- Extend personal goals.
- Set and respond to a challenge.
- Experience a sense of achievement.

What is a physical activity?

In short, anything that requires a sustained level of physical energy and involves doing an activity.

You are free to do this section independently or as part of a team.

Physical categories

- Team sports
- Individual sports
- Water sports
- Racquet sports
- Dance
- Fitness
- Extreme sports
- Martial arts



Skills



Aim

- To inspire young people to develop practical and social skills and personal interests.

Benefits

- Develop a new talent.
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Develop practical and social skills.
- Develop better organisational and time management skills.
- Sharpen research skills.
- Learn how to set and rise to a challenge.

Something old or something new

Ultimately you must be able to prove that you have broadened your understanding and increased your expertise in the chosen skill.

Activities can be undertaken on either an individual or group basis.

Skills categories

- Creative arts
- Performance arts
- Science and technology
- Care of animals
- Music
- Life skills
- Learning and collecting
- Media and communication
- Natural world
- Games and sports



Expedition



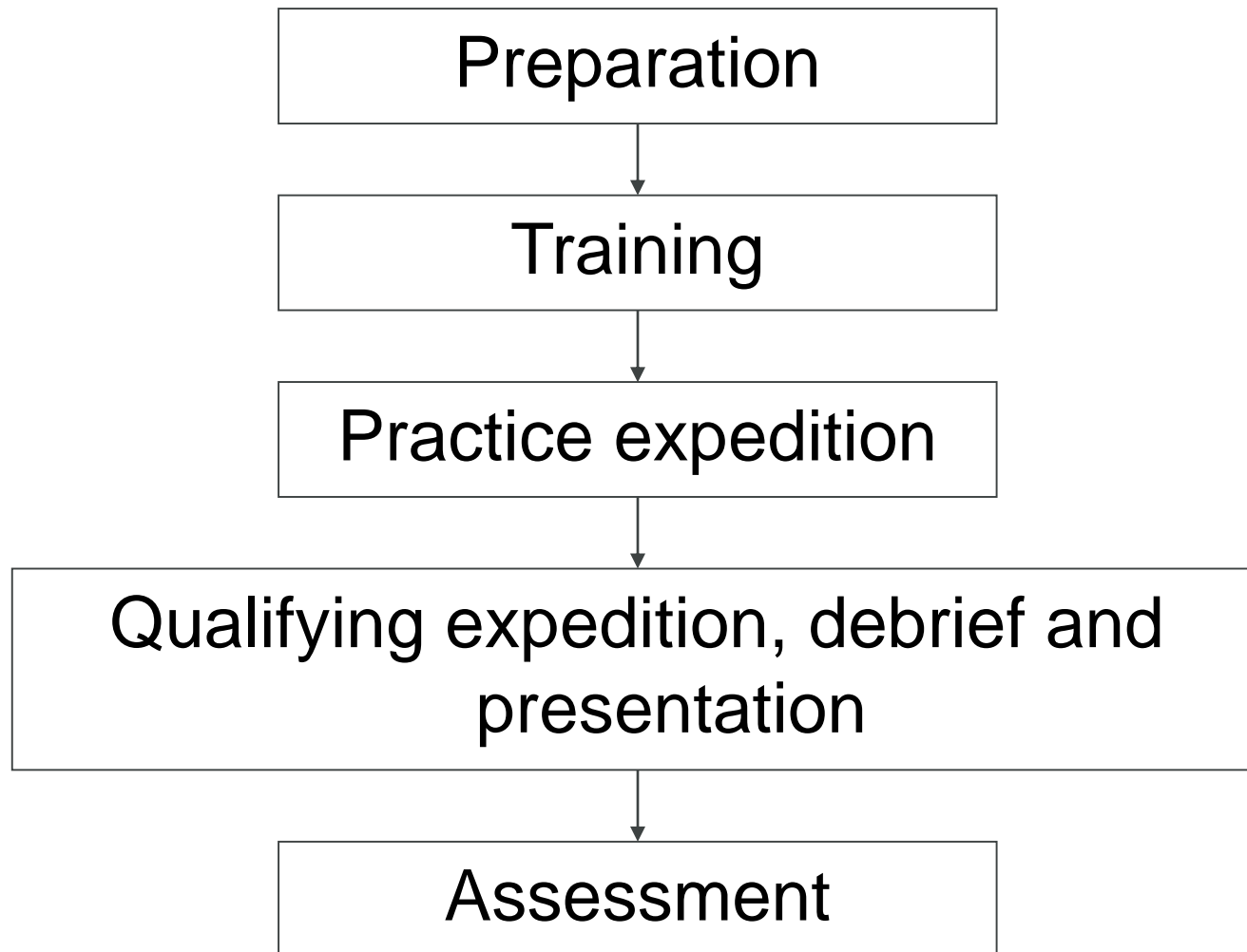
Aim

- To inspire young people to develop initiative and a sense of adventure and discovery, by planning, training for and completing an adventurous journey as part of a team.

Benefits

- Gain an appreciation of and respect for the outdoor environment.
- Learn the value of sharing responsibility for success.
- Learn the importance of attention to detail and organisational ability.
- Develop and demonstrate enterprise and imagination.
- Become more self-reliant.
- Become more able to overcome challenges.
- Recognise the needs and strengths of others.
- Improve decision-making skills and the ability to accept consequences.
- Gain skills to reflect on personal performance.
- Learn to manage risk.
- Learn through experience.

The expedition process



Expedition examples

- This can be far flung or close to home:
 - Exploring team dynamics on foot in the Cairngorms.
 - Using cycle paths in Germany to compare to the UK.
 - Following a disused railway track by wheelchair.
 - Utilising canoe trails in Canada on a wilderness trip.
 - Exploring bridle paths in the Brecon Beacons.



Timescales for qualifying expeditions

Level	Duration	Minimum hours of planned activity each day
Bronze	2 days and 1 night	At least 6 hours during the daytime (at least 3 of which must be spent journeying)
Silver	3 days and 2 nights	At least 7 hours during the daytime (at least 3½ of which must be spent journeying)
Gold	4 days and 3 nights	At least 8 hours during the daytime (at least 4 of which must be spent journeying)

Residential (Gold only)

Aim

- To inspire participants through a concentrated involvement with people they don't know, who are usually from different backgrounds, and bring alternative views to the challenges they will face.



Benefits

- Meet people.
- Develop the confidence to thrive in an unfamiliar environment.
- Build new relationships and show concern for others.
- Work as part of a team towards shared goals.
- Accept responsibility for themselves and others.
- Develop communication skills and effective coping mechanisms.
- Develop respect and understanding for others.
- Show initiative.
- Develop the skills and attitudes to live and work with others.

Residential examples

- Developing an existing interest or something new:
 - Assisting at a kids' summer camp.
 - Joining a conservation project.
 - Doing a photography course.
 - Improving language skills on an intensive course.



Have fun!