

Commonwealth Award



Guides

**The
Senior Section**

Commonwealth Award

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Introduction

The Commonwealth Award is open to Guides over 13 years of age and The Senior Section. Guiding members from all Commonwealth countries (including all Branch Associations) can undertake this award. Members of British Guides in Foreign Countries (BGIFC) can also take part even if they are not living in a Commonwealth country as they are still members of a Commonwealth guiding organisation.

The award is an opportunity to challenge yourself to discover more about the Commonwealth through fun and exciting activities. It is also a great way to find out more about your wider community and its people. You can start the award at Guides and continue it in The Senior Section. There is no set time for completing it but you must still be in Guides or The Senior Section.

Aim of the award

This award is about challenging yourself to find out more about the Commonwealth you are part of. Some of the challenges are quite open, giving you lots of choices to be creative. Your Leader will be able to help you set goals for each challenge you choose to complete. Discuss with a Leader how you will know you have achieved your goals. Remember, each challenge you do should be a **challenge** to you.

What you have to do

To earn the award you must complete challenges 1, 2 and 3, plus two of the eight optional challenges. You can complete the award on your own or as part of a group. Together with your Leader, think about who can help you while you do the award.

With your Leader's help as well, keep your County Commissioner informed of what you learn as you go along. Your County Commissioner is the person who will verify that you have completed your award.

Compulsory challenges

You need to do **all** the clauses in each challenge.

1. History of guiding

- a) Be able to talk about guiding from its beginning at the Crystal Palace Rally in 1909, including the development of World Guiding.
- b) Know how guiding developed in your own country.
- c) Understand the basic aims and principles of guiding.

2. Knowledge of the Commonwealth

- a) Know something about the development of the Commonwealth of Nations.
- b) Be able to talk knowledgeably about a Commonwealth country other than your own. Your knowledge should include:
 - a little about the cultures and religions of the country
 - a day in the life of its people
 - how guiding began and how it has developed.
- c) Do something practical in relation to the country of your choice. For example, you could correspond with someone, prepare a typical meal, produce a scrapbook, learn a craft or make a collection of items.

3. Community action

Carry out service within the community. This should cover a total of at least 20 hours over a minimum period of three months, and within a maximum period of six months. Explain why you have chosen this particular form of service.

Optional challenges

Choose and complete **two** of the following eight optional challenges.

Health

Complete **both** of the following clauses.

- a) Know what health services are available in your own country. Find out what immunisation is required for entry into two other Commonwealth countries in an area of the world other than your own. This information should be correct at the time you are doing the challenge.
- b) Explain how nutrition and sanitation can affect the health of your family.

Environment

Complete **both** of the following clauses.

- a) Study in detail one of the following in your country: environmental pollution, water supplies, forestry, conservation, soil erosion, sustainable resources.
- b) Find out about environmental issues in another Commonwealth country and investigate how that country is addressing them.

Cultural heritage

Complete **both** of the following clauses.

- a) Know about the cultural heritage of your own country on two of these subjects: art, music (vocal or instrumental), dress, literature, poetry, dance or craft. Produce a collection of items, such as pictures, programmes, instruments or books, for your chosen subjects. Be able to demonstrate or perform an item from one of your choices.
- b) Discuss three religions, denominations or faiths found in your country with a group of your peers.

Fit for life/Out of doors

Complete **one** of the following clauses.

- a) Take part in or learn about a physical activity (sport or skill) new to you. Explain the benefits of regular physical activity for young women.
- b) Participate in a camp of at least two nights on two occasions within three years.

Public speaking or debating

Complete **one** of the following clauses.

- a) Give a talk to a group of your peers on any subject you choose, which should last at least five minutes.
- b) Take part in an organised debate as the principal speaker for or against the motion.

Creative writing

Write a short story or a poem about life in your own country, or tell a legend from your cultural heritage.

Citizenship

Complete **both** of the following clauses.

- a) Describe your own system of government and that of another country in the Commonwealth.
- b) Demonstrate knowledge of how your country is prepared for disaster. This could include flooding, hurricanes, forest fires and other natural disasters. Find out which agencies in your country are responsible for dealing with natural disasters.

Investigation

Complete **one** of the following clauses.

- a) Investigate the public education and nature conservation programmes of an institution such as a national park, wildlife sanctuary, zoo or botanical garden. How does this fit in with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)?
- b) Talk to your unit about architectural developments in your town or area over a specific period. Take them to visit at least two historical buildings or monuments you have investigated.

Support

If you are still in need of ideas, have a chat with your peer group about what they have done or are planning to do. The Senior Section website also includes suggestions and case studies of what other people have done, go to www.girlguiding.org.uk/theseniorsection > [What can I do?](#) > [Awards and qualifications](#) > [Commonwealth Award](#). Finally, your Leaders, Commissioners and Advisers may also be able to give you some ideas.

Recording what you have done

Keep track of what you have done using the *Commonwealth Award Record Book* (available from www.girlguidingshop.co.uk, order code 6389). You might also like to keep additional and more detailed records of what you have done. This could be a video journal, a blog, a scrapbook, a display, a written journal, a calendar and so on.

It is up to you, in agreement with your Leader and County Commissioner, to decide how you are going to present what you have done to fulfil your award challenges. Be creative - you might like to put together a display, invent a game for younger members about the topic or give a talk to your peers.

Don't forget

Check if what you are planning to do for your Commonwealth Award can be counted towards other guiding awards and qualifications. Some of the activities undertaken for this award could be counted towards phase 1 activities of Look Wider, for example. You will need to decide this beforehand as the requirements for the two different awards could vary slightly and you need to make sure you fulfil the requirements for both.

If you start the award as a Guide you can continue working on it in The Senior Section.

You have to finish the award before you leave The Senior Section, so before your 26th birthday.

When you have finished

When you have completed challenges 1, 2 and 3 plus two optional challenges, and had them signed off in your record book, your County Commissioner will verify that you have completed your Commonwealth Award. She may want to see the different things you have completed to gain the award. She will let you know how you will be presented with your certificate and badge. Remember to celebrate what you have achieved - and tell others about your experience of completing the Commonwealth Award!