



## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **What is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?**

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is an internationally recognized program for young people, building their skills to equip them for life and work. By creating opportunities for young people to develop skills, get physically active, give service and experience adventure, the Award can play a critical role in their development. It looks really good on a resume too!

The Duke of Edinburgh Award was originally started in the United Kingdom by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in 1956 and has branched out around the world in its 60+ years. It became the Duke of Edinburgh International Award in 2015 and is currently available in 140+ countries and counting.

The current group here at West Kings re-started in 2014 and coincided with the launch of the **Online Record Book (ORB)**. We were part of the initial trial for this new program. As of the start of the 2019-20 school year, we have had 6 Gold, 11 Silver and 12 Bronze awards earned.

We meet on Mondays 1 or 2 times a month as required and the advisor is reachable by email and our Facebook group or through the free ORB app for questions or advice.

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### **How long does it take?**

The Bronze can be done in as little as 6 months, the Silver in 6 months and the Gold in a year, so start to finish consecutively could be as little as 2 years to complete. Sections do not have to be done at the same time though, so you could take a year (or more) to complete the Bronze, if you choose. You must complete your last activity by your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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### **Is there a cost involved?**

There is a \$50 fee per level to take part in the program. This fee covers costs associated with running the program. Fees for access to the Online Record Book and the free app for users and advisors, costs of ceremonies at the Silver and Gold levels, costs of the pins and certificates and upkeep of the websites, nationally and provincially as well as staff to administer the program at the various levels (although most of us are volunteers).

Our award unit at West Kings also runs a bottle drive on the first Saturday after New Year's Eve to raise funds for expeditions as well as equipment purchase and upkeep.

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### **I have heard about an academic credit.**

In 2004, the Department of Education under the Honorable Jamie Muir, Minister of Education, introduced an academic credit for completion of the Duke of Edinburgh Award program. Participants would get a grade 10 credit for Bronze, grade 11 credit for Silver and a grade 12 credit for Gold.

Unfortunately, the government of Nova Scotia reversed this decision in 2016. As of September 1, 2016 any members already in the program would receive the credits for their program, but for any new participants enrolled after that date, the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards are Personal Development credits.

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### **When can I start?**

You must be at least 14 years of age to start the Bronze level, 15 for Silver and 16 for Gold. The award is self-driven, so you can work at your own pace.

The award has 3 levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold with each level requiring an hour a week in each of Skill, Physical Recreation and Service, with the number of weeks increasing as you go up in level (see "[Where can I find out more?](#)"). These sections do not have to be done all at the same time, they can be done consecutively, but they must be completed before your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Anything done for a section must be free from reward. Any paid activity or activity done as a requirement for a school credit, for instance, will not count.

There is also an Adventurous Journey component which consists of a required training session, a practice and a qualifying overnight. We run a training session and practice in the fall and a qualifying for Bronze around the May long weekend every year, as required.

At the Gold level, there is an additional requirement for a Gold Project, a 5-day interaction with peers towards a goal. Legion Leadership Training Camp, Encounters With Canada, summer music camp, Cadet summer camp, or camp counsellor (unpaid), all qualify for this requirement, to name a few. It can be done any time after you are enrolled in any level of the program, but you must be at least 16 years of age.

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### **Where do I get equipment for the Adventurous Journey?**

We are a lending depot for the provincial program. That means that for a small fee (\$20) to cover wear and tear, we can provide registered program members access to backpacks, sleeping bags, stoves, tents, almost everything you need. You provide your own footwear, food and clothing appropriate to the season.

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### **What if I don't have time with all my other activities?**

Most of our member's activities count toward the program. Any organized sports cover the physical recreation section, activities like band or Gaelic cover the skill and any volunteering (no reward) cover the service. Service is usually the hardest to find, but student council meetings/activities, fundraising activities, reading at an after school program or cleaning at C.A.P.S. count toward your service. Even mowing or shovelling for a senior neighbor (unpaid and not household chores) will count.

If you think you are too busy to do the award, you probably have most of what you need already!

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### **What do I get out of it?**

Besides lots of fun and a sense of accomplishment, you will receive a pin and certificate at each level, with your Gold level presented by the Governor General or when available, a member of the Royal Family. The academic credit has been discontinued, but you will still receive a Personal Development credit for your efforts.

You will also get a great item to have on your resume! Many employers (and universities) look for that *something* to differentiate one applicant from another and recognize the award as one of those items!

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**Who are we?**

Robert Albert is the senior advisor here at West Kings and a semi-retired navigator on the Aurora, now working as a reservist. In addition to a lifelong interest in the outdoors, canoeing, camping and hiking, he has done survival courses through the military, is current on first aid and has taken several courses through Hike Nova Scotia, Outdoor Council of Canada and the Red Cross including Field Leader (Hiking), Field Leader (Overnight) and Wilderness & Remote First Aid. And of course, being a retired navigator, he has some idea how to use maps and compass. Having spent almost 20 years instructing, he is also a qualified instructor.

Don Hyslop is our Adventurous Journey leader and a retired teacher from the valley. He has led many trips over many years, including Cape Chignecto and Mount Katahdin, Maine. He recently received his certificate from the Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia for his 20 years of volunteering with the award. He also runs the Gaelic club at the school, if you are looking for a skill...

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**Where can I find out more?**

You can check out the website at [www.dukeofed.org](http://www.dukeofed.org)

Check out the [Summary of Conditions](#) for details on the level requirements.

If you still have questions after reading this FAQ and checking out the website, you can send questions directly to Mr. Albert at [wkawardunit@bellaliant.net](mailto:wkawardunit@bellaliant.net)

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