

The Gold Expedition is the final step towards gaining all Duke of Edinburgh Awards. It is the most challenging expedition with skills and knowledge gained during the previous levels drawn upon and applied in a more remote setting. The Gold expedition is the most demanding-but also the most satisfying to complete!

The Gold Hike is usually the final hurdle faced after many years of striving to complete the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. After dedicating so much time and effort to the award for the Bronze and Silver levels, the Gold Hike is the one often most enjoyed by participants due to the number of friendships made along the way. Somerset challenges the students to do their best, and encourages them to have fun and make the most of the four day expedition.



The Group Leader

The Group Leader's responsibility is to oversee the expedition and ensure students are on the right track. The Group Leader takes a much more passive role during the Gold Pack and Paddle, particularly the test, compared to the previous levels. This allows for students to truly step up to their full potential and excel.



Getting Started

On arrival on the morning of the expedition, students are issued with their equipment and a route planning session is conducted. Once route plans are finalised and all gear is packed correctly, students set off on the 4 day Journey.

The Gold Pack and Paddle sees participants out on the Hawkesbury River and visiting some of Somerset's most remotely located campsites, with some having no vehicular access. Gold Pack and Paddle students are expected to apply all the skills and information they have gained throughout their previous journeys and work as a team. The campsites visited are more remote than those visited at the Silver level. Some Campsites will have no facilities and you will have to dig a hole for toileting, others on the River will have varying facilities incl toilets.

The students learn to rely on each other for support and to build team morale as well as factor in each individual's strengths and weaknesses. Problem solving is a key role played in this level of expedition and students are expected to focus on achieving the best possible solution.

All students end up back at Somerset Base at the end of their expedition to clean / dry any gear used for the expedition, pack up all equipment neatly and **debrief**.

