

How to...run Arts Award as an extra-curricular activity

Claire Everett, Arts Award adviser and teacher at Cranborne Middle School shares her practical guide on running Arts Award as an extra-curricular activity

"I launched our Arts Award offer at Cranborne Middle School in 2010. It has always been delivered through the extra-curricular route. Our school already had a vibrant extra curricular provision, particularly in sports and music, so I was looking at providing students with arts projects with a real focus; an outcome. Students at Bronze and Silver plan and deliver their own sessions and lunchtime clubs to younger pupils, some of whom are from Year 5 and completing their Arts Award Explore. They then use these experiences as part of their portfolio. Over the years, I have experimented with different timings, group sizes and methods of delivery and have now settled on an offer that works smoothly, both for my students and me!"



1. How to get started

Do not overload yourself. After I completed my Advisor training in 2010, I decided to select a small pilot group of four students to take through Bronze. The following year, three of them chose to progress to Silver and I took on a larger group of Bronze participants. I learned a lot from that experience and used it to develop my offer in the years that have followed. It is important to be as prepared as possible in advance and to think of all eventualities. Here is a brief checklist:

- **Why** Arts Award? Consider why you want to run the Arts Award: what do you think it will bring to the students, the wider school and your own CPD?
- **Who** will undertake it and who will help? Recruitment: what year groups and group size? Who will you need to support you (ideally another Arts Award adviser but a



helpful colleague in the arts and/or a Teaching Assistant could be invaluable to bounce ideas off and support you in busy times). Explaining about Arts Award in advance to a member of the admin/finance staff is also useful when the time comes to ask for payment and to support you with moderation paperwork.

- ▶ **What** levels will you deliver? One level, all levels or a combination, running concurrently?
- ▶ **When** will you deliver it? Consider your own workload, the timings of various other arts events running during the year. Days of the week and lunch or after school are all decisions that need to be made in advance, after considering the other clubs on offer (clashes could mean that students miss out)
- ▶ **How** long a period of time would you run it for and how will you deliver the sessions? We have found it really successful running it in a fixed period. It has meant that students work more effectively within a tighter time frame and that they can then attend other clubs and commitments when it has finished.

2. How to recruit students (and ensure they stay committed)

- ▶ Active recruitment is crucial in ensuring that all students (even those who will never undertake an Arts Award) and staff get an opportunity to hear about it. Arts Award, once it is embedded in your school, will carry its own buzz but it is important every year to introduce it in a whole year group assembly.



Extract from the Arts Award presentation for school staff, available from the Adviser Hub

Here are some further tips:

- ▶ Try a presentation to a whole year group assemblies. You will require the whole assembly; not just an 'announcement.' This will set out your stall for this high profile new club.
- ▶ Use the Arts Award resources, especially the powerpoint presentations and the video clips. These are **ready made and very professional PR materials**.
- ▶ You could put up posters, give out flyers and invite students to a lunchtime meeting to find out more.
- ▶ During this meeting, have parental letters photocopied and waiting to give out to interested students. To this letter I would also attach the powerpoint handout, so parents can read more about the Award and how it will run.
- ▶ You could offer a 'no obligation' first taster session, where students can opt out, if they feel it is not for them.
- ▶ To retain the students, I have found that setting an expectation of 80% minimum attendance at lunch time or after school sessions give students a clear message that they are required to commit but are given the freedom of a couple of sessions 'off.'
- ▶ It is important to foster an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect within the sessions. I inform them that I am not their teacher but their Adviser and therefore I will not invoke the behaviour policy of the school for missing deadlines, for example. I also do not 'mark' their work - all this has been very liberating for all concerned!

3. How to explain/convince SLT that Arts Award is worthwhile running as an extra-curricular activity

- ▶ Give them the same presentation as you intend giving to the students and staff. Use the **Value and Positioning** resource to help support this.
- ▶ Arts Award is a portfolio led, nationally recognised qualification in the arts for young people aged 5-25 and it has a tried and tested history of being able to be delivered as part of an enrichment or extra-curricular programme of activities.



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- ▶ Have clear plans for how you intend to deliver and fund Arts Award.
- ▶ Inform them of how it will weave into the current arts provision you have, eg: students can use their existing clubs and/or upcoming performances.
- ▶ SLT will want to know whether you think you can handle the added workload. Think about how you will answer this question by carefully considering all the answers to question 1.

4. How to fund Arts Award

This depends on several factors: your school's financial situation and budgets; the type of projects and links with Arts Award Supporter venues and Bridge Organisations; and the socio-economic status of your cohort.

My students' parents and carers pay the full amount or in three instalments before the commencement of the Awards at the end of September. If we attend a trip, they pay for this separately. All students undertake their own individual projects and pay for most of their own materials. For some students, if they are in receipt of Free School Meals the school covers the cost from the Pupil Premium fund to

ensure no-one is excluded from taking part.

The cost to parents covers the moderation and certification fee, materials, Arts Award lapel badges, lanyards and pens (which I give as gifts in the end of year annual Arts Award Celebration Evening).

Ideas for funding:

- ▶ Full parental funding. Ask for the full amount or instalments throughout the duration of the programme. Your school may or may not decide to pay for Pupil Premium students.
- ▶ Many Arts Award Supporters offer funding for young people who undertake the whole or part of their Arts Award linked to them. For example, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is funding a Year 8 musician in my school who has undertaken his Unit 1 through being involved in a performance with them.
- ▶ If you want to deliver Arts Award but are working with young people who may struggle to access it, you may be able to apply for an Arts Award Access Fund grant. Visit artsaward.org.uk/accessfundinfo for more information.

5. How to plan and deliver short sessions

- ▶ To help you write your overview for the number of sessions you intend to run, **use the planning template on the Arts Award website.**
- ▶ Think to yourself-what do I want them to know/learn/understand/work on in each session?
- ▶ Call a register at the beginning of each session and expect punctuality.
- ▶ Be brief in your delivery at the start of each session.
- ▶ Leave a task list on the board for students to refer to. Give choice but also structure to the sessions.
- ▶ Circulate, as you would in class but don't spend too long with any one student.
- ▶ Toward the end of each part, sit down and ask students to come to you 1:1 to review their portfolios. Give them to-do lists to work through, such as evidence checklists downloadable from the Adviser Hub.
- ▶ Listen to them, get excited about their projects and ideas, offer advice but try not to take over. Encourage students to help each other.
- ▶ After the structured sessions are over, open up your room to more informal 1:1 sessions, so that students can drop in to show you their work.
- ▶ When approaching the deadline before moderation, target individual students and insist they work closely with you on a regular basis, so you can support them in their organisation and collection of their evidence and the bringing together of their portfolios.

6. How long the programme can be expected to last for:

Here is my offer and a brief overview of the order of my delivery. Please note: Bronze and Silver participants are also invited to drop in to me at lunchtime to discuss their portfolios and ask any questions.

Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
<p>Year 8 Bronze (approx 10 students)</p> <p>After school every Tuesday from late September-end of term</p> <p>1. Part A: 1 month deadline</p> <p>2. Part B: ongoing-then photographed and shared on Twitter page or on school website as a blog.</p> <p>3. Part C: 1 month</p> <p>4. Part D: Ongoing (this is the final unit introduced)</p>	<p>Year 7 Bronze (largest group up to 28 students)</p> <p>After school every Tuesday from January-end of term</p> <p>1. Part A: 1 month deadline</p> <p>2. Part B: ongoing-then photographed and shared on Twitter page or on school website as a blog.</p> <p>3. Part C: 1 month</p> <p>4. Part D: Ongoing (this is the final unit introduced)</p>	<p>Arts Award Explore (approx 15 students)</p> <p>Lunchtime once a week</p> <p>From mid April to mid June-with a day trip to local arts venue</p> <p>1. Part A: Ongoing</p> <p>2. Part B: 1 month including a trip</p> <p>3. Part C: 1 month</p> <p>4. Part D 2 weeks at the end of the programme</p>
<p>Year 8 Silver throughout the year (approx 15 students-all are Bronze achievers from previous year)</p> <p>Every Monday after school from late September until moderation in May</p> <p>Includes a trip to Upper School as part of Unit 1-Practice and Pathways</p> <p>Autumn Term: Unit 1 (includes trip to Upper School)</p> <p>Spring Term: Unit 2 (including supervision of lunchtime clubs run by participants)</p>		



Common challenges and how these are overcome:

- ▶ **Student retention** - encourage students to sign up to a statement of commitment at the start of their Arts Award journey. You will lose some students, but perhaps think about re-engaging them the following year. Getting students to pay upfront is a good way to increase parental engagement and get support from home
- ▶ **Competition between students** - it is natural that some students may get competitive with their Arts Award. It may be in how they present their portfolios or the work or projects they get involved in. Keep reminding students that they are not competing with each other, and it is their individual progress and development that moderators will want to see. A strength of Arts Award is that it celebrates the individual students' achievements, unrelated to school expectations or what other people are doing
- ▶ **Assessment and moderation preparation** - this can take time, especially if you have a large group and you are the only adviser. Review portfolios as you go and assess throughout the year rather than leaving it to the last minute. See if there another adviser who can support you to assess work, or see if the admin or finance office can help with submitting students for moderation
- ▶ **Juggling it all!** - unfortunately there is no magic answer to this. Having support from colleagues, a good plan for the year and clear deadlines in mind will help, but naturally things will crop up which you haven't planned for. Try not to panic, and remember that there is lots of support available from Arts Award if you need it

For support with getting started, or developing your Arts Award offer contact the Arts Award helpdesk on **020 7820 6178** or email artsawardenquiries@trinitycollege.co.uk