

Setting up an Award Group

There is no fixed structure or format for an Award Group. Groups can be formed and operated in a way that fits in with the needs of young people and their programme.

Award Group members are supported and guided by their youth worker, the Award Group Worker, who should ensure that young people are fully aware of the assessment criteria that will be used to agree Challenge Sheet plans and completed challenges. These criteria are fully explained on page 14.

An Award Group can therefore be formed at any time with any membership, provided the group are each aware of the assessment criteria. It is recommended that Award Groups should have a minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 members.

One member of the Award Group signs the Challenge Sheet on behalf of the Award Group.

It is also important to remember that, for the process of peer assessment to be successful, Award Group Workers and young people will need to work together to create and maintain a safe and supportive environment.

The role of the Award Group is to:

- Help each other to plan their challenge by giving feedback
- Assess and sign off the '*plan it*' section
- Support each other to complete their challenges
- Assist in reviewing and recording their achievements and learning
- Assess completed challenges for certification

The peer assessment element is a vital characteristic of the Dynamic Youth Awards and cannot therefore be considered an optional extra.

Peer Assessment

Like the rest of society, young people are assessing each other on a daily basis, whether it is about what their friends are wearing, what type of music they listen to or what they think others think of them. It is a natural part of life and a process which young people are familiar with in their daily lives. Of course, this does not always happen positively!

In order for the peer assessment process within Dynamic Youth Awards to work, it needs to happen within the boundaries of quality youth work practice.

These can be defined as:

- ❑ A safe and supportive environment
- ❑ Young people are encouraged to share their opinions
- ❑ Young people show respect for each other's opinions and, in turn, expect respect
- ❑ Negative comments and actions are challenged supportively

(Adapted from Youth Scotland's Up and Running pack)

Essential to this process is clarity of the criteria against which assessment decisions are taken. For the two peer assessment stages of the Dynamic Youth Awards, the criteria are:

Peer Assessment Stage 1

The Award Group will peer assess the planned challenge against the following criteria:

- The Challenge Title clearly describes what the activity is.
- The activity planned represents a challenge but is achievable to the individual.
- The activity will involve a minimum of 5 hours commitment to complete.
- At least 2 of the 4 Challenge Steps have been completed.

Peer Assessment Stage 2

The Award Group will peer assess the completed challenge against the following criteria:

- All of the sections have been completed.
- That they are satisfied that the hours claimed are accurate.
- That they are satisfied that the level of responsibility taken is accurate.
- There is at least one piece of personalised evidence.

At Stage 2, the Award Group is also asked to agree a statement that reflects the individual's 'Special Achievement or Unique Contribution'.