

Adult Roles in Explorer Scouting



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This factsheet contains general information for those wishing to know more about the adult roles in this section. There are further factsheets that explain the roles in more detail.

Within the Explorer Scout section there are four main adult leadership roles:

- District Explorer Scout Commissioner (DESC)
- Explorer Scout Leader (ESL)
- Assistant Explorer Scout Leader (AESL)
- Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader)

and two support roles:

- District Explorer Scout Administrator (DESA)
- Assistant County Commissioner (Explorer Scouts)

District Explorer Scout Commissioner

This is an appointment unique to the Explorer Scout Section, and combines the roles of Group Scout Leader (GSL), Section Leader and 'Manager' for the Explorer Scout provision in the District. The District Explorer Scout Commissioner:

- Is appointed by the District Commissioner (DC) on approved by the District Appointments Advisory Committee.
- Reports directly to the DC
- Is responsible for managing Explorer Scouting in the District

The main role of the District Explorer Scout Commissioner (DESC) is to ensure that Explorer Scouting is delivered effectively in the District. This involves responsibility in seven main areas:

- **Programme and awards** - ensuring that there is a balanced programme, covering all of the Programme Zones and that it is available to all youth members in the section.
- **Management of Explorer Scout Units** - This includes responsibility for opening Units where and when provision is needed, ensuring there is an adequate number of leaders, and that they are appropriately trained and supported. Occasionally it may also be necessary to close or merge Units to best suit local provision, and this too is the responsibility of the DESC, in consultation with the DC, GSLs and the District Executive Committee.
- **Finance and resources** - by working closely with the District Executive Committee, the DESC must ensure that Explorer Scout Units are adequately and appropriately funded. Partnership Agreements between Units and any supporting bodies must be made, ratified by all parties (the Unit, the District and the supporting body) and reviewed/updated regularly, to ensure that Units have adequate access to funds, equipment and buildings.
- **Administration and communication** – working closely with the DESA to ensure efficient administration of the District database and finances, and enable open and

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regular communication of information to and from youth members and leaders in the district.

- **Youth Involvement** - set up and maintain the District Explorer Scout Forum as the focal point of direct representation of youth members, ensuring that they have the opportunity to contribute to the programme and management of Explorer Scouting in the District. They must also ensure each Unit has a Unit Forum, and hold a regular District Explorer Scout Meeting at least annually.
- **Recruitment and retention** - make sure that ESLs and the DESA maintain a good relationship with GSLs and Scout Section Leaders, enabling a smooth transition from Scouts to Explorer Scouts. Actively encourage the moving on process from the Explorer Scout Section to the Scout Network.
- **Young Leaders' Unit** - along with the Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) the DESC should develop the Young Leaders' Unit and ensure all Young Leaders receive adequate training, whilst being given full access to the wider district Explorer Scout programme.

The DESC must also regularly review the provision of Explorer Scouting in the District.

To fulfil the role, the DESC must clearly maintain a good relationship with a wide number of people, including the ESLs, DESA, GSLs and Scout Leaders, and the County Scout Network Commissioner and local Network Co-ordinators.

District Explorer Scout Administrator

This is another role unique to Explorer Scouting, and is a vital source of support for the District Explorer Scout Commissioner and the ESLs. The District Explorer Scout Administrator (DESA) needs to be an organised and efficient administrator, with time to develop and maintain the Explorer

Scout database, and a good communicator with the ability to maintain a working relationship with a number of people. The main components of the role are:

- **Development and upkeep of the district Explorer Scout Records** - this will usually mean access to a personal computer and adequate computer skills to maintain a database of all youth members in the section. The DESA also keeps a record of all Partnership Agreements and meetings/forums held in the District.
- **Recruitment and retention** - the DESA has a key role in liaising with GSLs and Scout Section Leaders in order to maintain a register of Scout Section members over the age of 13. The DESA should ensure that each potential Explorer Scout is made aware at an early stage of the opportunities available to them in Explorer Scouting. Likewise, the DESA should ensure that the County Scout Network Commissioner and local Scout Network Co-ordinators are aware of all Explorer Scouts over the age of 17 who are potential Network members.
- **Communication** - the DESA will help the DESC to maintain a high level of communication between all parties, youth members and adult members in the District.
- **Other duties agreed with the DESC**- these may include keeping minutes at Explorer Scout Leader meetings, District Explorer Scout Forum meetings and the District Explorer Scout Meeting. Other administrative duties, such as production of a newsletter, may also be agreed.

Explorer Scout Leader

The Explorer Scout Leader (ESL) acts as the Section Leader for an Explorer Scout Unit, but is directly responsible to the DESC. As the Explorer Scout Section is leader-led, the ESL has responsibility for developing and providing quality Explorer Scouting in the Explorer Scout Unit and the District as a whole:

- **Delivery of a Balanced Programme** for the Explorer Scout Unit, covering all the Programme Zones, taking into account the needs and views of the youth members of the Unit. This should be done in conjunction with the DESC via regular communication to ensure good provision across the whole District.
- **Encourage participation** in the Award scheme, ensuring that both participation and achievement are rewarded. Alongside this, the ESL should make sure that each young person takes part in the *Building My Success* process and receives a Participation Award every year.
- **Encourage the moving in process** by maintaining good links with the Scout Section, and encourage the moving on process into the Network by including the Moving On Award in the Unit programme.
- **Ensure that young people get what they want and need** from being members of the Unit and that they have a say in developing and reviewing the Unit programme via the Unit Forum.

The ESL has a very practical role and should spend as much of their Scouting time as possible in the actual process of delivering the programme.

Assistant Explorer Scout Leader

The role of the AESL is a leader who helps and supports the ESL in providing the balanced programme. Again, it is a very practical role, with as much time spent on programme planning and delivery as possible.

Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader)

All youth members between the ages of 14 and 18 who wish to undertake a leadership role in the younger sections must be members of the Young Leader's Unit. The leader of this Unit must fulfil duties in addition to those of an ESL:

- **Ensure that all young leaders** are adequately supervised and trained for the role of a Young Leader.
- **Deliver the modules** of the Young Leaders' Training Scheme.
- **Ensure that Young Leaders** have full access to the balanced programme provided by the District, and have the opportunity to take part in the award scheme.

This is a challenging role, as the ESL(YL) will also have to fulfil many of the other normal duties of an ESL. Some Young Leaders will be members of other Explorer Scout Units, others will gain all their Scouting experience as Young Leaders, and many will only be Young Leaders for a short period of time in order to fulfil the service requirements of the Award scheme. The ESL(YL) has to be alert to the needs of all these different Young Leaders.

Naturally, as well as the usual working relationships, the ESL(YL) must liaise closely with all Section Leaders and Assistant District Commissioners who have Young Leaders in their Section.

Assistant County (Explorer Scouts)

The ACC (ES) has a role in developing Explorer Scouting across the County and supporting DESCs in their role. The focus of the ACC (ES) role will be agreed with the County Commissioner, in conjunction with the DCs.

Role of other adults in supporting the Explorer Scout Section

A number of other adults in the district and county may have an important role to play in the development and delivery of Explorer Scouting, either directly or indirectly:

- **Beaver Scout, Cub Scout and Scout Section Leaders** may have Young Leaders helping in their section. They should work closely with the ESL(YL) to ensure these young people get the most out of their leadership roles.

- **Scout Leaders** have an important role to play in the moving on process into Explorer Scouting, such as making contact with the DESA and discussing the available options with their Scouts.
- **Group Scout Leaders** are operationally responsible for the Beaver Scout, Cub Scout and Scout Sections, but have a very important role in developing Partnership Agreements with Explorer Scout Units. They should also encourage the moving on process into Explorer Scouts and may well have Young Leaders working in the Group.
- **Assistant District Commissioners (Scouts)** need to work with their DESCs to understand the options available to Scouts in their District. They can then support Scout Leaders in the operation of the new structure.
- **The District Commissioner** has ultimate responsibility for the DESC, and therefore for the operation of Explorer Scouting in the District.
- **Assistant County Commissioner (Scouts)** needs to support links between the Scout and Explorer Scout sections, working with the ACC (ES).
- **County Scout Network Commissioner**, along with local Scout Network Co-ordinators, needs to maintain a good working relationship with all DESCs to encourage Explorer Scouts to move on to the Network.