

## Section Notes

# Residential Project





This leaflet provides a basic outline of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, with particular emphasis on the Residential Project 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.

## Residential Project

The Residential Project gives participants a shared purposeful experience with people who are not their usual companions, working towards a common goal. It should be an experience that broadens the participant's outlook and horizons.

The specific benefits will obviously depend on the Residential Project chosen. Some general benefits include meeting new people, experiencing an unfamiliar environment, building new relationships, working as part of a team and enjoyment.

Participants learn by doing in keeping with the Award methodology of experimental learning. By undertaking a Residential Project, it is hoped to broaden the participants experience through involvement with others in a residential setting.



## Time requirements

The Residential Project section is only required at Gold Level. Participants are required to undertake a shared purposeful activity, with people who are not their usual colleagues or friends, in an unfamiliar residential setting. The activity should take place over a period of at least four nights and five consecutive days. In exceptional circumstances, the commitment may be spread over two weekends. In these circumstances, the same activity must be pursued over both weekends and must take place within the same 12 month period.

## Plan

Participants should discuss their area of interest with their Award Leader before choosing a Residential Project. It requires a significant personal investment of time, and sometimes money, and the participant should be encouraged to choose wisely from suitable opportunities.

Participants should choose an activity that interests them, make the necessary enquiries and arrangements, and inform the organisation that they wish the experience to count towards their Gold Award. The Assessor should usually be the course instructor, leader, or facilitator, who can assess the participant throughout the experience and complete their Record Book or online equivalent. They should commit to being involved for the entire duration of the experience.

## Review

Participants should have the opportunity to review their experience with you at an interim point of the residential activity and at the end, to reflect on their experience, the high and low points, and what they have learned for the future.

The participant should be assessed on:

- Personal standards (application, punctuality, and so on)
- Relationship with others on the activity
- Willingness to show initiative and take responsibility
- Development of skills throughout the activity

Once this review is completed, the Assessor should complete the necessary documents for the participant to upload to their Online Record Book.

## 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.





**The Residential Project can have a lasting impact on both a participant and other people, often being the pinnacle of the journey through their Award. It often draws together many of the skills developed by a participant during their Award and can therefore provide an experience and legacy.**

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