



Summary of temporary programme changes

All temporary programme changes are in place until 31 December 2022.

All sections

Participants can change section activities more than once.

Previously, participants could only change activities once per section. However, due to the pandemic, we know many participants have already changed activities to something they can do from home, and may want to resume their original activity once restrictions are lifted.

Some activities participants are doing from home may not continue when normal life returns (e.g. helping with the coronavirus efforts in their community) so they will need to find something new.

The minimum timescales must still be met, but this may be done cumulatively across multiple activities.

Participants can progress to the next level before completing their expedition

For those participants who simply won't have the chance to complete an expedition this year and want to progress to the next Award level, we've introduced two temporary rule changes.

– At Bronze and Silver, participants who have completed their Skills, Physical and Volunteering sections – thus achieving the DofE Certificate of Achievement – can progress to Silver or Gold as though they have completed the previous level. This means that when they commit to their sectional activities, they will not have to complete additional time requirements.

For those progressing from Bronze to Silver, this means they'll only have to complete six months of activity, not 12. For Silver to Gold, this means young people will not have to do an additional six months in either Volunteering or the longer of their Physical or Skills sections.

– Bronze participants who progress to Silver in this way will be able to use their Silver practice expedition as their qualifying expedition at Bronze, enabling them to achieve both their Bronze and Silver Awards. Similarly, Silver participants who progress to Gold will be able to use their Gold practice expedition as their qualifying expedition at Silver.

Volunteering section

Volunteering section

Participants can volunteer for family members, for example by mentoring or coaching younger siblings.

This should be more than a participant babysitting, or helping out with their usual chores!

As with all DofE activities, they should be structured and help the participant to meet the benefits and outcomes of the Volunteering section.

Participants can choose to volunteer to help any family member. This could include:

- mentoring a younger sibling and helping them with their schoolwork or homework
- coaching a sibling or another family member to learn an instrument or develop another skill
- organising a sports session or arts and crafts session for someone they live with to participate in

If a participant wants to help another family member in a different way, then their DofE Leader will just need to check it's suitable by ensuring it fulfils the aims of the section.

Physical section

No temporary rule changes.

Skills section

No temporary rule changes.

Expedition section

With social distancing restrictions seeming likely to remain in place in one way or another for some time, we've made a number of temporary rule changes to the Expedition section.

These changes will help LOs and AAPs to run expeditions to support new cohorts of participants and those young people whose expeditions have been delayed. This may be outside the 'usual' expedition season – although it's worth noting that DofE expeditions can always be run at any point of the year.

The rule changes are as follows:

1. Bronze participants who progress to Silver will be able to use their Silver practice expedition as their qualifying expedition at Bronze, enabling them to achieve both their Bronze and Silver Awards. This expedition must meet the minimum requirements of the Silver practice expedition (two days and two nights). Participants wishing to do a combined Silver/Bronze expedition must meet the age requirements of the higher level (they must be in

the year group in which their peers turn 15) and they must be enrolled at Silver. Similarly, **Silver participants who progress to Gold will be able to use their Gold practice expedition as their qualifying expedition at Silver.** This expedition must meet the requirements of the Silver qualifying expedition (three days and two nights). In addition, participants wishing to do a combined Gold/Silver expedition must meet the age requirements of the higher level (they must be at least 16 years old) and they must be enrolled at Gold.

As practice expeditions are not under qualifying conditions, combined expeditions do not require an Accredited Expedition Assessor but we recommend that an Assessor is present if possible. In order to ensure the outcomes of the section are met if an Assessor is not present, the Expedition Supervisor for the practice expedition must provide a short statement which is added as 'evidence' (not an Assessor's Report) to the participant's Expedition section in eDofE. This statement will confirm that the practice expedition has been completed and used for the participant's qualifying expedition, and that the outcomes of the Expedition section have been met as best they can.

If centres have mixed teams with some participants completing just the qualifying expedition and some participants completing a combined practice/qualifying expedition, minimum team numbers will still need to be met. This may mean that some participants have an extra night beyond the duration of a Bronze qualifying expedition (for a Silver/Bronze hybrid) or an extra day beyond the duration of a Gold practice expedition (for a Gold/Silver hybrid).

Practice expeditions are an important part of the preparation and training participants carry out to ensure that they can undertake a safe and enjoyable remotely supervised expedition. For that reason, all Gold and Silver participants will still have to do both a practice and qualifying expedition.

2. At Silver and Gold level, practice expeditions and qualifying expeditions can be delivered 'back to back'.

3. We've relaxed the rules around recommended environments, so participants don't have to leave their local area to complete an expedition. This means that Gold expeditions can take place outside of wild country. If you are planning an expedition in a wild country area, then you are still required to complete a Green Form and you will be given a notification number which you can enter on eDofE. If you are planning a Gold level expedition outside of a wild country area then you do not need to submit a form and will not need to enter a notification number on eDofE.

Additionally, participants can complete an expedition in an urban environment in their local area. It may be appropriate for participants to spend a greater proportion of time investigating their aim, and they should plan to travel through a range of environments e.g. parkland, commons and waterways. If these environments do not permit the use of a stove, participants could be transported to/from a location, such as their school or youth group grounds, where they can cook a hot meal at an appropriate time during the expedition. For example, on a Bronze expedition this might be at the end of the first day before participants go home to sleep.

As the normal terrain requirements have been relaxed, it is possible to take all levels of teams to the same location. However, you must consider whether it is safe and practical to do so (for example, each team will still need to meet the appropriate duration requirements),

whether you have obtained the appropriate permissions from your Licensed Organisation (LO), and the potential pressure on campsites and other facilities.

In addition, teams can journey in terrain that is familiar to them. This could be where they did a previous level or undertook training walks or a practice expedition. However, expeditions should still be a fun and challenging experience for all participants. Therefore, new routes and campsites, even if they are within familiar or 'pre-used' areas, should be used if possible.

4. Leaders can use motorised transport to take participants to the start point of their route and pick them up at their end point. Travel to and from the expedition location each day is additional to the required hours of activity time.

5. Teams at all Award levels are allowed to return home to sleep during their expedition. They should, however, still plan and cook their meals as a team, and of course meet the minimum hours of planned activity during each day. Expeditions must be self-sufficient so, even though participants are going home to sleep, they need to carry appropriate expedition kit. Participants should carry some form of shelter and warmth in case of emergency, although this could be a survival shelter rather than a tent. Participants should also carry all food and clothing that they will need for the whole expedition.

Alternatively, if you have permission to use your school field (or any other area) for camping, then this is acceptable under the new temporary flexibilities. Journeying from, and returning to, the same camping area each night is also allowed.

6. Expedition Assessors for Silver and Gold levels can be known to the group. This includes helping run the DofE group, or supporting expedition training – although they must still be an Accredited Assessor.

Expeditions in restricted outdoor spaces

As part of the temporary changes, expeditions can now be run in restricted outdoor spaces such as school grounds. This model offers LOs and AAPs greater flexibility in delivering expeditions whilst following the specific guidance and rules for their sector, and their own local policies and procedures.

Residential section

Several flexibilities have been introduced to support socially-distanced residentials.

Participants can go home at night to sleep following the evening meal and any evening activities.

The minimum number of participants on a residential has been lowered to four.

The attendees on the residential should still be unknown to each other.

Residentials can take place over two two-night blocks, rather than one four-night block.

Participants should aim to arrive before dinner on the first night (e.g. a Friday), and leave at the earliest mid-afternoon on the last day (e.g. a Sunday). Participants should be taking part in the same type of activity on each half of the residential, but they can do so with different people. Both parts of the residential must be completed within a 12 month period.