

## Guide to requesting a Network Assessor in Scotland

The following provides some information about the process of requesting a Network Assessor within Scotland. There is a brief general introduction to Assessor Networks and Network Assessors in *The Expedition Guide*.

### **The process**

Once you have requested an Assessor from the Scottish Expedition Network Co-ordinator (SENC) they will send out an email to the Network Assessors in the relevant expedition area where the expedition is taking place, giving them details and asking if anyone is available to do the assessment. These requests are often collected and sent out as a batch, but this will be within a week of the request being received.

This request will be resent to the Network assessors in the area every one to two weeks, unless someone comes forward to do the assessment. If no one in the local area is available the request may be broadened to nearby expedition areas to try to find an available Assessor.

If an Assessor comes forward to help with the assessment the SENC will send them all paperwork received so far, and put them in touch with the group. At this point the Network Assessor and expedition Supervisory team should arrange the practicalities of the expedition e.g. arranging when and where they will meet and exchanging contact details.

If no one has come forward two weeks before the expedition the SENC will let you know the situation, at this point it is unlikely a Network Assessor will be supplied for the team.

### **The Network Assessors**

- Our Network Assessors are volunteers who have been PVG checked by DofE Scotland and are accredited DofE Assessors.
- They should introduce themselves to the team and Supervisor at the start of the expedition by showing their Assessor's badge.
- Network Assessors have no responsibility for the safety of the group, this remains with the DofE Supervisor.
- Some Network Assessors come out and stay in the area during the expedition. Others may come out for visits only.
- Network Assessors are usually self-sufficient in terms of transport, accommodation and equipment.
- Sometimes Network Assessors team up and share an expedition due to geographical or time limitations e.g. one Assessor may do the first two days of an expedition and then hand over to another. The Assessors will organise the hand-over between them, and this will not affect the cost of the assessment, which will remain one voucher. One Assessor will take responsibility for writing the Assessor's Reports, although the other will usually provide input to this.

### **What the team/Leader needs to do**

- All paperwork (green forms, routecards, and routemaps) must be supplied to the Assessor at least two weeks before the expedition (as per green form deadlines).
- The whole the team must be enrolled on eDofE for the relevant level, and they have logged in recently before the expedition, so the Assessor can upload the Assessor's Reports after the expedition.
- The expedition Supervisor(s) should exchange contact details with the Assessor before the expedition, especially mobile numbers.
- Time needs to be allowed in the expedition plans for the Assessor to do a pre-expedition check, either the day before if practical, or allowing at least half an hour after arrival at the start point before the team starts journeying.
- At the pre-expedition check the team should be prepared to demonstrate to the Assessor that they are appropriately equipped and to talk through their planned journey and aims.
- The Supervisor must update the Assessor with any changes to plans throughout the expedition, such as campsites or timing.

### **FAQs:**

#### **Can you guarantee to supply a Network Assessor?**

No. All our Assessors are volunteers and therefore whether we can supply an Assessor depends entirely on their availability. Some areas have fewer Assessors available to begin with and this is highlighted [on our website](#). We will always try to find an Assessor for you, but we can never guarantee it. We can usually supply Assessors for at least 95% of assessment requests in Scotland. Any bookings or reservations you make should take account of this, as we cannot accept any liability for any financial losses because a Network Assessor cannot be supplied.

#### **How much notice must be supplied to arrange a Network Assessor?**

As much as possible - 6 weeks is the minimum, as per the green form instructions. The SENC can be contacted for an early assessment request even before the green form is submitted as long as the dates, number of teams and rough route can be supplied. This should be followed by the green form as soon as possible.

#### **Our Assessor has dropped out at the last minute, can we request a Network Assessor?**

Yes, but you should be aware that the closer to the expedition the less likely we will be able to find a Network Assessor, as they may all already have commitments.

#### **How many Network Assessors are available in Scotland?**

There are about 120 Network Assessors spread across the length and breadth of Scotland. There are between 1 and 30 individual Assessors in each expedition area. In areas where numbers make it less likely we will be able to supply a Network Assessor, this is highlighted [on our website](#).

#### **How many teams can a Network Assessor assess simultaneously?**

This depends on a number of factors including the Assessor's own preference, access to the expedition routes, and the timing of the different groups. Regardless of the number of Network Assessors used for an assessment the charge is still one Expedition Assessment Voucher per team.

#### **I haven't heard from the SENC about our expedition, have you found an Assessor for us?**

The SENC will contact you as soon as an Assessor is found, so if you haven't heard then no one has been found as yet. The SENC will do everything possible to find an Assessor for you including asking a wider pool of Assessors and seeing if the assessment can be split between several Assessors.

#### **Do I need to pay any expenses for the Assessor?**

Not directly. All teams requesting assessment by a Network Assessor must supply an Expedition Assessment Voucher code. The money from this is used by DofE to pay the expenses incurred by the Network Assessor on the expedition

### **When do I need to buy an Expedition Assessment Voucher?**

Ideally you should present a voucher code when you request the Assessor. If you have not presented a voucher code by the time the Network Assessor has come forward you will not be put in touch with the Assessor until one is supplied.

### **How do I buy an Expedition Assessment Voucher?**

Vouchers are bought through the 'DofE Essentials' shop [within eDofE](#) by DofE Leaders and coordinators. Multiple vouchers can be purchased at once. Any issues with purchasing these should be addressed to [asl@dofe.org](mailto:asl@dofe.org), and vouchers can be bought by email from ASL (Award Services Limited).

The voucher code that needs to be supplied to the SENC will be emailed to the purchaser and will always begin with a 'V' e.g. V63CD2188B2CBE9

### **I have more than one team being assessed at the same time, how many Expedition Assessment Vouchers do I need to supply?**

One voucher code per team.

### **Can the Assessor receive the team's presentation?**

In principle yes, but it depends on the practicality, so this should always be discussed with the Assessor before the expedition. For example, a written presentation that can be emailed would be suitable for the Assessor to receive anywhere, but if the group are doing a live presentation it may not be practical for the Assessor to be there in person. Network Assessors do not have access to the team's eDofE accounts so the DofE leader will still need to sign this off on eDofE.

### **What if no one is available to assess our expedition?**

Unfortunately it is not always possible for us to find a volunteer to assess all Network Assessment requests. If no one can be found you will be notified by the SENC two weeks before the expedition is due to go out. At this stage there are several possibilities;

- finding an accredited Assessor through your Licensed Organisation
- finding an accredited Assessor through an [Approved Activity Provider](#)
- postponing the expedition to another date
- using it as an extra practice and scheduling a later qualifying expedition

## **Key terms**

**Scottish Expedition Network Co-ordinator (SENC)** – a member of the DofE Scotland staff team who receives and processes green forms, and co-ordinates Network Assessment requests.

**Expedition Area (formerly Wild Country Panels)** – areas of Scotland identified as wild country; an area remote from habitation large enough to journey for a number of days. Each of these has a network of Assessors who volunteer to assess expeditions within this area.

**Network Assessor** – a volunteer approved by the DofE to carry out assessments within their expedition area.

**Expedition Assessment Voucher** – a voucher bought through eDofE or ASL which covers the expenses of a Network Assessor as well as administration of the process.