



# A parent / carer's guide to The Duke of Edinburgh's Award





# What is the DofE?





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The DofE is the world's leading achievement award for young people.

It's about going the extra mile – learning new skills for work and life, getting fitter, making a difference and broadening your horizons.

- Non-competitive
- Achievable by all
- Voluntary
- Personal development
- Personalised
- Balanced
- Progressive
- Achievement focused
- Demand commitment
- Fun



# Gold Award

There's **loads of activities** to choose from — most activities can count towards a DofE programme. Take a look at our website for ideas: [DofE.org/do/activities](https://DofE.org/do/activities).

- Activities could be something that young people are **already doing** or something **completely new** – and there are lots of possibilities that can be done from home or under social distancing.
- **Weekend, lunch and after school** clubs and activities will count.
- Minimum **one hour a week** per section. A whole programme will take a minimum of **six months** to complete.
- A chosen Assessor will need to **write a short statement when they've finished each section**. This could be a family friend, neighbour, coach or teacher (not a relative).

Gold (age 16+)	Volunteering <b>12</b> months	Physical <b>12<sup>or</sup> 6</b> months	Skills <b>12<sup>or</sup> 6</b> months	Expedition <b>4 days 3 nights</b>	Residential <b>5 days 4 nights</b>
	Physical and Skills sections: one section for <b>12 months</b> and the other section for <b>6 months</b>				
	If you didn't do Silver, you must do a further <b>6 months</b> in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.				

# Volunteering

**Volunteering's all about taking action and making a difference to other people's lives.**

From coaching a local football team or collecting for a foodbank to starting a campaign, young people will give up their time to help others and change things for the better.

It's extremely rewarding, grows confidence and independence — and can enable a young person to experience the world of work too.

*Young people must not be replacing paid labour i.e. they cannot volunteer for commercial organisations.*

Over

**3/4**

Feel happier  
because volunteering  
gave them more  
confidence

**88%**

Believe volunteering  
helps them feel more  
satisfied in life

**96%**

Say volunteering  
gave them a sense  
of achievement





# Physical

The Physical section is a chance for young people to focus on their health and fitness and have fun along the way.



This might be the push needed for a young person to try something completely different or concentrate and improve on something they are already doing.

From yoga to going to the gym, skateboarding to wheelchair tennis — almost any dance, sport or fitness activity can count.

And doing more physical activity can help support mental health.

Young people can join a team or do it on their own — it's up to them!



# Skills

**From coding to cookery, the Skills section lets young people learn a new talent, develop existing skills and discover new things to love.**

By developing practical and social skills and gaining interests and talents, young people will enjoy themselves and get a real sense of achievement.

If they're interested in a specific field, this could be the perfect chance to do something related to it.

They'll grow their confidence and show they're committed, motivated and can rise to a challenge.



# Expedition

**Getting into the great outdoors and spending a night away with friends – a DofE expedition will give young people lifelong memories.**

As part of a small team, they will plan their aim, choose their location, do some training to make sure they're prepared and know what they are doing — then spend four days and three nights away.

The expedition will improve resilience, communication, teamwork and leadership skills.

They might come home with a rucksack full of washing — and experiences they won't forget.





# Residential

**To achieve the Gold Award, there is an extra section – the Residential.**

It's a big, exciting and fulfilling experience, spending five days and four nights away from home on a shared activity with people they've never met before.

From learning to snowboard in Scotland to helping at a children's camp, there are lots of exciting possibilities to get involved with — both in the UK and abroad.

Learning how to work with people from different backgrounds and build confidence staying in new environments.



# The DofE and COVID-19



The COVID-19 outbreak won't stop young people from doing their DofE – far from it.

Young people can choose and change their activities, so they can pick ones that are easy to do safely under social distancing guidelines or from home.

There are flexible ways to run expeditions and residentials so – when it's safe to do so and Government guidelines allow – young people will be able to get out, and experience all the benefits and memories they'd get at any other time.

Visit **[DofE.org/DofEWithADifference](https://DofE.org/DofEWithADifference)** for loads of activity ideas and information.

**Running Mentoring DIY Cooking  
Yoga Photography Wii Fit Coding  
Guitar playing Knitting Cycling  
Sign language Gardening Walking  
Painting Circuits Quizzing Jogging  
Campaigning Money management  
Vlogging YouTube fitness Dancing  
Helping neighbours Dog-walking  
#DofEWithADifference Languages  
Tutoring Singing Martial arts Sewing  
Pilates Crafting Blogging App design  
Filmmaking Combatting loneliness  
Cyber safety Family tree research  
Online learning Foodbank collection  
Website building Book reviewing  
First aid Aerobics Driving skills  
Programming Skateboarding**



# DofE Certificate of Achievement

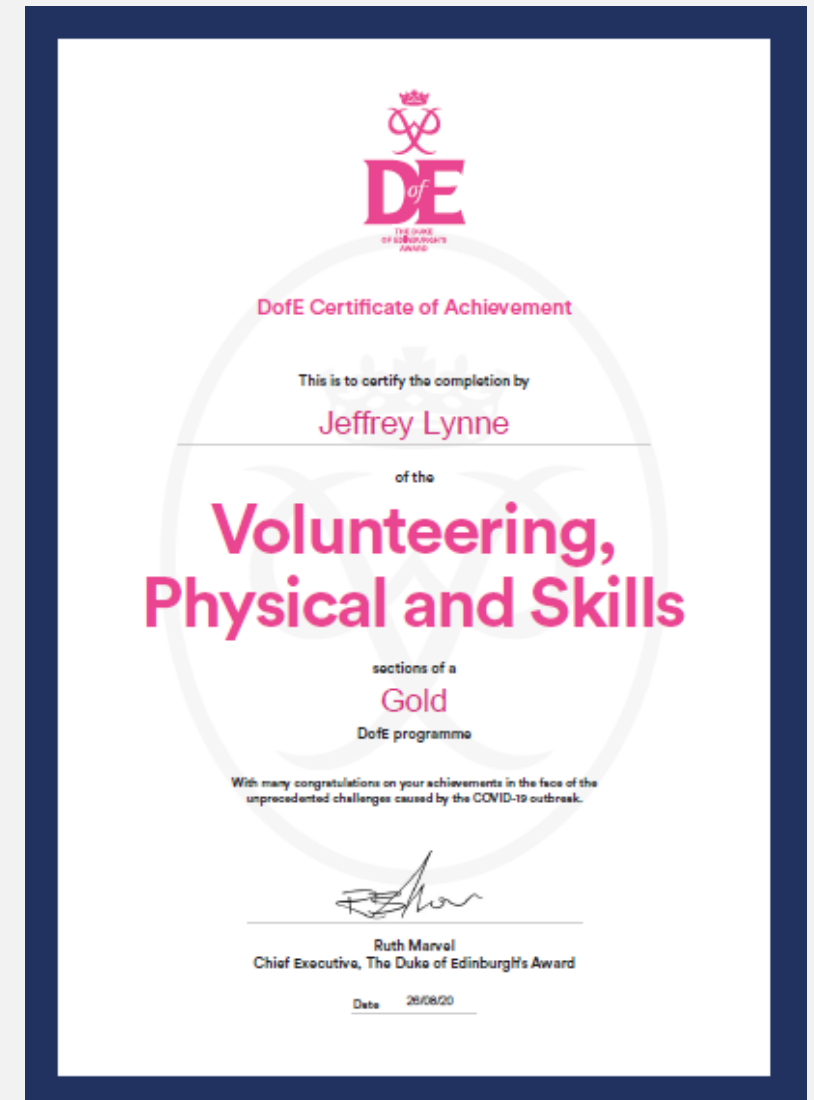


During and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak, participants who complete their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections will receive a special DofE Certificate of Achievement.

This is a formal recognition, by the DofE, of the effort, skill and commitment young people have shown at this extraordinary time.

The Certificate can act as a talking point on a CV or in a personal statement and help young people to stand out.

And participants can still do their expedition and residential and achieve their Gold Award.



# DofE Ambassador

**This is an additional opportunity for young people who would like to develop their leadership and mentoring skills further.**

Once a young person has completed a level and are working towards their Silver or Gold, they could help support their school or organisation with DofE.

This opportunity can be used as their Volunteering section activity.

If your young person is interested, please ask them to contact their DofE Manager.



4.44/5 rating  
for their experience  
being a  
DofE Ambassador



# Your Welcome Pack and eDofE

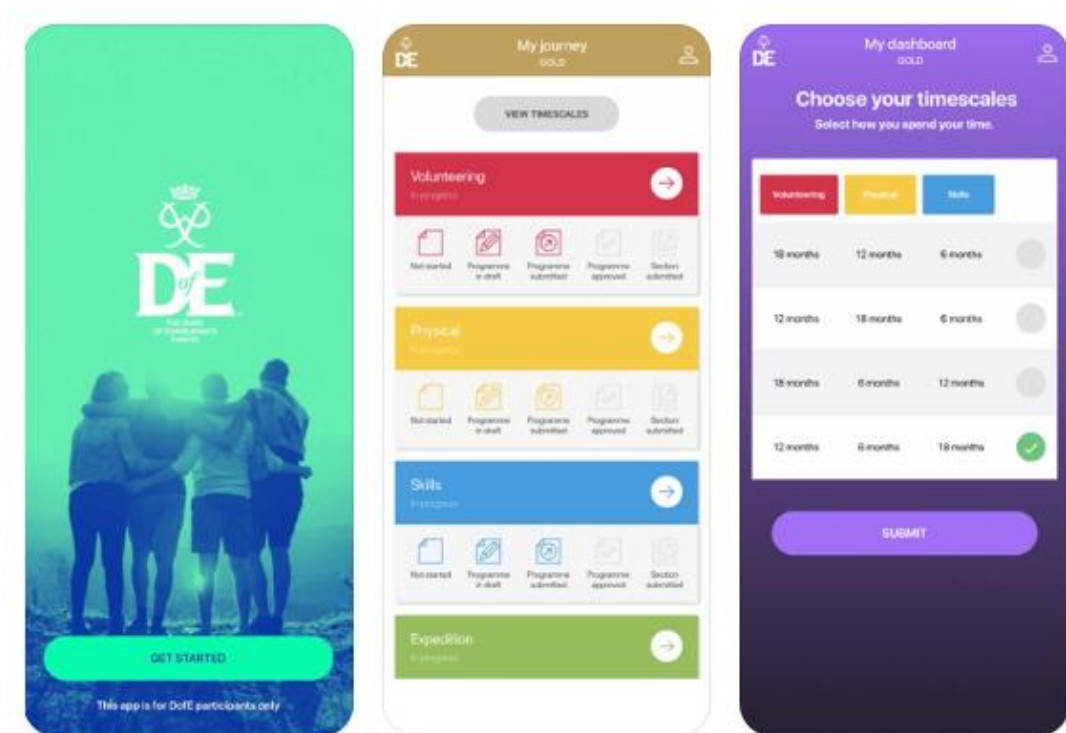
Once you've signed up to do your DofE, you'll get your own eDofE account, so you can start planning your activities online and using the free DofE app.

When you've added your home address, you'll be sent your Welcome Pack – with lots of information and advice, as well as your personalised DofE Card.

Your DofE Card will give you and your family exclusive discounts in the DofE's five fantastic recommended retailers.



# The DofE app



The DofE app is available for free from the App Store on iPhones and Google Play on Android phones.

Participants can use the DofE app to plan activities, get approval from Leaders, record evidence, submit programmes for completion and more.

Plus, it can sync important dates to your phone calendar and add the personalised DofE Card to the digital wallet, to make the most of the exclusive discounts.



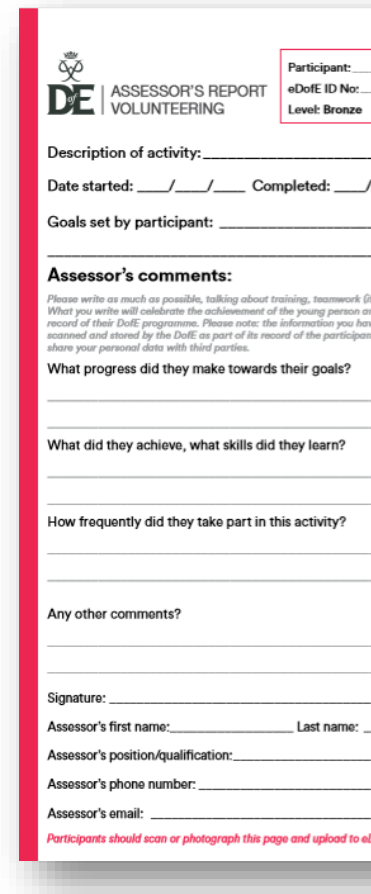
# Assessor's Reports

Once a young person has completed their time requirement for a section, they need to obtain an Assessor's Report.

The Assessor's Report needs to be completed by the Assessor (e.g. Leader, teacher, coach etc.).

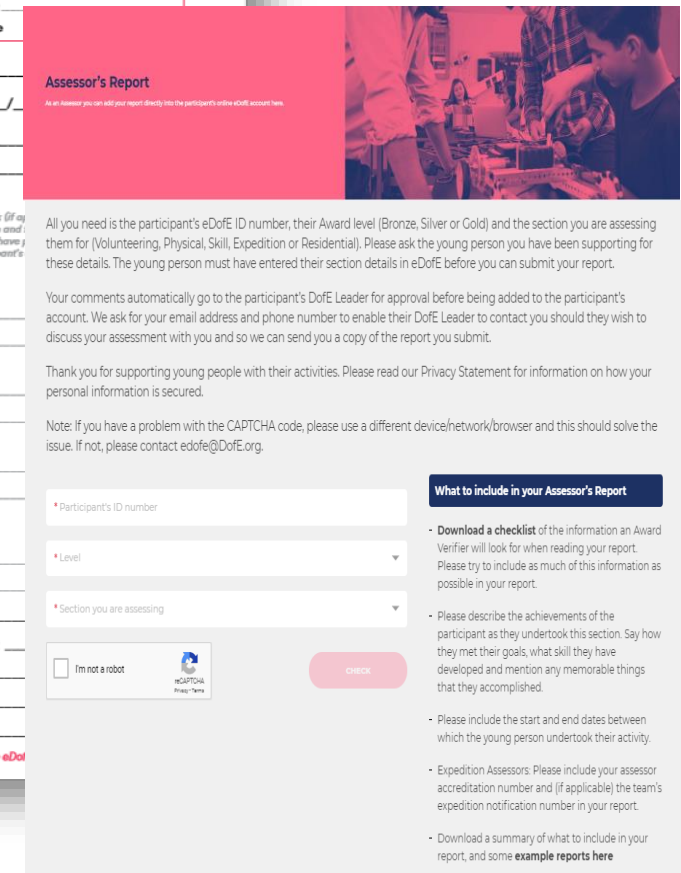
It can be written by hand using the report card in the young person's Welcome Pack (which they will receive in the post when they first enrol), or via the DofE Assessor portal at [DofE.org/Assessor](https://DofE.org/Assessor).

## Welcome Pack



The image shows a printed 'ASSASSOR'S REPORT VOLUNTEERING' form. It includes fields for Participant name, eDofE ID No., and Level (Bronze). There are sections for 'Description of activity', 'Date started', 'Completed', 'Goals set by participant', 'Assessor's comments' (with a note about writing for the record), and 'Any other comments'. At the bottom, there are fields for the Assessor's signature, first and last name, position/qualification, phone number, and email. A red banner at the bottom states: 'Participants should scan or photograph this page and upload to eDofE'.

## Assessor portal



The image shows the 'Assessor's Report' web portal. It features a red header with the title 'Assessor's Report' and a sub-note: 'As an Assessor you can add your report directly into the participant's online eDofE account here.' Below the header is a large image of a group of young people working together. The main content area is white and contains instructions: 'All you need is the participant's eDofE ID number, their Award level (Bronze, Silver or Gold) and the section you are assessing them for (Volunteering, Physical, Skill, Expedition or Residential). Please ask the young person you have been supporting for these details. The young person must have entered their section details in eDofE before you can submit your report.' It also states: 'Your comments automatically go to the participant's DofE Leader for approval before being added to the participant's account. We ask for your email address and phone number to enable their DofE Leader to contact you should they wish to discuss your assessment with you and so we can send you a copy of the report you submit.' A 'Thank you' message follows. A note at the bottom says: 'Note: If you have a problem with the CAPTCHA code, please use a different device/network/browser and this should solve the issue. If not, please contact [edofe@DofE.org](mailto:edofe@DofE.org).' On the right, there is a 'What to include in your Assessor's Report' section with a checklist: 'Download a checklist of the information an Award Verifier will look for when reading your report. Please try to include as much of this information as possible in your report.', 'Please describe the achievements of the participant as they undertook this section. Say how they met their goals, what skill they have developed and mention any memorable things that they accomplished.', 'Please include the start and end dates between which the young person undertook their activity.', 'Expedition Assessors: Please include your assessor accreditation number and (if applicable) the team's expedition notification number in your report.', and 'Download a summary of what to include in your report, and some example reports here'. At the bottom, there is a form with fields for 'Participant's ID number', 'Level' (a dropdown menu), and 'Section you are assessing' (a dropdown menu). There is also a CAPTCHA section with a checkbox 'I'm not a robot', a CAPTCHA image, and a 'CHECK' button.

# Parental role

## Guidance

- Provide guidance and support on activities, kit and Assessor choices.

## Encouragement

- It can be challenging to keep the motivation going, especially over some of the longer timeframes.

## Expedition support

- You may be required to drop off/collect from expeditions... and also wash the kit when it comes home!

## Reminders

- Keep them on track with their activities, particularly those which are being done from home.

## Recognise their achievements

- We hope all organisations will recognise the amazing achievement, and it is just as important to receive that recognition from family members.





# Why do the DofE?



## So why should your son/daughter do their DofE?

It's hard to list all the benefits of achieving a DofE Award, so here's a quick snapshot. They'll...

- Have lots of fun
- Get healthier and happier
- Meet incredible people and make lasting friendships
- Have amazing new experiences
- Find talents you didn't know they had
- Gain skills that employers' value, which they can reference on their CV
- Become more confident and independent
- Stand out from the crowd in college, university and job applications
- Make memories that will last a lifetime.



*"As an actor I know how much Award holders' experiences and the skills they've developed matter. Without determination and passion I wouldn't be where I am today."*

**Benedict Cumberbatch**, actor.



*"Life doesn't naturally happen, you've got to get involved. What better way to do that than do your DofE. As an employer I want to work with people who have a range of skills and can see things through."*

**Deborah Meaden**, entrepreneur and Dragons' Den investor

# Next steps

- Check the school / organisation's process for signing up to DofE.
- Parents / carers will need to complete and return some paperwork and payment.
- Talk to your young person about what activities they might choose for their DofE.
- Discuss who their Assessors could be, especially for any home-based activities.

