

DofE FAQs

Why should I do my DofE?

The DofE gives you the chance to do something completely new and improve on things you're already doing. It takes you out of your comfort zone and into a place where you'll push yourself and have amazing new experiences. You'll build confidence, resilience, skills for work and friendship groups. And you'll have a brilliant time doing it.

What do I have to do to get my award?

In addition to the expedition, participants need to complete 3 sections - in volunteering, physical activity and skills. Gold participants must also complete a residential section.

- Skills where you learn a new skill or develop an existing one such as playing a musical instrument or designing a website.
- Physical where you focus on your health and fitness and have to undertake a period of improvement in an existing or new sport or physical activity.
- Volunteering to help others to make a difference to other people's lives by giving your time.
- Expedition undertaken under your own efforts including camping out overnight.
- Residential where you take part in a residential stay taking part in a shared, worthwhile activity with people you may not know.

How do I sign up for the Duke of Edinburgh Award?

Miss Carty, DofE Manager, will run launch assemblies for students. Letters will go home via ParentMail and you will have a few weeks to make payment of the initial deposit. Following the deposit payment deadline, login details for DofE will be shared with students.

What can I do to satisfy the volunteering section?

Ideas of what students have done in the past include volunteering at charity shops, parkrun, beavers, rainbows, churches, or food banks. In school, students can volunteer to help run an after school club, volunteer after school as a helper for a department, or being a school prefect. It is up to students themselves to arrange these activities and ask what is available.

Volunteering CAN NOT be unpaid work for a business - eg you cannot volunteer at a gym, café or hairdresser. Volunteering should ideally be 1 hour per week for the selected time period.

Please look at the Activities pack for further ideas or see Miss Carty.

What can I do to satisfy the physical section?

Ideas of what students have done in the past include being part of a sports team, playing an individual sport such a golf, tennis, running or cycling. Make sure you have a clear aim, and there is a way of you recording and evidencing what you have done- apps such as strava, or devices like smart watches are good for this. Under DofE rules, dancing is classed as physical activity, and NOT as part of the skills section. Physical section should ideally be 1 hour per week for the selected time period.

What can I do to satisfy the skills section?

Ideas of what students have done in the past include first aid, driving lessons, umpiring, cooking, playing a musical instrument, singing, being in the school show, computing skills, design, online course in business skills, caring for animals and learning new languages.

You need to show progress and development over the time period. If for example you are cooking, you will need to log the recipes you make and upload photos of food you have made.

A common error is to confuse which section an activity falls into: e.g. developing football skills is a Physical, learning how to referee is a Skill.

What can I do to satisfy the residential section (gold only)?

A Residential for Gold DofE means a programme that spends 5 days and 4 nights away from home on a shared activity with people that you have never met before. Your residential can have any focus or include any activities. You can go with one or two friends but the majority of the group must be unknown to you.

Ideas:

National Citizens Service - <https://wearencs.com/>, adventurous activity courses, National Trust working holidays, overseas conservation trips, etc

Use the DofE Opportunity Finder to help you, there are so many opportunities out there!

Make sure your planned residential covers all of the requirements. A good start is to check it using the Residential Requirements Checklist, then make sure it is approved on eDofE before you go.

Also be aware that a certificate of completion is not an assessor's report! Ask for your assessor report to be completed asap, don't leave it too long as staff tend to move on.

How do I get my eDofE login details?

You will receive an email from Miss Carty with this information.

How do I log my activities on eDofE?

Once you are logged in, you need to log each activity. For all levels of award, all students MUST have logged all activities as soon as they receive their login details. This means you will have already, or be close to completing these sections of the award by the end of the academic year.

Logging of activities happens on the eDofE website or by using the eDofE app on your phone.

Please ensure the start and end dates are correct, and it has been submitted for approval so a member of staff at school can check that your activity is suitable. Start and end dates must match what is recorded on the assessor report.

Once you have completed a section, you need to get your assessor to complete an assessor report. You can either fill in a paper copy from your welcome pack and upload a photo, or you can complete an online form here: <https://www.dofe.org/assessor/>

You will need to give the assessor your eDofE ID number to complete your assessor report. This can be found when you log into your eDofE account.

Who can be my assessor?

Normally the assessor will be the person who ran the section- eg the charity shop manager, netball coach or singing teacher.

You can ask your form tutor at school to complete an assessor report where finding an assessor is tricky- eg if you have learnt a language on duolingo, learnt to cook at home, or have gone running on your own every week. For this you will need to show the form tutor evidence you completed this (eg duolingo streak or smart watch log of runs), and then they can fill in a report for you.

Family members CANNOT be used to fill in assessor reports.

What equipment do I need for my expedition?

Full details of equipment will be shared with students close to the expedition. Please see Mr Randall for more information about the expedition.

Who chooses who is in my group for the expedition?

Groups must be between 4 and 7 people. This will be arranged during the expedition training day.

How long is the expedition?

The following must be met to satisfy the expedition section.

Bronze: A minimum of 2 days, 1 night; 6 hours planned activity each day.

Silver: A minimum of 3 days, 2 nights; 7 hours planned activity each day.

Gold: A minimum of 4 days, 3 nights; 8 hours planned activity each day.

Bronze teams and direct entrants will have training in school on elements such as first aid, campcraft, kit, and navigation. The training may take place as part of the practice expedition.

When is the deadline for completing the award?

Ideally all Bronze awards will be completed by the end of Year 9, Silver awards by the end of Year 10 and Gold awards by the end of Year 13. It is a nice way to end the academic year by handing out the awards in the end of year assembly.

I haven't done the Bronze award, but would like to do the Silver or Gold awards.

It is great if students start off with Bronze in Year 9 and progress through each award until they are in Year 12, and most students do this. However, this is not mandatory. Some students start off with the Silver award in Year 10 without having done the Bronze - this just means that they are classed as a 'direct entrant' which means they have to do slightly longer sections for physical or skills. The same applies to the Gold award - you do not need to have done Silver to take part, and again you are classed as a 'direct entrant' with slightly longer sections.