



YOUTH EXPEDITION LEADER SELECTION Good Practice Guidelines

GOOD PRACTICE: *this does not mean that all organisations should act precisely as in any agreed YET statement of Good Practice Guidelines, but that if actual practice varied from the agreed statement, then the organisation should be able and willing to justify to any relevant authority why any alternative system had been used.*

Terms & Definitions:

Expedition Provider: an individual or organisation with overall responsibility for all aspects of an expedition provided either on a voluntary basis or in return for payment.

Expedition Leader: an individual taking overall responsibility for all or a pre-determined period of an expedition as the representative of the Expedition Provider.

Leadership Team: a group of persons forming the team that includes the Expedition Leader, all leaders and activity specialists, approved by the Expedition Provider to deliver the expedition.

Member of the Leadership Team: a competent individual, who is part of the Leadership Team, reporting to the Expedition Leader and to whom responsibility for a particular group of participants and/or activity is assigned.

Trainee Leader: a person learning the skills of leadership under the close supervision of an assigned member of the Leadership Team.

Competent person: someone who has the necessary and sufficient training, knowledge, experience, expertise and/or other qualities to complete their allotted task safely and effectively.

Participant: a person taking part in an expedition but not a member of the Leadership Team.

Down time: time occurring within the overall duration of the expedition but which has been agreed and is understood prior to departure by all members of the expedition as being beyond the jurisdiction of the Expedition Provider or any member of Leadership Team.

Note: It is not customary for there to be any "down time" on an expedition in which the participants are under 18 years of age.

Personal time: time during the expedition when an activity is not taking place but participants remain under the supervision, remote or otherwise, and therefore the responsibility of the Leadership Team.



A. Some basic assumptions:

1. Providing an expedition for young people is a major and serious commitment and it therefore beholds the Expedition Provider to have an established procedure for selecting the Expedition Leader and Leadership Team so that they possess personal qualities and communication skills relevant to the nature of the expedition and that they are assigned duties and responsibilities within their proven competence. No one individual may possess all the required Expedition Leadership qualities as itemised in this *Good Practice*, but it is important to ensure that in no circumstance an unqualified/inexperienced member of the Leadership Team is left in charge of a situation on an expedition that they are not competent to manage.
2. It is *Good Practice* to identify the competence of a member of the Leadership Team through one or a combination of:
 - an appropriate and current National Governing Body Award;
 - an equivalent nationally or internationally recognised award;
 - experience;
 - in-house training and assessment.

NOTE: Many Expedition Providers seek to verify experience and in-house training through a statement of competence from an experienced person who has a high level of National Governing Body award but who will not necessarily be taking part in the expedition (a technical advisor).

3. Not only does it behold an Expedition Provider to select an Expedition Leader who is competent but it is *Good Practice* for the provider to have a written policy that details the minimum competencies required for each member of the Leadership Team with respect to:
 - the activities for which the Leadership Team are responsible;
 - first aid or lifesaving qualifications;
 - the environment in which the expedition is taking place;
 - the needs of the participants;
 - the supervision and management of the participants, especially those under 18, including details for any periods of remote supervision, personal time or down time.
4. An expedition should attempt to reflect the participant gender ratio in the composition of the Leadership Team; Trainee Leaders should not normally be included in establishing this ratio. If a single gender Leadership Team is selected it is *Good Practice* to communicate this to potential participants and their parents / guardians before they commit to the expedition.
5. In selecting the number in the Leadership Team the leader to participant ratio should be determined by the Risk Assessment Management System (RAMS) as well as the range of activities to be undertaken on the expedition; Trainee Leaders should not be included in establishing this ratio.



B. Safeguarding Young People & Safer Recruitment Procedure

1. The Young Explorers' Trust accepts the statement made in The Department for Education and Skills (now DCFS) document "*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*" (in force 01/01/07) that "it is vital that ... other educational establishments(i.e. Expedition Providers) adopt recruitment and selection procedures, and other human resources management processes, that help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them".
2. The document goes on to comment that the measures outlined "should be applied in relation to everyone who works in an education setting where there are under 18 year olds who is likely to be perceived as a safe and trustworthy adult".
3. It continues: "Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants."
4. Further, the document sets out clear guidance as to the elements that any selection process should include:
 - ensuring the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - ensuring that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children;
 - obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
 - obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
 - a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post;
 - verifying the successful applicant's identity;
 - verifying that the successful applicant has the relevant academic, vocational, or technical qualifications claimed;
 - where appropriate an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or equivalent national organisation.

C. Selection procedures:

An Expedition Provider should consider following the procedure described below when selecting the Expedition Leader and members of the Leadership Team.

1. The Expedition Provider should have an explicit written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures, which should link to its child protection policy and procedures.



2. The selection policy statement should incorporate an explicit statement about the Expedition Provider's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This statement should be referred to in:
 - publicity materials
 - recruitment websites
 - advertisements
 - candidate information packs
 - person specifications
 - job descriptions
 - competency frameworks
 - induction training
3. If the Expedition Provider is advertising for a leadership role the advertisement should include a statement about commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau as part of the process verifying competency and suitability to work with under 18 year olds.
4. The Expedition Provider should produce unambiguous, written definitions of the responsibility, authority, accountability and required competencies for each member of the Leadership Team.
5. The Expedition Provider should have in place a full Job Description for each specific leadership role, which should be made available to an applicant in advance of the completion of the application. This job description should include:
 - the main duties and responsibilities of the post;
 - responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of any participant in the expedition who is under 18 years old.
6. The Expedition Provider should produce a Person Specification for each leadership position, which should:
 - include the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with under 18 year olds;
 - describe the competences and qualities that the successful applicant should be able to demonstrate;
 - explain how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process.
7. The Expedition Provider should produce a Leader Application Information pack, which should include a copy of:
 - the application form, and explanatory notes about completing the form;
 - the job description and person specification, (clauses C5 & C6);
 - relevant information about the organisation and its recruitment process, and statements of relevant policies such as the organisation's policy about equal opportunities, the recruitment of ex-offenders;
 - the child protection policy statement;
 - a statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post.
8. All applications should be made through the use of an agreed application form. The application form should obtain:
 - full identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, date of birth, and current address;
 - a statement of any academic, vocational or technical qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the position for which s/he is applying with details of the awarding body and the date of the award;



- a history in chronological order, of any previous post held or appointment, part time or voluntary work, for any Expedition Provider or in a role that is relevant to the responsibilities of the leadership position being applied for;
- details of at least two referees, one of whom should have knowledge of the applicant's recent experience and competency to perform the Expedition Leadership role required; (open references should not be accepted)
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant and how s/he meets the person specification.

NOTE: If an applicant has sought a leadership position before with the Expedition Provider there should be a policy of how frequently an application form needs to be up dated.

9. The application form should include an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared; it should require a signed statement that the person is not disqualified from work with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, and either has no convictions, cautions or bind-overs, or has attached details of their record in a sealed enveloped marked confidential.
10. The application should be accompanied by photocopies of any relevant certificates or statements of competence; the Expedition Provider should request the original certificate (if not produced at interview) if the applicant is appointed to a leadership position.
11. Medical practitioners applying for a position on the medical team of the expedition should be checked through the British Medical Council, in addition to the references submitted.

NOTE: It is realised that whilst ideally the leadership application should be for a specific expedition already in the planning stage, with some Expedition Providers applications are made for a general leadership appointment and the specific leadership role for an expedition is subsequently offered/ allocated.

12. The Expedition Provider should arrange an interview of the applicant in accordance with its written selection process. A record of any such interview together with the outcomes should be kept.
13. The offer of a leadership role on an expedition should be made in writing by the relevant authorising person or committee of the Expedition Provider. An appointment should not be confirmed until all references have been obtained.
14. An offer of appointment should be conditional upon:
 - the receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
 - verification of the candidate's identity (if not confirmed at interview);
 - a check of the Protection of Children Act (PoCA) List, and a current Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau;
 - verification of relevant qualifications (if not gained at interview).
15. The Expedition Provider should keep a central written or computer-based record, together with the date on which each check was completed and the name of the person carrying out those checks, of the information obtained in C14 above.

16. Should the applicant be found to be on the Protection of Children Act List, or disqualified from practice by the GMC, or the Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB



indicates she/he has been disqualified from working with children or vulnerable people by a Court, or should the applicant have provided false information in support of the application, then the Expedition Provider has a responsibility to report the situation to the Police and/or the DCSF's Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit.

17. Checks similar to the above should be carried through on overseas applicants, or on UK applicants who have been working abroad recently, for a position on a Leadership Team; where this is not possible, then the Expedition Provider needs to take great care before appointing such person to a Leadership Team.
18. Applicants accepting a position on the Leadership Team, should complete an acceptance of offer form, and signify on that form an acceptance of any financial commitment, of the RAMS for the expedition, and the Expedition Providers policies in relation to:
 - Leader Code of Conduct
 - Member Code of Behaviour
 - Child Protection
 - Equal Opportunities.
19. It is *Good Practice* for the Expedition Provider to arrange an induction time during which leaders new to that organisation can learn about its ethos, its aims, its organisation, its expectations of leaders, its safety policies, its major incident procedures, its codes of behaviour, its child protection policy, its equal opportunities policy, and the like.
20. Once appointed, the Leadership Team should be encouraged strongly to meet for at least one week-end (or similar time span) before the commencement of the expedition.
21. All leaders should have access to or (preferably) be issued with a copy of the current YET booklets "Safe and Responsible Expeditions" and "Environmental Responsibility for Expeditions"; additionally, all leaders should be encouraged to use the RGS / YET Leader Log Book.

NOTE: The procedure for CRB clearance is currently subject to change by the Government. For further and the most up to date information about the CRB vetting and barring scheme please visit: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/independentsafeguardingauthority

D. Additional considerations in selecting the Expedition Leader:

The selection of the Expedition Leader (the person charged with the overall leadership of the expedition, however he or she is termed) by the Expedition Provider should follow the procedure above, but additionally:

1. The proposed Expedition Leader should be given clear guidelines as to his / her overall responsibilities in the running of the expedition, before, during, and after the expedition.
2. The Expedition Leader should receive a copy of all the Expedition Provider's relevant expedition policies and guidelines, and agree to abide by them.



3. The responsibility for recruiting the Leadership Team rests either with the Expedition Provider or the Expedition Leader, or a combination, and this should be made clear in the Expedition Leader's job description.
4. Using a recognised procedure the Expedition Leader should be informed by the Expedition Provider of the skills, competencies, and experience of the Leadership Team and the composition, needs and experience of each participant.
5. The Expedition Leader should be informed that he / she will not be authorised to add any activity to the expedition programme that has not gained the Expedition Provider's advanced approval as falling within the competence, qualifications, and experience of the Leadership Team, and which is covered by the expedition's insurance.
6. If the Expedition Leader is to receive any fee or honorarium from the Expedition Provider, then the amount, the time of payment, and the obligations incumbent on the Expedition Leader before final payment should be made clear from the outset and agreed to in the form of a written contract.

E. Deputy Expedition Leader:

If the Expedition Provider decides that there is a need to formally select a Deputy Expedition Leader he/she should be of a level of experience / qualification similar to the overall Expedition Leader, since he / she may have to take full control of the expedition in the event that the Expedition Leader is unable to fulfil his/her function. This information should be given to the participants and their parents at the earliest possible time and certainly prior to departure.

The considerations in D above equally apply to the Deputy Expedition Leader.