

Delivering the Award during the COVID-19 virus outbreak: Ideas to help Participants continue to progress their Award from home

Information for Award Centres, Award Leaders, Assessors Parents and Participants

People around the world have been affected by the COVID-19 virus outbreak. In many places, schools and youth organisations may be closed and people confined to their homes to reduce the spread of the virus. In others, these measures may be being considered.

For The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Participants in these affected areas, this means that their Award progress may have been delayed as many of the Award activities usually happen in or around the school or organisation that could potentially close. However, there are many ways in which Participants can continue their activities for the Skills, Voluntary Service and Physical Recreation Sections from their own homes, to ensure they can keep their Award progress on track and combat the inevitable boredom and anxiety many young people may face. During these uncertain times, it's important for Participants to stay engaged, active and healthy in a safe and positive way and the Award can be a great way of doing so.

Below are some suggestions for ways Participants can continue Award activities at home, whilst still undertaking a meaningful Award Journey and providing enough evidence to Assessors and Award Leaders to continue progressing goals.

Please note: it is paramount that anyone considering undertaking Award activities outside of the home in areas affected by the COVID-19 virus outbreak consult their local public health or relevant government authorities before doing so.

The Sections of the Award

Skills

Progress towards the Skills Section is something that can easily be done from home. If the Participant is learning a musical instrument, a new language, cooking new recipes, designing software or creating art, or many other activities, chances are they have all the tools they need at home to continue working towards their goal. They can get in contact with their Assessor or Award Leader to help them find some activities that can be done from home, or alternatively they can look online to find tutorials to help continue their progress towards that skill. Once they have found some suitable activities that can be done at home, Participants are encouraged to take photos or videos of the activity so they can show their Assessor the progress they have made. They can upload these photos or videos directly to the Online Record Book (ORB) when making their weekly logs.

Physical Recreation

This Section is about improving physical fitness and wellbeing. It is very important to keep this up, especially if they are restricted to their house. Whatever activity and goal they have chosen for the Physical Recreation Section, there are many ways to continue progressing by doing their own home workouts. Increasing their fitness levels in home workout sessions will undoubtedly contribute to their physical recreation goals. There are also more specific targeted exercise programs that can be done from home to specifically develop strength, coordination, reflexes, flexibility or fitness that will contribute to their goal. Participants can contact their Assessor or Award Leader to get some ideas, or they can look online to find limitless ideas for home workout sessions to work towards their chosen goal. It's important the Participant shows evidence of their progress to their Assessor by uploading any photos, videos or workout plans to their ORB weekly logs.

Voluntary Service

The Voluntary Service Section may appear difficult to complete remotely, especially if the Participant has chosen a group project activity with their peers, or if their goal requires them to visit a particular location away from their home. However, there are always activities that can be done from home that contribute to a Participant's overall goal. Remotely working towards a project is possible, as they can start a chat group with their fellow Participants and brainstorm activities that can be done at home to continue contributing to the project. Online research, creating brochures for raising awareness or posting helpful things online for the community can all be activities that

contribute to a Participant's goal. If they are not sure of what activities can be done to contribute to their Voluntary Service Section, Participants should contact their Assessor or Award Leader to support them in finding new creative ideas.

Adventurous Journey and Gold Residential Project

As the Adventurous Journey and Gold Residential Project Sections are group activities, they both represent the most challenging sections to complete during the virus outbreak. Many planned Practice and Qualifying Adventurous Journeys have been delayed, which is important to prevent the spread of the virus. Similarly options for organising Residential Projects will be limited.

However, that doesn't mean that all progress must be halted. If a Participant already has a team for the Adventurous Journey, they can keep in contact with their team, Award Leader and Supervisor online using emails or chat group. Researching different areas, route planning and some training can be done as a team remotely.

There are many resources available online with activities to develop a Participant's navigation, first aid, environmental awareness and camp craft skills that they can do at home. It's important a Participant stays in contact with their team, Award Leader and Supervisor so that they can ensure that when their school or organisation reopens and their journeys can resume, they will be more prepared.

Finally, if they are at Gold, they can also start planning in detail what they may wish to do for their Residential Project from their home and potentially reach out to organisations that they are keen to support and/or work with for their project.

Changing Section activities

There are naturally a multitude of reasons why a Participant might need and want to change Award activity in a section. Whilst the ideal situation for a young person progressing through the Award remains that they pick an activity and stick it at for the time requirements for the relevant level, the COVID-19 outbreak is a good example where pragmatic and practical solutions should apply.

We would therefore encourage Award Leaders to discuss with their Participants about the appropriateness of changing activities should a Participant need to in order to keep challenging themselves and remain active in the Award.