

THE MARK SCOTT LEADERSHIP FOR LIFE AWARD

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND



WHY THE AWARD IS RELEVANT TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND

- Only **29%** of Scottish employers recruited young education leavers between 2010 and 2013. The main reasons cited were lack of skills (63%), lack of experience (61%) and lack of necessary qualifications (29%)¹.
- Employers identified weaknesses in young people's employability skills: **61%** reported that school leavers lack the self-management and resilience they need to succeed in the workplace; **52%** believed that they do not have the required communication skills; and **33%** reported that they do not have the appropriate attitude towards work².
- Research with 11-25 year olds has shown less than half of young people in Scotland believe that they are active citizens and that they are involved in making decisions which affect their lives. In addition, less than a third of the respondents had volunteered over the past 12 months³.

These findings indicate that many young people require help in developing the skills and attributes that will enable them to move on to a positive destination after school. They also indicate that, for the Scottish Government's efforts to build stronger and more empowered communities to succeed, young people need to be inspired to become active citizens.

¹ Employer Skills Survey 2013, UKCES

² Gateway to Growth: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey 2014, CBI

³ Being Young in Scotland 2009, Youth Link Scotland

DEVELOPING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH THE MARK SCOTT LEADERSHIP FOR LIFE AWARD

The Mark Scott Leadership for Life Award, delivered by The Outward Bound Trust⁴, is designed to develop the attitudes, skills and behaviours that young people require as they prepare for their next step into higher education, training or employment, and to make a positive contribution to society.

The programme is targeted at Scottish young people in their final year of school. Over a six-month period, they work in teams which bring together pupils from different religious, ethnic and economic backgrounds. First, the participants embark on a challenging five-day outdoor adventure residential. Upon returning to school, they work in groups to identify, organise and deliver a project that benefits their local community.

Since its inception, over 2,000 young people from 68 schools have participated in the Award programme delivering 350 projects that have benefitted people in the local community. In 2012, the Scottish Government made a financial commitment to support The Trust's ambition of enabling 1,000 young people to participate in the Mark Scott Leadership for Life Award from 2012-2017.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO SCOTLAND

Over the past six years, The Trust has evaluated the effectiveness of The Mark Scott Leadership for Life Award. The results indicate that the programme contributes towards achieving the following four Scottish National Outcomes⁵:

- Young people become more confident individuals and responsible citizens (National Outcome 4)
- Young people improve their life chances (National Outcome 8)
- The programme contributes towards a society free of crime and disorder (National Outcome 9)
- The programme contributes towards building supportive communities as young people take responsibility for their actions and how they affect others (National Outcome 11)

RESEARCHING THE LASTING IMPACT OF THE AWARD

Recently, The Trust conducted research into the lasting impact of taking part in the Award, in particular into the effects it has on young people in the first few years after leaving school. It involved individuals who have completed the Award over the past thirteen years. Three key findings of the research were:

1. The Award gives young people vital life skills which support them in moving into further education or work.
2. Participation in the Award increases young people's feeling of responsibility towards their community and makes them more willing to volunteer their time to help others.
3. The experience of taking part in the Award continues to influence individuals for many years afterwards.

These findings are presented in more detail overleaf.

⁴ The Outward Bound Trust is an educational charity and the UK's leading provider of bursary-assisted outdoor learning. The Trust has been supporting the development of young people for over 70 years, working closely with schools, youth groups and employers.

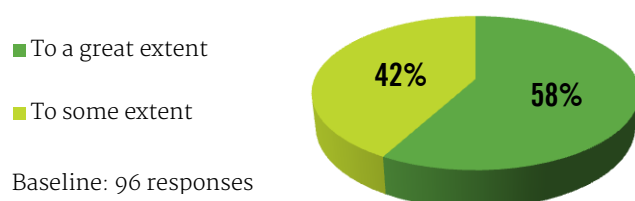
⁵ If you would like more specific information on our evaluation findings, please contact the Evaluation Team at The Outward Bound Trust: evaluation@outwardbound.org.uk

1. PROVIDING THE SKILLS NEEDED TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

All respondents⁶ reported that the Award experience gave them skills that helped them in the years after leaving school (see Chart 1 below), in particular in relation to their academic work, when applying for university, training or jobs, and when entering employment. The key benefits they described were:

- Significantly increased confidence and self-belief.
- Improved ability to interact with others they had never met and to be a productive team member, whether at university, college or in the work place.
- Valuable experiences to draw on during interviews, as they used and referred to the skills they had gained on the programme, setting them apart from other candidates.

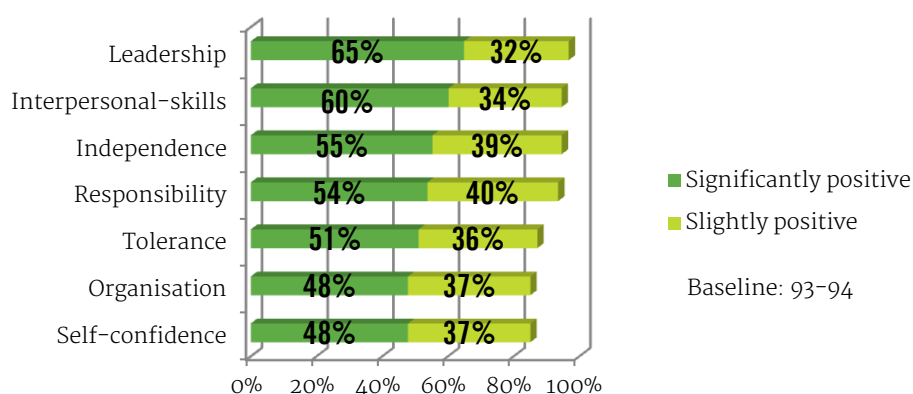
Chart 1: Respondents reported the extent to which the Award experience had given them skills that helped them in the year after leaving school.



The respondents reported gaining specific skills through participating in the Award (see Chart 2 for a breakdown of responses to the survey question):

- **97%** reported improved leadership skills; 94% reported increased independence and a greater ability to take responsibility.
- **94%** reported improved interpersonal-skills; 87% reported being more tolerant.

Chart 2: Percentage of individuals who reported a positive impact on their skills and attitudes.



+ THE AWARD DEFINITELY TAUGHT ME HOW TO WORK WELL IN A TEAM, HOW TO ARRANGE AND ORGANISE PROJECTS AND GAVE ME CONFIDENCE TO USE THIS EXPERIENCE AS AN EXAMPLE WHEN APPLYING TO BOTH UNIVERSITY AND TO JOBS. +

Award Participant in 2009/2010.

⁶ For the purposes of this paper, we collated data from different pieces of research involving Award participants of 2001-2013.

2. EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The experience of planning and delivering a community project had a positive effect on the young people's feelings of responsibility towards their community, their willingness to volunteer their time and their acceptance of others.

- **92%** of the respondents had become more aware of their community's needs and felt more responsible for their community.
- **89%** reported that community work and volunteering had become more important to them; 87% had increased the amount of time they spent helping others.
- **86%** stated that their involvement in the programme had made them feel more positive about interacting with people from a different background.

+ **THE AWARD OPENED MY EYES TO THE IMPACT WE CAN MAKE ON OUR COMMUNITIES, JUST BY DEVOTING A LITTLE TIME AND ENERGY.**+

Award Participant in 2005/2006.

3. AN EXPERIENCE THAT LASTS

The research suggests that the Award experience has a lasting positive effect on young people's lives. **85%** of the respondents reported that the Award experience continues to influence their lives today. Many stated that it had significantly influenced their personal development and that they continued to use the skills they learnt on a regular basis. They also attributed multiple achievements in their lives to the Award experience.

+ **FINISHING UNIVERSITY IS A BIG STEP I FACE THIS YEAR. LIKE [WHEN I FINISHED] SCHOOL AND [STARTED] UNIVERSITY, THE SKILLS THE AWARD HELPED ME TO GAIN WILL ASSIST ME WITH THIS CHANGE.**+

Award Participant in 2009/2010.

+ **I WOULD SAY [THE AWARD EXPERIENCE] IS STILL RELEVANT. IT WAS A BUILDING BLOCK FOR WHO I AM AND WHAT I DO TODAY.**+

Award Participant in 2009/2010.

+ **THE SKILLS YOU DEVELOP ON THE PROGRAMME ARE SKILLS THAT ARE INVALUABLE FOR LIFE.**

THESE SKILLS ARE NOT ONLY RELEVANT TO ME NOW - BUT CRITICAL TO MY CAREER.+

Award Participant in 2005/2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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