

Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards

Introduction

What are the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards?

The Youth Challenge and the Youth Achievement Awards are an activity-based approach to peer education. The Awards are designed to help develop more effective participative practice by encouraging young people progressively to take more responsibility in selecting, planning and leading activities that are based on their interests. The peer group model encourages the development of a wide range of life skills through a flexible and informal approach.

The Youth Challenge Awards are internally moderated and nationally certificated and are aimed at young people aged 11 to 14, although they may be appropriate for people who are older, or even slightly younger. The Bronze to Gold Youth Achievement Awards are aimed at young people who are 14 plus, with the Platinum young leaders award only being appropriate for young people of 16 plus.

Who runs the Awards?

The Youth Achievement Awards are a partnership between UK Youth, the leading national youth work charity, and ASDAN, an awarding body that manages a wide range of young people's accreditation. UK Youth provide the support structure and development for the Awards with ASDAN providing external moderation and accreditation.

The Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards are well-established in most authorities. In your area, they are likely to be used by a number of agencies working with young people e.g. youth workers, Connexions partnerships, schools, colleges, youth offending teams and training providers.

It is vital that you work in partnership to deliver these Awards as they need to be run by an Award Group Worker who has attended UK Youth training.

What do the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards consist of?

The Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards are structured as a range of 'challenges' which are determined by the young people in conjunction with their 'award group' and the Award Group Worker.

Each challenge takes either 6 or 15 hours to complete, depending on the award. Participants receive a certificate for each completed challenge and accumulate credit for an Award (which takes between 30 and 120 hours to complete depending on the level).

As young people progress through the levels, they assume increasing responsibility for the planning, organising and leading of activities.

It is not essential for young people to start with the Bronze Award they can start at the level appropriate to them.

The levels are:

Level	Age of young person	Role played by young person	Number of challenges and hours spent
Youth Challenge	Usually 11-14, although can be used by older or younger	Young person participates in activities	5 activities of 6 hours duration Total: 30 hours
Youth Challenge Extra	Usually 11-14, although can be used by older or younger	Young person shares responsibility for activities	5 activities of 6 hours duration Total: 30 hours
Bronze Youth Achievement Award	14 plus	Young person participates in activities	4 activities of 15 hours duration Total: 60 hours
Silver Youth Achievement Award	14 plus	Young person takes an assistant organiser's role	6 activities of 15 hours duration Total: 90 hours
Gold Youth Achievement Award	14 plus	Young person takes a planning, organising and leading role	7 activities of 15 hours duration, plus a presentation Total: 120 hours
Platinum Youth Achievement Award	16 plus	Young person takes a leadership or peer education role	120 hours (60 hours of which need to be active leadership)

What's the difference between the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards?

In order to achieve a Youth Challenge Award, a young person will assume a similar amount of responsibility to young people working towards a Bronze Youth Achievement Award. A young person working towards a Youth Challenge Extra Award will assume a similar amount of responsibility to young people who are working towards a Silver Youth Achievement Award. The main difference between these Awards is in the amount of time taken to achieve an Award and the expected age of the young people. Youth Challenge and Youth Challenge Extra Awards provide an opportunity for young people to achieve quick results before moving on to higher level Awards.

Transferring credit from one Award to another

Credit from one level can be transferred to subsequent levels, thus reducing the number of challenges needed for each Award. For example, if a young person has already complete a Youth Challenge, this counts as two challenges in the Bronze Award, leaving two 15 hour challenges to complete. Likewise, if a young person has already completed a Bronze Award, they only have to do 4 of the 6 challenges needed in order to gain a Silver Award.

How do we run The Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards in libraries?

The Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards are ideally suited to the library environment because of their emphasis on young people's involvement in leading activities and the flexibility of the content of each challenge. Within libraries and through projects such as HeadSpace, young people can devise their own programme of involvement/ challenges, each of which can be accredited through the Youth Achievement Award.

Anyone running the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards needs to be trained as an Award Group Leader and their organisation needs to be registered as a Participating Unit. The Participating Unit also needs to be linked to an Operating Agency which can be either a national or regional body registered to run the Awards. Registration as an Operating Agency is costly, so the best approach, if you want to use the Awards within libraries, is to work with partners who are registered and already experienced in using the Awards.

In order to run the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards via this method, you should do the following:

1. Acquaint yourself with the structure of the Awards and the ways in which young people might achieve the Awards within the library context (see below).
2. Find out who is registered to run the Awards in your area by talking to youth partners or contacting UK Youth (see Useful Contacts at the end of this section).
3. Set up a meeting with local partners to discuss how libraries can help young people to achieve units within their Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards and agree procedures and responsibilities for registering and supporting young people through the awards
4. Support young people through the process of achieving Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards though following the process identified below.

Creating challenges

Young people should agree their own challenges with their Award Group Worker. This member of staff should be someone who has been trained to run the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards. Other workers such as library staff can support young people in achieving their Awards without attending training.

Young people can and should be encouraged to set their own challenges which reflect their personal interests however, particularly in the early stages, they may also want to select challenges from options which the library service can provide. Examples of what your service might offer are detailed in the sample challenges below.

Sample challenges can be adapted to suit the needs and levels of individual young people and are included only to provide guidelines for Award content.

It is worth noting that personal, social development targets can be included alongside activity-based targets and that time can be included for review, evaluation and portfolio building.

Sample Challenges

Challenges marked with an asterisk are described in more detail in the following section.

Level	Challenge/library activity
Youth Challenge	*Demonstrating good time-keeping
	*Attending a reading group
	*Attending a writing group
	*Attending a workshop, group activity or author event
	*Taking part in stock selection
	*Taking part in a focus group or consultation activity e.g. on the design of a HeadSpace site
	*Group working
	*Designing promotional materials for a library event
	Contributing book reviews to groupthing website or library display
Youth Challenge Extra	*Working on a HeadSpace project/creating a youth space in the library
	*Assisting at a workshop
	*Helping with stock selection
	*Supporting others
	*Taking part in meetings
	*Helping to organise an event
	*Delivering a presentation
	Making a display

Bronze	*Attending a reading group
	*Attending a writing group
	* Taking part in a focus group or consultation activity e.g. on the design of a HeadSpace site
	Attending events or workshops
	Contributing content to groupthing website
	Contributing reviews to groupthing website or displays
	Attending and contributing to decision-making meetings e.g. HeadSpace or project steering group
Silver	*Assisting with workshops
	*Assisting with stock selection
	*Working on a HeadSpace project/creating a youth space in the library
	*Assisting with the design of a HeadSpace Or youth area within the library
	*Helping to organise an event
	Taking part in presentations about young people's activities in the library
	Taking a role during group meetings e.g. chairing, recording minutes

Level	Challenge/library activity
Gold	*Co-ordinate and organise the design/layout of a space in the library e.g. HeadSpace
	*Working as a HeadSpace assistant
	*Organising events
	*Chairing decision-making meetings
	*Training/ recruiting library staff and volunteers
	*Working as a Study Support Leader
	*Co-ordinating marketing and publicity for library events and activities
	*Co-ordinating a reading group
	Organising stock selection
	Organising consultation, evaluation and research to assess and improve library services for young people
Platinum	The young person is required to produce a personal development plan, undertake training, undertake placements working with young people, produce an evaluation of their progress, and then prepare for and give a presentation.

Sample challenges – detail

Creative Activity Challenges

1. Attending a reading group

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge (attend 2 sessions)

15 for Bronze Youth Achievement Award (attend 5 sessions)

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend reading group session Read the selected books Join in with group discussions about the books Decide on which books to read alongside other group members

2. Co-ordinating a reading group

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
2	Create a reading list (with group members) and make sure group members have copies of the agreed books
3	Set up the room in preparation for sessions e.g. arrange chairs, refreshments and any necessary resources
2	Promote the group and encourage new people to join
8 (e.g. 4 sessions of 2 hours)	Chair the group, asking prompting questions and ensuring that everyone has a fair say

3. Attending a writing group

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge (2 sessions)

15 for Bronze Youth Achievement Award (5 sessions)

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend writing group session Join in with creative writing activities Produce your own creative writing

4. Attending a workshop or creative activity

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend creative workshop or activity
2	Continue the activity outside of the workshop e.g. contribute to display of results, finish off unfinished artwork
1	Review your contribution to the workshop

5. Assisting with a workshop or creative activity

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge Extra

15 for Silver Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)		Activities
Youth Challenge Extra	Silver youth achievement award	
1	2	Help with the planning of the workshop(s)
1	3	Assist workshop leader with setting up of resources and materials
3	9	Assist workshop leader before and during workshop(s)
1	1	Review your contribution to the activity

HeadSpace/ creating youth spaces activities

Design

1. Taking part in design and branding meetings

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for youth Challenge

15 for Bronze Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)		Activities
Youth Challenge	Bronze Youth Achievement Award	
1	2	Prepare ideas for meeting
3	5	Attend design and/or branding workshops/meetings and contribute ideas
1	2	Contribute ideas through other mechanisms e.g. completing surveys, adding to discussions on groupthing.org
1	1	Review your contribution to the activity
n/a	3	Spend time researching possible design options e.g. searching web, taking photos, visiting sites
n/a	2	Contribute to the ordering of furnishings and branding

2. Assisting with the design of HeadSpace/ youth space in library

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Silver Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend design meetings and contribute your ideas
3	Spend time researching and helping others to research possible design options
2	Help with the calculating of budgets and ordering of materials
3	Help with developing the layout and zoning of the space
3	Help to co-ordinate consultation activities
1	Evaluate the success of the activity and your contribution to it

3. Co-ordinating the design of HeadSpace/ youth space in library

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Organise design meetings, contribute your ideas and make sure other's people's ideas are valued
3	Spend time researching and helping others to research possible design options
2	Calculate budgets for the design and arrange the ordering of materials
3	Organise ways in which other young people can contribute to ideas e.g. designing and distributing surveys, creating discussion groups and polls on groupthing.org
3	Co-ordinate consultation activities
1	Evaluate the success of the activity and your contribution to it

Events

1. Helping to organise an event

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge Extra

15 for Silver Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)		Activities
Youth Challenge Extra	Silver Youth Achievement Award	
2	2	Help to decide with group and staff, what, when and where the event will be
3	3	Take a role on the day of the event e.g. showing people where to go, serving refreshments etc
	1	Contribute to a list of tasks to complete and take on a specific role relating to the organisation of the event
	1	Contribute to budgeting how much money is available and agree how it should be spent with staff and group
	2	Help to use publicity materials, local contacts and the internet to find performers, workshop leaders, sound technicians etc as needed for the event
	1	Write letters or emails to performers, workshop leaders, sound technicians etc Agree dates, times, and roles with the people who are performing etc
	1	Take part in group discussions about the best ways to promote the event with the group
	1	Help to design flyers and posters
	1	Display/ hand out publicity in places where young people will see it
	1	Talk to young people about the event either one-to-one in the library or in presentations to schools and youth groups
1	1	Review the success of the event and your contribution to it

2. Organising events

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
1	Take a lead role in deciding what, when and where the event will be with group and staff
1	Make a list of tasks to complete and decide who will do what
1	Work out how much money is available and agree how it should be spent with staff and group
1	Use publicity materials, local contacts and the internet to find performers, workshop leaders, sound technicians etc. needed for the event
1	Write letters or emails to performers, workshop leaders, sound technicians etc.
1	Agree dates, times and roles with the people who are performing etc
2	Discuss the best ways to promote the event with the group
1	Co-ordinate the design of flyers and posters
1	Co-ordinate the display/ hand out publicity in places where young people will see it
2	Talk to young people about the event either one-to-one in the library or in presentations to schools and youth groups
3	Take a co-ordinating role on the day of the event, making sure that other team members are carrying out appropriate tasks e.g. organising refreshments, distributing name badges, helping with equipment

Marketing

1. Designing flyers and/or posters

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
2.5	Discuss design ideas and what information needs to go on the poster with the group
2.5	Design the poster either by hand or on a PC and Arrange printing of the poster
1	Evaluate the effectiveness of the poster and your work

2. Delivering a presentation

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge Extra

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
4	Contribute to the planning of a presentation for a specified audience
1	Deliver the presentation to the target audience
1	Evaluate the effectiveness of the presentation and your work

3. Assisting with library marketing

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Silver Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
2	Contribute to discussions about marketing of library services for young people
2	Assist with the design of marketing materials
4	Contribute to promotional presentations
5	Write a promotional piece about library activities for newsletter, magazine or website such as groupthing.org
2	Reflect on the success of your contribution and the skills which you have developed

4. Co-ordinating library marketing

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Gather the views of others to create a plan for how to promote library opportunities/HeadSpace project to young people and other stakeholders
3	Help to form a group to deliver the marketing/promotional activities in your plan
3	Deliver a promotional presentation to a key group identified in your plan
4	Write a promotional piece about library activities /HeadSpace for newsletter, magazine or website such as groupthing.org
2	Reflect on the success of your contribution and the skills which you have developed

Managing materials

1. Taking part in stock selection activities

Number of Hours to complete Challenge:

6 for Youth Challenge

6 for Youth Challenge Extra

15 for Silver youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)			Activities
Youth Challenge	Youth Challenge Extra	Silver Youth Achievement Award	
2	1	1	Suggest the kind of books, CDs, DVDs and games that young people would like
n/a	1	1	Research the kind of books, CDs, DVDs and games that other users would like
n/a	n/a	2	Research new and popular materials or authors via internet and/or catalogues and reviews in magazines
n/a	1	3	Help to arrange stock selection activities e.g. shopping trips, online purchasing, reviewing current collections
3	2	3	Join in stock selection activities e.g. shopping trips, online purchasing, reviewing current collections
n/a	n/a	3	Contribute to the display of new materials
n/a	n/a	1	Assess the effectiveness of the new stock
1	1	1	Record your contribution the activity

Making decisions

1. Taking part in meetings

Number of Hours to complete Challenge
6 for Youth Challenge Extra

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
1	Contribute the agenda for a decision-making meeting
1	Prepare for your own contribution to the meeting e.g. researching a specific subject, planning a short presentation of an idea
2	Attend a meeting Contribute ideas to discussions Listen to and give feedback on other people's ideas
1	Understand what makes a good group member
1	Reflect on your own experience of attending the meeting and your skills

2. Chairing meetings

Number of Hours to complete Challenge
15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Create and circulate agendas for at least three decision making meetings
3	Plan your own contribution to at least three decision making meetings and ensure that other members are clear about their contributions
6	Take the role of chair for two meetings Keeping people on task Displaying good time-keeping Making sure everyone has their say
2	Demonstrate an understanding of the various role and skills needed by different members e.g. secretary, treasurer etc
2	Reflect on your experience of chairing the meetings and your own skill development

Supporting others

1. Working as a HeadSpace Volunteer

Number of Hours to complete Challenge

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend training and/or team meetings
4	Keep up to date with books, music, DVDS and games in HeadSpace stock
8	Work as volunteer in HeadSpace, assisting other young people with getting refreshments, finding stock and accessing ICT

2. Working as a Study Support Leader

Number of Hours to complete Challenge

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend training and/or team meetings
1	Plan homework sessions
1	Promote homework sessions to young people
8	Assist other young people with finding books, information and accessing ICT to help them with their homework
2	Keep up to date with resources available in study support collections

Advisory and decision making roles

1. Working as a staff trainer/ recruiter

Number of Hours to complete Challenge

15 for Gold Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
3	Attend training and/or team meetings
3	Design course materials/ assist with developing role description and recruitment materials
3	Organise and promote courses /assist with short listing candidates
3	Deliver training / assist with interviewing candidates
3	Get feedback about effectiveness of training/recruitment and reflect on personal performance

Personal targets

1. Time- keeping

Number of Hours to complete Challenge
6 for Youth Challenge

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
1	Talk with library staff about ways that would help you with your time-keeping and agree times when you will attend the library for meetings or volunteer duties
1	Use different ways to help you to remember the times and dates of appointments e.g. diary, reminders on mobile phone and computers
3	Attend agreed meetings/commitments on time on at least 3 occasions
1	Review your progress

2. Group-working

Number of Hours to complete Challenge
6 for Youth Challenge

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
1	Understand the skills needed to be a good group member
4	Display the skills of a good group worker on at least two occasions e.g. taking turns in discussion, listening to the views of others etc
1	Reflect on your own skills development in relation to group-working

3. Helping others

Number of Hours to complete Challenge
6 for Youth Challenge Extra

Time taken to do activities (hours)	Activities
1	Understand the skills needed to help other people
2	Give information to other library users/volunteers
2	Help other library users to find appropriate resources
1	Reflect on your skills in helping others

General

1. Working with HeadSpace

Number of Hours to complete Challenge

6 for Youth Challenge Extra

15 for Silver Youth Achievement Award

Time taken to do activities (hours)		Activities
Youth Challenge Extra	Silver Youth Achievement	
2	6	Take part in decision-making processes for HeadSpace project
2	6	Assist with creation and/or delivery of HeadSpace promotional activity e.g. posters, newsletters, press interviews and/or presentations
2	3	Reflect on your own contribution to HeadSpace and your skills development

How are the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards assessed and moderated?

The Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards are based on a peer education model. This means that young people are partly responsible for assessing each other's progress in the various challenges they undertake.

Several people contribute to the assessment and moderation process for the Awards:

1. The young person records his/her own progress in Award Booklets and portfolios.
2. The young person's peers or award group reflect on the young person's contribution and achievement in the challenges.
3. The Award Group Worker may record his/her observations of the young person's progress and will check that all the accreditation requirements have been met.
4. An internal moderator will verify that all the targets have been met and that challenges have been achieved at the appropriate level. (Your Operating Agency will have internal moderation procedures in place).
5. An external moderator (arranged through ASDAN) will check portfolios and record booklets. NB Youth Challenge and Youth Challenge Extra do not need to be externally moderated.

How is progress recorded?

The Award booklets (called Challenge booklets when doing the Youth Challenges) are the primary means for young people to record and review their challenges. The booklets contain all the key questions that must be answered in order to complete the Awards. It is vital that a young person feels ownership over their own booklet and they should be encouraged to complete the first page with details of themselves and their group.

At the start of each challenge, the young person should complete the appropriate planning section in his or her booklet. Once agreed, the challenge and targets should be signed and dated by a member of the Award Group.

After completing the challenge the young person should discuss his/her experiences with the Award Group and complete the review section in their booklet. A member of the Award Group should record the group's observations saying what they felt the young person achieved in the challenge and making any other appropriate comments. In addition, the young person may also decide to invite the Award Group Worker to record additional observations.

Depending on the young people involved, Award Group Workers may need to work closely with the Award Group to facilitate the review process and to encourage constructive observations.

Once the young person has completed all the required challenges for the Award, s/he will need to check that s/he has addressed the points highlighted on the 'Portfolio and Booklet Checklist' at the back of the booklet, and acted on any action points before finally adding signatures and dates.

All the materials you need to run this awards programme can be downloaded from: www.ukyouth.org/whatwedo/Programmes/YAA/

Portfolios - Evidencing the process

In addition to the Award booklets, each young person must submit a portfolio of evidence. The portfolio should be an organised collection of evidence that illustrates what the young person has achieved and how they have met their targets whilst completing their challenges.

Ideally a portfolio should contain evidence that is naturally generated by the young person's involvement in their activities.

Guidelines for presentation of portfolio evidence

- Portfolios should be as well organised as possible (e.g. it is helpful for evidence relating to individual challenges to be clearly separated).
- As evidence for length of time spent on challenges, it can be useful to break down some of the elements of the challenge (e.g. include simple timesheets, diaries or logs).
- When evidencing challenges it is important to try and be selective. It is the quality of evidence that counts, not the quantity.
- Visual evidence such as photographs, pictures, drawings, illustrations or objects should be given some explanation (e.g. captions) to show why they have been included and how they relate to the challenge.
- Portfolio evidence should clearly reflect the experience and learning of the individual young person. Whilst pre-printed sheets and group handouts are acceptable as evidence, they should be personalised in some way to explain their relevance to the individual.
- Literacy skills are not a requirement for the Youth Achievement Awards. As long as the evidence can be attributed to the young person (by counter signature or witness statement, for example) it will be acceptable.

Examples of Portfolio Evidence

The portfolio must demonstrate that the individual young person:

- was involved in the activity
- worked towards their targets
- took the appropriate amount of responsibility according to the level of Award that they are completing
- spent the minimum time needed on each challenge
- completed the appropriate number of challenges.

UK Youth offer training in effective portfolio building

Evidence that shows that the young person:	Produced by the young person	Collected by the young person	Produced by others
Was involved in the activity	Photographs Video recording Tape recording Statements Drawings Questionnaires Letters E-mails Phone Records Plans Designs Posters Memos Notices Posters Diary Scripts	Consent forms Receipts Leaflets Booklets Travel tickets Events tickets Flyers Maps Course notes Research Newspaper cuttings Certificates	Youth Worker observations Witness observations Employer observations Family observations Peer observations
Worked towards their targets	Questionnaires Review Forms Evaluation Forms Feedback sessions Diary Log book Timelines	Certificates Test results	Witness observations Peer observations Attendance records
Took the appropriate amount of responsibility	Role descriptions Work plans Task sheets Diary Log book	Minutes of Meetings	Witness observations Attendance records
Spent the minimum time needed on each challenge	Diary Log book Time sheet	Records of attendance Signing In sheets	Witness statements Attendance records
Completed the appropriate number of challenges	Award booklet	Challenge certificates	Witness statements

How much does it cost?

Unless you are working in partnership with a Participating Unit that can accredit all of your young people your library service will need to register as Participating Units in order to run the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards

- Registration as a Participating Unit costs: approximately £48 per calendar year
- You (or your local partners) will also need to pay for young people's registration (which includes Record booklets and certification)
- Young people's registration costs: approximately £5-11.20 depending on the level of the Award.
- If no-one in your service or your partner agency is qualified to deliver the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards you will also need to arrange training for your workers. Training can be organised through UK Youth.
- In-house training for up to 12 people can be organised for a cost of approximately £850
- Alternatively workers can attend multi-agency training days which run on a regular basis around the country. The cost for attending one of these days will be approximately £130 per delegate, plus VAT.

Useful contacts

If you need more information about the Youth Challenge and Youth Achievement Awards, you can find it at: www.ukyouth.org/whatwedo/Programmes/YAA/

The downloadable information pack has a full list of regional contacts.