

DofE Assessment Report's Policy

Introduction

No Limits Development and its team believe that the development of young people through adventure and expedition is paramount. A key part to reinforcing achievements and development for DofE expeditions is the "DofE assessors report".

We recognise that the way these reports are provided and added to participant records has developed over the last 5 years. We are taking this opportunity to review our approach and align with industry best practice, as well as to ensure the customer experience for both participant and client are the best possible.

Creation of Assessor Reports

It is the responsibility of the NLD instructor responsible for a team on an assessed expedition to produce a written report that meets the NLD requirements below, as well as the DofE's verification requirements. This report forms part of the evidence for the young person's overall award, and will be seen by the young person, their parent, in school verifier and external verifiers at DofE head office. It is therefore important that not only does the report meet the minimum requirements, but it offers a true reflection of the effort and experience the young person has put into their expedition.

As an experienced DofE assessor and instructor you are welcome to approach this in your own way, provided the report is a positive reflection of the experience and is tailored to each individual. It is acceptable (and an efficient approach) to have a 2-stage approach to your report, with the first paragraph being generic to the team, and the second being relevant to just that individual, as in the example below. All reports must include your name and accreditation number to end.

The Arctic Monkeys undertook an expedition through the Chilterns, in challenging weather conditions, spending a night at Braidwood scout campsite. The team met all the 20 conditions and worked well as a team to lead them all to having a safe and enjoyable experience.

Amy was an asset to her team taking a leading role with the cooking to provide a truly excellent curry on Saturday night. Her team felt her bubbly personality and motivating singing helped them get through the difficult stages of the walking, and Amy tells me she particularly enjoyed the challenge of navigating the woodland sections, allowing her to show off her orientation skills.

Well done on a really successful expedition, I look forward to seeing you progress further through the DofE.

Matt Simmon CE 122345

Gathering information from reports and delivering feedback

Again, many experienced assessors will have their own ways of doing this, and No Limits does not stipulate a particular methodology. For those who are relatively new to instructing, or who struggle gathering evidence on expeditions with relatively little contact time with students, below are a number of tips:

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- Brief teams on Day 1, that you will write a report at the end of the expedition. To help with this, ask them to keep note of any particularly memorable moments, key learning points or stand out points. This helps the report be truer reflection of the expedition from their perspective.
- Take notes and write reports as you go. This seems obvious, but with the pressures of managing multiple teams, is easily forgotten.
- Try to write reports as soon as possible whilst the memory is fresh in your mind. We realise that at the end of an expedition everyone is keen to go home but spending 15 minutes in the carpark writing some notes, greatly improves the quality of the report and saves you time later. In our experience the longer the reports are left, the harder they become!
- Try developing a process that suits you to make reports easier. One approach that is tried and tested is to have a relatively generic first paragraph, where you insert the expedition specific details. With a second paragraph combining your own observations, an observation from the individual and an observation from their team. All these are gained from asking the right questions at a quick debrief!

Delivery of feedback is not limited to reports, arguably the personal debriefs throughout the expedition are more important as they lead to increased personal confidence and allows you to reinforce good habits and perhaps coach improvements where needed. Participants should not leave expedition's waiting for their report to see if they passed. The report should be a formality reinforcing what they already know.

It goes without saying that feedback should always be delivered in a positive manner. There may be occasions where improvements are required from a team, and whilst it is acceptable to offer points for improvement, reports should always contain positive feedback on performance, and be pitched in an encouraging tone. Always keep in mind that reports will be seen by parents, school staff and DofE head office, and that those reading the report may not have the benefit of context and will therefore judge the feedback purely on what they read in your report.

Submitting reports

Moving forward we are now asking Assessors to upload their own reports directly to eDofE for all NLD schools. To balance this workload, we will no longer be asking for written reports at practice, and "staff only" clients will continue to follow their own procedures (most commonly asking for a handwritten report before you leave site).

To help you upload your reports, we will do our best to provide you a name list which contains your team, its participants, and their eDofE numbers, before an expedition. This is not always possible due to school's preferences and GDPR policies. If one is issued, please check on the ground that this is correct, or where it is not, please ensure you collect this information from your team.

To submit reports please follow the below process:

1. We recommend that you first write your expedition generic paragraph and individual paragraphs on a word document, to allow you to copy and paste into the online system, although you don't have to if you'd prefer to type each one.

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2. Go to <https://www.dofe.org/assessor/>
3. Fill out the Participants ID number. Select the level, and select "expedition".
4. Complete the Assessors Comments Box
5. Complete your name and accreditation number
6. Put "No Limits Development Instructor" in the Job title box
7. Put reports@nolimitsdevelopment.co.uk in the email box
8. Confirm and complete on the eDofE
9. Send us your invoice, letting us know you have completed all your reports.

By putting the NLD email address your report will be sent to the NLD team, who will therefore be able to confirm you have completed your teams report and authorise your invoice for payment.

The process becomes much easier in future, as it will remember all details apart from your comments, therefore making the process relatively quick,

If you have any issues with this system at all, please do just give one of the team a call and they will be happy to talk you through it.

Deferring Teams

It currently remains the case that when making the decision to defer a team, you should consult with the duty ops manager. This is not so we can influence your decision as the assessor, but to allow us to support your decision, and manage the wider implications this has within the expedition and with the client.

Where teams are to be deferred, there is not a route to a deferral form on eDofE, therefore you should send your report to the duty ops manager, who will send this on to the school where we will work with them to allow us to provide opportunities for the participants to work towards a future successful assessed expedition.

Sharing feedback and notes with other instructors

There are times when seeing feedback about a team's practice expedition allows the following instructor to provide a better development experience at assessment. An example of this would be the practice instructor passing on that whilst the team completed their practice adequately, their navigation in more complex areas, was a little lacking. This would allow us to ensure closer supervision in tricky areas next time. Without practice reports this link has gone.

It is therefore more important than ever to drop us an email if you think there is information which future instructors need to know or ensure you have shared it with the course lead who can add it to their Post Course Feedback report. We can then add it to our systems, and pop it on the future joining instructions.