

## Continuing the Award in the context of COVID-19

### Temporary Changes and Further Guidance

1. Age requirements
2. Voluntary Service
3. Adventurous Journeys

Most of the content of this guidance is not new. It simply reflects information already contained in the International Handbook for Award Leaders (7th ed., 2019) and/or the Operational Guidelines. Therefore the ‘further guidance’ in this guide aims to give clarity on how some of the existing Award Requirements can be interpreted or implemented by Operators and Award Centres to help address the challenges we are now facing. All the temporary changes will apply until 31 December 2020.

### Age Requirements

#### **Agreed Temporary Change :Rationale Boundaries for implementation and Award level**

For all participants due to reach their 25th birthday in the remainder of 2020; an extension will be applied enabling them to complete their Award. The specific change includes:

- No requirement to apply for an extension to the Foundation or National Office.
- Extension is provided on the basis that the participant cannot complete due to COVID19.
- Participants will be allowed to continue logging activities until December 31st 2021.

#### **Rationale**

Lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures are deemed circumstances beyond the control of participants in all affected jurisdictions.

#### **Boundaries for implementation and Award level**

This relates to any participant whose 25th birthday falls in April – December 2020.

- The extension is a blanket extension for all affected participants until 31st December 2021.
- Participants should be encouraged to continue their Award activities without interruption, where at all possible.
- Applicable to all levels of the Award.

## Voluntary Service

The COVID-19 pandemic represents a real opportunity for Award participants to make a meaningful difference in their communities through the Voluntary Service Section. Further to the information listed below Operators are reminded of the guidance under ‘Further guidance and clarification of existing requirements’ – participants are allowed to change their activity; and/or change Assessor; and/or revise their SMART Goal throughout their Section to adapt to the situation.

Where it is safe for them to do so, you may wish to encourage your participants to take active roles in responding to the COVID-19 crisis in their country. Please see the [AwardCommunity.org](http://AwardCommunity.org) for further ideas and examples of best practice from other Operators.

### **Agreed Temporary Change**

Voluntary Service Section – Participants can now volunteer for family members as part of their Award activities. If a participant’s Voluntary Service activity becomes untenable, and volunteering online/remotely is not possible, they may change their activity to volunteering within the home, with other members of the family/living unit. As with existing guidance, the Assessor for the section must not be a family member.

### **Rationale**

If a participant has exhausted all opportunities to conduct an alternative voluntary role outside their home; they may continue their Voluntary Service by volunteering for family members – e.g. tutoring a younger sibling.

### **Boundaries for implementation and Award level**

- Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures in place;
- This option is intended as a last resort.
- The participant must receive prior consent from their Award Leader; and must identify a suitable Section Assessor.
- Regular chores or other regular household responsibilities do not suffice.
- The Voluntary Service hours must be structured, logged and evidenced; and the SMART Goal will need to be reviewed for appropriateness.
- Applicable to all levels of the Award.

## Adventurous Journeys

For many, the Adventurous Journey (AJ) is the Section most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we have identified several possible changes or options for Award Centres to adopt, to make this section of the Award feasible within a country's COVID-19 public health restrictions.

Where possible, preference should be given to delaying the AJ until such time as it is feasible to complete it. Where postponement of AJs presents a challenge for an Award Centre – either due to capacity later in the year or pressure from participants to complete in the coming months – the temporary changes detailed below allow for alternative options as follows:

- Waiving the Bronze Practice Journey and/or re-assigning a previous Practice Journey as the Qualifying Journey
- Deferring the Qualifying AJ for Bronze participants, to support participants to keep up their momentum by moving on to Silver. In this instance, the subsequent Practice Journey at Silver level will count as the Qualifying Bronze AJ.
- AJs may be organised in a familiar environment.
- It is permitted for participants to use a home, school gym, etc. as accommodation during Adventurous Journeys; or for a group's accommodation to be physically separated, e.g. participants all sleep in separate tents or accommodation.

The further guidance and the temporary changes detailed in this paper allow for flexibility, while maintaining standards for safety as well as learning outcomes, in particular the teamwork and leadership skills that are at the core of the purpose of an AJ.

As always, Award Centres must conduct the necessary planning and risk management to determine the best course of action; and Adults delivering the Award may need to adjust routes or re-plan in accordance with isolation or social distancing measures. Even with the temporary changes in place, some Award Centres may not be able to offer opportunities to complete the Adventurous Journey Section in their present circumstances.

### Agreed Temporary Change

- ✓ **The requirement for a Bronze Practice Journey can be waived OR where a Practice has been completed count as the Bronze Qualifying Journey.** The Practice AJ is intended as part of the process of preparing, training and learning for young people doing their AJ; should the adults delivering the Award feel confident that the learning outcomes are being achieved in the absence of a Practice Journey; and that sufficient health and safety risk mitigation actions have been taken, the adults delivering the Award can choose to waive the Practice Journey. This should be done in the following circumstances only:

1. The Award Coordinator / Leader is confident that the group is able to do a Qualifying Journey, based on: a thorough health and safety risk assessment of the AJ; the team demonstrating acquisition of the required knowledge and skills from training and preparation; and the team having successfully come together to establish their roles and norms.
2. If a standard Practice Journey was already completed by the team, and the Supervisor believes that the AJ 15 Requirements were met and the learning outcomes for the group and individuals were achieved on that trip, that Practice Journey can be considered the Qualifying Journey.

- ✓ **Participants continue to Silver and are then awarded their Bronze once the Silver practice AJ is completed.** This change will mean that Bronze participants do not need to do complete a Bronze AJ to complete Bronze. This will take the pressure off organisations later on in the year who cannot run multiple Bronzer and Silver AJs at the same time. The Silver Practice counting as the Bronze qualifier is to be used specifically where participants want to continue to the next level, but the Operator / Award Centre does not have the capacity to run additional Bronze and Silver AJs later on in the year without limiting impact on new entrants. Should also be used to incentivise young people to progress to Silver.
- ✓ **AJs may be organised in a familiar environment.** Where delivering AJs is difficult or impossible in the current environment, the preferred solution remains to postpone AJs (including all 15 Requirements) until such time as they are feasible. This allowance is intended for jurisdictions where AJs can be conducted while social distancing is in place. It will address safety concerns and limitations on travel; and is most likely to be suited to AJs conducted as urban explorations. Participants will still be able to accomplish key learning outcomes, such as teamwork and leadership skills. This option is intended as a last resort. Applicable to all levels of the Award.
- ✓ **It is permitted for participants to use a home, school gym, etc. as accommodation during Adventurous Journeys; or for a group's accommodation to be physically separated, e.g. participants all sleep in separate tents or accommodation.** As Above. In addition, it caters for when some social-distancing measures are lifted but where young people are not allowed to share sleeping accommodation due to hygiene reasons.