

Venturer Peak Award Requirements while Scouting @ Home



The COVID-19 Pandemic has seen life, as we know it, change to protect ourselves and each other. The way we Scout has had to rapidly change in the space of hours, which has seen the cancellation of face-to-face activities. Support has been implemented for Groups to continue their program by Scouting @ Home.

It is likely the COVID-19 Pandemic is going to disrupt traditional face-to-face Scouting and our Program for many months. The way each State or Territory is affected may also differ at times. Public Health strategies that are being implemented to stop the spread of disease include social distancing, lockdown, isolation and rolling phases of lockdown or isolation.

As the Scouts Australia Program Handbook states, “some Scouts may be limited by aspects out of their control. As an inclusive movement, we should always do our best to help these Scouts achieve as much as possible.” (Scouts Australia Program Handbook, page 83).

For those Youth Members currently undertaking their final steps towards achieving their Peak Award COVID-19 poses some significant challenges.

This is an outline of the modifications to be made to ensure no Youth Member is disadvantaged in completing their Peak Award, whilst we adhere to Federal, State or Territory Government social distancing policies.

Timeline & Impact

The following modifications are in force whilst Federal, State or Territory COVID-19 social distancing rules are being enforced within NSW.

Modifications are only to be made for Youth Members who would normally be completing their Peak Award during the time period that Federal, State or Territory COVID-19 social distancing rules are being enforced.

Modifications cannot be used to exempt or accelerate a Youth Member through their Award Scheme, Achievement Pathways or Program Essentials or onto their Peak Award.

Level 1, Quad 3
102 Bennelong Parkway,
Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127
ABN 42 460 434 054

PO Box 125,
Lidcombe NSW 1825

T 02 9735 9000

info@nsw.scouts.com.au
nsw.scouts.com.au



Scouts Australia
Member of the World
Organization of the
Scout Movement

Modifications for OLD Award Scheme Groups

Expedition: Modifications to the Expedition should only take place when the Venturer Scout is within the last 12 months of their permitted time in the section (17-18 years of age) and modifications should only be used to complete one Expedition. It is important no Venturer Scout is disadvantaged during the pandemic.

The planning of the Expedition is still to be undertaken. The Expedition is often the pinnacle of a Venturer Scout's experience in the section, a hike that represents hours of pre-planning, the management of participants, an arduous but fulfilling hike/bike ride/canoe trip or other activity... and lots of fun. For the time being, the Expedition cannot happen.

Under normal circumstances, the Expedition is an assessment of a Venturer Scout's competencies in the planning and execution of a challenging hike. It includes pre-planning (route, menu, equipment and program), navigation, camping, physical challenge, risk management and leadership. The journey is not simply a test of the Venturer Scout's ability to carry a pack over the distance. The Unit Council can assess those skills by reviewing the Expedition plan put together by the Venturer Scout and looking at the review documentation from previous activities the Venturer Scout has led, for evidence that they are capable of similar hikes and leading other Venturer Scouts.

The plan document should be written as if the Venturer Scout is doing the Hike. Care should be taken to use real locations and real dates, assessing weather and other dangers. Permission, fees, transport should be planned and documented. Menu, rations, equipment all detailed as well as responsibilities of the Patrol. **NO LOCAL RULES** are to be imposed on any Venturer Scout.

Venturer Scouts might choose to extend themselves on a Virtual Walk and produce a log of this journey. Venturer Scouts should describe the journey from the maps, satellite imagery, online searches, blogs from hiking sites and national park descriptions. They could complete this virtual hike with their patrol and camp in a backyard setting, setting up lightweight camp areas and communicating via video conference. Cooking their meals using lightweight cooking equipment where available and photographing or vlogging their experience.

The Unit Council supported by the Venturer Scout Leader should be able to support the achievement of this element in the Scouting @ Home virtual space. The Youth Member must undertake a review of the plan they have

created – this way they have facilitated the Planning and Reviewing processes of the Expedition. A virtual walk would be an additional stretch the Venturer Scouts may choose to perform and should be highlighted to the Unit Council as something the Venturer will do or not do prior to entering the planning phases.

All other areas of the Venturer Award Scheme and the Peak Award should be able to be completed in the Scouting @ Home environment via regular online meetings. Considerations and integrations of these elements into your virtual program should occur and resources are available via many of the states Scouting @ Home internet pages and following the various groups on social media. There are three things you should consider:

- **Be collaborative!** Work with your Unit Council to adjust a task to something achievable in our current constraints.
- **Be realistic!** Where a task is hard or impossible to do, think about what the task is trying to test, and how you might prove your skills or knowledge in another way.
- **Be imaginative!** When you film a video, make it fun and creative. Who knows? Your leader might think it is awesome and want to share it with the Communications team for Scouts NSW and onto the Facebook page!

Venturer Scouts should be encouraged to make use of online tools such as messaging and video conferencing to manage their Scouting life, replace Unit Meetings, and provide a means to connect with each other. Whilst this pandemic remains, Unit Councils are given the discretion to make adjustments or relaxations to the requirements of the Award Scheme in order for a Venturer Scout to progress through the award scheme, no faster than 75% of the required time frames.

Initiative, Unit Management and Leadership Courses:

Whilst undertaking the Scouting @ Home program and State and Region teams will work to reconstruct an online, virtual delivery of these courses. It is likely the Youth Members will need to perform some pre-course work to be presented in their online session and will need the support of the Unit Council, Leaders and Parents and Family to complete the elements. Construction of a visual portfolio including video might be an option for this.

Until such time as an online program has been developed, the Unit Council should assess the Venturer Scout against the learning outcomes of the respective Course.

The Unit Council should schedule an online meeting with the Venturer Scout as a formal but comfortable gathering, where the Unit Council is able to review evidence from the Venturer Scout demonstrating their experience in each of the learning outcome areas for their respective course. This is a reflection process and there is no pass or fail. This online meeting is to help the Venturer Scout review the skills and experience they have gained while in the Venturer Section and how they have applied these learnings in their every-day life.

Leadership and Unit Management skills should be learnt in the weekly Scouting program if the youth member is active in the program. The attendance at such a course should be an extension of this learning.

Modifications for Current Program Groups

Progressing through the Achievement Pathways and Program Essentials is a core part of our Program. Achievement Pathways and Program Essentials contribute directly to the personal development and informal education of our young people. These elements of our program rely on being able to actively participate in the program by doing activities with a Patrol or Unit, and this will continue. Scouting @ Home has been set up to assist with this and each State is preparing and distributing significant amounts of resources to assist here.

Outdoor Adventure Skills: Outdoor Adventure Skills are not easy to modify, as a significant element of progressing through the Stages involves completing outdoor pursuits.

Some elements of the Outdoor Adventure Skills and their Stages will be able to be completed virtually - either through self-directed learning and evidence upload or by instruction. Virtual completion of these elements also allows for the Two-Down approach to be continued - linking members virtually to achieve the goals required.

If a Youth Member requires only one progression to achieve their Peak Award, consideration should be given to awarding the Peak Award with one less progression than mandated as to not delay their personal progression through to the next section.

Nights Under Canvas: Youth members are encouraged to think outside the box in order to complete their Nights Under Canvas or Camping Requirements. This could involve setting up a camp in their backyards, living rooms, veranda's - the opportunities are endless! Youth members should be creative and seek the support of their parents when considering their camp location.

Modifications to Participate, Assist, Lead: Even in a virtual environment, Participate, Assist and Lead can still occur. This is easier to facilitate in the younger sections in a virtual environment.

For the older sections, particularly when it is expected that Assists and Leads involve a sustained effort over a period of time (such as organising an event or camp), they should be encouraged to continue with their chosen Assists and Leads or supported to modify their goals. Emphasis should be placed on the planning and reviewing of the process and modification of goals if required.

Evidence: Whilst undertaking the Scouting @ Home program and modifications to the Achievement Pathways, collection of evidence will be key for Units. All youth should be encouraged to record their progress within the digital system. Photos, vlogs, reports, posters - the recording of evidence is up to each Youth Member and the Unit to decide together what works best for the individual.

Leadership / Personal Development Course: Whilst undertaking the Scouting @ Home program and State and Region teams will work to reconstruct an online, virtual delivery of this course. It is likely the Youth Members will need to perform some pre-course work to be presented in their online session and will need the support of the Unit Council, Leaders and Parents to complete the elements. Construction of a visual portfolio including video might be an option for this.

Until such time as an online program has been developed, the Unit Council should assess the Venturer Scout against the learning outcomes of the Leadership / Personal Development Course.

The Unit Council should schedule an online meeting with the Venturer Scout as a formal but comfortable gathering, where the Unit Council is able to review evidence from the Venturer Scout demonstrating their experience in each of the learning outcome areas. This is a reflection process and there is no pass or fail. This online meeting is to help the Venturer Scout review the skills and experience they have gained while in the Venturer Scout Section and how they have applied these learnings in their every-day life.

- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Task Management
- Leadership
- Planning
- Community Involvement

Leadership / Personal Development skills should be learnt in the weekly Scouting program if the youth member is active in the program. The attendance at such a course should be an extension of this learning.

Simple Principles for Supporting Scouts Achievement During This Scouting @ Home period.

With more people staying at home, Scouts should be encouraged to work independently or in small groups (Activity Patrols) on their Award Scheme or [Achievement Pathways](#). This is particularly important for young people who will progress to the next section in the next six months and wish to achieve their Peak Award.

As there are many different methods of doing Scouting @ Home, these simple principles have been developed to support each youth member continuing with their progress in the Award Scheme or Achievement Pathways which recognises their personal achievements.

- No youth member is to be disadvantaged during the pandemic and should be actively encouraged to work on their Achievement Pathways or Award Scheme.
- At all times, standards, rules and regulations set by the government must be followed. [Click here](#) for up to date NSW information.
- Resilience should be encouraged and recognised through any adjustments that are made.
- Working on some aspects of the [Outdoor Adventure Skills](#) and most of the [Special Interest Areas](#) are highly achievable and transferable to the Old Award Scheme.
- Leaders should support each member to make available, every opportunity to complete award requirements
- Modifications may be needed, and youth and leaders should consider how best to achieve outcomes given the restrictions of the pandemic, to ensure youth can still achieve the same educational outcome.
- In the younger sections, parents should be involved to ensure personal challenges are attainable and assist with supervision given their specific circumstances.
- Each Scout must be challenged personally and participate in the Plan>Do>Review> process.
- Wherever possible, members of the Unit Council should be involved in the approval process. This can happen via online meetings in your virtual Scout Halls.
- Where possible and appropriate, small activity patrols involving other Scouts or other people who are non-Scouts (brothers and sisters) could be involved.