

Briefing on Expedition Assessment Fees

At the beginning of 2009 we announced that we would be introducing a new charging structure for expedition teams whose assessment is carried out by one of our Expedition Assessor Networks (previously Wild Country Panels). These charges are now coming into effect for the Expedition season this year.

What is a DofE Expedition Assessor Network?

There is an Expedition Assessor Network for each expedition area in wild country (previously called Wild Country Panels). They are managed by DofE Directors in Regional/Country offices and consist of an Expedition Co-ordinator and a team of volunteer Network Assessors. For a list of all expedition areas, a map of where they are located and the contact details for the Expedition Coordinators, please see:

www.DofE.org/go/expeditionareas

What are the fees?

- Expedition teams undertaking their expedition in wild country, that choose to use an Expedition Area Assessor will be charged a fee towards the charity's costs.
- **A Bronze Team will pay £30, a Silver Team £45 and a Gold Team £60.**
- The charge is per team (not per person or per centre). For example, if a group has two teams requiring an Assessor, two fees are chargeable; and the fee is the same whether there are four or seven young people under assessment in the team.

Why is the DofE introducing assessment fees?

- Charges have been introduced to enable us to meet the expenses incurred by our volunteer Assessors, such as travel and car parking. The charges will also go some way to supporting the costs incurred by the Charity of administrating the Expedition Assessor Networks.
- If you are using an Assessor from outside the Network (i.e. taking one of your own Assessors) these charges will not apply.

How do I pay for the assessment?

- Later this year you will be able to pay for the assessment through the on-line DofE shop. In return for the assessment fee, you will be assigned a voucher code(s) for the appropriate level(s)– Bronze, Silver or Gold. This code should be e-mailed with the expedition notification number to Scotland@DofE.org.

What are the terms of purchase?

- More than one voucher code can be bought at once
- Anyone can purchase an Expedition Assessment
- The voucher code(s) can be used at any time within 2 years of purchase. There is no refund for voucher codes not used within this time
- The voucher code can be used for an Expedition Assessment in any of the DofE's Expedition Areas – this does not have to be specified at time of purchase
- The voucher code can be used by any DofE group – this does not have to be specified at time of purchase

Timescales

The online payment system through the on-line DofE shop is still under development and should be fully functional later in 2010. If you need to submit a Green Expedition Notification form before the voucher codes are available in April please do so.

Until DofE is able to offer this service through the on-line shop, the Scotland Office will contact supervisors who have been allocated an Assessor. They will be reminded of the charges and exactly what they will pay and the payment process will be explained.

What kind of service can I expect from an Assessor if I pay these fees?

All Expedition Assessors have to be accredited through the DofE Expedition Assessor Accreditation Scheme (EAAS). This programme provides Expedition Assessors with a clear and consistent understanding of their role and responsibilities and ensures that Assessors are trained to provide a dependable level of service.

There is a consistent framework within which Assessors operate which goes a long way to ensuring the success of the participants.

Assessors have the following key responsibilities:

- Ensure that the aim of the Expedition section is met
- Ensure that the 20 conditions of the Expedition section are fulfilled
- Assist with the safety of the participants, by providing advice regarding the chosen route based on their local knowledge. (However, responsibility for safety and equipment rests with the Supervisor at all times)
- Protect the interests of the DofE, for instance using local knowledge to avoid friction with landowners or overburdened communities

Assessors follow the seven steps to the assessment process:

- Receive expedition information from the team; make initial contact with the team; carry out a pre-expedition check; meet the team in the expedition area; meet with the team en-route; debrief the team; and receive presentations, if requested.

Assessors also operate in accordance with the following four principles:

- *The expedition belongs to the participants.* It is the participants and not the adults involved who are responsible for planning the expedition.
- *Any adult intervention is an intrusion into the young peoples' expedition.* Adult intervention is done if it is necessary for safety reasons and to ensure that the 20 conditions are fulfilled. Assessors can offer support and encouragement, but this should be carefully planned and kept to a minimum.
- *There is no pass or fail.* Either the expedition meets the 20 conditions and is successful or it does not.
- *Assessing is about facilitating and confirming success.*

Do I still need to use a Green Form?

Yes. Whichever Assessor you use, please carry on using the Green Form notification process. The Green Form download from the website will have a space to include your voucher code, once these are available to buy from the on-line shop.

For more information

Please contact the Scotland Office: Scotland@DofE.org 0131 343 0920

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