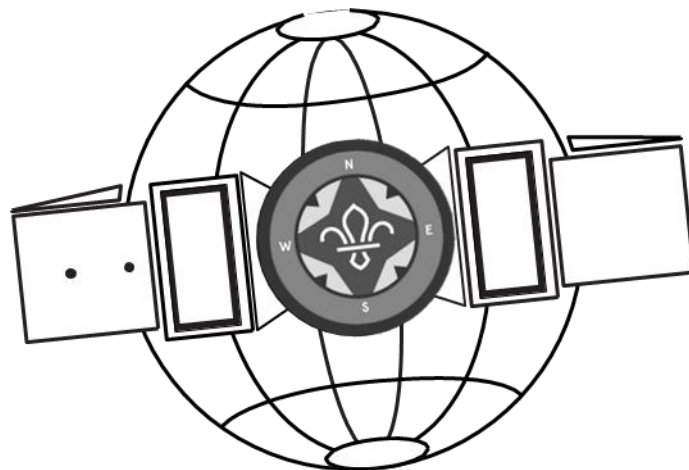


# REACH OUT AND EXPLORE!

## The Explorer Belt Award Information for participants

September 2019  
Fourth Edition



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## Notes

Although in some parts of the British Isles Scout Counties are known as Areas or Islands – or in one case Bailiwick – for ease of reading this publication simply refers to County/Counties. In Scotland there is no direct equivalent for County or Area. In Scotland, Scouting is organised into Districts and Regions, each with distinct responsibilities. Some ‘County’ functions are the responsibility of Scottish Regions, while others lie with Scottish Districts.

# Introduction

The Explorer Belt is a challenge of a lifetime. It is a chance to take part in a 10-day expedition that brings you a real understanding of a different country, its culture and way of life. You will develop this understanding by travelling through your chosen country, working as part of a small team to complete a series of projects and, most importantly, by meeting local people. It is an experience and an achievement that you will remember for the rest of your life.

The expedition can be undertaken by a team travelling independently, or as part of a larger contingent of teams visiting the country as an organised expedition. It can be undertaken using a variety of modes of travel including on foot, by bicycle, by canoe, or on horseback.

You will train and work as part of a small team to plan and undertake your expedition. As a team you will need to source your equipment, plan your route and budget, and decide on your major project. All of this will take time, so ensure that you have started your planning early.

## So how do I gain my Explorer Belt?

This pack will be a valuable tool for you to work through the various stages of the award, both during the planning and the actual expedition.

The expedition will be challenging, but it is incredibly rewarding. There are many people out there who can provide invaluable help and support as you face the challenges that come with the various stages of planning and preparing for your expedition.

This pack has been produced for young people interested in carrying out a self-led expedition, but could also be used for those participating in an organised expedition. If aged 16–18 years old, you may only participate in an organised expedition supported by an in-country leadership team, rather than being self-led. This means that some of the information may be less relevant to you, as certain aspects of the expedition would be organised for you.

Information for adults supporting Explorer Belt expeditions can be found in the resource entitled *Helping Them Reach Out and Explore!*



# Requirements of the Explorer Belt

## Registration

Register your intention to complete the award at [www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt](http://www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt)

## Membership

Be an Explorer Scout aged 16 or over, a Scout Network member, or a member of the Senior Section of Girlguiding aged 16 or over.

## Expedition

Undertake a 10-day expedition as part of a team\* outside of the UK with a minimum travelling time of 50 hours over the 10 days, by foot, cycle, horse, canoe, boat or dinghy. If aged 16–18 years old, you may only participate in an organised expedition supported by an in-country leadership team, rather than being self-led.

The use of public transport is acceptable as part of the travelling time, where opportunities to meet people would otherwise be missed.

\*Minimum starting number of young people per team is three with the minimum of two per team completing the expedition. Cover the following areas during your preparation and expedition:

Competence	Budgeting	Logbook	Projects
Show that you are competent in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigation skills</li> <li>• Expedition cooking</li> <li>• Lightweight camping</li> <li>• Language of the country being visited</li> <li>• Choosing acceptable accommodation</li> <li>• Fitness</li> <li>• Proficiency in mode of travel</li> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• First aid (covering First Response as a minimum)</li> </ul>	Agree the budget before the expedition and record spending throughout the trip.	Keep a logbook of the expedition which records places visited, the route taken, project work undertaken and personal thoughts.	Complete one major project selected by the team which is undertaken throughout the expedition.  Complete at least 10 minor projects which may be chosen by the team, leadership team, peers or a mixture of these.

## Debrief

Take part in a debrief of the expedition with your mentor and leadership team. Ideally this should be within 24 hours of the 10th day of the expedition or within 24 hours of your return to the UK.

## Presentation

Make a presentation including all elements of your award to the assessment panel and other invited guests of your experiences and achievements.

## Assessments

Your expedition, project work and presentation will be assessed by an assessment panel including your mentor to determine if you have successfully achieved your Explorer Belt. Final sign-off of the award is the responsibility of a commissioner at UK, County level or District Commissioner in Scotland (see page 12 for further guidance).

# Awards process – Getting started

If you want to complete your Explorer Belt you need to register your intention with UK Headquarters at [www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt](http://www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt).

You may choose your expedition team from your own section or join an expedition being organised by a District, County, Region or country in the UK. If aged 16–18 years old, you may only participate in an organised expedition supported by an in-country leadership team, rather than being self-led.

The team should decide which country and possibly which region of the country you will carry out your expedition in. You should select your chosen expedition area to maximise your opportunity to learn about the culture of the country you are visiting.

The Assistant County Commissioner International or equivalent will be able to advise and support you with selecting the destination country and putting you in touch with the relevant Scout association. They will also be able to provide the team with a Visits Abroad pack which contains all the information you will need to help your plans.

You will be assigned a mentor who will advise and support you, and provide training when needed to help you complete the Explorer Belt successfully. If you are organising your own expedition, then you should agree your mentor with your leader. Your mentor may be your Section Leader, one of the leaders on an organised expedition, or someone else in Scouting. They will ideally have personal experience and understanding of the Explorer Belt requirements and spirit.

Your assessment panel will include your mentor, an ACC International or equivalent, peers and your leadership team (either the expedition support team if you are going on an organised expedition, or your section leadership team). If you are completing a self-led expedition you may need to contact these people to set up the assessment panel – your mentor will help with this.

The role of the assessment panel is to review the quality of your expedition and experiences gained, by talking to the team members and observing your presentation. They also help to set the minor projects for your team. They will recommend to the relevant commissioner that you achieve the award.

The award is signed off by a commissioner at UK or County level (e.g. UK Scout Network Commissioner, Assistant County Commissioner (Explorers), Assistant County Commissioner (Scout Network), or equivalent roles such as Deputy County Commissioner (Programme)). In Scotland, sign-off of the award is by the District Explorer Scout Commissioner or District Commissioner.



# Planning your journey

Planning for any expedition abroad takes time. You should consider your outline plans at least six months in advance. Talk with your mentor, Section Leader or commissioner as early as possible about your plans.

General information and advice on planning visits abroad is available from your ACC International/Adviser and from UKHQ.

## Picking your team

An Explorer Belt team is made up of a minimum of three members, with the requirement that at least two complete the expedition. It is good practice to have no more than seven in a team.

Where possible, teams should not be made up of a mixture of Explorer Scouts and Scout Network members. Where under 18s are present, the Activity and Nights Away Permit Scheme rules must apply. For under 18 only groups Nights Away Event Passports are issued to all of the group by a Nights Away Permit Holder. To be issued with a Nights Away Event Passport you will need to speak with your Explorer Scout Leader. Where teams are all over the age of 18, the Adults in Adventurous Activities rules must be followed.

It could be that you are the only member of your Unit/Network that wants to undertake the award, in which case you could join another small team looking to complete the award from across the County, Area, Region or even country.

An important factor to consider when deciding your team is that you will be working with these people in close proximity for a long period of time.

## Choosing your location

Many factors will affect your choice of country. You should start by selecting a country of interest to you, which can be visited in the time that you have available and is within your financial scope. At this stage, you should also check with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office that it is safe to travel to your chosen destination: [gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice). You will then need to draw up a budget and investigate various travel options.

Collect as much background information as possible on the country and select an appropriate subject for your major project. Alternatively, you may already have determined to investigate a specific subject, and this may indicate your choice of country. The topic selected should not be too specialised – it should enable you to conduct a meaningful study on the strength of chance encounters with ordinary people.

**Travel:** You need to consider which method of travel you will adopt to get to the start of the expedition. Whatever mode of transport you choose you should plan and organise tickets well in advance. You may need to check local legislation for the country you are visiting or travelling through. Make sure all your travel providers are covered by The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA).

**Culture:** It can be really handy to learn the language of the country and be aware of any religious customs or events that may affect any project work or travel arrangements. Further information can be found by visiting the Foreign & Commonwealth Office website: [gov.uk/fco](http://gov.uk/fco).

**Visits Abroad guidance:** This can be obtained from your ACC International or is available online at [scouts.org.uk/visitsabroad](http://scouts.org.uk/visitsabroad). This includes guidance flow charts to help you plan your expedition and the relevant forms. These forms need to be completed and sent to the relevant adviser/ commissioner at least three months in advance for Europe and six for outside Europe. There is a checklist provided to make sure you have covered everything you need. It is also advisable that the team has an International Letter of Introduction. This is available from your ACC International or from Scout Store.

Passports/official papers: When travelling abroad you need to make sure you have a valid passport with at least six months remaining before expiry. Some countries require you to apply for a visa before arrival. Check requirements for the country you are visiting on the Foreign & Commonwealth Office website. Obtaining a visa can be a lengthy process so don't leave it until the last minute – apply in plenty of time. Any non-UK citizens in the team should check visa requirements as soon as possible.

Insurance: You and any leaders travelling will need to arrange travel insurance as early as possible before making any major payments. This can provide cover for cancellation outside your control (e.g. close family bereavement and flight cancellations), sickness, injury, medical treatment abroad and repatriation. Travel insurance is available from many providers. Always check the conditions and exclusions of your travel insurance policy, as cheaper policies will usually have less cover. Unity (Scout Insurance Services), a wholly owned subsidiary of The Scout Association, has designed its travel policies with Scouting in mind, covering all recognised Scouting activities: <https://www.unityinsuranceservices.co.uk/>.

Medical: Before you travel you may need to have some vaccinations; check with your GP at least six months in advance. The dates of your vaccinations, most recent dentist visits, and health conditions should be recorded on a health form and shared with your leader and emergency contact. It is worth visiting [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) for health information when travelling abroad.

If you are travelling within Europe you should apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The EHIC lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. EHICs are free and further information can be found at [nhs.uk/ehic](http://nhs.uk/ehic).

## Planning your route

Your choice of country and region will naturally influence your route. Expeditions should not take place in remote, hazardous terrain since the projects need to involve contact with local communities. Thus, a 10-day high mountain traverse would not be appropriate. It may not be possible for you to plan your route in detail prior to departure due to map availability, but as a minimum you should provide a rough outline of where you plan to go. Your route must provide a test of your skill and initiative while enabling you to make a study of your selected main project. Taking part in adventurous activities while in new and different countries can bring an exciting new element to your Explorer Belt adventure. If you are undertaking any adventurous activities while undertaking your trip, there is some guidance available to ensure that it falls within the rules: [scouts.org.uk/internationalactivities](http://scouts.org.uk/internationalactivities).

Planning where you will sleep at night is also important. Accommodation may come in a range of forms including camping, hostels, and staying with local Scout groups. Staying with local families is only allowed for over 18's. Planning which town/village you will be staying each night will help you to plan and gauge the accommodation available. Journeying needs to be during daylight hours and so times of sunset and sunrise should be considered. The route should include at least 50 hours of travel by foot, horse, canoe or cycle. The use of public transport as part of the travelling time is acceptable where opportunities to meet people would otherwise be missed.

For further guidance the skills sheet on hiking should be used along with guidance [FS120409 Route Plan](#).

# Useful Checklist

<b>By six months before departure</b>
Decide on your team (minimum of three, maximum of seven people per team) Choose the country to be visited (check the FCO travel advice)
Discuss your plans and gain approval with your mentor
Obtain passports (and visas if necessary) Start research on the country chosen
Obtain information and advice from your ACC (I) or equivalent
Obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) free from the NHS (if appropriate) and seek advice regarding any health precautions required
Establish the budget
Make travel bookings
Arrange travel insurance
Plan fundraising
Start thinking about how you can demonstrate that you meet the required competencies, and what further training you need to do
<b>By three months before departure</b>
Complete Visits Abroad form and obtain an International Letter of Introduction (six months in advance for countries outside Europe)
Agree your major project with your mentor
Carry out background research on your major project
Obtain local maps
Book any accommodation/campsites necessary for before and after the expedition
Ensure an InTouch system has been planned
Complete your risk assessment for your expedition
<b>By one month before departure</b>
Prepare equipment, tentage, etc.
Learn some of the language
Complete relevant expedition training
Confirm your InTouch system
Plan a general route and share it with your mentor
<b>During the last month before expedition</b>
Arrange currency, travellers cheques, etc.
Send news releases and arrange for local publicity
<b>After the expedition</b>
Have a debrief with your mentor/expedition support team to reflect on your expedition
Give a presentation about your expedition
Use your award to boost your CV



# Safety and Risk Assessments

When travelling abroad it is important to consider safety at all times. As with all activities in Scouting, Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) must be adhered to, with particular attention to Chapter 9: Activities – [scouts.org.uk/POR](https://scouts.org.uk/POR). For this reason it is important to follow the correct procedures and submit forms to the relevant people for authorisation in plenty of time before your expedition. The independent nature of the Explorer Belt expedition can introduce many risks, but good preparation can ensure you have a safe and fun experience.

Particular areas to consider in relation to safety would include methods of travel, routes taken, accommodation, clothing, food, water/dehydration, becoming a victim of crime, ill health, any existing health issues and injury. You will need to make sure that the group first aid kit has sufficient contents relevant to the activity undertaken, for example blister repair material and suncream. When planning your Explorer Belt you will need to be careful and consider the abilities of your party with regard to travel times and terrain.

More information regarding safety can be found at [www.scouts.org.uk/safety](https://www.scouts.org.uk/safety).

You will need to complete a risk assessment for your trip. When completing your risk assessment you need to consider a number of factors. You should identify potential hazards you may encounter during the expedition, consider how likely they are to happen and decide how these can be addressed in order to minimise the risk. You will then need to communicate these solutions to all involved in the most effective way you can. Help in understanding and how to do a risk assessment can be found at [www.scouts.org.uk/safety](https://www.scouts.org.uk/safety).

During the expedition, unexpected events or opportunities may occur for which you have not carried out a risk assessment. In such cases these will need to be risk assessed at the time and decisions and reasoning recorded in your logbook. An example of this could be that a road closure or some other unforeseen event forces you to change your route. As a team you would need to decide on the safest alternative based on the current circumstances.

# Are you ready for this?

You must complete training appropriate to the expedition you plan. Training should cover expedition safety and emergencies, physical preparation and some discussion about the best ways of approaching and meeting local people for help with projects.

It is essential that, by the end of the training, you understand that the aim of the Explorer Belt is to develop a better understanding of another country, its people and way of life. Teams that approach the Explorer Belt as a purely physical challenge are unlikely to achieve the requirements.

The level of training, guidance and support required before you set off will depend very much on your needs and prior experience. You must be able to demonstrate that you are competent in the following areas (based on the decision of your mentor):

- Navigation skills
- Expedition cooking
- Lightweight camping
- Language
- Choosing acceptable accommodation
- Fitness
- Proficiency in mode of travel – foot/horse/canoe/cycle/ sailing/etc.
- Team building
- First aid training (covering First Response as a minimum)

There is no checklist or set standard of competency for each of these areas – it is up to your mentor to make a judgement based on their own expertise, the people in your team, the destination country and other plans for the trip. Essentially, your mentor needs to be comfortable that your team will be able to deal with the challenges of the expedition when in- country where help may not be immediately available.

# Budgeting/ Finances

There are many different factors that will affect the cost of the expedition. You may find that you already have a budget in mind that will have determined the destination. So, what do you need to budget for?

- Travel costs – research which method of travel to your chosen country is available, how long it will take and how much it will cost at the time you wish to travel. Not only do you need to transport yourself but you will have equipment as well. It is worth comparing lots of different methods of travel if these are available and comparing the time it will take against how much it will cost
- Daily expedition budget – what is your team's daily budget going to be? Find out how much food and water is going to cost before you go so that you can set yourself a realistic daily budget. Don't forget that at times you may have to rely on local campsites, so it is important to plan for this
- You should also aim to have a contingency fund of about 10% on top of the total budget in case of emergencies or unexpected price increases

Possible additional costs to consider include:

- Passport, any visas you may need, vaccinations and insurance
- During your expedition it may be necessary to use public transport at times. This needs to be taken into account when planning your daily budget
- Additional accommodation and living costs. Some people choose to spend time in the country before their expedition to acclimatise and get their bearings. You may also appreciate a day or two at the end of the expedition to relax and reflect on the past 10 days
- Souvenirs of the visit and materials for presentations
- You should now have a total cost for the expedition so you can work out how much it is going to cost each person. Where possible pay for things in pounds sterling before departing and buy some currency prior to travel. It is also advisable to take a mixture of cash and travellers cheques or have a pre-paid card which can be topped up with money from home.

## Grant Schemes

Think about how you are going to fund your expedition. It may be possible to apply for grants or undertake some fundraising activities to subsidise the cost. A grant to assist international visits and exchanges is available from the International Fund managed by the International Programme team at UKHQ. Applications to the International Fund must be made at least three months in advance of when the money is required and it is not guaranteed that a grant will be approved. Other sources of potential funding could be available locally, or from the European Commission, via [erasmusplus.org.uk](http://erasmusplus.org.uk).

For more information on the above schemes, fundraising suggestions and to apply to the Headquarters International Fund see BP260006 Fundraising for Visits Abroad or the Fundraising section of Member Resources on [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk).

## Equipment/ Kit List

You will be carrying everything you need for the whole 10 days so it is important that:

- You remember everything you need
- It is of a standard that can survive the 10 days
- You can still pick your rucksack up once it is full

It is important that you have the right footwear for the type of expedition you are undertaking. Walking boots need to be worn in and not brand new. You also need to make sure you have appropriate clothing and equipment for the mode of travel and the climate.

You will largely be living off the food of the country being visited, but you should be prepared to take some dehydrated expedition food as a reserve. Also check which fuels are readily available for your cooking equipment in your chosen country.

Generally a loaded pack should not weigh more than a quarter of your body weight. However, it is not advisable to regularly carry more than 13.5 kg (about 30 lb) as it can affect your health in the long term.

## Personal Kit List (depending on climate)

- Rucksack and liner
- Survival bag
- Whistle
- Watch
- Uniform shirt and scarf
- T-shirts
- Jumper/fleece
- Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Socks
- Underclothes
- Trousers/shorts – lightweight trousers with the ability to zip off the legs for shorts are great as you can have shorts and trousers but reduce the amount of weight you have to carry
- Lightweight towel
- Swimwear
- Scarf, hat and gloves
- Sun hat, sun cream and sunglasses
- Sleeping bag
- Lightweight roll mat or similar
- Bowl, mug, water bottle/water carrier, lightweight cutlery
- Torch, batteries with spares and a spare bulb
- Personal first aid kit
- Toothbrush and other personal washing items which cannot be shared
- Emergency food rations
- Passport (check that it is still in date and will be so at time of arrival back to the UK)
- EHIC Card (for travel in Europe, but check that it is still valid in the country you visit and in date)
- Visa
- Logbook and pen
- Boots/shoes and a spare pair of laces

## Team Kit

- Lightweight tent(s)
- Cooking stoves and fuel (look into where you can source the fuel as due to transportation you may not be able to take it with you)
- Matches and/or disposable lighter
- Cooking pans
- Duct tape
- Mobile phone and charger
- Camera (optional)
- Map(s) and case
- Compass
- Clothes washing powder
- Washing items which can be shared such as toothpaste, antibacterial handwash, and shampoo
- Tissues/toilet paper
- First aid kit
- Pocket knife
- Sewing kit
- Travel guidebook
- Phrasebook/swatch cards
- Aids to project work such as pencils and badges

The lists above are not exhaustive and depending on your mode of travel, destination, climate and team members there may be other items which you will need. It can often be worth leaving some space in your bag for items you may collect throughout the expedition such as leaflets, maps and other small souvenirs.

When you're packing think about how you can reduce weight. For example, take a large plastic mug that can double up as a bowl; sun cream that can also be used as moisturiser; multi-purpose soap which can be used for washing dishes, clothes and hair; and old clothes which can be thrown away once worn.

Specific equipment, resources, requirements and regulations relevant to alternative modes of travel (cycle/horse/canoe/ boat) have to be considered. Advice and guidance should be sought from an appropriately experienced individual when undertaking the expedition using these modes of travel.

# Projects

There are two types of projects within the Explorer Belt: major projects which are selected by the team, and minor projects which are set by the assessing panel and by your peers (e.g. other Explorer Scouts or Scout Network members). The aim of both the major and minor projects is to bring you into close contact with people that you meet in the communities you are travelling through.

The projects are not an academic exercise. While you are encouraged to keep some record of the work that you have done for the projects, there is not a requirement to have a written report for each project.

## Major Project

The major project should be chosen by the team but will need to be approved by your mentor. Before confirming the major project you should do some research to ensure that it is going to be feasible to complete. The major project should take around 15 hours to complete.

A good major project will be one that:

- Is interesting to all members of your team
- Provides each member with a chance to learn more about people and their culture
- Is unique to the country that you are visiting
- Encourages the team to meet local people and provides opportunities for this to happen
- Is not focused on a single place, thing or day
- Is agreed by each member of the team, and with your mentor

When thinking about possible projects think about what your interests and hobbies are, look at maps of the area and websites to find out about the history and traditions of the places you will be visiting. There is a list of example projects that may give you ideas at [www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt/projects](http://www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt/projects).

## Minor Projects

The minor projects are set by the assessing panel and your peers.

Good minor projects should:

- Be flexible enough to be achievable
- Need help from local people in order to complete
- Prompt you to do something that you may otherwise miss
- Be based on something unique to the area being visited
- Avoid the subject of the major project
- Encourage you to take part in an aspect of the local lifestyle
- Take around one hour to complete

It is useful for you to be able to choose some of your projects from a longer list of projects, so that you have a level of flexibility throughout your expedition.

The actual timing of when you are provided with your minor projects will be decided by the leaders who are supervising or assessing your expedition. For example, this could be on arrival in the country, at the point that you start your expedition, or day by day.

For examples of minor projects, visit [www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt/projects](http://www.scouts.org.uk/explorerbelt/projects).



# Logbook

The purpose of the logbook is to help you to keep personal notes during the expedition, to record the things that have happened, and things that you have seen and done. The logbook is not assessed, but it is something that you will use to help you in preparing for your debrief and, more importantly, your presentation. Before your expedition it is important to agree whether you will be keeping individual logs or a team one.

Key facts to include in your logbook about the expedition are:

- Distance travelled
- Route taken (including your overnight location)
- Any public transport used
- Money spent
- Your menu
- Work on your projects
- Personal impressions and feelings
- Weather
- Items collected locally (menus, postcards, tickets, etc.)
- Names of people that you have met and the help that they gave

It is better to complete the logbook as you go through the expedition, as you will quickly forget some of the smaller details. Ensure that you record as much as you can in your logbook, as it will help you to remember the order in which things happened. It is also useful to take plenty of photographs and videos to record experiences as they happen.

Remember that your logbook will survive many years after your memory of the expedition has faded. It is a fantastic document to read years later to reflect on your experiences. If you do a collective log rather than individual logbooks it is worth making copies for each member of the team.

## Typical day

No two expeditions, or two days, are the same as every expedition varies greatly. However, a typical day may run something like this...

- Get up early to get the most out of the day
- Have a good breakfast and pack up equipment
- Walk in the morning when it is cooler, and give yourself more time to find overnight accommodation in the evening once the journeying time is complete
- Keep to main roads and pathways with lots of opportunities to meet local people
- Stop off for coffee/meet local people and ask for advice on project work
- Carry out some major project work
- Buy lunch in a local shop and eat under the vines in the shade
- Continue journey, including time to achieve a minor project
- Arrive at destination, sit in a café talking to local people
- Choose appropriate accommodation
- Check in with leadership team
- Get taken to local community/Scout event
- Dinner with locals you've made contact with
- Update logbook and plan the next day
- Sleep

## The end game

Once the Explorer Belt expedition has been completed you will have an extraordinary sense of achievement. At this stage the end game begins. You should start to think ahead to your Explorer Belt presentation and order your thoughts while things are still fresh in your mind.

### Debriefing

Your team will be given the opportunity to talk about your experiences, with the expedition support team or your mentor. The debriefing will take place within 24 hours of the final day of your expedition, or ideally within 24 hours after your return to the UK if there is no supporting team within the country you are visiting. This debriefing is done to help your team reflect on:

- What you have done, including the projects you have completed
- The people you have met
- How your views about the country visited have developed
- How you worked as a team

- How appropriate your planning and preparation for the expedition was
- Individual and team highs and lows of the expedition
- Any dangers/issues for any expedition in the area in the future

Your logbook should be reviewed, and you might want to make additional notes on topics based on the discussion. The debriefing is not part of your assessment and no judgements should or will be made.

## Presentation

On returning home, you and your team should make your presentation as soon as is practical and certainly within three months, while events and memories are fresh in your minds. This presentation will be to your assessment panel and an audience. The audience may be your Explorer Scout Unit, a District Explorer Scout meeting, a local Scout Network or the District AGM. Your leader will help you decide which audience might be appropriate for your presentation.

Your logbook should be used to help plan the presentation. The best presentations are well ordered and well presented, but remember you are being assessed on the content rather than the delivery.

- Use visual aids to help make your presentation more interesting. Photographs or video clips taken during the expedition are a great way to illustrate your talk. Remember, however, that there are many other ways to make an interesting presentation without relying on technology
- Be enthusiastic when making your presentation
- Organise who is going to say what
- No presentation should last more than 30–45 minutes
- Your audience might find it interesting if you have had time to decorate the hall where you plan to make your presentation with material you have used or obtained during the expedition. This could include maps of your route, pamphlets, leaflets or posters describing different aspects of the places visited and items of local produce

- You may consider some local foods for the audience to sample, or demonstrate some local customs, particularly if these were included in your minor projects

## Assessment

The assessment panel will base their decision on:

- How much you have developed your knowledge of the country, people and way of life
- How much your team have developed personally and as a team from the experience
- Whether your expedition meets the award requirements and achieved its aim

It is expected that normally all members of the team would receive the award, unless there are exceptional reasons why this is not appropriate.

## The award process

The presentation and a discussion with your team normally help the assessment panel to make their decision. After the presentation, if the assessment panel are happy that you have fulfilled the award requirements, they should inform the commissioner at UK or County level (UK Scout Network Commissioner, Assistant County Commissioner (Scout Network), Assistant County Commissioner (Explorers), or equivalent roles), or if in Scotland, the District Explorer Scout Commissioner or District Commissioner, who is responsible for sign-off.

The commissioner should contact you to briefly talk about your achievements before they sign off the award.

In the event that you don't agree with the assessment panel's decision, the commissioner signing off the award should be contacted in the first instance to provide assistance. The commissioner has the final say, as they are the person signing off the award.

Successful teams receive a badge, certificate and the Explorer Belt, which is a belt with a special buckle. Arrangements should be made for a presentation of the award on a suitable occasion. Success in this award is a major achievement and should be recognised as such.

# Using your Explorer Belt

## Spreading the word

Now that you have completed your Explorer Belt, you should shout about it in your local media. We don't expect you to do this on your own; your local Media Development Managers (MDMs)/Assistant Regional Commissioner (Communications) (ARC (Comms)) are there to help you. They will know the best places to get your stories heard and your achievements acknowledged.

If you do not know who your MDM/ARC (Comms) is, speak to your leader, who will be able to put you in touch with them. Why not offer to share your experiences with other young people in your area by giving a presentation to local Scout Troops, Explorer Units or Network? Your leader will be able to help you with this if you're not sure how to go about it.

Don't forget to log your experiences on Globe Trekker – an interactive online tool that enables you to share and learn about other people's experiences during visits abroad.

[www.scouts.org.uk/globetrekker](http://www.scouts.org.uk/globetrekker).

## Boosting your CV

Completing your Explorer Belt is a big achievement, and something you should highlight on your CV.

The content of the award is highly regarded by tutors and employers. Including it on your CV demonstrates to a potential employer that you are committed, motivated and possess leadership and communication skills. It will help you stand out from the crowd. Don't forget to include it in your personal statement on your UCAS application form too.

For more information about how you can use your Scouting experiences to boost your CV and improve your chances when applying for higher education or jobs, take a look at Get Ahead: Scouting and employability: A Guide for Explorers and Network members. [scouts.org.uk/getahead](http://scouts.org.uk/getahead).

## Support an Explorer Belt

After successfully completing your Explorer Belt you may wish to support other young people in gaining

the award. You could be part of an assessment panel, help make up part of a support team, or even be a mentor. If you are interested, ask your leader or commissioner how you can get involved.

# General Guidance

## Links to other award

Subject to approval, completing your Explorer Belt expedition may also count towards other awards including:

- Chief Scout's Platinum/Diamond Award – the Explorer Belt expedition can count towards the expedition challenge
- Queen's Scout Award (QSA) – One of the requirements of the QSA is to: 'Complete six activities from the list of International, Environment and Values activities'. One of the suggested activities on the International list is 'Complete your Explorer Belt'. The Explorer Belt Award can only be used to fulfil this requirement of the QSA and may not be counted as the expedition or residential elements
- as the participant will know the other Explorer Belt team members before their expedition, and will not be travelling in wild country
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) – Explorer Belt expeditions cannot be used for the expedition element of the DofE Award as the two sets of requirements do not match each other. The Explorer Belt cannot be used for the residential element as the participants will know the team of people doing the award before they set off
- Scouts of the World Award (SOWA) – Explorer Belt expeditions cannot be used to cover the SOWA voluntary service requirement
- Further information on the Chief Scout's, Queen's Scout and DofE Awards can be found on the Member Resources area on [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk)

## Explorer Belts with members of Girlguiding

Members of the Senior Section of Girlguiding, aged 16 or over, can complete their Explorer Belt Award.

A mixed Scouting and Guiding expedition can help participants to better understand each other's organisation, perhaps leading to more joint activities locally before and after the expedition itself.

The team and core team (if applicable) should be aware of differing rules and practices that should be accommodated; these are set out in the current edition of The Guiding Manual (<http://guidingmanual.guk.org.uk>) and POR ([www.scouts.org.uk/por](http://www.scouts.org.uk/por)). Early co-operation between Scout and Guide members is essential if you are considering an expedition with members of Girlguiding.

Further information about joint activities with Girlguiding can be found within guidance [FS120007 Joint Adventurous Activities with Girlguiding](#).

## Further Contacts

Although you should seek advice and guidance locally in the first instance, you may find the following national contacts useful.

UK Headquarters are responsible for the content of Explorer Belt, how it fits into the wider context of the youth programme, this team can advise on a range of matters, including:

- providing details of your Assistant County/Area
- Commissioner (International) who can support you through the Visits Abroad process
- putting you in contact with others who have undertaken the Explorer Belt, who may be able to offer advice and assistance

For an easy way to find all of the relevant information regarding activities check out the A-Z list of activities at [www.scouts.org.uk/a-z](http://www.scouts.org.uk/a-z)  
Tel: 020 8433 7100  
Fax: 020 8433 7103  
Email: [info.centre@scouts.org.uk](mailto:info.centre@scouts.org.uk)

**Country HQs** – can support with providing local contacts and with the administration of the award.

- **Scouts Scotland**  
[www.scouts-scotland.org.uk](http://www.scouts-scotland.org.uk)  
Tel: 01383 419073  
Email: [shq@scouts-scotland.org.uk](mailto:shq@scouts-scotland.org.uk)
- **Scouts Cymru**  
[www.scoutswales.org.uk](http://www.scoutswales.org.uk)  
Tel: 01446 795277

Email: [admin@scoutswales.org.uk](mailto:admin@scoutswales.org.uk)

- **Northern Ireland**  
[www.scoutsni.com](http://www.scoutsni.com)  
Tel: 028 90 492829  
Email: [info@scoutsni.org](mailto:info@scoutsni.org)

**Girlguiding** – if members of Girlguiding are involved with your expedition, their headquarters will be able to advise on relevant issues.

[www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7834 6242  
Email: [info@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:info@girlguiding.org.uk)

**Foreign & Commonwealth Office** – a useful research and news resource, providing travel tips and warnings for all countries around the world.  
[gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

**NHS Travel Health** – provides health advice for travellers including travel vaccinations, travel insurance, practical advice and how to obtain medical treatment abroad.  
[www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/TravelHealth](http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/TravelHealth)

**Where to stay in Europe** – an online resource for finding campsites and Scout/Guide centres across Europe. [www.scout.org/node/20623](http://www.scout.org/node/20623)

**Globe Trekker** – an interactive online tool that enables you to learn about other people's experiences during visits abroad and to provide feedback on your Explorer Belt on your return.  
[globetrekker.scouts.org.uk](http://globetrekker.scouts.org.uk)

**Fundraising for Visits Abroad (BP260006)** – helpful advice with fundraising ideas and sources, as well as a form for applying to the international fund.  
[scouts.org.uk/fundraisingforvisitsabroad](http://scouts.org.uk/fundraisingforvisitsabroad)

**Unity (Scout Insurance Services)** – provides bespoke insurance solutions to The Scout Association and Scout Groups, Districts and Counties.  
[www.scoutinsurance.co.uk](http://www.scoutinsurance.co.uk)  
Tel: 0845 0945 703  
Fax: 01903 751044  
Email: [scouts@unityins.co.uk](mailto:scouts@unityins.co.uk)

**Safety in Scouting** – a useful webpage containing links to all of the necessary resources and guidance regarding safety. [www.scouts.org.uk/safety](http://www.scouts.org.uk/safety)



