****

****

**USE AND LIMITATIONS OF EXPEDITION QUALIFICATIONS**

Expedition Supervisors must be **qualified in the mode of travel** planned for the expedition. This leaflet lists the most common walking expedition leaders’ qualifications and notes the limits attached to each award.

**DofE Expedition Skills (DES)** is designed by DofE to give volunteers the basic skills to assist and lead a Bronze DofE expedition. It is a 3 day course delivered by experienced staff from a DofE Regional Office.

The use of DES is limited to approved routes following paths and tracks with 3km of a road and below 400m.

**Lowhills Award** (suitable for Bronze and most Silver routes). This is a local qualification accredited by Adventure Scotland (AS) for DofE group leaders operating in the Grampian area (including Moray and Aberdeenshire) only.

The Lowhills Award is subject to the following Limitations:

1. **Summer conditions** only, generally between May-October inclusive***.***
2. Routes are to be primarily path and track based, with no more than very short sections of untracked terrain between established paths.
3. No planned water crossings except for simple steps across small burns that cross established paths and are no more than ankle deep.
4. Routes must be known to the leader.
5. Routes are to be within approximately 5km of a tarred road.
6. Below 600m.
7. In the area to the east of the A9 between Dunkeld and Inverness and north of a line drawn from Dunkeld to Montrose

.

**Basic Expedition Leader Award** (**BELA**) (suitable for Bronze and some Silver). This is a national recognised award which is being replaced by Lowland Leader. Holders of a BELA qualification will be able to lead DofE groups on routes within the limit of the Award.

Limitations are similar to Lowland Leader.

**Walking Group Leader** (**WGL**) qualification (suitable for Bronze and some Silver routes). This is a national recognised award which has been replaced by Lowland Leader. Holders of a WGL qualification will be able to lead DofE groups on routes within the limit of the Award.

Limitations are the same as Lowland Leader.

**Lowland Leader** (suitable for Bronze and some Silver routes) is a national award accredited by Mountain Training UK. The Lowland Leader syllabus comprises a 2 day training course and a 2 day assessment. Candidattes need a minimum of 10 logged walking days prior to training and 20 logged days prior to assessment. Logged days must include 6 hours walking plus an element of learning (ie new routes, new skills).

A number of private companies are licensed to deliver Lowland Leader training and assessment.

The Award is subject to the following limitations:

1. Summer conditions (ie when there is no unavoidable snow or ice on any part of the route).
2. Routes must follow paths or tracks that are both marked on a map and clearly visible on the ground and that do not require navigation across untracked areas.
3. Water crossings to be by bridges or other recognised water crossing points.
4. Walks must not cross any hazardous terrain (eg cliffs, very steep slopes, water hazards etc).
5. Routes should stay “below the tree line” (nominally around 500m).
6. Routes should be within 3km away from a key access point such as a car park or lay-by. Potential escape routes should also lie within the scope of the defined terrain for the Lowland Leader award.

**Mountain Leader** Award (ML) accredited by Mountain Training UK for Bronze, Silver (above 600m) and Gold expeditions. Volunteers who have completed the Mountain Leader Training (MLT) course can lead on Bronze or Silver routes (below 600m).

The Mountain Leader qualification is limited to summer conditions. Although the remit opens access to wild and remote country, qualifying routes still need to be selected to avoid hazards such as steep ground and water crossings.

Exceptionally the DofE Manager may recognise other qualifications/experience on a case by case basis and in consultation with AS.

For **other modes of transport** (cycle, canoe etc.) supervisors must hold an appropriate National Governing Body (NGB) Award in the mode of travel and the nature of the planned route. As the training structure for these sports is very complicated please consult with the DofE Office to identify the appropriate qualifications or experience required.

Expedition Supervisors must hold a current **First Aid Certificate.** Course requirements are for 16 hour of instruction and cover emergencies in the outdoors. There are many course providers available and DofE Moray will organise regular training courses applicable for supervisors.