

A photograph of three hikers in winter gear walking on a rocky mountain trail. The hiker on the left is wearing an orange jacket and black pants with orange gaiters. The hiker in the middle is wearing a red jacket and black pants. The hiker on the right is wearing a green jacket and black pants. They are all carrying large backpacks and using ice axes. The background shows a mountain range with snow-capped peaks under a blue sky. A large, colorful rainbow graphic is overlaid on the top left of the image.

Guide for Gold Award Participants

A note from the Founder of the Award,
His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT:

Buckingham Palace



It is one thing to succeed in academic subjects, but I am sure that you will find that meeting the demands of the Gold Award will broaden your experience of life, and enable you to make choices as a responsible citizen in the opportunities available in life away from work.



Welcome to your Award challenge

Taking part in the Award isn't easy – it requires commitment over time – but it is simple to get started and after all your time and effort you will have achieved something special of which you can be proud and which universities and employers rate highly.

As an Award participant you will have the chance to:

- Design your own Award programme
- Set your own goals and record your progress
- Make a positive impact on the lives of others through community service
- Learn valuable practical and social skills for career development
- Take up the challenge of an adventurous journey
- Connect with other Award participants at home and abroad

You can continue with activities you're already taking part in, such as sports or volunteering, and count these towards achieving your Award, or your Award could be an opportunity to try something new and develop a passion for something different.

The Gold Award is the final level of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award but it doesn't need to be the end of your Award involvement. You could consider becoming an Award Leader, Adventurous Journey Supervisor or Assessor, or a supporter of the Award.

How it all works

Set your own programme.

You can start your Gold Award as soon as you've completed your Silver, or from the age of 16 if you are doing an Award for the first time. Choose an activity in each of the first three sections of the Award listed below and do each one for a minimum of one hour a week, for a minimum of 12 months. You'll also complete an Adventurous Journey (for 4 days and 3 nights plus training and at least one practice journey) and a Residential Project (for 5 days and 4 nights).

Service

Challenge yourself to be a responsible, caring member of the community.
See pages 6–7



Physical Recreation

Challenge yourself to improve your health, fitness and performance.
See pages 8–9



Skills

Challenge yourself to improve your skills and widen your interests.
See pages 10–11



Adventurous Journey

Challenge yourself to journey and explore with your eyes open.
See pages 12–13



Residential Project

Challenge yourself to journey and explore with your eyes open.
See pages 14–15



The sections

The following pages give you some examples of activities you could choose to do in each section.

Remember that these are only suggestions to get you started ... use them to help you think about what interests you'd like to develop, explore or re-visit. If you are finding it hard to choose, your Award Leader can help.

Service



Through the Service section, you get to volunteer in your community and see how your efforts can make a positive difference to the lives of others.

You'll improve your skills in areas such as team work and communication, building self-confidence as a result.



"The Award has given me a better sense of community, and how to give the best of myself as a way of life. It instilled in me values such as motivation, and kept me motivated and committed."

Duncan Vanniekerk,
South Africa

Example ideas

Here's a list of some Service ideas that you could do or use as a starting point to create a programme of your own.

People in the community

- Visit people in need, such as elderly or disabled people, on a regular basis, to provide assistance with shopping, gardening or other domestic tasks, or simply keep them company
- Volunteer in hospitals and care centres
- Visit prisons or detention centres under the auspices of the proper authorities
- Help with a local community radio, newspaper or blog
- Coach or manage a sports team
- Do a first-aid course and then make your skills available to benefit the local community, e.g. be a first-aider at football matches or dance competitions

Youth work

- Act in a leadership role in a youth club or uniformed youth organisation
- Assist with teaching primary school children

Community education and health education

- Work with experienced people to educate the local community on important issues such as primary health care, immunisation campaigns, drug or alcohol awareness education
- Teach someone to read or write

Environmental service

- Take part in a conservation project such as clearing wasteland, cleaning a river, or caring for threatened wildlife or trees
- Care for a public or school garden
- Encourage recycling
- Care for animals
- Work in a clean-up campaign
- Promote environmental sustainability

Charity work

- Fundraise for a charity
- Create or maintain a charity website or newsletter

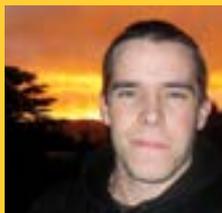
Emergency services

- Help an emergency service team, such as the fire service, surf life-saving, coastguard, police, mountain rescue or Civil Defence

Physical Recreation



The Physical Recreation section of the Award encourages you to improve your health and fitness, whatever your starting point. You could choose to do a team sport, solo sport or any healthy activity. It could be something you already do regularly, have tried before or something completely new to you. You'll build valuable team-skills and self-esteem — all while having great fun!



“By keeping up with activities that I completed for my Award I have also continued to develop my skills. I have gone from playing weight grade school boy rugby to captaining a finalist team at senior club level and even playing at premier club level.”

James Clarke, New Zealand

Example ideas

Here's a list of some Physical Recreation ideas that you could do or use as a starting point to create a programme of your own.

Ball sports

- Rugby
- Soccer
- Netball
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Handball
- Cricket
- Baseball
- Softball
- Hockey
- Tennis
- Squash
- Table-tennis
- Futsal

Athletics

- Running
- Jumping (high or long)
- Throwing (hammer, javelin, shot put)
- Biathlon, triathlon, heptathlon or decathlon

Winter sports

- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Luge
- Ice skating
- Ice hockey
- Curling

Water sports

- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Swimming
- Water polo
- Sailing
- Surfing
- Windsurfing
- Kite boarding
- Water skiing
- Diving
- Synchronised swimming
- Rowing
- Paddleboarding

Martial arts

- Karate
- Aikido
- Judo
- Kickboxing
- Boxing
- Tae kwon do
- Kung fu
- Fencing
- Kendo

Animal sports

- Horse riding
- Polo

Fitness activities

- Aerobics
- Running
- Skipping
- Walking
- Weight training

Adventure sports

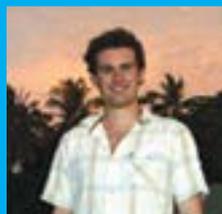
- Rock climbing
- Mountaineering
- Parachuting
- Caving and pot holing
- Hang-gliding
- Paragliding
- Kite surfing

Miscellaneous

- Dancing
- Cycling
- Gymnastics
- Weightlifting
- Trampolineing
- Wrestling
- Roller skating
- Skateboarding
- BMX
- Orienteering
- Badminton
- Ultimate Frisbee



Through the Skills section you can choose to improve on an existing skill or try something new. It's all about having a go, learning something and getting better at it, giving yourself a sense of achievement and well-being. Tertiary educators and employers like to see that you have life skills too!



"I could have never anticipated how much doing the Award influenced where I am today. I think the key reason to do the Award is to really discover what you enjoy doing and what you are best at."

Daniel Scott,
New Zealand

Example ideas

Here's a list of some Skills section ideas that you could do or use as a starting point to create a programme of your own.

Music

- Play an instrument
- Learn musical theory
- Sing
- Manage a music event

Sports related

- Officiate for a sport
- Umpire or referee a sport
- Sports equipment maintenance
- Sports ground maintenance

Arts and crafts

- Ceramics
- Clay modelling
- Embroidery
- Dressmaking
- Glass painting
- Jewellery making
- Calligraphy
- Drawing
- History of art
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture
- Graphic design

Nature and the environment

- Agriculture
- Aquarium keeping
- Astronomy
- Bee keeping
- Bird watching
- Conservation
- Dog training and handling
- Fishing
- Forestry
- Gardening
- Horticulture
- Animal care and handling

Communication

- Film and video making
- Film studies
- Sign language
- Braille
- Foreign languages
- Newsletter and magazine production
- Reading
- Writing
- Presentation skills
- Public speaking and debating
- Digital media
- Journalism
- Information technology
- Website development

Games

- Billiards, snooker or pool
- Card games
- Chess
- Draughts
- Darts
- Backgammon
- Other table games

Life skills

- Business management
- Financial literacy
- Entrepreneurship
- Health awareness

Technical and vocational skills

- Accounting
- Hairdressing
- Vehicle maintenance
- Engineering
- Fashion
- Furniture making
- Furniture restoration
- Metal work
- Tailoring
- Carpentry
- Cookery

Performance skills

- Drama and theatre skills
- Circus skills
- Puppetry

Adventurous Journey



For the Adventurous Journey section you'll need a sense of adventure and discovery as you go on a team journey, expedition or exploration.

By getting out of your comfort zone, you'll have the opportunity to learn more about the wider environment, and develop self-confidence and team work skills. You'll never forget it, and you'll never regret it!



A group of young mothers went on a cycle ride on tandem bikes in the Netherlands, with their children in trailers for their Adventurous Journey. They have become more motivated and determined to be positive role models for their children and others.

Example ideas

Here's a list of ideas that you could do for your Adventurous Journey, expedition or exploration, or use as a starting point to create a programme of your own.

Adventurous Journey

- Explore the natural world: glaciations, erosion, geology, coastal studies, river valleys, plant studies, bird studies, animal studies or insect studies
- Explore historic land use
- Investigate the survival or extinction of a language
- Explore human impact: visitor pressure in national parks, monitor pollution, survey the numbers of walkers in remote areas
- Carry out health surveys or health education in remote areas
- Complete a particularly demanding journey by foot, cycle or canoe/kayak – for 4 days and 3 nights with 8 hours of purposeful effort per day, i.e. approx 65km total distance
- Cycle an historic trail

At the Gold level, you may consider undertaking an even tougher challenge such as:

- Sailing across a sea or ocean
- Climbing a high mountainous peak



Residential Project



For the Residential Project section you'll need a sense of adventure and discovery as you go on a team journey, expedition or exploration.

It will involve you undertaking a shared activity or specific course with people you don't know that will build on a talent you've developed in another section, learn something completely new on an intensive course or do something to help others. It's a big, exciting and very fulfilling experience that will leave you with a great sense of achievement.



"I was in seventh heaven when we completed our Residential Project successfully."

Koushik,
India

Example ideas

There are many different options for completing a Residential Project. Note that the activity must be purposeful and not considered as a holiday, and that your choice must be approved by the National Office before you begin.

Personal training courses

- Residential language course
- Leadership training
- Skills development
- Ecology study course
- Youth camps
- Youth parliaments

Environment and conservation projects

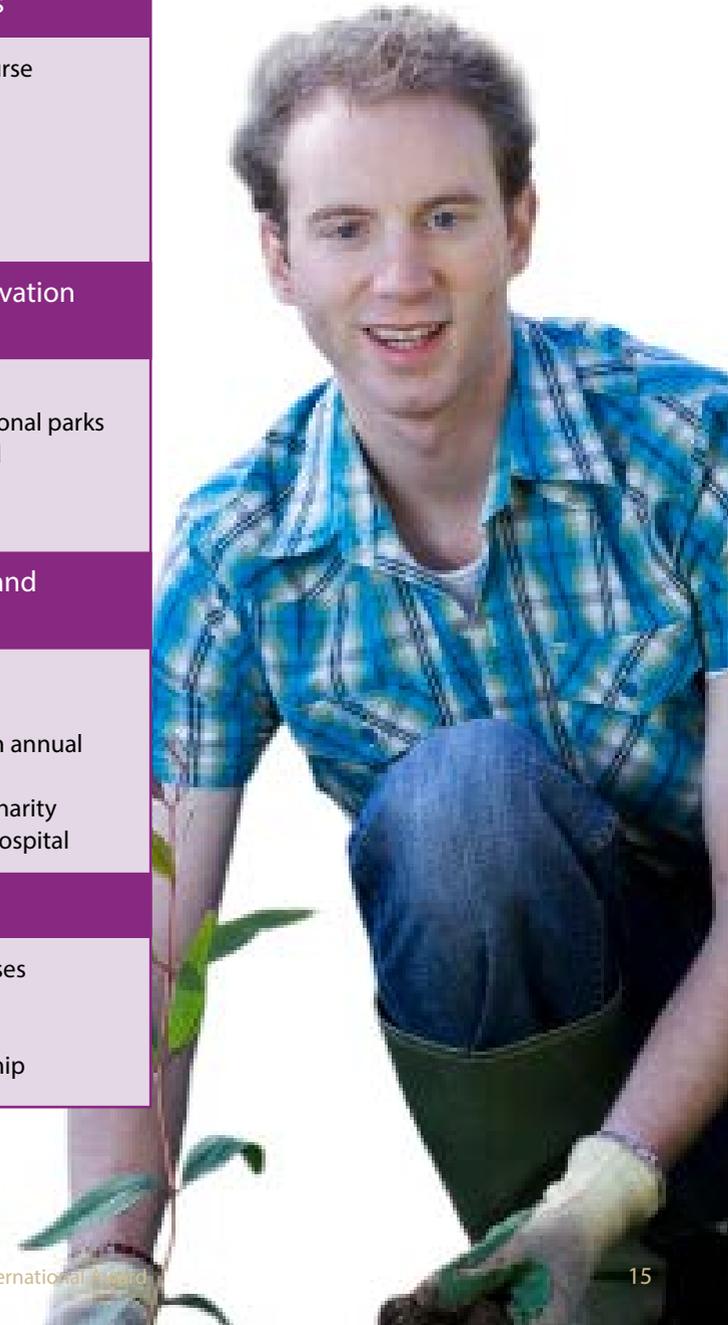
- Environmental clean up
- Volunteer work with national parks
- Research on habitats and ecosystems
- Restoration of buildings

Service to other people and communities

- Provision of facilities
- Construction projects
- Assisting as a leader at an annual camp for young people
- Work with overseas aid charity
- Work in a care home or hospital

Activity based

- Outdoor adventure courses
- Sports coaching
- Sport skills development
- Crew member on a tall ship



Next steps

Ready to get started? Just follow these simple steps!

1 Register to join the Online Record Book (ORB)

Go to <https://www.onlinerecordbook.org/> to set yourself up in the Online Record Book.

2 Register your chosen activities

See pages 6–13 for some activity ideas, or come up with your own, and then speak to your Award Leader, who will need to approve your choices. Enter your chosen activities and goals into your Online Record Book.

3 Find your Assessors

Find someone (not a relative) who is an expert in your choice of activity (such as a coach). Your Award Leader will need to agree on your choice of Assessor for each section. You can record your Assessors' details in the Online Record Book.

4 Do the activities

Do your activities regularly for the set amount of time. Log your activities regularly in the Online Record Book and follow your progress on the progress bar.

5 Assessor reports

When you finish a section, you need to get your Assessor to approve it. You can do this by emailing them a link to your summary of activity in the Online Record Book, or you can download and print the form for them to sign, and then scan and upload it into the Online Record Book.

6 Celebrate!

When you've completed all four sections, your Award Leader will submit them for approval to the Award's National Office who will authorise your **Gold Award** and let you know when the next Gold Award ceremony will be held. Congratulations!

ORB Frequently Asked Questions

What's my username?

Your username will be the email address you used when you first registered on the Online Record Book.

I've confirmed my email address, but still can't log on.

Your Award Leader has to authorise your access to the Online Record Book so check with them if this has been done already.

Can I change my password?

Yes. Hover the cursor over your name and a box will drop down. From here you can click on your profile and change your password, update your personal details and also change your profile picture.

Help, I've forgotten my password!

Click on the 'Forgot your password?' link and the password you chose will be emailed to you.

I've got evidence I want to save, can I save it in the Online Record Book?

Yes, you can upload photographs, videos and scanned documents into your ORB Documents folder.

How are the percentages worked out for my Award progress?

For the Skills, Physical Recreation and Service sections of the Award, you must undertake regular activity over a set period of time. In the Online Record Book, all logs are recorded in quarter, half and full hours. The general requirement for Skills, Physical Recreation and Service is to undertake regular effort of one hour of activity per week or two hours per fortnight and so on over the required time frame. You can't achieve your Award by working more intensely over a shorter time.

My Assessor needs to sign off my logged activities, how can s/he do this?

Once you've completed a section, you can email your Assessor a link to your summary of activities for them to approve. Alternatively, you can download and print the summary for your Assessor to sign (or provide another form of proof), then scan it and upload it to your ORB Library. Talk to your Award Leader if you have difficulties getting your summary into the Online Record Book.

Completing your Award

You will have completed your Gold Award when:

- You have done your activities for each section for the minimum time period
- You've recorded all your activities and uploaded evidence into the Online Record Book (ORB)
- Your Assessors are happy with your progress and have made their reports. Once you've completed your Award, make sure you submit it to your Award Leader using the Online Record Book.

Your Award information will be automatically passed by your Award Leader through the Online Record Book to the National Office who will check everything is correct and, if everything is in order, will let you know when the next Gold Award ceremony will be held so you can be presented with your Gold badge and certificate.

Congratulations - you've completed Gold!

Any questions?

If you have any questions about your Award, talk to your Award Leader first – they are there to help you.

If you have a problem that can't be answered by your Award Leader, our website or the Online Record Book, contact the National Office:

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freephone: 0800 69 29 27

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You can also connect with us via social media:



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