THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S
INTERNATIONAL AWARD
MALTA
Discovering Purpose Through Giving Back
Voluntary Service
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#WORLD READY

Beyond Yourself

In a world where individual achievement is often put first, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) invites young people to look beyond themselves. Through voluntary service, participants are encouraged to step out of their own routines and make a real difference in the lives of others.

This experience isn't just about counting hours—it's about discovering the unique satisfaction and personal growth that come from helping your community. By giving back, participants gain new perspectives and a sense of purpose that goes far beyond the Award itself.

The Power of Giving Back

Voluntary service is more than a requirement in the Award, it's a chance to experience the world in a new light and discover your capacity to create real change. In an era when many young people feel uncertain about the future, volunteering offers a sense of purpose, belonging, and hope. It's about seeing a need and stepping up to meet it, no matter how small the action might seem.

When you choose to give your time to others, you're not only helping your community; you're also shaping your own character, values, and outlook on life. Acts of service teach you to look beyond your own challenges, to empathise with others, and to find joy in kindness. This journey of giving back develops compassion and resilience, and sparks a sense of civic responsibility that stays with you for years to come.

Every act of service; whether it's helping at a food bank, supporting an animal shelter, tutoring younger students, or cleaning up a local park; contributes to something much bigger than yourself. And the impact of volunteering is always two-way: as you uplift others, you'll find yourself gaining new skills, deeper self-awareness, and a more meaningful connection to the world around you. In the end, it's not just about what you give; it's about who you become along the way.

Why it Matters

In today's world, young people are often encouraged to focus on their own achievements—but true growth comes from reaching beyond ourselves. Volunteering through the DofE is not only about doing good for others; it's about building the qualities that prepare participants for life's real challenges. Each act of service is a step toward becoming a more compassionate, capable, and confident person.

Volunteering teaches more than kindness. It promotes:

Empathy and Understanding

Volunteering connects you with people from different backgrounds and life stories. These interactions help you understand others' challenges and see the world through fresh eyes.

Responsibility and Commitment

Taking on a voluntary role means being counted on, even when it's not easy. Over time, this builds a real sense of accountability and pride in the difference you make.

Real-World Skills

Through service, you practice teamwork, communication, and leadership in real situations—not just in theory. Each experience, from problem-solving to planning, prepares you for the future.

Mental Wellbeing

Helping others doesn't just benefit your community—it's proven to boost your own mood and reduce stress. For many young people, volunteering brings a sense of purpose and happiness that lasts.

Real Stories, Real Impact: Teamwork at the Animal Shelter

A group of Award participants, decided to spend their Voluntary Service at a local animal shelter. At first, they were strangers, some quiet, some outgoing; but all a bit unsure about how they could help. Their initial tasks were simple: walking dogs, cleaning kennels, and preparing food. As the weeks went on, their confidence and teamwork grew.

They worked together on weekend adoption days, helping families meet the animals and sharing stories about each pet's personality. They learned to handle challenges, like calming nervous dogs or comforting abandoned kittens. The team even organised a fundraiser, creating posters and spreading the word on social media. Their efforts helped the shelter find homes for more animals than ever before.

By the end of their service, they had not only formed close friendships but also discovered new skills in communication, organisation, and leadership. "Seeing a shy dog finally find a loving family made all our work worth it," said one participant. "We realised that even small actions, when done together, can have a big impact."

How the Award Makes Volunteering Meaningful

The Award provides a flexible framework, allowing participants to choose causes they care about. This freedom ensures that service isn't a chore—it's a personal mission. Whether you're passionate about the environment, education, animal welfare, or elder care, there's a way to get involved and make it count. Participants also learn to:

SET GOALS

Volunteering through the Award encourages young people to think about the change they want to create; whether it's making life better for animals, supporting the elderly, or helping the environment. By deciding on a clear goal and understanding their role in reaching it, participants develop focus and direction in their service.

TAKE INITIATIVE

The Award challenges participants to move from simply following instructions to actively shaping their projects. Many find themselves stepping up: organising activities, proposing new ideas, or leading a small team; discovering leadership skills and self-confidence they didn't know they had.

REFLECT AND GROW

Regular reflection is built into the Award journey. By looking back on what worked, what was challenging, and how they felt about their efforts, participants deepen their understanding of the impact they've made: not just on others, but on themselves. This habit of reflection helps turn every volunteering experience into a lesson for the future.

Tips for Making the Most of Your Service

Follow Your Passion Choose a cause that resonates with you personally

Stay Committed Consistency builds trust and makes a real impact.

Bring a Friend Volunteering can be more fun and effective with others.

Journal Your Experience Writing about your journey helps you see your growth.

Share Your Impact

Every act of service matters. Share your journey using the hashtag **#ServeWithDofE** and inspire others to give their time and heart to a cause. Your story could be the spark that lights someone else's journey.

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Next in the Series: Adventure and Challenge

In the next blog, we'll explore how stepping into the unknown through the Adventurous Journey pushes participants beyond their limits and helps them discover inner strength. Stay tuned!

intaward.mt

admin@intaward.mt | +356 7980 8283

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Design: www.mattborg.eu