



Dear Parent/Carer,

Duke of Edinburgh Award – Participation Enrolment Letter

We are delighted to confirm that Hermitage Academy is a licenced organisation for DofE and look forward to offering this programme to our Year 10 students (Bronze level) and our Year 12 students (Direct entry Silver).

The DofE is a great chance for your child to broaden their horizons, discover new interests and talents, have fun with friends, develop essential skills for their future and achieve an internationally renowned award.

About the Duke of Edinburgh Award

The DofE is non-competitive and open to all young people – it's about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries. Through their DofE award, students will make friends and memories and build traits like confidence, resilience and self-esteem, which can benefit mental health. They will gain skills and attributes for work and life, like problem-solving, team-working and self-motivation – and they'll achieve an Award that's recognised by top employers and can help them stand out when applying for university or jobs in the future.

To achieve their Bronze and Silver Award, participants must complete four sections: Skills, Volunteering, Physical and their Expedition.

Every young person's DofE programme is personal to them – they can choose what they'd like to do for their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections, and most activities can count. Students will be provided with a DofE pack, which provides extensive lists for all non-expedition sections. We hope that if your child has not already thought about what they would like to complete, that this will give them some inspiration.

Activities for each section take a **minimum of one hour per week** over a set period of time, so they can fit around studying, hobbies and social lives. Below shows the amount of time that students would need to commit to their activities for each award.

Bronze			
Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, train for and complete a 2 day, 1 night expedition
Participants must also undertake a further three months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skills section.			
Silver			
Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
6 months	One for 6 months / one for 3 months		Plan, train for and complete a 3 day, 2 night expedition
If participants haven't achieved their Bronze Award they must undertake a further 6 months in Volunteering or the longer of their Physical or Skills section			

Please note: as Year 12 students are Direct entry Silver, they must undertake a further 6 months in volunteering or the longer of their physical and skills sections.

Signing up

The initial cost of taking part in the DofE is £26 per participant. This covers your child's participation place and Welcome Pack, which will be sent to their home address and includes their personalised DofE Discount Card. **Please collect, complete and return an enrolment form to Mrs Ford, who will arrange for this fee to be added to your Parent Pay account.** To encourage our students to actively secure their award, the school will reimburse the enrolment fee for the first 30 students that are successful in completing their Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections, or offset the cost against the expedition fees.

In terms of the expedition, the training, practice and expedition, including the provision of all transport and expedition specific kit, is priced at approximately £170pp for Bronze and £265pp for Silver. This is ran by our specialised partner Simonside Outdoor Adventure. We are yet to confirm our expedition dates for 2024, but they generally run on weekends throughout September and early October, to minimise any disruption to learning. For students that are registered as Pupil Premium or that have free school meals, they will be supported with 50% of the expedition costs.

For more information about the DofE, please see the information short videos below

Bronze Award - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7kY2w4A7_s

Silver Award - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqHrGnY_Ktg

Q&A's

Will Duke of Edinburgh impact on learning time?

We will endeavour to minimise any disruption to your child's lessons and the majority of planned activities will take place during lunch times, after school and weekends, in term time.

My child already has expedition equipment, will this reduce costs?

Due to high numbers, we will be working in partnership with an Authorised Activity Provider who has a competitive fixed rate. Therefore, if your child is a scout, it may be more cost effective to complete the award with them. We understand that this cost is not insignificant and would like to stress, that as well as paying for the cost of the licence fee, we run the award as a complete not-for-profit scheme at Hermitage Academy.

Can my child volunteer to work in a local business?

It is important that the volunteering section is completed for a charity or non-profit organisation if related to a business. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer in school too. Please see the DofE volunteering ideas page for more information (available online or from school).

How will my child evidence that they have completed a section?

Whilst your child can upload a variety of media to support their completion of a section in their eDofE, it is vital that an appropriate adult completes a short assessor's report to confirm that this has been done. This must be completed by an impartial person and cannot be completed by a family member.

What support will my child receive?

We run a DofE drop in every Friday lunch time in HUM5 to provide constant support. It is vital however that students understand that whilst the school will support them in getting set up on the award and ensuring that they are confident in what they need to do, the actual completion of the individual sections needs to be undertaken independently, and in their own time. Please also note, pupils must have started all 3 sections, and have fully completed 2 sections in full, prior to embarking on the expedition element.

My child is in year 9, can they start now with The Hermitage Academy?

Unfortunately due to high numbers, we only have capacity to offer Bronze level to our students once they reach Year 10.

Many thanks for your support,

Mrs Ford-Hutchinson (Character Development Champion)