

**PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

# **YOUNG LEADERS' SCHEME**

**Practical tips for local success**



[scouts.org.uk/youngleaders](https://scouts.org.uk/youngleaders)

Note: The following information should be used in conjunction with the Keys to Success resource.

## INTRODUCTION

For young people to get the most out of their time as Young Leaders, a local system should be in place to provide training, support and encouragement. How this is organised will depend on local needs, but where this is provided effectively, local Scouting benefits from a regular supply of trained and motivated Young Leaders, many of whom go on to take on adult appointments.

Training and support is provided through membership of a Young Leaders' Unit, led by an Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader). There is no set way to manage a Young Leaders' Unit, but experience has shown that it need not meet as frequently as other Explorer Scout Units.

Young Leaders can find themselves in an isolated position. They are neither section members nor adult leaders and sometimes need the support of peers to fully understand their role, and a champion (namely, their Unit leader) to give them the confidence to fulfil their potential.

The Young Leaders' Scheme requires training in 11 modules, which are validated by 4 exercises called missions. Irrespective of the talents of the young people involved, training and opportunities to complete all the missions will greatly enhance the contribution they can make to the sections they support. Indeed, some training is mandatory – Young Leaders are required to complete Module A ('Prepare for take off!') within three months of joining the scheme.

## SETTING UP THE YOUNG LEADERS' UNIT

Two models for setting up a Young Leaders' Unit are set out in the Keys to Success resource. These are generally the best methods of setting up Young Leader provision, although a third model may be useful for some Districts. In this case, there is no dedicated Young Leaders' Unit, and Young Leaders' training is delivered as part of the balanced programme offered to all Explorer Scouts in the District. However, in this model the role of the Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) is still vital to co-ordinate training across the Explorer Scout provision within the District.

## THE ROLE OF THE EXPLORER SCOUT LEADER (YOUNG LEADER) – ESL (YL)

The ESL (YL) is key to ensuring that the system works effectively. The role does not need to be managed by someone appointed from within Scouting, and unlike other section leadership roles, it does not require a weekly commitment, unless the Young Leaders' Unit meets regularly. However, Young Leaders are unlikely to meet as a Unit more than once a month, so the ESL (YL) has a different routine to Explorer Scout Leaders.

The ESL (YL) is responsible for ensuring that adequate training and supervision is provided for all Explorer Scouts in the District who wish to be Young Leaders. They are also responsible for other young people who are not members of the Scout Movement but are using the Young Leaders' Scheme to meet the service or community requirement of another scheme, such as the DofE programme. The ESL (YL) is appointed by the District Explorer Scout Commissioner. A full role description can be found in the factsheet Role Description for an Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) (FS330049) at [scouts.org.uk](http://scouts.org.uk)

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Keeping track of all the Young Leaders in the District can be a challenge. If every section in an average District of ten Groups has two Young Leaders, that means 60 young people to register, train and monitor, as they work through the 11 modules and four missions of the scheme. Appointing a person to provide administrative support can do much to improve the efficiency of the system. The annual census can also help to identify young people who are still involved in the scheme but who are not currently benefiting from Young Leader training.

**'Our District keeps a record of all Young Leaders' training and completes certificates. These are then given to the Young Leaders when they turn 18 and used to help validate their adult leader training modules.'**

**Gill, ESL (YL)**

## ORGANISING YOUNG LEADERS' TRAINING

Some Young Leader training may be delivered as part of regular Explorer Scout meetings. Other training will be arranged specifically to meet the needs of Young Leaders who may not otherwise be active in an Explorer Scout Unit. Consider the most suitable times and venues to offer training. Module A training should be offered fairly regularly, as new Young Leaders need to complete this within three months of joining the scheme. Training for other modules should be timed to avoid periods when young people will have exams, revision or other commitments. If possible, arrange to use a number of venues in the District, to minimise travelling time for your Young Leaders.

Many Young Leaders prefer to commit an annual weekend to a residential and social event that tackles perhaps half a dozen modules, rather than one every few months. Young Leader training can be delivered by any adult with appropriate experience, so while it may be occasionally beneficial to contact the County training team, the ESL (YL) and the District are free to assemble their own team of experienced leaders to provide training. Also co-ordinate training with neighbouring Districts to make best use of limited resources.

## OBTAINING FUNDING

As a new section, a Young Leaders' Unit qualifies for a start up grant from the Development Grants Board (DGB) administered by UKHQ. Other grants are also available to support training. Visit the DGB pages of Member Resources at [scouts.org.uk](http://scouts.org.uk) for more information.

Young Leaders are members of the Movement and must pay annual membership fees to their County, District and UKHQ. Many Districts view this as a cost which should be passed to the Groups where the young people volunteer, rather than to the young people themselves. Agree who will absorb this cost early on, to avoid disagreement when the payment is due each year. Signing a placement agreement may be a good solution.

## RECRUITING YOUNG LEADERS

Understandably, Groups often want to retain their young people when they reach the age of 14. This means that the challenge for the ESL (YL) is less about recruiting young people to help run sections, and more about persuading those already involved to register as an Explorer Scout and get the training and support on offer.

Often, it is Group Scout Leaders rather than young people who need to be convinced of the value of the Young Leaders' Scheme. As links between the Scout and Explorer sections improve, it is important that Scouts are aware of all opportunities available to them, including that of becoming a Young Leader. It is important to use the District records collected at census to identify which young people are involved, but not registered as Young Leaders.

## COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

At Group level, effective communication is maintained primarily through the weekly meeting. For a new Young Leader, who meets with his YL Unit perhaps only once a month, the experience will be very different, so it is important that alternative methods of communication are in place. It may be beneficial to create a dedicated area for Young Leaders in your District's website, or to set up a Facebook page or group for Young Leaders. This can be supplemented by text messages and emails. Ensure that content and interactions remain appropriate, as Young Leaders are still young people.

**'We publicise events and training through a dedicated Facebook page for Young Leaders and Section Leaders. We also have a District website for Explorer Scouts and ESLs.'**  
Nigel, DESC

**'We keep Leaders, GSLs and parents informed by email or by post. I respond to all emails from Young Leaders, copying in their parents and ESL or DESC. We also have a Facebook page for Explorer Scouts in the District, which the DESC co-ordinates.'**  
Susan, ESL (YL)

## SELLING THE SCHEME TO SECTION LEADERS

Many leaders appreciate the value of capable ex-Scouts helping out within the Group. However, a Young Leader is a young person and should be treated as another member of the adult leadership team. The Young Leaders' Scheme is designed to develop a young person's key skills, and Section Leaders should encourage the Young Leader to attend the training sessions on offer, while also providing opportunities in their programme for Young Leaders to complete their four missions. This is essential in order to validate their training. Experience gained as a Young Leader can also count towards prior learning for validation of modules in the adult training scheme. Further information can be found in the factsheet Prior learning in the Young Leaders' Scheme (FS 330094).

**'It has taken a long time but most groups in our District now understand the benefits of having Young Leaders. We explained the Young Leaders' Scheme through a presentation for GSLs, and the ESL (YL) also attends sectional meetings to talk to leaders about the scheme. I recently presented the scheme at an ADC (Cubs) County meeting, which was very positively received.'**  
Julian, DESC

## PLACING YOUNG LEADERS WITHIN A SECTION

Once established, the DESC should have a clear idea of those Scouts due to move into Explorer Scouting in the coming year. This is an ideal opportunity to promote the benefits of the Explorer section, becoming a Young Leader and the DofE programme. While many Scouts may wish to stay within their own Groups, it is beneficial to spend time with other Groups across the District and beyond. The ESL (YL) may wish to consider using the Young Leader placement agreement, which ensures that sections understand their responsibilities towards the Young Leader while they are part of their leadership team.

**'We found that visiting Groups regularly and, if they didn't know the Group, accompanying a Young Leader to their first section meeting really made a difference.'**  
Peter, ESL (YL)

## VISITING SECTIONS

If possible, ESL (YL)s should visit Young Leaders volunteering within their sections. This provides an opportunity to see the Young Leader in action, to check that they are playing a useful role, and to speak to other members of the leadership team about the support and help they can give. Many Section Leaders are still unaware of the Young Leaders' Scheme and it should be actively promoted.

**'Stay in touch with GSLs. Keep them informed about how Young Leaders are doing in the District. Don't simply assume that other volunteers understand the Young Leaders' Scheme or the training modules. Explain and educate!'**  
Bruce, DESC.

## MONITORING PROGRESS

The Regional Development Service has produced a development planning toolkit for Young Leader Units which should be used to review progress on an annual basis. The toolkit employs SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and enables users to measure Unit progress against a set of criteria, known as the RAG sheet (Red, Amber and Green). This is a great way to highlight successes and target areas for further attention.

## AN ADULT AT 18

Explorer Scouting ends very abruptly on a young person's 18th birthday. Along with all the other changes that come with adulthood, their role in Scouting will also change. It is a busy time, which can be overshadowed by exams and revision or uncertainty about further education or employment. Where possible, we should try to keep our 'trained' young adults within the Movement. It is vital that the opportunities available are clearly explained to them, so they can continue their development as a Scout Network member and work towards Gold DofE and the Queen's Scout Award. Equally they may want to take on an adult role within a section or District, or join a Scout Active Support Unit. Some 45% of adult leaders are former youth members and by nurturing today's Young Leaders, we can significantly increase this percentage to ensure Scouting continues to have a bright future.

## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### Q1: Can a Scout become a Young Leader immediately after leaving the Scout section?

A: We strongly recommend that a young person leaves a six-month gap before taking on a Young Leader role within their former Troop. This is to help both the Young Leader and the Scouts adjust to the Young Leader's new level of responsibility.

### Q2: How many Young Leaders can work in each section?

A: To enable a Young Leader to develop effectively in their role, we recommend taking on no more than three Young Leaders per section. This is clearly dependent on the number of young people and adult volunteers in the section. The key consideration is that Young Leaders have an active role to help them develop and enable them to complete their missions.

### Q3: Who is responsible for signing off a Young Leader's training?

A: The Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) is responsible for signing off training, but Section Leaders should provide opportunities for Young Leaders to complete both modules and missions.

### Q4: Can Young Leaders be included in ratios of adults-to-young people during activities?

A: No. Since they are under 18, they do not count as an adult.

### Q5: Who is responsible for payment of Young Leaders' membership fees?

A: This should be mutually agreed at local level. Standard practice is that if the Young Leader is also an Explorer Scout, then normally their membership fees will be paid accordingly. If the Young Leader is not involved in Explorer Scouting then the Group should pay the membership fee to the District.

### Q6: How soon does Module A need to be completed?

A: As soon as possible but within 3 months.

### Q7: Can a District obtain funding towards Young Leader Training?

A: Funding applications for this purpose are welcomed by the Development Grants Board (DGB). Visit the DGB pages in the Member Resources area of [scouts.org.uk](http://scouts.org.uk)

### Q8: Is funding available for starting up a new Young Leader Unit?

A: Yes, through the Development Grants Board. Visit the DGB pages in the Member Resources area of [scouts.org.uk](http://scouts.org.uk)

### Q9: Do Young Leaders need to be registered with the District?

A: Yes. This will ensure that they get the appropriate support and training from the ESL (YL). All Young Leaders should be registered, including young people who are not Scouts but have enrolled in the scheme in order to complete the service section of an external programme such as DofE.

### Q10: What are the benefits of completing missions and training modules for Young Leaders?

A: The missions and training modules are designed to aid personal development. Module A and a further two hours of Young Leader training must also be completed in order to achieve the service section of the DofE Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Young Leader training also links well with adult leader training, so skills and knowledge can be easily validated once they turn 18. For more information, see the factsheet Prior learning in the Young Leaders' Scheme (FS 330094).

**Q11: Can Young Leaders have unsupervised access to young people in their section and do they need a CRB check?**

A: POR rule 3.35c states that a young person under the age of 18 years working with another section must not have unsupervised access to youth members. Since a Young Leader is under 18 they do not require a CRB check but this should be completed when they take on their next role.

**Q12: What happens when a non-Scout Young Leader volunteering in a section completes the required service for their DofE Award?**

A: A non-Scout can only help out at a section for the period of time that their DofE Award requires. After this, they must either leave or, preferably, be invested as an Explorer Scout and enrol in the Young Leaders' Scheme so they can remain involved.

**Q13: Where should Young Leaders sleep on a residential experience: with adult volunteers or with the young people?**

A: Neither. Young Leaders should be provided with separate sleeping accommodation to young people and adults at a residential experience.

**Q14: What uniform should Young Leaders wear?**

A: A Young Leader should wear the Explorer Scout uniform. They must not wear adult leader uniform until they turn 18.

**Q15: Should Young Leaders follow the Young People First code of practice (Yellow Card)?**

A: Since a Young Leader is under 18, the Yellow Card does not apply to them. However, Young Leaders have their own safeguarding code of practice known as the Orange Card. This is available at Scout Shops.

Planning a Young Leaders' Training Weekend helps the Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) to organise a weekend away for Young Leaders to complete training modules, encourage teamwork and get to know both the adult leaders and other Young Leaders.

Young Leaders' Essentials supports the Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) to: set up the Young Leader Unit; deliver the Scheme locally and support Young Leaders as they work with their sectional leaders in the Group. This resource contains at least one delivery method for each module.

Young Leaders' Essentials Plus supports the delivery of the modules locally. This resource contains a further two delivery methods for each module (except Module K – First Aid).

The Programme Team at Gilwell Park are able to offer support and advice. Contact them by phone on 0845 300 1818, email [programme@scouts.org.uk](mailto:programme@scouts.org.uk) or write to The Programme Team, The Scout Association, Gilwell Park, Chingford, London, E4 7QW.

## **OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES:**

Colony/Pack/Troop Essentials provides understanding of how the younger sections work to prepare the Young Leader for working with a section they may not have any experience of.

Colony/Pack/Troop Programme describes the set up of the section programme including the requirements for each badge and award available within the section.

## **FURTHER SUPPORT AND INFORMATION**

Keys to Success is a resource designed to help District Commissioners and District Explorer Scout Commissioners to: understand the Young Leaders' Scheme, realise its importance as part of wider Explorer Scout provision, and start, develop and renew their own District Young Leaders' Scheme.

The Young Leaders placement agreement is a concise document that helps Scout Groups, Section Leaders and Young Leaders ensure that an effective working relationship exists between all the parties involved.

The Young Leaders' File enables Young Leaders to record their progress as they complete the training modules and missions of the Young Leaders' Scheme.