

Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

A. Accessing the Award Scheme

Module Overview

The methods of delivering the Aim of Scouting include a relevant and attractive, progressive award scheme. At the heart of our Troop programs are activities, instruction and challenges to achieve levels of competence. The award scheme can appear daunting and over-bearing to both youth and adult members. Part of your role is to help everyone understand and access the award scheme.

Expected Outcomes

In this module, it is expected that you will:

- Increase and demonstrate your understanding of the overall award scheme
- Promote the award scheme to the Sections in your District
- Identify opportunities to engage your Sections in all aspects of the award scheme
- Become a centre of excellence for delivering aspects of the award scheme
- Understand how your Sections progressive awards fit in with other Sections

Practical Outcomes

Your Sections will benefit directly from your participation in this Module. They will all gain a better understanding of the award scheme and how to deliver it in new and interesting ways.

Amount of Work

It is expected that this Module will take between 1 and 3 months to complete including two face-to-face meetings with your RCYP and one interaction with youth members.

In This Pack

To support the implementation and running of the module, the following resources are provided:

- Regional Commissioner Youth Program's Briefing
- Participant Briefing
- Module Resources
- Module Completion and Feedback

Other Modules in the Scheme

Following this module, you might like to consider one of the other modules in the scheme:

- District Communications
- Recruitment, retention and supporting adults
- District Events and Activities
- Scout Leadership Courses
- Actively Supporting Troops
- Running Effective Mindaris
- Training others

About the Tools for Effective District Scout Leading Scheme

This scheme was introduced in 2008 to support the work of new and existing District Scout Leaders. There are several modules in the scheme focusing on different areas of the role. District Leaders should negotiate with their Regional Commissioner (Scouts) to decide which modules are most relevant to your situation. The modules are designed to be practical in nature and completed in any order. For more information, visit www.nsw.scouts.com/scouts/districtleaders.htm.

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Accessing the Award Scheme

Region Commissioner Youth Program's Briefing

This module can be run with an individual or with a number of District Leaders. The outcomes for each participant are the same. Your set up and review of progress may be structured differently if working with a number of District Leaders.

Your Role in this Module

After the initial input and set-up of the module, your role in this module is to provide support, advice and example resources from your own operations or those you have seen in use. You may find it useful to collect these into a resource folder before starting the module and adding to the resource over time. At the end of the module, the Region Commissioner Youth Program must review the module's effectiveness and submit the review report to the State Commissioner YP.

Setting Up the Module

The module should be set up during a single set-up session with the participant(s). This should preferably be done face-to-face where practical, but can be achieved over email or telephone.

The session would cover:

- Understanding and acceptance of the module outcomes
- Review of current skills, knowledge and experience
- Review of the resources available in this pack and elsewhere, written and human
- Outline plan for development, including milestones and timescales
- Identification of support required and a plan to provide it
- Expectations of completion and review – how do we know we have finished?

This session may or may not form part of your regular Region Training Meetings.

Support to the Region Commissioner Youth Program

Support is available to you in facilitating this module from your State Commissioner's Team. This could include telephone support or further working examples of communication types. You should also look to the District Commissioner and other members of your Region Team for ideas and advise on this topic. If you already have Section Leaders or District Leaders in your Region who are centres of excellence for award scheme delivery, you should encourage them to support the participant. You should also contact the RCYP for the Sections either side of yours to ensure your own knowledge of their training program is up to date.

Measuring Success

Scouting has always been based on doing your best. With this in mind, measuring success can be a very subjective task. Emphasising the positive achievements of the participant(s) will further build confidence. Remember the expected outcomes of the module and measure against those – Did the participant(s):

- Increase and demonstrate their understanding of the overall award scheme?
- Promote the award scheme to the Sections in their District?
- Identify opportunities to engage their Sections in all aspects of the award scheme?
- Become a centre of excellence for delivering aspects of the award scheme?
- Understand how their Sections progressive awards fit in with other Sections?

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Participating District Leader's Briefing

Welcome to the Accessing the Award Scheme module of the Tools for Effective District Leading scheme. This is not a formal training scheme, but a practical, project driven support scheme designed specifically to support and develop you in your Scouting role.

Your Role in this Module

You will meet with your Regional Commissioner Youth Program (RCYP) to discuss the expected outcomes of this module and to set a plan. Part of that plan will involve you working with leaders in your District to improve everyone's ability to understand and access the award scheme. Although there is room to experiment and trial different approaches, ultimately, the module will lead you to a working model that will be the basis of future working practices.

Setting Up the Module

The first step is to meet with your RCYP. There may be other participants completing the same module, so it would be helpful to meet together and share ideas. In your meeting, you should cover:

- Your understanding and acceptance of the module outcomes
- Review of current skills, knowledge and experience
- Review of the resources available in this pack and elsewhere, written and human
- Outline plan for development, including milestones and timescales
- Identification of support required and a plan to provide it
- Expectations of completion and review – how do we know we have finished?

This session may or may not form part of your regular Region Training Meetings.

Support Available

Your RCYP is probably the central support to you in this module, but you should also talk with your District Commissioner, other members of your District Team and the Section Leaders you are supporting to seek their views and strategies on communication as well.

Module Layout

There are five elements to this module:

- Your Knowledge of the Award Scheme
- Promoting the Award Scheme
- Innovation and Integration in the Award Scheme
- Resources, Processes, Policies and Procedures

Module Review

You will find information on each over the next few pages.

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Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

Accessing the Award Scheme

Element A: Your Knowledge of the Award Scheme

Before you can inspire others to make the best use of our main training tool, you need to understand it for yourself.

The Task

Produce a training aid for use in your District Training Meeting or at a Troop Council to inform the audience of the main components of your Section's Award Scheme. The format of the aid is your choice (e.g. a poster, presentation, document, etc.) and you are welcome to make use of the excellent resources already available. You will use your training aid at least once in its intended forum and also present it at your Module Review Meeting.

Gathering the Information

Before you start, make sure you really do understand the scheme yourself. Some Sections have extremely complicated schemes with pre-requisites, age dependant awards, combination awards and local requirements. Use the award scheme pocket books and other publications from Scouts Australia and NSW State Office to help you. You will find some excellent information on the internet. Avoid assuming that your own knowledge or that of the leaders in your District is current and correct. Talk to your RCYP about the scheme. Your training aid should include reference to the 6 – 25 age range program and how this award scheme fits in with the schemes running in other Sections. Where there are National, State or Regional procedures in place for the approval and monitoring of certain awards ensure you are fully aware of them from discussion with your RCYP. Incorrect information only results in the Youth Member being penalised. Understand who has the role of approving and awarding each award within the Section and have some examples of minimum standards they should apply.

Presenting Your Knowledge

Decide who will benefit most from your presentation. Perhaps the Section Leaders or maybe your own District Team or possibly a Troop Council would be best? Prepare thoroughly for the presentation so you appear confident in your topic. You can't possibly know every aspect of the scheme, so be prepared to take questions and advise the enquirer that you will come back to them later. Above all else, stick to the facts and don't be tempted to add your own interpretations to the scheme.

What Should Your Audience Know?

Leaders who have attended a Basic Leadership 3 Training Course will have taken part in a session on the Award Scheme. Newer leaders, long-standing leaders and youth members will only know what they read or are told by Section Leaders and District Leaders. In the age of the internet, much of the information is readily available for those who choose to seek it out. As a District Leader, you are responsible for keeping your Sections up to date with changes and reviews of the award scheme. You are also responsible for taking their comments and suggestions for improvements to your Region for consideration by the National Youth Program Team.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

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Accessing the Award Scheme

Element B: Promoting the Award Scheme

Now everybody knows about it, let's get on with it!

The Task

Implement a campaign to promote the award scheme within the Sections of your District. The campaign will include a launch at your next District Training Meeting, monitoring of a set of expected outcomes and a report back on the effect. The campaign could last for one or two terms. The campaign will include the supply of at least one resource to support the scheme designed by you. The set up and launch will form part your Module Review Meeting, but the report back will be something you complete independently, after the Module is completed.

What Type of Campaign?

This could be anything from a simple monthly pro-forma report back through a District Leader's Competition to a reward program. If your Sections are already progressing well with the award scheme, then simply asking them to tell you their achievements each month might be enough to let them know you are interested. Many Sections struggle to deliver some aspects of the award scheme and may need your help and guidance to plan for them. A bit of healthy competition between the Sections can be generated. Perhaps any Youth Member who achieves a major award in the term is invited to a special District presentation evening? Your campaign might focus on the less well used aspects of the award scheme such as language badges or Their Service Our Heritage or an obscure Achievement Badge. Whatever you choose, launch it with the whole District and supply them with a simple method of monitoring their progress.

Provide Support

It is all very well sitting in an ivory tower and implementing new campaigns to increase access to the award scheme, but you have a crucial role to play in support this campaign. Just because you are not a Section Leader doesn't mean you can't prepare resources, plan programs and deliver activities. Spend some time preparing at least one resource that can be used by your Sections to improve their programs. Encourage original thinking, diversity and idea sharing. Ask each Section to talk about their experiences at the District Training Meeting. Record new ideas and circulate them with the minutes.

Report Back – Let's Celebrate

At the end of the campaign, review the progress and celebrate the success. At your District Training Meeting, take time to re-iterate what you were trying to achieve and reflect on how this has changed the Sections in your District. Be positive, but realistic as well – if the promotion did not increase awards being achieved, ask why not. What can we do next time to improve on this? Use your review to feed into the launch of a new promotion campaign.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

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Element C: Innovation and Integration in the Award Scheme

Everyone knows that Scouting is fun. Nobody wants it to be like school. Our formal training scheme sounds a bit like school work, but with a bit of creative thinking and careful planning, the badge work becomes an integrated part of the fun.

The Task

Identify and promote 5 ways that leaders in your District have delivered badge work in innovative and integrated ways. Produce a short report on each activity including how it was planned and delivered and what the outcomes were. Include at least one comment from a participating youth member that shows this activity was well received. Present your findings to your District Training Meeting. Your final report will form part of your Module Review Meeting.

What is Innovative and Integrated These Days?

Read a Section Program. Many of them include an activity called "Badge Work" or "Test Work". Does this sound appealing or fun? Many Sections write this on their program, but don't actually spend any time teaching, instructing or testing. Instead they provide an activity which, by its very nature, develops skills and understanding just by participating. For example, instruct on the best ways to light a fire by building a fire to cook a meal on rather than in a theory or training environment – do the activity for a purpose. The most creative leaders will find all kinds of ways to deliver an exciting and active program which automatically incorporates the requirements of the award scheme.

Spotting a Winner

Part of this Element expects you to seek comments from youth members on the activities in question. Talking with the youth members is a far better indication of the appropriateness of a particular activity than just reading about it or even observing it. As adults, what inspires and interests us is a far reach from things that young people need. During your visits and District events, ask probing questions about the programs running in the Sections. Avoid being derogatory or judgemental on what you are told, rather just listen and note for future follow up. If something sounds great when a young person tells you about it, chances are there was something great about it!

Minimum Standards

This area causes a huge amount of discussion and debate in most adult forums. The passing of a particular part of the award scheme is generally quite objective. For younger Sections, the adult has full responsibility but for the Scout Section and older Sections, the youth members are self-regulating through the Troop, Unit or Crew Council. Here, the members set their own standards and expectations, always under the banner of "do your best". Some activities just require participation, others that a specific task is fulfilled. For many a level of skill or knowledge or a competence must be demonstrated. Ensure that the tasks you are presenting in this Element encourage the participants to achieve the minimum standard as expected.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

Accessing the Award Scheme

Element D: Resources, Policies, Processes and Procedures

The minefield that is policy and procedure does not make the job of a Section Leader any easier. Your understanding and communication of the restrictions on youth program is the only true line of defence a Section has.

The Task

Take one of the major awards in your Section's award scheme and prepare a list of all aspects where you know either:

- There is an excellent resource available to help deliver the aspect;
- There is a local, State or National policy that affects this aspect; or
- There is a local or State Process or Procedure to be followed for this aspect.

Your list should, where possible, briefly outline the implication of the resource, policy, process or procedure. You will discuss your list with your RCYP at your Module Review Meeting.

Resources

These could be anything from a Scouts Australia Book to a lady you know who lives around the corner with a wealth of experience in the subject. From your own experiences and those of others, you will soon discover a large number of resources which you can pass on to your Sections.

Policies

It is becoming increasingly important that our leaders on the ground know, understand and follow policies for their own protection. A lack of knowledge is not a defence against complaints and legal actions. The State and National policies have been created and implemented to ensure the safe operation of our activities. The District Leader is the first source of information about these policies for a Section Leader. You may not know them all inside-out, but you should know that they exist, how to access them and who you can contact for more information or clarification. Your District Commissioner or RCYP will keep you informed of which policies have been updated or reviewed so you can keep your Section Leaders informed.

Processes and Procedures

Some elements of the award scheme require a higher level of participation than others. In the case of the top award for each Section, support from the Region Team is required before a participant undertakes the award. As the communication link between the Section and the Region/State, you are responsible for ensuring this process is understood and followed. Any process put in place by a Region or State must be clearly written in a readily available or regularly circulated document. If you are unclear or unhappy with any process that has been put in place to control certain aspects of the award scheme, you should raise the issue with your RCYP.

Resources to Support This Element

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Review and Feedback

Now you have completed this module, it is time to review your experiences. The review has three purposes:

- To ensure you have developed in your role as a District Leader in this area
- To ensure the contents of the module are relevant, appropriate and support the outcomes
- To identify the next steps for your development

You will complete this review in consultation with your RCYP. The RCYP will submit a copy of the review to the State Commissioner within 4 weeks of your meeting. If you would like to attach examples of your work, the State Team would be grateful to receive them.

DL's Name: _____ Date of review: _____
 District: _____ Region: _____
 Reviewer: _____

About Your Experiences

Did the module lead you to:

Achieved	Close to	Started	Did not
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes:

About the Module and Resources provided

Please rate the resources in this module:

Excellent	Suitable	Weak	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Notes:

The Next Steps

There are more Modules available in the scheme. You should now discuss with your RCYP which would be the most appropriate for you.

- I will be taking a break from Effective Tool Modules for a while
- I would like to do another one, but I am still choosing which
- I am going to try _____ next

Instructions to RCYP on completion of this form

The completed form should be forwarded to the State Commissioner for your Section within four weeks of the review meeting. You may wish to take a copy of the form for your own records and/or share the information with your Region Commissioner or the participants District Commissioner. The contents of the form will be used to monitor overall region progress on developing District Leaders and for ongoing review of the resources and support materials available.