

You begin the Gold level after GCSE's when you enter the sixth form and, as you would expect, the expectations are higher. The Skill and Physical Recreation sections have to be six and twelve months minimum (again, you can choose), and the Service Section is now twelve months.

The Expedition.

The practice expedition is just before Easter in the Brecon Beacons, at Dulwich Field Centre. There are planning days at the end of January and the expedition consists of two training days on location immediately followed by a four-day expedition. This involves three overnight camps and a total route of about 80 km.

The Qualifying expedition will be in the third week of July and will either be in the Lake District or Snowdonia. As for the practice expedition there will be planning days in May and then two training days on location immediately prior to the actual expedition.

The Residential section.

Once you have completed the four sections at Gold level, you must complete the Residential section. This will involve you in a project where you work with a group of young people (none of whom you know) for around five days. This gives you the opportunity to meet new people, work as part of a team and show initiative. For more details go to www.dofe.org and check out the residential section.