

Temporary Changes and Further Guidance of Award Requirements in the context of COVID-19

From: The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia	For: All Award Leaders & Participants
Date: 27 May 2020	For more information: Your State/Territory Award Office www.dukeofed.com.au

1. Introduction

These temporary changes are the outcome of multiple reviews conducted from April to August by the International Award Foundation (IAF) and representatives from twenty-two National Award Operators (Award licensed countries). A list of challenges and issues submitted by colleagues from across the world were assessed. The aim of the review was to identify a common global approach for supporting the continued completion of Awards during self-isolation and social distancing measures imposed during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

All changes will apply from 1 May – 31 July 2021 with ongoing review.

2. Purpose and timeframe: 1 May – 31 July 2021

These changes are temporary and specifically time-limited for use during the COVID19 pandemic. They have been approved by the IAF and The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia with the specific purpose of supporting Award Centres, Leaders and Participants to overcome the myriad of challenges created by COVID19.

They should be regarded as a last resort by Award Centres, Leaders and Participants.

The IAF and The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia will also continue to review the situation and will make further changes based on evidence, should the need arise and case be made by Award Centres. The changes will be reviewed by the IAF in August, following a short consultation with the IAF-led Award Requirements Working Group

Summary of Temporary Changes and Further Guidance

Temporary changes to existing Award Requirements recognised by the IAF and The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia		Page No.	Change introduced
Age Extension 25+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants due to reach their 25th birthday between April and December 2020 can apply for extension; granting them time to complete their Award 	4	May
Voluntary Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary Service Section – Volunteering from Home. Participants can now volunteer for family members as part of their Award activities 	5	May
Adventurous Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award Leaders can waive the requirement for a Bronze Practice Journey <i>OR</i> where a Practice has been previously completed, it can be counted as the Bronze Qualifying Journey 	6	May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising the Silver practice journey as the Bronze qualifier 	8	May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gold Practice Journey can count as the Silver Qualifying Journey 	9	September
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE) 	10	May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Virtual Exploration can be used as Silver Practice 	11	September
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AJs may be organised in a familiar environment 	12	May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	13	May
Gold Residential Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gold Residential Project changes – further development work required 	14	September

Further clarity and guidance on existing Award Requirements		Page No.
Assessor information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award Assessors / Section Assessors 	14
Award Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining Participants / Continuing to the next Level 	15
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Gold Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age-range for Gold Level 	22
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the Gold Residential Project 	22
Adventurous Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to Supervision and Assessment and size of groups for Adventurous Journeys 	23
Regularity of hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the allowed regularity of logged hours 	23

3. Temporary Changes to existing Award Requirements recognised by the IAF and The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia

Age and Voluntary Service

3.1 All Participants due to reach their 25 th birthday between April and December 2020 can apply for an extension; granting them extra time to complete their Award.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
All Participants due to reach their 25th birthday between April and December 2020 can apply for an extension; granting them extra time to complete their Award.	The Award is available to young people between the ages of 14 and 24. If a Participant is unable to complete their Award before their 25 th birthday because of illness, accident or other unavoidable circumstances, application for an extension needs to be made by the Participant's Award Centre to their State/Territory Award Office for approval by the National Office	Lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures are deemed circumstances beyond the control of Participants in all affected jurisdictions.	<p>This relates to any Participant whose 25th birthday falls in April – December 2020.</p> <p>The extension is for those affected Participants until 31st December 2021.</p> <p>These Participants will be able to continue logging activities, on the ORB until 31 December 2021.</p>	<p>The specific change includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are required to apply for an extension via their Award Centre to their State/Territory Office. This application will be escalated to the National Office for approval. The State/Territory Office will be advised of the outcome and will inform the Award Centre to notify the Participant. 	<p>No change to the ORB. Participants are required to apply for an extension via their Award Centre/Award Leader to the relevant State/Territory Office. This application will be escalated to the National Office for approval. The State/Territory Office will be advised of the outcome and will inform the Award Centre/Award Leader to notify the Participant. Extension is provided on the basis that the Participant cannot complete due to COVID19.</p>

	Reference: - Australian Award Handbook 1.7.3			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension is provided on the basis that the Participant cannot complete due to COVID19. 	
3.2 Voluntary Service Section – Volunteering from home. Participants can now volunteer for family members as part of their Award activities.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
Voluntary Service Section – Volunteering from home. Participants can now volunteer for family members as part of their Award activities.	Voluntary Service activity to be conducted in the community – contributing to community causes supporting people, the environment or animals. Reference: - Australian Award Handbook 5.8	If a Participant has exhausted all opportunities to conduct an alternative voluntary role outside their home or online; they may continue their Voluntary Service by volunteering for family members – e.g. tutoring a younger sibling.	Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures in place. The Participant must receive prior consent from their Award Leader; and must identify a suitable Section Assessor (not an immediate family member). <u>Regular chores or other regular household responsibilities do not suffice.</u> The Voluntary Service hours must be structured, logged and evidenced; and the SMART Goal will need to be reviewed with the Award Leader for appropriateness.	If a Participant's Voluntary Service activity becomes untenable, and volunteering online is not possible, they may change their activity to volunteering within the home, with other members of the family/living unit.	No change to the ORB. Participants should continue to liaise with relevant Assessors/ Award Leaders and record their activities in the same way on the ORB.

Adventurous Journeys

Where delivering AJs is difficult or impossible whilst COVID-19 social isolation is required or travel has been restricted, the preferred solution remains to postpone AJs until such time as they are feasible.

3.3 Award Leaders can waive the requirement for a <u>Bronze</u> Practice Journey <u>OR</u> where a Practice has been previously completed, it can be counted as the Bronze Qualifying Journey					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
Award Leaders can waive the requirement for a <u>Bronze</u> Practice Journey <u>OR</u> where a Practice has been previously completed, it can be counted as the Bronze Qualifying Journey	<p>Adventurous Journey 14 Requirements: Requirement #10. All Participants must undertake a minimum of one Practice Journey per level.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Award Handbook 6.4 and 6.9 	<p>Where delivering AJs is difficult or impossible in the current environment, the preferred solution remains to postpone AJs until such time as they are feasible.</p> <p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bronze only • Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures in place; • Applicable only for AJs at Bronze level. • This option is intended as a last resort. Please see the guidance on alternative options for the Adventurous Journey Section on page 11 of this document. • This should be done in the following circumstances only: 	<p>Instructions will be provided on how a Participant can log this variation to their AJ in the Online Record Book (ORB).</p>	<p>Waiving the requirement to do a Bronze Practice Journey.</p> <p>Award Leaders can now access a template ORB AJ Event that has been pre-populated with information. The name of the AJ is: Bronze COVID-19 – NO PRACTICE</p> <p>Leaders will need to add Participants to this ORB AJ Event in order to progress them to the Qualifying Journey record.</p> <p>The ORB AJ Event will automatically appear on each Award Centre profile and there is no limit on the number of Participants that can be added to the ORB AJ Event.</p>

		<p>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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Award 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 Assessor believes that the AJ 14 Requirements were met and the AJ's Benefits & Outcomes for the group and individuals were achieved on that trip, that Practice Journey can be considered the Qualifying Journey. 	<p>You can watch a video of how to do this here: https://dukeofed.com.au/delivering-the-award-during-the-covid-19-virus-outbreak/</p> <p>Recognising the Practice as the Bronze Qualifying Journey</p> <p>Award Leaders should simply tell Participants to replicate the same records and information in the Qualifying Journey as the Practice and include a report.</p>
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3.4 Recognising the Silver practice journey as the Bronze qualifier.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
Recognising the Silver practice journey as the Bronze qualifier.	<p>Adventurous Journey section.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Award Handbook 6.9 	<p>As above.</p> <p>Where young people are likely to progress to Silver or can be incentivised to do so. The Bronze qualifier can be deferred for Participants who are committed to continuing to the Silver level. These Participants can move on to do all of their Silver Award activities. At a later date, the Participant's Silver Practice AJ will be used to count as their Bronze Qualifier. Once this is complete, the Participant will be awarded their Bronze. It is specifically intended for use where Participants want to continue to the next level, but the Award Centre does</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. Participants would commence Silver before completing Bronze and be awarded their Bronze on completion of their Silver Practice Journey. Where applicable – use planning and preparation platform of the Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE) for the final stages of Bronze activity. See below. Bronze Practice Journey must be completed before starting Silver Practice Journey Once Participants have completed their Bronze Practice Journey, they can be awarded their Bronze Qualifying AJ on completion of their Silver Practice Journey. 	<p>Instructions will be provided on how a Participant can log this variation to their AJ in the Online Record Book (ORB).</p>	<p>No change to the ORB. Participants that continue to Silver are recognised as continuing / non-direct entrants and therefore the minimum age requirements for 'Silver direct' do not apply.</p> <p>Once the Silver Practice AJ has been completed and all the requirements have been met, the Bronze Qualifying AJ should be input by the Participant with the same information as the Silver Practice AJ and include an AJ report.</p> <p>For those Participants who have completed all other sections of their Bronze level, the Award Leader utilises the "Next level invitation" function to invite the Participant to commence their Silver Award.</p>

		not have the capacity to run additional Bronze and Silver AJs later on without limiting impact on new entrants.			
3.5 The Gold Practice Journey can count as the Silver Qualifying Journey.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
The Gold Practice Journey can count as the Silver Qualifying Journey to enable progression and act as a further incentive to start the next level. This mirrors the previous temporary change at Bronze level and is conditional on the licensed Award Centre / licensing body ensuring that the Award Leader and/or Assessor has approved the practice journey as meeting the requirements.	Adventurous Journey Section. Reference: -Australian Award Handbook 6.9	Refer to 'Agreed Temporary Change'	See 'Agreed Temporary Change' The Gold Practice Journey, as long as Gold Practice Journey met Silver Qualifying Journey requirements, can count as the Silver Qualifying Journey to enable progression and act as a further incentive to start the next level. This mirrors the previous temporary change at Bronze level and is conditional on the licensed Award Centre/ licensing body ensuring that the Award Leader and/or Assessor has approved the practice journey as meeting the requirements. Participant meets minimum age (16) requirements. Silver Practice Journey must be completed before starting Gold Practice Journey	Refer to 'Online Record Book Guidance / Adaptation'	No change to the ORB. Once the Gold Practice AJ has been completed and all the requirements have been met, the Qualifying AJ should be input by the Participant with the same information as the Silver Practice AJ and include an AJ report. For those Participants who have completed all other sections of their Silver level the Award Leader utilises the "Next level invitation" function to invite the Participant to commence their Gold Award (ensuring the Participant also meets the minimum age of 16)

3.6 Implementation of the Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE).					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
Implementation of the Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE). NB: This is still in development , it is intended to be piloted by selected Award Centres during June. Full details will be shared in due course.	Adventurous Journey section. Reference: - Australian Award Handbook 6.6 2	Where there is no prospect of delivering a Practice or Qualifying AJ and there is a time-sensitive desire for Participants to complete Bronze in the coming months, a Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE) may be considered. The VBE is a virtual team experience that may be completed from home, subject to internet access, and broadly matches the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VBE should be seen as a last resort. Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures in place. Designed primarily for those young people needing to complete Bronze in the coming months. 	This is still in development as selected Award Centres are currently running trial VBEs. Contact your division for access to the VBE materials.	Participants should complete the records of the journey in the same way they would for any other Expedition or Exploration.

		<p>learning outcomes of the AJ Section.</p> <p>The VBE is intended to be used where there is a need to support a current cohort of Bronze Participants to complete their Award, in order to be able to continue offering the Award to the next cohort of young people at Bronze level.</p> <p>Adoption of the VBE for this period should alleviate difficulties of organising multiple different Bronze and Silver AJs later.</p>			
3.7 The Virtual Exploration can be used as Silver Practice.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
The Virtual Exploration can be used as Silver Practice.	<p>Adventurous Journey section.</p> <p>Reference: -Australian Award Handbook 6.9</p>	In keeping with the new approach to the Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE), Award Centres are now given the flexibility to explore using the virtual exploration approach for Silver Practice AJs.	A physical component should be incorporated in the activity and the use is primarily restricted for the preparation, planning and team building components of the practice. Within reason and where public health restrictions require it, the physical component can be an activity that is solo i.e. not as a group and with a family member.	The Materials that were created for the VBE can be adapted for the Silver Practice Journey.	Participants should complete the records of the journey in the same way they would for any other Expedition or Exploration.

			Where the Virtual Exploration option is taken up for the Silver Practice, this cannot count as the Bronze qualifier (as per the other 'VBE' temporary change. This change does not relate to Silver Qualifying Journeys.)		
3.8 AJs may be organised in a familiar environment.					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
AJs may be organised in a familiar environment.	Adventurous Journey Requirement #9. The environment chosen must be unfamiliar to all Participants. Reference:	This allowance is intended for jurisdictions where AJs can be conducted while social distancing is in place. It will address safety concerns and	<i>This change is applicable to all levels of the Award.</i> • Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social	Previous Adventurous Journey routes can be used.	No change to the ORB Participants should record their activities in the same way on the ORB.

	- Australian Award Handbook 6.2 and 6.4	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.	distancing measures in place; • This option is intended as a last resort.		
3.9 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					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
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	Adventurous Journey 14 Requirements: Requirement #11. Accommodation must Only utilise simple self-catering accommodation (e.g. shelters, tents, hostels) and be largely self-sufficient throughout the journey. Reference:	Where delivering AJs is difficult or impossible in the current environment, the preferred solution remains to postpone AJs (including all 14 Requirements) until such time as they are feasible. This allowance is intended for jurisdictions where AJs can be conducted	<i>This change is applicable to all levels of the Award.</i> • Applicable only in jurisdictions where there are ongoing lockdown/isolation/social distancing measures in place; • This option is intended as a last resort.	N / A	No change to the ORB Participants should record their activities in the same way on the ORB.

	- Australian Award Handbook 6.4, Requirement 11	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>			
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The Gold Residential Project (GRP)

Where achieving the GRP is difficult or impossible whilst COVID-19 social isolation is required or travel has been restricted, the preferred solution remains to postpone GRP's until such time as they are feasible.

3.10 Gold Residential Project changes – further development work required					
Agreed Temporary Change	Award Requirement (source)	Rationale	Boundaries for implementation	Guidance for Award Leaders	Online Record Book guidance / adaptation
A Virtual Gold Residential Project is in the process of being approved as the International Award foundation are designing a flexible set of	Australia Award Handbook 7.1 -7.9	Where there is no prospect of a participant being able to achieve the GRP normally, and there is a time-sensitive desire for Participants to	Once guidelines for a virtual GRP have been established any boundaries for implementation will be made apparent.	It is anticipated new, flexible requirements for the Gold Residential Project will be published in October.	No change to the ORB Participants should record their activities in the same way on the ORB.

temporary requirements that will enable a 'bottom-up approach' for young people to set and complete appropriate GRPs that are fit for a COVID-19 world.		complete Gold Award, A fully Virtual or hybrid version of the GRP may be possible.			
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4. Further guidance and clarity on existing Award Requirements

This section provides clarity and further guidance on some existing Award Requirements that can be used by Award Centres to address challenges identified by the International Award Foundation. The guidance should not be regarded as changes, as it is reaffirming existing policy.

4.1 Assessors/Award Assessors / Section Assessors		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Assessors/ Award Assessors /	All	Assessors cannot be family members: <i>In most circumstances, an Assessor should not be a family member. See Glossary for definition of family and possible exemptions. Handbook 2.2.2 (3)</i>

Section Assessors		<p>This requirement remains. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Anybody, other than a family member, who knows the subject better than the Participant can act as Section Assessor. ii. The Section Assessor does not have to be present in the room while the Participant is doing their activity. iii. Nor does the Section Assessor have to be actively providing instruction to the Participant (although commonly they are doing so) iv. The Assessor can keep track of a Participant's progress remotely, with updates from the Participant. In this case, a Participant should keep photo / video / diary evidence of them doing their loggable hours of activity. v. Where an existing Assessor has become uncontactable, the Participant can change Assessor mid-way through a Section. vi. If a Participant changes their Section activity mid-way through the Section, they will likely need to change their Assessor too. vii. Award Leaders should be flexible in helping Participants to identify a new Assessor – in some cases, an Award Leader may be able to act as Assessor themselves if appropriate, or in some cases some NAO/OP staff make themselves available to act as Assessors. viii. Please ensure your staff, Award Leaders and other adults delivering the Award continue to operate in accordance with local safeguarding and child protection legislation. ix. For more information on the role of Assessors: <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 2.2.2 and 3.5</p> <p>FAQ Reference: 'How can Parents assist their children to complete their Award Sections when in a remote or isolated situation?' https://dukeofed.com.au/award-leader-centre-faqs-during-covid-19/</p>
4.2 Retaining Participants / Continuing to the next Level		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Retaining Participants / Continuing to the next Level	All	<p>Participants are currently allowed to register for and move on to the next Level of the Award without completing all sections at their current Level:</p> <p><i>Participants are to be encouraged to complete all Sections of the one level of their Award that they are undertaking before progressing on to another level. However, if the Award Leader has very good cause for allowing the Participant to commence the next level then they may start with a Section at the next level provided that they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. have completed that Section (including signed off by the Award Leader) in their current level;</i> <i>b. have completed 3 Sections of the current level;</i>

		<p><i>c. have made a substantial commencement of the Section that has not been completed and have evidence that can be observed on the ORB that commencement of the Section that has not been completed is underway or was undertaken through activity planning and arrangements, such as activity and appropriate assessor selected and approved.</i></p> <p><i>d. have reached the minimum age of entry for the new level;</i></p> <p><i>e. complete the lower level before the higher level can be approved for sign-off, or the higher level will be treated as a direct entry including the need for one Section to be completed as a major.</i></p> <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 1.8.5 (9)</p> <p>FAQ Reference 'Can I continue to the next level of my Duke of Ed without having completed my current level?': https://dukeofed.com.au/participant-faqs-during-covid-19/</p> <p>Participants who are prevented from completing a Section(/s) of their Award due to COVID-19 restrictions, should be encouraged to register for and to start their activities at the next Level of the Award, before returning to finish the outstanding activity at their current Level when feasible to do so.</p> <p>For example: where a Participant cannot do their Qualifying AJ at Bronze Level but they have finished all their other Sections; they can register and begin working towards their Silver Award, logging their activities under Skill, Voluntary Service and Physical Recreation. When restrictions have eased, the Participant can then do their Qualifying Bronze AJ and achieve their Bronze Award before moving on to work on their Silver AJ.</p>
4.3 Minimum age requirements		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Minimum age requirements	All	<p>The minimum age requirements for beginning each level of the Award are 14, 15 and 16 years of age respectively. However, since the update to the IAF Operational Guidelines published in July 2018, and subsequently the Australian Award Handbook on 2019 (1.7.2), there is some flexibility built into the Award framework in this regard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I. At Bronze level, if a person is aged 13 but part of a school year /peer group where the majority are 14 years or older that young person can start their Bronze Award with the rest of the group upon the approval of the Award Leader.</i> <i>II. At Silver level, if the young person is a direct entrant to Silver, they must be 15 years old to start the Award. A young person may commence Silver earlier than 15 years old if they have completed their Bronze Award upon the approval of the Award Leader.</i> <p><i>3. No activity undertaken before a 16th birthday may be counted towards a Gold Award.</i></p>

		<p>III. At Gold level – no activities can be counted before a Participant's 16th birthday to ensure it is more of an adult challenge.</p> <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 1.7.2</p>
4.4 Breaks in activity for an extended period		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Breaks in activity for an extended period	All	<p>Participants are allowed to take a break in their activity (Handbook 1.7.2). Subject to the maximum age limit, Participants can take as long as they want to complete their Award</p> <p><i>If a Participant is required to take a break in their activities (eg due to illness, school holidays or exams) they may still count their previous activities toward their Award. Breaks are fine so long as the Participant shows regular commitment over the specified whole number of months required for the Award level they have chosen. The Award Leader may elect to extend the overall duration of the section. For example, if a Participant has had to have a 2 month break from undertaking an activity for the Silver Award then when they resume they may be required to complete this section over an 8 month period, ie. the original 6 months plus a 2 month extension.</i></p> <p>A Participant can allow for a gap in their activity logs for a Section(/s). This simply means, once they resume activity, they will need to persist for an extended period until they have logged the required amount of hours and shown sufficient progress towards their SMART Goal.</p> <p>Remember, the Award is referred to as a marathon, not a sprint!</p> <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 1.7.2</p>
4.5 Changing Activities		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Changing Activities	Skill/ Physical	Participants are allowed to change their choice of activity mid-way through a Section (Handbook 3.4):

	Recreation / Voluntary Service	<p><i>Participants do not have to undertake the same activity for the entire required time, although are encouraged to particularly for the Bronze Award. They may choose, for example, two activities such as a winter activity and a summer activity that can be split over the required time</i></p> <p>Therefore, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Participants are allowed to change their chosen activity for any level and in any Section if their original activity is not suitable to continue from home or under social distancing. This may require them to change their SMART Goal and/or their choice of Assessor too. Award Leaders should continue to recognise previously logged hours that related to the Participant's original activity; and if appropriate allow them to switch back to their original activity once lockdown/social distancing is over, if they wish.</p> <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 3.4</p> <p>FAQ</p>
4.6 Change of Major Section for Direct Entrants		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Change of Major Section for Direct Entrants	Skill/ Physical Recreation / Voluntary Service	<p>All Participants at Bronze level, and those who are Direct Entrants at Silver and Gold may change their choice of 'Major' Section:</p> <p>The Handbook Glossary, 1.7.1, 1.7.2</p> <p><i>Bronze:</i> <i>All Participants must do an extra 3 months in one of the following: Physical Recreation; or Skills; or Voluntary Service</i></p> <p><i>Silver / Gold:</i> <i>All Participants must do an extra 6 months in one of the following: Physical Recreation; or Skills; or Voluntary Service</i></p> <p>Award Centres may allow Participants to change their choice of Major Section, if continuing activity at home in an alternative Section is more feasible. In this case, the SMART Goal in each relevant section should be reviewed for suitability.</p> <p>Reference: The Handbook Glossary, 1.7.1, 1.7.2</p>

4.7 Voluntary Service in the Community		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Voluntary Service in the Community	Voluntary Service	<p>Voluntary Service activities, working with a local, national or global community organisation on a cause supporting people, the environment or animals - can be done from home.</p> <p>COVID19 represents an opportunity to use the Voluntary Service Section to make a meaningful difference in communities. Participants should be encouraged to continue engaging with community organisations; volunteering by doing roles that do not require the Participant to attend a public location. These activities could be conducted online or offline.</p> <p>Voluntary Service needs to continue to be carried out in accordance with national legislation, and that any Participant who volunteers with children or vulnerable adults has signed the relevant Safeguarding Code of Conduct.</p>
4.8 AJ preparation and provision of training		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
AJ preparation and provision of training	Adventurous Journey	<p>The AJ section often requires months of advance preparation and training on the part of Award Participants. Some preparation and training for the AJ may be conducted online; so in many cases progress with preparation and training may continue uninterrupted under isolation or social distancing measures.</p> <p>The development of technical skills relating to the chosen route, journey type and mode of transport; as well as universal skills such as planning, teamwork and leadership, can be facilitated using online resources or through remote group work. Further to this, AJ teams can collaborate remotely to agree and develop their shared Adventurous Journey Aim.</p> <p>Award Leaders may wish to reconsider the planned AJ environment and route, if the intended preparation is not feasibly delivered remotely; or if a revised risk assessment deems the health and safety risk of a planned AJ too high.</p>

4.9 Practice Journey's being shorter than Qualifying Journey's		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Practice Journey's being shorter than Qualifying Journey's	Adventurous Journey	<p>The Australian Award Handbook provides some discretion for shorter Practice Journeys if it can be confidently established by the Award Leader that the Adventurous Journey Participants have the demonstrated experience to safely undertake their proposed mode of travel in their planned environment. This means that a Bronze Practice Journey may be undertaken over 1 day and a Silver or a Gold Practice Journey may be undertaken over 1 night 2 days. This would typically be by exception but under the current circumstances with restricted opportunity for Adventurous Journey to be undertaken in 2020, this discretion may be extended by Award Leaders to recognise the reduced opportunity for undertaking AJs. The key criteria for such consideration being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated competence by the group in the mode of travel and the environment (location) and conditions (time of year) • Demonstrated overnight simple self-catering/camping experience • Demonstrated positive team dynamics • Agreed to by the Adventurous Journey Assessor • Approved by the Award Leader <p>Reference: Australian Award Handbook 3.4</p> <p>FAQ Reference: https://dukeofed.com.au/award-leader-centre-faqs-during-covid-19/</p>
4.10 Urban explorations		
Topic	Section(s) affected	Guidance
Urban explorations	Adventurous Journey	<p>The Adventurous Journey does not need to take place in a rural environment.</p> <p>Urban environments are suitable for AJs, especially where Participants choose to conduct an Exploration ('a purpose with a journey').</p>

		<p>The average minimum hours of purposeful effort per day are:</p> <p>At Bronze level - 6 hrs per day / 2 days. For an exploration, this would mean 4 hours of exploring/researching, with 2 hours of journeying per day.</p> <p>At Silver level - 7 hours per day / 3 days. For an exploration, this would mean 4 hours 40 minutes of exploring/researching, with 2 hours 20 minutes of journeying per day.</p> <p>At Gold level - 8 hours per day / 4 days. For an exploration, this would mean 5 hours 20 minutes of exploring/researching, with 2 hours 40 minutes of journeying per day.</p> <p>An Urban Exploration may be an appropriate AJ to undertake under social distancing conditions.</p> <p>Reference: - Australian Award Handbook 6.7 4d</p>
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5. What has not been approved by the IAF and the Australian Award Operator

There are a number of recommendations that were submitted by countries to the IAF that have not been approved. The reason for these not being approved was that they did not specifically address the short-term challenges associated with COVID-19 and were therefore considered 'beyond scope'.

For full transparency, and to avoid further recommendations on these topics, these were as follows:

- I. **Age-range for Gold Level** – as previously advised by International Trustees, the minimum age-range for continuing or direct at Gold is 16. This will not change in light of COVID-19 and the view of the IAF is that any young person wishing to progress to Gold will do so when they are able to. There is no time pressure.

- II. **Changes to Supervision and Assessment and size of groups for Adventurous Journeys** – it was felt that the other changes were sufficient and where AJs can be delivered 'normally' there is no need to change these requirements.
- III. **Changes to the allowed regularity of logged hours** – it was felt that, with the other changes and with clarity on how Participants can continue their activities in each Section from home, there is no need to allow for condensed logging of hours within short periods of time once isolation measures have eased.

6. Next steps, ongoing review and consultation

The International Award Foundation (IAF) and The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia are committed to ensuring that it supports Award Centres to continue to deliver the Award and stay relevant to the young people they support. The Award requirements will therefore continue to be reviewed in light of COVID19 and Award Centres should be encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions to their State/Territory Award Office.