

CHINA VIRTUAL BRONZE EXPLORATION (VBE)

AWARD LEADER'S GUIDE

中国铜奖线上探索爱奖导师指南

This guide provides Award Leaders with the key information to manage, support and oversee participants completing a Virtual Bronze Exploration (VBE). The guide includes an overview of the VBE, who it is for and an explanation regarding how it can be used in conjunction with a traditional Adventurous Journey (AJ). It includes a detailed outline of the five stages, an FAQ and details regarding how to get started. It should be issued to Award Centres/Open Award Centers in conjunction with the following documents and tools:

- VBE Requirements 铜奖线上探索的要求
- Access to Digital Platform for VBE class 准备好线上教育平台
- VBE Checklist 铜奖线上探索执行清单
- VBE Welcome Email 铜奖线上探索欢迎邮件
- VBE Action Resource Pack (share upon AC/OAC's registration)
铜奖线上探索资源包（有意向 AC/OAC 联系爱奖中国后单独分享）

What is the VBE?

The VBE is an online resource for participants to complete their Adventurous Journey (AJ) in a virtual (or semi-virtual) space. As with the traditional AJ, the VBE aims to develop teamwork, problem solving, cooperation, and planning skills. Please see section 8.4 of the International Award Handbook for Award Leaders (2019 edition) regarding Outcomes and Benefits of the Adventurous Journey section.

Using Google Classroom, the VBE is completed in 5 Stages:

- Stage 1: Preparation & Training (Part A & B) 准备和培训
- Stage 2: Group Planning 团队计划
- Stage 3: Practice 练习
- Stage 4: Virtual Journey (Expedition) 线上旅程
- Stage 5: Research Project (Exploration) 项目调研

The VBE provides an Award Centre/Open Award Center with the option to organize an AJ virtually during COVID-19. Where public health restrictions are sufficiently 'relaxed' and outdoor education in small groups is allowed, the VBE can be used as a hybrid tool with an outdoor AJ and used to replace the preparation, training and practice stages associated with the traditional AJ.

The VBE provides participants with an accessible option to work together to overcome challenges in a group setting while still adhering to local COVID-19 restrictions. Award Leaders will assist participants to organise a group and complete the stages with regular virtual meetings. In this virtual setting the Award Leader is able to act as both the Adventurous Journey Assessor and Adventurous Journey Supervisor, or may get other adults to assist (please see Q & A below)

The VBE can be accessed by contacting Operations@intawardchina.cn. The VBE Action resources (videos and articles) and forms are to assist completion of the VBE. This material may be swapped or altered to tailor the experience to the local context, as long as the VBE requirements are being met. These are covered under the 5 stages information below and also as an attachment to this Guide.

You may need to set up a digital classroom platform or using an existing one arranged by your organisation. Please contact operations@intawardchina.cn to confirm your digital option.

您需要准备好一个在线教室平台，或者使用目前学校已经拥有的平台。联系爱奖中国确认线上教室平台。

FYI-For an introduction to the VBE on Google Classroom, please watch the [Steps to Getting Started in Google Classroom](#) instructional video. You can find many more support materials regarding how to use Google Classroom on [google.com](https://www.google.com).

Or you can join the CHINA VBE launch meeting or/and Consulting Group for more support by reaching to operations@intawardchina.cn.

欢迎您联系爱奖中国，参加铜奖线上探索的专项交流群及会议。

Who can use the VBE?

The VBE is designed for Bronze level participants who are part of an Award Centre/Open Award Center and who are not able to participate in a traditional AJ.

Participants of an Award Centre/Open Award Center at the Silver or Gold level may use the VBE to complete the Preparation & Training component of the AJ.

Delivering a hybrid VBE, including a traditional AJ

As noted, where public health restrictions are sufficiently 'relaxed' and outdoor education in small groups is allowed, the VBE can be used as a hybrid tool with an outdoor / traditional AJ and used to replace the preparation, training and practice stages associated with the traditional AJ.

In this context, it is recommended that Stages 1 – 3 are completed using your digital education platform and then Stages 4 and 5 delivered as per a 'normal' AJ.

Depending on the restrictions in your location, you may still not be able to deliver an AJ that is fully compliant with all the **15 Requirements in the International Handbook for Award Leaders**. For instance, journeying with a group outside a single household may be prohibited and the only option would be to journey with a family member and not in a group. If this is the case, please speak to Operations@intawardchina.cn to discuss what requirements are acceptable to be waived.

In reality, the blend of how much will be virtual and how much will be 'traditional' will come down to what is appropriate in the context of the Award Centres/Open Award Centres and this should be discussed with China NAO.

Five Stages of the VBE

Stage 1: Preparation & Training (Part A & B)

The group must read and watch the materials and videos provided and demonstrate their learning by completing the worksheets. Participants must upload their worksheets to their ORB.

- **Part A – Online Exploration Skills:** Team Communication, Well-Being & Cyber Responsibility, Research Skills & Project Management, and Physical Recreation
- **Part B – Journey Related Training:** Trip Planning, Equipment, Map & Compass, First-Aid & Risk Management, Camp-Craft

The journey related training videos are provided by the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council. They are a comprehensive set of short resources for our target age range. Leaders and participants are asked to take into consideration the seasonal and regional concerns of risk, equipment, preparedness, first-aid, wildlife, and weather.

Stage 2: Group Planning

The group plan must be coherent and ensure that the Assessor has enough information to know the group is working together to accomplish the overall aims of each stage. The Supervisor (may also be the Assessor) should have enough information to have confidence that the group has considered all health and safety risks. The group preparation & planning document will help the group to:

- Agree on the **Aim** of their AJ/VBE
- Develop the plan and ensure that the whole group works together
- Look at their AJ from multiple angles/VBE

Stage 3: Practice

This stage is designed to allow participants to test their group plan, review, and possibly alter it. Group members select one or two virtual walk videos and complete pre-tasks, observations, and team challenges for those videos. They test their proposed physical activities, assess research project ideas and methodologies, and complete record keeping and reporting, noting any learning and changes to the plan.

Stage 4: Virtual Journey (Expedition)

The Virtual Journey is a one-day challenge comprised of the following activities:

- **Journey Videos** – watching the selected virtual journeys as though the group were undertaking them as physical challenges. They should be encouraged to use their imagination. The group will need to write and submit a post-viewing journey report for each virtual journey they view.
- **Team Challenges** – as a group, they must choose four challenges and complete them in a one-hour timeframe. They should think of the context from the virtual journey videos and answer appropriately filling in the worksheet.

- **Meal Challenge** – the group must prepare one hot meal in a 30-minute time frame and then eat it together within 30 minutes to recreate a virtual campfire time. The group will need to decide on the meal and cooking method based on the ingredients and supplies the whole group has available. They may cook outside on a camp stove, so long as the whole group agrees to do so. Encourage participants to use their imagination and have some fun!
- **Physical Activity Challenge** – the group must plan a three-hour challenging physical activity. It should be something which pushes the whole group such as walking 15,000 steps in three hours, or something more imaginative. Account must be taken by the adult facilitator of any accessibility issues within the group that may make any physical activity more challenging. We want all participants in the group to be able to engage in challenging activity and to be proud of what they are able to achieve within the three-hour period. The group may decide to complete their Physical Activity Challenge in an outdoor area and using more expedition type activities, e.g. walking up and down a tall building staircase or even engaging in a 3-hour hike. It must be done at the same time, and participants should find a way of encouraging each other as a team.

At a minimum, participants will need to touch base with their Assessor at the start and end of their activities. Each participant is responsible for uploading all worksheets and documentation onto their ORB account as they progress through the VBE.

Leaders may incorporate additional ideas and resources: Keep in mind any safety issues or risks when participants are not together in a group. The group may decide to create an at-home camp site. They should be encouraged to incorporate as many aspects of a typical outdoor AJ as possible but must consider and prepare for the risks.

Stage 5: Research Project (Exploration)

The aim of this stage is for the group to complete and document a group research project.

- As a group they must select from the three listed themes and develop a group research project (Action Research) and complete the project within ten days of completing stage four. The group research project involves the entire group in online research while sharing and learning from the personal experiences of others in the group.
- They must meet at least three times during this period to share their personal research findings for the group report as well as to share personal views from their own experience.
For example: Conduct a research project about the impact of Covid-19 on the education of 14 year-olds in their province. They could each survey ten friends and document the thoughts and feelings of those respondents, combined with the views of their own group. They could research the steps taken and the response of their respective Ministry of Education. Learning from and sharing their own views as 14 year-olds reinforces the experiential learning aspect of the VBE.
- Participants must upload a copy of their group research project to their ORB.

Leader Responsibilities Q & A

Below are the answers to a few questions you may have on how to manage your group. Some answers vary depending on the group.

Q. Who is the Leader and what roles can they play?

A. The VBE can be used by one adult to fulfil a number of different roles. Your digital education platform structure refers to any adult helper as a “teacher” and there can be numerous co-teachers. An Award Leader must request access to the VBE and may use this tool themselves. Normally an AJ requires an AJ Supervisor, responsible for health & safety and management of the trip and an AJ Assessor, responsible for ensuring that learning objectives and the requirements of the Award have been met. In the VBE the one adult can play all these roles if they are happy to do so, or they can invite other adults to help as co-teachers. In this Q & A we will refer to the overall adult facilitator as the Leader.

Q. Are the participants or Leaders scheduling the meetings for their group?

A. The Planning component of the VBE is more demanding and important than what is typically required for a physical group AJ. It is up to the participants to schedule their meetings and report to their Leader about their journey planning. The Leader will need to check in if they have not been informed of the the proposed schedule.

Q. Are meetings all set up and run through the Digital Platform we decide?

A. Participants can schedule meetings through any digital platforms, email, or discuss other options with their group to determine the best time and way to meet.

Q. Can the Leader act as the Assessor?

A. Yes, the Leader may act as the Assessor. Please remember that in this role the Assessor is checking for attainment of the learning outcomes and ensuring that participants meet the requirements of the Award as laid out in the International Handbook for Award Leaders.

Q. Can a parent be involved?

Under normal circumstances parents cannot be involved in a trip comprising group peers, working together. Under flexibilities brought in to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions, an Award Leader may approve a parent to act as the Supervisor where a non-family member is not possible, but the parent must not intrude or disrupt the learning process and problem solving that the participants are required to do on their own. The regular AJ standards remain intact, and any parental decisions (other than health and safety) that interferes with the leadership of the participants may disqualify the journey.

Q. Does the Leader need to be present for the meetings? Does the Assessor or Supervisor need to be at the meetings?

A. The AJ Assessor needs to be checking in from time to time to assess if the participants are completing assignments correctly and to help and observe as participants learn the skills in the challenges and videos. The AJ Supervisor needs to also check in to see if the participants are confidently prepared at the end of each stage to move onto the next stage. As mentioned above these roles may all be done by the same Award Leader for the VBE.

Q. Could Silver or Gold participants in groups act as an Assessor for Bronze Participants?

A. If they are over the age of sixteen, are knowledgeable about the requirements of the AJ section of the Award and are appropriately vetted, briefed – and where relevant trained – to act as a volunteer within your organization they may be able to act as an AJ Assessor – if they are under the age of majority for your province of operation their actions must be overseen by an accountable adult, recognized by your organization.

Q. Can a participant fail the VBE if a certain mark is not reached on their worksheets?

A. No. But when the participant completes their worksheets and assignments, they must save the documents and upload them to their ORB and notify their Leader that they are complete. The Leader must review the assignments to see that the participant has a clear understanding of the learning. If the Leader does not consider the participant to be fully understanding of the material, they may ask the participant to re-do the assignment to better evidence their learning. Please also note that we believe every Award Holder has worked hard to gain the recognition they deserve: interventions by parents or other family members to assist and complete the Award are frowned upon and may lead to the refusal to grant the Award.

Q. If a member of the group is struggling, what should a Leader do?

A. To encourage a positive experience, the Leader is to consider if the group is struggling and or if an individual group member is struggling. Encourage the group to support each other and work on an area together. If it is apparent that one-on-one support is needed to gain a skill, the Leader is free to contact the participant and open a dialogue into strengthening a skill or overcoming a challenge. The Leader should encourage the participant to reach out to work on any skills with which they are struggling.

It is also worth noting that for some participants, the VBE may prove to be too difficult to complete based on the format and need to work on a computer or device for long periods of time. Leaders should therefore make regular contact with participants to check how they are progressing.

Q. How does a participant record the VBE on their ORB?

A. Participants must upload their VBE worksheets and assignments to their ORB as they go through the five stages. The ORB has been updated to include 'VBE' as an AJ type for Leaders to select. Documents from stages one, two, and three can be uploaded as a file to the Practice Journey section on their ORB. Documents from stages four and five can be uploaded as a file to the Qualifying Journey section on their ORB. The Leader is to ensure that all assignments and the group research project are completed and uploaded to the participant's ORB prior to submitting to the China NAO for approval.

How to get started?

Contact the operations team of the China NAO via Operations@intawardchina.cn to register your Award Centre for the VBE

- ***You will be invited to join a VBE support meeting for any query before you launch VBE***
- ***You will receive VBE Action Resource Pack in your best workable way in order to set it up in your new or existing digital education platform.***

- ***One staff from the China NAO will be assigned only to your Award Centre/Open Award Centre and join your education platform for VBE.***
 - You should not remove this person in case you need any assistance in the future with your group. They will not interfere or answer participant queries, unless you request help from them.
 - Only students and fellow Award Leaders who you invite will have access to this class for data protection and privacy.
- ***Read the Welcome Introduction and Stages 1-5 to determine if this option is appropriate for your group.***
 - This is no easy option as we have combined some elements from both the Expedition and Exploration type of Adventurous Journeys.
- ***Communicate the VBE option to your group***
 - Invite participants to read the Welcome Introduction and the VBE Checklist (Provided as separate email attachments upon registration and included on your Digital Classroom). Once you confirm the final group of 4-8 people, you must invite them as “students” and you must “Assign/post” each activity in the Digital Classroom.
 - This is also a good time to invite any “co-teachers” and explain in a post who is helping you and what role they will play e.g. “Please all welcome Mrs Brown as the AJ Assessor for this group, she will now be able to see all communications posted here and will be able to see your progress through the Digital classroom site. If you have any queries about your training or the requirements of the exercises please post a question in the classroom – please note that all teachers can see all comments.”
- ***Start your VBE!***
 - Once students are invited (please check back on the student list to see who has accepted) and all activities posted, they can start completing the activities. Please note they have a maximum of 5 weeks to complete this virtual experience and put their documentation onto the ORB before the classroom will be closed and archived.

If you as the Award leader experience any problems, please contact
Operations@intawardchina.cn asap.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award China

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