

Going overseas for your DofE Expedition



Taking your DofE team overseas is an extremely rewarding experience for all involved. Choosing the right location for you is key and we have a variety of fantastic locations with all logistics taken care of for you. We ensure that things are both safe, stress-free to organise and an unforgettable experience for young people.

Our overseas programmes are approved by the DofE and ensure that the 20 Conditions for Expeditions are fully adhered to alongside making the most of opportunities for self-development and having fun exploring new areas. **All overseas expeditions are led by International Mountain Leaders and have been reced to ensure viability and safety.**

Real value

Adventure Expeditions works with UK schools, private groups and international schools to provide expeditions outside of the UK each year. All of our programmes are designed to be inspiring, visit beautiful and genuinely different overseas locations and represent **real value for money**.

As with our UK programmes, all paperwork is undertaken as required by your DofE Operating Authority and DofE Head Office (including Blue Forms and all paperwork required to obtain notification numbers). We also provide you with all the necessary information for the programme including comprehensive itinerary information, kits lists, parents' evenings and pre-expedition training specific to your destination.

Where can we go?

We have spent a great deal of time researching and receing what we consider to be the best overseas locations for DofE expeditions – a balance of a great expedition experience, things to see and a mix of different cultures, languages and sights to absorb during and after the expedition. Some locations may be more appropriate at certain times of the year because of climate or snow cover on the ground which may influence your choice if you have specific dates or times in mind – get in touch if you would like to discuss which location might work best for you or if you would like to go somewhere that isn't listed, **we are always open to different ideas and options** – if you would like to go there chances are others will too.

Ideas for you

Chamonix-Mont-Blanc: A challenging expedition where you can get up close and personal with spectacular mountains, glaciers, forests, alpine meadows and mountain chamois (deer-like animals with tall ribbed horns!). With Chamonix lying in France but very close to the borders of Switzerland

and Italy, groups may find themselves going through two or three different countries over the course of their expedition;

Provence: If you're looking for a slightly more chilled out expedition in a location that gets over 300 days of sunshine a year, Provence is the one! A great mix of alpine and Mediterranean cultures: old hilltop villages and chateaux to explore with mountain peaks rising out of the hills including the mighty Mont Ventoux, of Tour de France fame. Blue skies (normally) guaranteed!;

Bernese Oberland: A fantastic blend of mountains, alpine meadows with carpets of flowers and traditional alpine village life, the Bernese Oberland allows you to explore some quieter areas before arriving beneath the famous giant mountains of the Eiger, Jungfrau and Monch. Witness first-hand the Valley of Waterfalls, see where James Bond was filmed and take in the scene of countless mountaineering epics and tragedies on the Eiger 'Nordwand';

Poland & Slovakia: A little known gem and a truly fantastic adventure for DofE that is easily accessible – trek in the beautiful hills, forests and mountain passes while exploring the Tatra Mountains. If you're keen for culture and stunning scenery, you have to join us in Poland and Slovakia. The Tatra give a great way to see a quieter and more remote landscape with different languages, tasty food and basic mountain refuges to stay in. You might like to take a cable car to the heart of the mountains (and maybe even the snowline!) to acclimatise, or explore the local supermarkets to stock up on tasty expedition supplies. Spend a couple of days after your expedition exploring the wonderful city of Krakow, a day at the haunting Auschwitz, explore the cathedral sized Wieliczka salt mines or stay in the mountains at our mountain base and try some outdoor activities or explore the local markets. Whatever you choose to do, we are confident that you will see why Poland and Slovakia has become one of our most popular overseas expedition areas.

Slovenia: Nestled among sparkling lakes, varied forests, pointy limestone peaks and vibrant little alpine towns, the Julian Alps of Slovenia are a real mecca for walkers and a stunning way to complete your DofE expedition. When planning your route you have a good amount of choice depending on what your team would like to see, the level of challenge you would all like to undertake and what your interests are. You will walk between a selection of mountain refuges or 'doms' to stay in each night and get to experience great trails, stunning views, crisp mountain air, awe-inspiring gorges with unbelievably blue water running through them and their famous grey trout darting alongside you as you walk and the famed mountains of the Triglav National Park as you traverse this stunning alpine landscape. Explore the sights and activities of Lake Bled or one of the mountain towns of the National Park to finish your expedition programme and celebrate – a stunning country with great transport links.

Norway: The Land of Giants! Norway cannot fail to disappoint if you would like to head in search of beautiful open spaces, picturesque fjords and the chance to experience an expedition with an emphasis on self-reliance, solitude and wild camping among the mountains. An expedition to Norway is truly unique: beautiful wild camps, peaks to summit after the expedition with our instructors if you wish to, a chance to feel totally away from it all and absorb this stunning country. We are really sure that you won't want to leave the Land of Giants at the end of your expedition.

Morocco: A huge change in culture and climate yet only a short flight away from the UK. Morocco gives a great opportunity to explore the Atlas Mountains, trekking through small Berber villages and sampling the local Moroccan sweet mint tea (watch the locals pour it into your cup from a great height and be amazed when it all ends up the right place!) and extremely tasty tagines both before and after your expedition. The Atlas mountains are just North of the Sahara desert and as such have

a desert-like climate themselves: hot sunny days in Summer with cold desert nights as the clear skies let the heat of the day escape away. In Winter the snows arrive in the Atlas and Jebel Toubkal, the highest peak in northern Africa, is covered in snow. R&R after your expedition includes the chance to visit the Sahara, head to the coast around Essouira where world class surf breaks can be found (don't worry, there are lots of beginner beaches too!), join in with a local community project or explore the souks of Marrakech to stock up on souvenirs, watch snake charmers and experience a traditional 'hammam'.

Romania: The southern Carpathian Mountains of Romania (or 'Transylvanian Alps') are often described as one of the last true wilderness areas of Europe – home to an incredible diversity of alpine flowers and animals that we aim to spot on expedition – especially after a few top tips from on where to find and how to spot them: wild boar, stags, black chamois, deer, foxes and lynx, amazing! The Transylvanian Alps have a great amount of terrain waiting for you including stunning airy ridges, lush mountain forests and meadows to cross, medieval villages, sparkling streams and...the castle of Bran, home to the mystical Count Dracula (fangtastic!). We have found Romania to be fantastic for trekking and expeditions – wilderness and stunning scenery with a great dose of culture, tasty food and so many things to see and experience. There is the opportunity to finish your expedition with a day in the city of Bucharest, also known as the 'Paris of eastern Europe, with its blend of cultures and offering sightseeing, shopping, cafe hopping or just generally relaxing and taking it all in.

Pyrenees: Situated on the border between France and Spain, the Pyrenees are a beautiful and accessible range (from the foothills through to the summits) in which to complete an expedition – and a great way to practice your French and Spanish if you wish! Alpine meadows full of wild flowers, small hamlets and villages, dramatic snowy and rocky peaks towering above you and lots of wildlife to see. The Pyrenees offer the opportunity to experience a beautiful mountain landscape while escaping some of the crowds of the more popular alpine areas – stunning.

Iceland: If Norway is the 'Land of Giants' then Iceland is the 'Land of Fire and Ice'. Beautiful open landscapes dotted with thermal pools, spouting geysers and giant waterfalls await in Iceland. Expeditions of all levels work in Iceland and together with some fantastic natural sights to see including thermal pools to relax tired legs in post-expedition, make it a great expedition experience all-round. Accessible flights from the UK make Iceland top off the list of reasons why Iceland is great for expeditions.

Isle of Arran: While we know that the Isle of Arran is not technically an overseas location, we always feel like we are overseas when we arrive! With incredibly good transport links and a short ferry ride where wildlife spotting can begin with keeping a look out for basking sharks, dolphins and seals, arriving on Arran feels like you are heading on an expedition with a difference. The wildlife doesn't stop there as your expedition can take you into areas to spot golden eagles, otters and marvel at rare whitebeam trees. The geology and scenery of Arran won't disappoint either – from the pointy Goatfell down to the sandy beaches for beachcombing and wooded areas of the South, Arran is a real gem and your chance to be a 'castaway' for a little while. While on Arran, take the chance to relax after your expedition and see some of the sights that the island has to offer: head out otter spotting with one of our wildlife experts, take a short boat ride over to neighbouring Holy Isle and see seals along the way or hang out in Brodick and sample local fish and chips and send some postcards. Arran is one of our firm favourites – it feels as though you're overseas even if it isn't!

Cost

Our transparent pricing policy means that you know exactly how much each participant has to pay from the start – there are no hidden extras. **For tailor-made overseas programmes, we charge £65.00 – £70.00 per person, per day** (depending on location. Areas such as Switzerland and the current exchange rate mean that prices to go here are slightly higher than some other locations but we always ensure that we offer the best value for money possible).

Example itinerary and costs

We structure each programme after chatting through your requirements with you and so the example programme below is just that – an example to give you an idea on how costs might work based on programmes that we have run previously for schools:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Itinerary</u>
Pre-expedition	Training and planning day – either in-school or at the end of your practice expedition if you are also completing this with AE. Includes full training on the country you are visiting ready for the expedition and route planning with instructors. Includes twilight parents if this is useful for you.
Day 1	Depart UK, fly to destination country. AE instructors meet you from the airport and escort you to the expedition base location (in-country transfers paid for by AE). Overnight at bunkhouse and meal in local area.
Day 2	Acclimatisation day – walk in the local area with instructors, pre-expedition checks with DofE Accredited Assessors, food shopping at nearby supermarkets and grocery stores, recap route planning and an early night!
Day 3	Transfer to expedition start point and head out on first day of expedition
Day 4	Expedition day 2
Day 5	Expedition day 3
Day 6	Final day of expedition. Transfer back to expedition base for a hot shower and comfy bed
Day 7	Activities of your choice – explore the local area, visit local attractions or undertake activities of your choice. Give your expedition presentation to your Assessor in the evening and enjoy a well-deserved celebratory evening meal!
Day 8	Leisurely morning (depending on flight times!), transfer to airport for flight home. Instructors hand over all DofE paperwork and reports to you before departure so that you have everything for your expedition completed and signed off before you land back in the UK.

- **Where?** This example itinerary is the format of a programme that was undertaken by several schools during the 2017 expedition season to Poland and Slovakia;
- **What did groups do on Day 7?** Groups booked some outdoor activities in the local area, others went to Krakow for the day and another group visited Auschwitz and the Wieliczka salt mines in a full day tour arranged by AE;
- **What was the total cost?** The above programme included 1 UK day (£45.00 per person) and 8 overseas days (£65.00 per person) = total cost of **£565.00 per person**.

What's included in the cost?

All AE overseas expedition prices include:

- Comprehensive pre-expedition information pack and resources for participants;
- Completion of all paperwork required for your DofE Operating Authorities and Expedition Panels (including preparation of DofE Blue Forms, submission to DofE Head Office, obtaining notification numbers);
- UK training day at school or weekend in the hills as appropriate (including all overseas expedition route planning and full training specific to the area that you are travelling to);
- Qualified and experienced International Mountain Leaders to run your programme – we believe in the value of the experience and training gained through this award and it is a legal requirement when working as an instructor in some countries e.g. France, Italy and Switzerland;
- DofE Accredited Assessors for all qualifying expedition teams – there are no additional assessment fees to pay;
- **Free use of high quality group equipment:** tents, stoves, fuel for stoves, pots and pans, maps, first aid kits, group shelters;
- Accommodation costs during your expedition (including base accommodation) and transfer costs to/from arrival airport to your expedition location;
- Post expedition reviews with participants and leaders and a full expedition report signed by your DofE Assessor for upload to eDofE to have the expedition signed off in a simple and stress-free manner;
- DofE Accredited Assessor with all parts of the expedition programme signed off upon successful completion;
- **Financial peace of mind with our comprehensive insurance cover under the Package Travel Regulations** – this means that you are covered in the event of failure of any accommodation or other services used during the programme.

What you need to arrange/ provide

- Travel to and from the expedition location – we can help you with full information and logistics of this. We ask that schools arrange their own flights through school, this avoids having to pay additional flight bonding charges if we book them for you and means that you can arrange flights for the best times to suit you all;
- Personal insurance for participants – we require all participants to have insurance cover for medical and repatriation purposes. Schools often have policies in place that cover students but we can point you in the right direction for policies if necessary – we have a couple of trusted options that we recommend and these are very competitive (approx. £30.00 per person for 8 days including European trekking cover);
- Personal kit – we provide a comprehensive kit list and go through this fully during training sessions;

- Food for the expedition – many participants choose to purchase the four days of expedition food in the UK before heading overseas for their expedition or alternatively we can put together discounted expedition meal bundles to take out on expedition with you or build time into the programme to go food shopping upon arrival in-country. Again, comprehensive advice is included during the training sessions.

Going overseas, stress-free organisation...

We appreciate that the thought of running or co-ordinating an overseas expedition can often feel a little overwhelming – you may have just about be able to give up the time to join the expedition overseas but the idea of mounting paperwork can often ‘take the shine’ off the idea and mean that the whole programme is just too much to execute. **We’re here to help regain the excitement of co-ordinating the trip without additional stress or paperwork.** All overseas trips that we run include a training day in school (or training weekend in the hills where this is more appropriate) where we cover all additional training appropriate to the area that you are travelling to, complete all route planning, hold a parents meeting so that any questions can be answered in full and paperwork completed (including issuing all students with a comprehensive Expedition Information Pack) and students can get excited about the trip to come and planning the things they would like to do.

Following the training sessions, we bring all paperwork back to our base to ensure everything is in order, complete DofE paperwork (e.g. Blue Forms for submission to DofE Head Office) and put in place the final logistics ready for the excitement of departure!

Learning Opportunities

Being on expedition overseas can offer a range of learning opportunities both linked to the curriculum and personal development. In keeping with our Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, we are keen to maximise the experience of each participant on expedition and can work with you to identify links with the National Curriculum or personal development options in your chosen location.

Safety and Backup

Adventure Expeditions only runs expeditions using International Mountain Leaders. This qualification is a legal requirement for leaders running trips in France, Switzerland and Italy and acts as a guide for the standard of expertise that is expected elsewhere. All leaders are experienced, DBS checked, have outdoor-specific first aid training and are members of their relevant professional association. We believe that by using qualified and experienced instructors, we can maximise the safety of your students and the effectiveness of the operating procedures that Adventure Expeditions has in place.

All participants are given full briefings and training in emergency procedures for their chosen location and carry Expedition Safety Cards specific to their expedition country that act as an ‘aide memoire’ in the event of an emergency. Back in the UK, the Adventure Expeditions HQ acts to co-ordinate operations of all expeditions and provide support to leaders in the field, 24/7. For more information on how we manage safety and the licences, quality badges and insurance that we hold, **please click here.**

Hear from other teachers who have joined us overseas

We know that heading overseas and putting your trust in a provider can be a daunting task. Therefore we would love to put you in touch with teachers and leaders who have joined us on different expeditions in recent years – give us a call and we can get things sorted.

Next Steps...

Email to discuss your requirements or call us on 01433 651449 – our friendly office staff and team of instructors can happily chat through different ideas and options that might work well for you and your group.

Looking forward to seeing you on expedition!