

SECTION NOTES

SKILLS



This leaflet provides a basic outline of the International Award for

Young People, with particular emphasis on the Skills Section. It explains what is involved in acting as an Award Activity Coach for the Skills Section.

More detailed information can be obtained from the *International Handbook*, from trained Award Leaders, and from the local or National Award Authority.

What is the Award?

The Award is a programme of personal development for young people aged between 14 and 25. It has three levels: **Bronze**, **Silver** and **Gold**; each of which takes an increasing commitment of time to achieve. Participants set themselves challenging personal goals in four different Sections:

- Service
- Skills
- Physical Recreation
- Adventurous Journey

With an additional requirement of a Residential Project at Gold.

Throughout the Programme participants can either develop existing interests or try something new. The Award is not a competition. It is based on personal improvement and achievement. Once participants have set their goals, striven to achieve them and shown improvement, they will achieve their Award.

What is an Activity Coach?

An Activity Coach's role in the Award is that of instructor, mentor and supervisor.

You should have considerable knowledge and experience of the chosen activity. If necessary, you should hold any appropriate specialist qualifications. You should be able to guide the participant in the activity and help them to set their own appropriate, realistic and individually challenging goals.

As a mentor, you should be able to:

- Listen to and help with a participant's thoughts, concerns and questions
- Help them to think about ways to progress the activity
- Talk and work easily with young people
- Meet the participant regularly.

As a supervisor, you should check that the participant participates regularly over the minimum time period and shows improvement while striving to achieve their goals. At the end of the process you will be required to sign the participant's Record Book.

These notes are for guidance only; please refer to the national or International Award Handbook for full conditions and requirements.

SKILLS

The aim of this Section is to encourage the development of personal interests and practical skills. It should stimulate new interests or improve existing ones. These interests are typically of a non-physically demanding nature and may be hobbies, vocational or job-related skills, social or individual activities, cultural activities or life skills.

Benefits

The specific benefits to the participant will obviously depend on the skill chosen. Some general benefits include:

- Discovering new abilities and developing these or improving existing talents
- Increasing self-confidence by successfully setting and achieving a goal
- Refining awareness of one's own potential
- Developing time management and planning skills
- Enhancing self-motivation
- Enjoyment
- Interacting socially, by meeting new people, and interacting with adults in a meaningful way
- Improving employability by learning vocational skills.

Requirements

The chosen skill can be one which the young person is studying at their regular educational institution or their workplace. However, they must be able to show additional voluntary effort in

their own time to enhance what they would have been doing anyway. The Award is about encouraging young people to push their limits and overcome genuine challenges of their own devising, not about doing the minimum possible.

A participant may choose to work towards certification from an organisation that delivers and assesses the activity. This is not compulsory to obtain an Award, but it will enhance the sense of achievement of the participant, and may help them in their future life or search for work.

Participants should keep a diary or log book recording the time they have spent doing their activity and any meetings they have with you.

The Process

Initial briefing:

The participant will have already met with their Award Leader and chosen their activity for this Section. You will need to discuss and help the participant to set themselves individually challenging and realistic goals. These goals should

Initial Briefing	Initial planning and goal-setting with the Award Leader to agree challenging targets and start the process
Monitoring Progress	Targets and progress should be periodically reviewed and revised where necessary
Final Review	Reviews entire process Record Book is completed

be achievable in the time frame of the Award and should take into account the starting ability of the participant.

Monitoring Progress:

The participant should carry out the activity and strive to achieve their goal.

The participant must follow all local laws for minimum age restrictions, insurance requirements and other legal requirements.

Changing Goal:

The participant may find their original goal too challenging or too easy and so should revise it to make the challenge more appropriate. The participant should discuss this with you to agree the new goal.

Final Review:

This should offer a chance for the participant to critically

reflect on their experience and review the high points and low points and what they have learned for the future. It should be facilitated by you, the Activity Coach. You should also check that the minimum

time requirements have been met or exceeded, and that the participant has shown commitment and improvement. After this review process, the Record Book should be completed and signed.

Time requirements

The average minimum time to be spent on the activity over this time period is one hour per week. In a structured environment, such as being on a formal course,

the weekly sessions may be much longer than one hour and the participant would be expected to be involved for the entire session.

	Minimum time	If Skills chosen as longest Section
Bronze	3 months	6 months
Silver	6 months	12 months (non Bronze holders only)
Gold	12 months	18 months (non Silver holders only)

Completing the Record Book

You need to verify that the participant has been making persistent and regular effort for a total of the minimum time period required for the Award level, and has shown improvement from their initial level of ability. The specific targets which were agreed at the start of the process, or the revised ones if applicable, should have been achieved. A diary or journal is very useful for this.

There is no such thing as failure in the Award – if a participant has not shown commitment and improvement, the Record Book should be left blank and the participant encouraged to continue their efforts.

When the agreed goal is achieved, you should sign the Record Book and fill in the relevant sections for positive comments.

These Notes contain guidance on the operation of the International Award for Young People. The International Secretariat is available to provide assistance in all such matters. Neither the Handbook nor the Secretariat can assist in advising in connection with the legal and regulatory

Gold Award: Skills

Skill followed: *Woodwork*

Date commenced: *Dec '04* Date completed: *Dec '05*

Activity Coach's report: (give details of regular effort and improvement made, any qualifications gained and general performance)

Mohammed (a Silver Awardee) took up woodwork following a basic instruction at school. He produced a well laid out notebook of designs, drawings, and techniques. In the 12 months, he made several pieces of simple furniture including shelving for the Award office.

It is certified that this participant has shown individual progress and made a regular commitment over the period of time indicated above.

Signed: *C. Andrew* Date: *16/12/05*

Position: *Skills Centre Manager*

28

obligations which an NAA or Independent Operator (IO) may be required to comply with in order to operate the Award. Each NAA or IO is advised to seek local legal advice as to matters of legal liability to participants in the Award and others, and as to compliance with

all local legal and regulatory requirements and the International Secretariat accepts no responsibility in this regard or for ensuring the safety of any Programme or activities operated by an NAA or IO.



Over 500,000 young people in over 100 countries are currently taking part in the Award. They are only able to do so because of the support and encouragement of adult volunteers, who act as Instructors and Assessors for an impressive range of activities.

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