**Expedition Notification Form - Guidance Notes**

All notification forms must be forwarded to the LO DofE Manager/Nominated Person for approval in the first instance before being forwarded to the appropriate Assessor Network or DofE Office.

* **Blue Forms** – Expeditions outside the UK (including the Republic of Ireland) – This form must be used to notify the DofE that you are organising either an unaccompanied practice or a qualifying expedition taking place outside of the UK for any DofE level.
* **Green Forms** – Expeditions in UK Wild County Areas – This form must be used to notify the DofE that you are organising either an unaccompanied practice or a qualifying expedition in one of the DofE’s designated wild country areas as defined in *The Handbook for DofE Leaders* (seventh edition, pp 70-72).
* **Red Forms** – Expeditions in the Peak District – All expeditions in normal country in the Peak District National Park are notified to the Peak Assessor Network. Your co-operation will help us to maintain the good relationship that exists between the DofE and the people that live and work in the Park*.*
* **EA Practice Forms** – From 2017 these will no longer be sufficient. All unaccompanied practice expeditions must be notified using a Green Form.

**Notice required**

* Please ensure that all Blue Notification Forms reach the DofE Office at least eight weeks before the date of the Expedition. There is no guarantee that forms received with less than eight weeks notice can be processed in time for the notification number to be issued (especially when there are queries which arise).
* We receive a large number of forms giving less than two weeks notice; this has led to a number of issues including groups being unable to go on the planned Expedition.

**Expeditions cannot take place without a notification number. The DofE stresses the seriousness of failure to notify the Assessor Network Co-ordinator of expeditions in Wild Country Areas. In such cases the expedition will have no standing with the DofE and would not count for a participant’s DofE/JAI Award.**

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| **Check** | **Guidance**  |
| **Current Version of the Form** ***Blue Form – Jan 12******Green Form – Feb 14******Red Form – June 16***  | Only the Current Version of the Notification Form will be accepted. Previous versions will be returned and will not be processed. To find the most up to date documents please download them from: <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/resources-download/expedition-downloads/>  |
| **Notification form, route cards and maps received*****Please see Red Form for further guidance when submitting to Peak Assessor Network.***  | Please ensure the following documents are included:1. The current version of the Notification Form
2. Route cards for each day of the Expedition – the second page of the route card is the activity plan and must also be submitted.
3. Clearly legible copies of maps, to cover each day of the Expedition. If tracings are sent for Expeditions outside of Ireland then maps must also be sent with a stamped addressed envelope in which they can be returned. Maps can also be emailed or submitted using eMapping (GPX files).
4. Bad weather alternative routes should be submitted where necessary.
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| **Authorised by the DofE Manager** | Notification forms must be approved by the DofE Manager on behalf of the LO (or other authorised person) before being sent to DofE for approval. DofE NI will not commence checking notification forms until approval has been received from the LO DofE Manager. Centres **should not** submit Notification Forms to the Assessor Network/DofE at the same time as submitting them to the LO. The LO must have sight of the form, route cards and maps, and where appropriate sign it, before forwarding it to the Assessor Network/DofE for the Notification Number to be issued.  |
| **Should the notification form be processed by DofE NI?** | Blue Forms: * DofE NI process Blue Forms for groups registered with one of our Licensed Organisations.
* Blue Forms for AAP led groups should be submitted to the AAP Office in Windsor once approved by the LO DofE Manager.
* National Operating Authority groups should send their forms directly to the NOA team in Windsor.

Green Forms:* DofE NI process Green Forms for all expeditions taking place in Northern Ireland.
* Green Forms for expeditions taking place in other parts of the UK should be forwarded to the relevant Expedition Network once approved by the DofE Manager on behalf of the LO.
* Green Forms for Gold expeditions NOT taking place in Wild Country with an AAP should be sent to the AAP team in Windsor.
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| **Accredited Assessor allocated correctly** | 1. All Assessors must be registered with your Licensed Organisation; if they are not already registered you have the option to register them at this stage using the EAAS/12 Form.
2. Assessors must hold a currently valid Assessor Accreditation to the correct level. If you wish to check if an Assessor is valid, accredited to the correct level and registered with your LO please contact DofE NI on 028 9069 9100.
3. The Expedition Guide (page 55) allows some flexibility as to the appointment of Assessors for Expeditions Abroad. When the LO is approving the Blue Form at the 12-8 week period they may wish to seek further guidance, if necessary, from the DofE Office.
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| **Participants registered on *e*DofE** | 1. All participants must be registered on *e*DofE if they registered for the current level after the 1st April 2013 (By now this should be the majority of participants). This will ensure that the participants are covered by the personal accident insurance.
2. The *e*DofE account should be at the correct level (i.e. a Gold account for a Gold Expedition).
3. Participants not on *e*DofE should have the account created or the level added before the form is submitted to the DofE Office.
4. The next level can be added to a participants *e*DofE account once they have reached the minimum age and one section at the previous level has been completed.
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| **Participants are the correct age** | All participants must meet the minimum age requirement under the current minimum age pilot:* **Bronze – can be started in year 10**
* **Silver – can be started in year 11**
* **Gold – 16** (Participants must be 16 to take part in their Gold DofE programme). There is no exception to this rule. It is possible for participants to be involved in expedition training at Gold level before their 16th birthday, however the practice and qualifying expeditions can only count if completed on or after the 16th birthday.
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| **Route – Distance** | The Expedition Guide provides guidance on estimated walking distances (page 44):**Bronze: 24-32km****Silver: 46-60km****Gold 80-96km** Generally we suggest that an average team might travel between 3km and 4km per hour. For average distances for other modes of transport please refer to The Expedition Guide 13th edition (page 240 horseback or page 260 paddle and rowing. For sailing please refer to page 273).Half of the time must be spent journeying.“Some teams may travel much further, while other may put more time into their project investigation.  Whatever they do it must be an appropriate challenge for them.” |
| **Route – Planned Activity**  | A very detailed activity plan must be submitted covering any project investigations or other non-walking time especially where the distance is below the minimum distances listed above |
| **Route – Time** |

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| **Level** | **Duration** | **Minimum hours of planned activity each day** |
| Bronze | 2 days and 1 night | At least 6 hours during the daytime(at least 3 of which must be spent journeying) |
| Silver | 3 days and 2 nights | At least 7 hours during the daytime(at least 3.5 of which must be spent journeying) |
| Gold | 4 days and 3 nights | At least 8 hours during the daytime(at least 4 of which must be spent journeying) |

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| **Route - Campsites**  | The LO must ensure that the campsites are appropriate for the Expedition team and meet with the current guidance provided by DofE. |
| **Routes - Motorised Transport** | This is stated under condition number 1 of the 20 conditions. Motorised transport is not permitted during the practice or qualifying expeditions including any planned activity. This includes cars, buses, cable cars and motor boats etc. Routes should be planned to allow for the expedition to be completed by the participant’s own physical efforts. |
| **Practice expeditions**  | All team members must have completed at least one practice Expedition in the UK of the appropriate duration.* Bronze – One day and one overnight practice.
* Silver/Gold – One practice of at least two days and two nights, consecutively, is required.

Further guidance can be found on pages 151-158 of The Expedition Guide.Expedition Supervisors sign the Green Form to confirm that all preliminary training has been successfully completed and that the performance of each member of the team on practice expeditions has been such as to enable them to submit them for this expedition with confidence. If the notification form for the qualifying expedition is submitted before the date of the practice expedition Supervisors will be asked to confirm that the practice expedition was completed satisfactorily. |
| **20 Conditions met** | The DofE Manager should be satisfied that the Expedition meets the 20 Conditions of the Expedition section as follows:* Condition 1 – all expeditions must be by the participants’ own physical effort, without motorised or outside assistance.
* Condition 3 – all expeditions must be supervised by an adult who is able to accept responsibility for the safety of the team.
* Condition 7 – At least one practice expedition must be undertaken at each level of programme, in the same mode of travel in a similar environment to the qualifying expedition.
* Condition 9 – Assessment must be by an approved accredited Assessor.
* Condition 10 – There must be between four and seven in a team (eight for modes of travel which have tandem).
* Condition 15 – the expedition must be of the correct duration
* Condition 16 – the expedition should normally take place between the end of March and end of October.
* Condition 17 – The expedition should take place in the recommended environment.
* Condition 18 – the expedition must meet the minimum hours of planned activity.
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| **Other useful information:** | * The DofE website is full of information and resources for the Expedition section. The link for this is here [Expedition - the DofE](http://www.dofe.info/en/content/cms/doing-your-dofe/activities-sections/expedition/).
* There are a number of Frequently Asked Questions around expeditions that you may find useful and the link is here: [Expedition FAQs](http://www.dofe.info/go/faqe/).
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| **Can teams in the UK have the same route but 30 minutes apart?** | The flexibility allowed by condition 8 (The Handbook for DofE Leaders 7th edition, page 74) is that this can be used only where alternative routes are ‘absolutely unavoidable’. In practical terms this means that there should be almost nowhere in the UK where this flexibility could be used legitimately. It is designed for when there is only one route – usually across mountain passes, almost always outside of the UK. It should never be used for UK Bronze or Silver expeditions – there is no need for it.  |
| **Qualifying expeditions** | If you have submitted your qualifying expedition Green Form before the practice expedition has taken place please remember to inform the Regional Office once your practice expedition has been successfully completed. We will only issue the notification number for the qualifying expedition once we receive this information (as long as there are no outstanding issues/queries with the form). |
| **Queries** | If there is a query regarding the expedition we will contact the person who has submitted the Green Form, the Expedition Supervisor and LO as soon as possible providing a reference number. If a query has been raised please remember to inform the Regional Office when this has been resolved and please quote the reference number you have been given. We would ask LOs to follow up outstanding queries and to confirm when these have been resolved in order that we can process the Green Form and issue the notification number. |
| **Amendments** | There may be times where amendments need to be made. Where this may be a change in the expedition date, or an additional team member joining a new Green Form is not required. Please contact NIexpeditions@DofE.org at DofE NI, copying in the LO, to advise of the amendment and we can update the Green Form. If there are several changes including changes to the route, then please submit a new Green Form, Maps and Route Cards to the LO first for their approval before this is sent to the Regional Office. |
| **Aim of expedition** | Before any planning, an expedition team should decide on their expedition aim. This will allow the team to plan an effective and challenging expedition with a clear outcome. From thinking about the aim come all the other decisions like location and mode of travel.The aim of the expedition should not be to complete an expedition. |
| **Variations to the 20 conditions** | Where participants have individual needs that mean one or more of the 20 conditions cannot be met, they may apply for a variation to enable them to complete their DofE expedition.Variation application forms and guidance on how to apply are available on the *e*DofE Resource Zone and at [www.DofE.org/expedition](http://www.DofE.org/expedition) |
| **Mixed expedition teams with young people from different centres or LOs** | There may be public liability insurance implications where expedition teams are made up of participants from different centres. Please refer to your DofE Manager for further information. |
| **Tip** | One group leader gives a photo of each participant with name and *e*DofE ID number which is great for quickly identifying everyone |