

September 1, 2021

Temporary changes and further guidance on the Award Requirements

Award participants and adults delivering The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (the Award) in Barbados have been coming to terms with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their lives, work and study. Self-isolation, quarantine and social distancing measures mean for many that continuing the Award in their usual way has become increasingly difficult or impossible.

The Award plays a crucial role, now more than ever, in supporting the individual health and wellbeing of Award participants, as well as in underpinning social cohesion and creating a vital sense of community connection for young people.

To support participants during this challenging time and to encourage young people to stay active, the International Award Foundation has implemented some temporary changes to the Award requirements, **valid from 1 May 2020 to 31 December 2022.**

The changes implemented are not compulsory for all NAOs. Changes must be reasonable in the context of social distancing and local public health recommendations. As such, only the changes applicable to the Award in Barbados are being featured in this document.

If you are an Award participant and have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, please ensure to speak to your Award Leader for support, and to agree if and how you may adapt your activities to be able to continue and complete your Award. For approved ideas for how to stay active in your Award during COVID-19, please see [here](#).

This document will NOT explore options related to the Adventurous Journey Section. A separate document will be provided in due course.

Guidance on existing Award Requirements

Much of the flexibility required to address challenges faced by Award participants and their Award Leaders, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, is already contained in [the International Handbook for Award Leaders \(7th ed.,2019\)](#).

The further guidance listed below gives clarity on how some of the existing Award Requirements can be implemented, so that participants can continue and complete their Awards throughout this period.

Note to Award participants and Award Leaders:

We ask Award Leaders and Award participants to prioritize protecting your Award experience.

Please always choose an option which provides the least disruption to your existing activities.

Topic	Section(s) Affected	Guidance
Assessors	All	<p>Assessors cannot be family members: <i>Assessors will often be known by the participant, but they must not be an immediate relative.</i></p> <p>This requirement remains. However, please note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anybody, other than a family member, who knows the subject better than the participant can act as Section Assessor. • The Section Assessor does not have to be present in the room while the participant is doing their activity. • Nor does the Section Assessor have to be actively providing instruction to the participant (although commonly they are doing so) • The Assessor can keep track of a participant's progress remotely, with updates from the participant. In this case, a participant should keep photo / video / diary evidence of them doing their loggable hours of activity. • Where an existing Assessor has become uncontactable, the participant can change Assessor mid-way through a Section. • If a participant changes their Section activity mid-way through the Section, they will likely need to change their Assessor too. • Award Leaders should be flexible in helping participants to identify a new Assessor – in some cases, an Award Leader may be able to act as Assessor themselves if appropriate, or in some cases some NAO/OP staff make themselves available to act as Assessors. • All Adults delivering the Award must continue to act in accordance with the local Award policies (including Safeguarding) and child protection legislation.
Retaining Participants/ continuing to the next level	All	<p>Participants should be encouraged to complete all sections of their current Award level before progressing to another level. That said, current limitations prevent Participants from engaging in hiking and camping, activities required for the Adventurous Journey section. While options are being explored for alternative ways to complete this</p>

		<p>section (to be discussed later), other aspects of the Award may still be completed.</p> <p>As such, Participants are currently allowed to register for and move on to the next Level of the Award without completing the AJ section at their current Level, if they have completed ALL the other Sections at their current Level.</p> <p>This will require prior approval from the Award leader and an invitation on the ORB to the next Award Level.</p> <p>For example: where a participant cannot do their Qualifying AJ at Bronze Level, but they have finished all their other Sections; they can be permitted to register and begin working towards their Silver Award, logging their activities under Skill, Voluntary Service and Physical Recreation. When restrictions have eased, the participant can then do their Qualifying Bronze AJ and achieve their Bronze Award, before moving on to prepare for their Silver AJ.</p>
Minimum age Requirements	All	<p>The minimum age requirements for beginning each level of the Award are 14, 15 and 16 years of age respectively.</p> <p>However, as of 2018, there is some flexibility built into the Award framework in this regard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At Bronze level – discretion is allowed if a young person, who is younger than 14, is part of a peer group where the majority are 14 or older and wishes to start their Bronze with their peers. Under such circumstances the participant must have reached their 13th birthday. - At Silver level – young people who have completed their Bronze level may start their Silver level without a delay being imposed, even though they are not yet 15. - At Gold level – no activities can be counted before a participant's 16th birthday to ensure it is more of an adult challenge.
Changing activities	Skill/ Physical Recreation/ Voluntary Service	<p>For many Participants, changing activities may be necessary to continue progressing on a section.</p> <p>Participants are allowed to change their choice of activity mid-way through a section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If the initial choice of activity proves to be unsuitable, participants may choose another activity and count the time spent towards their overall minimum time requirement. This needs to be done in consultation with their Award Leader who should use judgement on how often this can happen.</i> • <i>Under normal circumstances, the recommended maximum activities per section is two (2)</i>

		<p>Therefore, in the context of the COVID-19, participants should be allowed to change their chosen activity in any section if their original activity is not suitable to continue from home or under social distancing. This may require them to change their SMART Goal and/or their choice of Assessor too. Award Leaders should continue to recognize previously logged hours that related to the participant's original activity: and if appropriate allow them to switch back to their original activity once lockdown/social distancing is over, if they wish.</p> <p>A participant can add activities to a section on the ORB. Changing activity information may require input from the Award Leader</p>
Change of Major Section	Skill/ Physical Recreation/ Voluntary Service	<p>All participants at Bronze level, and those who are Direct Entrants at Silver and Gold may change their choice of 'Major' section:</p> <p><i>Bronze:</i> All participants must do an extra 3 months in one of the following: <i>Physical Recreation; or Skills; or Voluntary Service</i></p> <p><i>Silver / Gold:</i> All participants must do an extra 6 months in one of the following: <i>Physical Recreation; or Skills; or Voluntary Service</i></p> <p>Award Leaders may allow participants to change their choice of major section, if continuing an alternative section at home is more feasible. In this case, the SMART Goal in each relevant section should be reviewed for suitability.</p>
Voluntary Service in the community	Voluntary Service	<p>Voluntary Service activities, working with a local, national, or global community organization on a cause supporting people, the environment, or animals – can be done from home.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic represents an opportunity to use the Voluntary Service Section to make a meaningful difference in communities. Participants should be encouraged to continue engaging with community organizations.</p> <p>Where safe to do so, participants may wish to be involved directly in their community or national response to COVID-19. Alternatively, participants can continue volunteering by doing roles that do not require the participant to attend a public location. These activities could be conducted online or offline.</p> <p>In all circumstances, any such activities should be following national directives. Award Volunteers AND Participants who work with children or vulnerable adults should sign the Award Code of Conduct and Safeguarding policies.</p>

Temporary Changes to Award Requirements

The temporary changes to the Award Requirements are designed to avoid interruption to Award during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as protecting each participant's experience and – as far as possible - maintaining the educational outcomes intended for each section of the Award.

They are specific and temporary. Unless stated otherwise, they are valid from **01 May 2020 – 31 December 2022**.

Topic	Section	Guidelines
Maximum Age Limit	All	<p>All participants who are due to reach their 25th birthday between April and December 2021 will have an extension applied; granting them time to complete their Award.</p> <p>Because the current social distancing/ COVID-19 measures currently in place are beyond the control of Participants, this change represents a blanket extension for all participants in the relevant age range.</p> <p>These participants will be able to continue logging activities, on the ORB (or offline), until 31 December 2022.</p> <p>Where possible, participants should be encouraged to continue their Award activities without interruption.</p> <p>This change is applicable to participants at all levels of the Award.</p>
Volunteering from Home	Voluntary Service	<p>Where all other possibilities have been exhausted, participants are encouraged to volunteer from home to stay active in the Voluntary Service section.</p> <p>The Award Leader should support and encourage a participant to provide meaningful volunteering for the benefit of others and the society around them. This is a key requirement for determining an appropriate activity.</p> <p>Regular household duties or other menial responsibilities do not suffice.</p> <p>The participant must receive prior consent from their Award Leader; and must identify a suitable Section Assessor (not an immediate family member). The Voluntary Service hours must be structured, logged and evidenced; and the SMART Goal will need to be reviewed with the Award Leader for appropriateness.</p> <p>This change is applicable to participants at all levels of the Award.</p> <p>This option is intended as a last resort. Guidance is provided on the Award website for Voluntary Service during the pandemic.</p>