



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

Young leaders and the Young leader qualification

Notes for leaders

Who are young leaders?

Young leaders are members of Girlguiding, aged 14 to 18 who volunteer with a Rainbow, Brownie or Guide unit. They could be working towards their Young leader qualification (YLQ) or the Leadership qualification (LQ), for which they are eligible from the age of 16. They may also be Rangers and undertaking some of the opportunities available for Rangers, listed on the Girlguiding website.

Having a young leader as part of your leadership team is a great asset. For example, they can contribute new ideas and share skills and also bridge the gap between leaders and the girls.

Please note that the Young Leader qualification is not compulsory. Young leaders may prefer to just help out with unit meetings as part of the leadership team.

How can I support my young leader?

- When a young leader first joins your unit, talk to her about her motivation for becoming a young leader. She may be working towards her Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE); she may wish to begin the YLQ or LQ; or she might just want to help with the running of a unit and be involved with a leadership team.
- Ask your young leader about her school/college or work commitments and how much she would like to be involved. Discuss your expectations of each other and your joint commitment - for example, if she is not going to be able to attend one week, she should let you know.
- Think about how you can support her to grow and develop as a leader. Be realistic in the tasks that you ask her to do, but try to challenge her where appropriate to enable her to learn new skills.
- Involve her in the unit's programme planning and listen to her ideas.
- Make sure she knows in advance what you would like her to do in unit meetings.
- If you ask her to organise and/or provide materials for an activity, make sure you have explained the unit finances to her and let her know what resources are already available. You may also want to discuss the need to stick to a budget.
- Don't leave her in sole charge of the unit or girls at any time, or give her an unexpected activity.
- Ensure she is aware that she should report any concerns or disclosures from young members to a unit leader, and suggest she familiarises herself with *A Safe Space* (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Making guiding happen > Learning and development > A Safe Space training
- If your young leader is working towards her YLQ or LQ there are additional ways you can support her (see page 2).

What is the YLQ?

The YLQ is an award for members of Girlguiding who are young leaders. It is designed to develop their leadership skills, and by achieving the YLQ, a young leader has demonstrated that she has taken an active part in your leadership team.

The YLQ can also act as a stepping stone for members working towards the LQ. Many of the clauses will count automatically towards the LQ, so it is suggested that the young leader keeps evidence of the work she has done for her YLQ. For further information about how the two qualifications overlap, please see www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/the-senior-section-14-25/young-leader-qualification/

Who can work towards the YLQ?

Any young leader aged between 14 and 18, with a Rainbow, Brownie or Guide unit.

A young leader who is aged 16 or above can start to work towards the LQ instead of the YLQ if she wishes, although she will be unable to use her LQ until she is 18.

What are the first steps?

- Get in touch with your local commissioner or leader/adviser for Rangers or young leaders. They will be able to provide your young leader with support, as well as information about online resources such as the downloadable YLQ workbook which contains the YLQ syllabus and sign-off space for each of the elements.
- Your young leader should have a supporter. This is the person she will talk to as she works through her qualification. She can choose her own supporter, which you can help her with, or the commissioner can assist in finding one. They could be someone within the unit, another leader, a young leader adviser, or someone else who has experience of the YLQ.
- If you have not already done so, inform your local commissioner that you have a young leader in your unit, so that she can be added to GO.

What does the YLQ involve?

The YLQ is similar to Modules 1 and 2 of the LQ, so you are likely to be familiar with many of the clauses. The YLQ's modules are as follows:

- Module 1: GO and section training
- Module 2: Leadership
- Module 3: Planning
- Module 4: Working with girls
- Module 5: Local guiding
- Module 6: Your role in guiding.

Your young leader is required to complete all of the requisite clauses, although these do not have to be completed in chronological order. She should have the clauses signed off in the Young leader qualification workbook by another member of the leadership team, her supporter or anyone else who has witnessed the activity, action or discussion. She should also keep a personal record of the activities undertaken and review these as she completes them, including collating supporting evidence. Evidence could be notes, minutes of meetings, photographs or anything else that illustrates what she has done.

How can I support my young leader with working towards her YLQ?

- Discuss the YLQ clauses she would like to complete in the near future and how you can help her to fit these into the unit programme.
- Encourage her to prepare activities. She may have skills and knowledge which she can share with your unit to support Girlguiding resources such as skills builders and unit meeting activities - for example, she may be able to run sports activities or teach the girls another language.

- Be willing to discuss her plans and preparations, and to help her to evaluate after the event - what was good and what needed more thought. Praise, encouragement and constructive feedback will develop her leadership skills.
- Encourage her to keep a record of her progress and offer support and guidance on what to record and what evidence can be used. She may be daunted at the prospect and will be reassured to hear from you that brief notes are all she needs.
- Give her the opportunity to attend district meetings with you and to get involved with the planning and running of district events.
- Make Girlguiding publications available to her, including *guiding* magazine if she does not receive her own copy (it is also available to read online at www.girlguiding.org.uk > Making guiding happen > Forms and resources > *guiding* magazine).
- Let her know that she can keep up to date by reading country/region and county newsletters and using the local and national websites.
- Encourage her to attend events for her age range and training sessions which are relevant to her leadership development. If possible, keep her informed of events which might be relevant to her, at county, country/region and national levels.
- Ensure that she keeps in touch with her supporter, and that you liaise with your district commissioner and/or young leader adviser regarding your young leader's training and progress.

What support is available for unit leaders who have a young leader?

Get in touch with your local Ranger/adviser. They should be able to answer any queries you may have regarding your young leader and her YLQ. Keep her up to date with your young leader's progress as she works through the qualification. The adviser and/or your young leader's supporter may visit your young leader in the unit from time to time.

What are the benefits of the YLQ?

For the young leader.

- Your young leader will develop skills in leadership, communication and team working, which will be impressive additions to her CV.
- Working towards the YLQ will support your young leader's development as a leader, allowing her to become more involved in the leadership team and feel like a valued member of the team.
- Completing the YLQ will hopefully renew her enthusiasm for guiding and make her want to become an adult member of Girlguiding.
- If your young leader decides to move on to the LQ, she will find that she has already completed a significant proportion of the clauses as part of the YLQ.

For your unit.

- Your young leader will become a more confident member of your leadership team.
- Your young leader will also be able to provide additional support to your leadership team - for example, by contributing new ideas and skills and running certain aspects of meetings.
- Your young leader will bridge the gap between the leaders and the girls, providing an opportunity for the girls to see how they could move through the sections within Girlguiding.

What other opportunities are available to my young leader?

A young leader is a young member within Girlguiding and there are many opportunities on offer just for them and their age group at a district, division, county, country/region or national level. She is able to pursue many parts of the Girlguiding offer, including the following.

- **Rangers** - as members of this section, young women in Rangers will follow our programme of interest badges, skills builders and awards and take part in amazing challenges, travel the world and develop skills across our six themes.
- **Queen's Guide Award** - the highest award available in guiding. It is open to members aged between 16 and 25.

- **Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE Bronze, Silver or Gold)** - an external award scheme for those aged between 14 and 23, which is recognised by Girlguiding.
- **4** - Girlguiding's peer-education programme. Members aged 14-25 can develop skills to empower their peers on topical or challenging issues such as bullying or media awareness.
- **Guiding Overseas Linked with Development (GOLD)** - a chance for Girlguiding members aged 18+ to work in partnership with other Guiding Associations around the world.
- **International selection weekends and international camps around the world.**
- **Advocate** - Girlguiding's youth panel, made up of members aged 14-25 who meet regularly to help formulate our campaigning, advocacy and research programme.

For further information and opportunities, please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk