Fundamental Principles, Operational Principles and Code of Practice

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation

09 August 2019
Version: 1.0
Version control

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1. Fundamental Principles

1.1 The criterion for gaining an Award is individual improvement through persistence and achievement, taking into account the participant’s initial capabilities and without any element of competition between participants.

1.2 Participation is entirely voluntary, and the individual participant has a completely free choice in the selection of locally available options within the four Sections.

1.3 There is no discrimination against participation on grounds of sex, race, religion or political affiliation.

2. Operational Principles

2.1 Participants must be between the ages of 14 and 24.

2.2 The basic structure of the Award Programme consists of the four mandatory Sections: Service (to learn how to give useful service to others), Adventurous Journey (to encourage a spirit of adventure and discovery whilst undertaking a journey in a group), Skills (to encourage the development of personal interests, creativity or practical skills) and Physical Recreation (to encourage participation in physical recreation and improvement of performance).

2.3 The three levels of Award are: Bronze (for those over the age of 14), Silver (for those over the age of 15) and Gold (for those over the age of 16).

2.4 The minimum period of participation for direct entrants to qualify for an Award is six months for a Bronze, 12 months for Silver and 18 months for Gold.

2.5 At Gold level participants undertake a Residential Project (to broaden experience through involvement with others in a residential setting) away from home.

3. Code of Practice

3.1 To maintain comparable standards of operating practice as advised by the Foundation.
3.2 To manage the Award fairly and impartially in all respects.

3.3 To ensure that the Award is open to all subject to age parameters.

3.4 To allow participants from any other Award Operator to continue their Award

3.5 Undertake to recognise the validity of achievements entered in Record Books issued by other Award Operators or to accept the electronic transfer of a participant’s records through the Online Record Book system or equivalent, in so far as it is possible under national law.

3.6 To manage the Award under the Operational Guidelines approved in 2003 and revised in 2018.