



Young Explorers' Trust Evaluation Service

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

<p><i>Why should I apply for Evaluation?</i></p>	<p>The YET Evaluation Service offers an Expedition Provider an opportunity to have expedition plans assessed by an independent, third party organization that is made up of experts drawn from the youth expedition fraternity. The process evaluates whether expedition plans meet the British Standard 8848. It thus gives the Provider the opportunity to demonstrate conformity to this important standard of safety and quality.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> THE SHORTHAND TERM "APPROVAL" INDICATES THAT YET IS SATISFIED THAT THE EXPEDITION PLANS, AS PRESENTED, MEET THE BRITISH STANDARD 8848.</p>
<p><i>What is BS8848?</i></p>	<p>The British Standards Institution is recognized by the UK Government as the National Body that establishes Standards for a range of products and services. BS 8848 is one of these standards, it was developed in 2007 and an amended version was published in 2009. BS 8848, named after the height in metres of Mount Everest, pulls together expertise and good practice into a new national standard for the safe management of overseas ventures. It provides a specification for organizing and managing visits, fieldwork, expeditions, and adventurous activities, outside the United Kingdom. Potential participants and other stakeholders, such as parents, local education authorities, and school governors, are likely to have greater confidence in those ventures assessed by an independent organization such as YET rather than just by the one providing the venture.</p> <p><i>Note: The whole YET Evaluation process is based on BS8848 and so there are no longer separate categories for YET Approval and BS8848 compliance.</i></p>
<p><i>Is the purpose of YET Evaluation to impose regulations?</i></p>	<p>No, the Evaluation is entirely voluntary and YET cannot impose conditions on any expedition. It is about enablement, not restriction or control. Many find the suggestions and advice given by the Panel very helpful in developing the expedition plans by raising the level safety and the overall quality.</p>
<p><i>The Application Form seems very long and off-putting</i></p>	<p>Think of it as a check list which will help applicants make sure that they have covered the important aspects of planning their expedition. It is actually quite easy to go through and provide rapid answers. It is based on the requirements of BS8848 and so provides coverage of plans to the National Standard.</p>



<p><i>There are different levels of Evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>How do they differ?</i></p>	<p>YET offers any Provider the opportunity to have their expedition plans evaluated either for an individual expedition, or on a corporate basis covering all expeditions by a single provider.</p> <p><u>Evaluation for an individual expedition</u> will focus upon how that specific expedition is managed and its planned delivery.</p> <p><u>Corporate Evaluation</u> involves a close scrutiny of the Provider's administration and management systems, plus an audit sample of expeditions. This, if successful, leads to a declaration by YET that, based on the evidence presented, all expeditions by that provider conform with BS 8848. This implies that all that Provider's expeditions will be internally self-assessed to demonstrate conformity with BS8848.</p>
<p><i>Do I have to pay for the Evaluation?</i></p>	<p>Yes, there is a fee for the evaluation service but this is discounted for members of YET. Whilst this is a professional service YET is a charity and the charges are scaled accordingly.</p> <p>The current rates are shown on the YET web-site.</p>
<p><i>How do I get the forms and other information?</i></p>	<p>Application forms, details of how to apply and guidance notes are all freely downloadable from the YET web-site. In addition contact information is given for the Evaluation Co-ordinator who will personally talk through problems and difficulties and make all the necessary arrangements for an Evaluation meeting between an applicant and a Panel.</p>
<p><i>What is the purpose of the Evaluation Panel Meeting?</i></p>	<p>The Evaluation meeting is for the Provider to offer additional evidence and to answer questions that the Panel may have arising from the application and information submitted.</p>
<p><i>Where are the Evaluation Meetings held?</i></p>	<p>YET publishes annually on its web site a list of possible dates and venues around the UK for a suggested Panel meeting. It encourages providers to use one of these dates to minimize costs and the problems of assembling a Panel.</p> <p>For Corporate Evaluation of an Expedition Provider, the Evaluation Co-coordinator will arrange a mutually convenient date for a Panel to visit the Provider's headquarters. It may also elect to visit a UK training session in the field.</p>
<p><i>Who are the Panel members?</i></p>	<p>The Panel is chaired by the Chairman of Evaluation or one of the Vice-Chairmen, a secretary, who is normally the Evaluation Co-ordinator, and one or two other experienced and trained members who will have considerable expedition leadership and management experience; making a panel of 3 or 4 members. All items discussed are regarded as confidential to that evaluation.</p>



<p><i>Who should attend an Evaluation Panel meeting?</i></p>	<p>The meeting normally requires the Venture Leader to attend, and perhaps other people involved in the planning and management of the expedition. Much depends upon the level of evaluation being undertaken. In some cases young participants attend but they normally need the support and guidance of an adult involved in the planning of the expedition. These matters can be discussed with the Evaluation Co-ordinator beforehand.</p>
<p><i>Can I ask questions before and after the evaluation meeting?</i></p>	<p>Yes, YET encourages Providers to seek assistance before the meeting and has an established mentoring system for those who want such support. Equally after an evaluation meeting, once the findings of the Panel have been sent to a provider the Co-ordinator will help with any questions which may arise. In exceptional circumstances another meeting may be arranged if the Panel feel that the application requires resubmission.</p>
<p><i>Will YET require me to change my plans (e.g. take sat phones)?</i></p>	<p>YET cannot impose demands on a provider. It will however make suggestions and if necessary recommendations. If YET believes that failure to meet these recommendations ignores current good practice, it may decline to grant “approval” until those conditions are met.</p>
<p><i>Does YET have a policy on altitude?</i></p>	<p>Yes, YET does have a document that outlines good practice in altitude acclimatization which is available free of charge from the web-site. This is reviewed at frequent intervals to take into account changes and developments. It is the responsibility of the Expedition Provider and Venture Leader to interpret this information as to how it best applies to any particular expedition and advise participants and stakeholders accordingly.</p>
<p><i>Will YET recommend particular suppliers (e.g. of vehicles, food, mules)?</i></p>	<p>The YET Evaluation process centres around “what has to be done” in the planning of a good expedition. It does not tell a provider “how it must or should be done”. YET is in a position to offer valuable advice and support and to exchange information through its national network of contacts in the expedition fraternity. YET does not recommend specific suppliers.</p>



<i>What are the possible outcomes - pass/fail?</i>	<p>This is not a pass or fail situation but a way of developing expedition plans to better enable a safe and high quality expedition experience to be delivered.</p> <p>Through mentoring, advice, and the guidance YET can give, most applications are successful. YET however does not award “approval” if it believes the safety & quality standards have not been met. Whilst the Evaluation Panel is an impartial body it will helpfully list recommendations for improvement. Once a provider demonstrates that these criteria have been fulfilled then “approval” is normally forthcoming.</p>
<i>It is possible to appeal against the decision of the Panel?</i>	<p>Yes, YET has an appeal procedure that is detailed in the information on the YET web site. Most issues are however resolved in a less formal way through discussion, advice and support long before they get to this impasse.</p>
<i>What are the chances of getting a YET grant for my expedition?</i>	<p>Only expeditions successfully going through the YET Evaluation procedure will be considered for Grant Aid. A number of small financial awards are made each year through the Trust's Grant Aid procedure to expeditions and individuals who show particular merit. This is a decision independent of the Evaluation Panel.</p>
<i>Will the result help me to get other sponsorship?</i>	<p>YET cannot guarantee that any expedition submitting plans for evaluation will attract other sponsorship BUT if an expedition provider has been willing to undergo the external scrutiny and the robustness of the YET Evaluation scheme then it almost certainly will stand a better chance of attracting sponsorship than an expedition that has not had such independent, third party evaluation.</p>