



Going for Gold - Duke of Edinburgh Experience



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Jack Gardner, operative at Sevenoaks quarry

Q. What happens when you take 30 colleagues aged under-23, and give them rucksacks, compasses and canoes in the Peak District?

A. Great teamwork and top banter. But that’s not the only benefit created by Tarmac’s partnership with The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DofE)

Jack Gardner, operative at Sevenoaks quarry (and now-confident canoeist), talks about his DofE experience.

I found out about The Duke of Edinburgh programme after my manager thought it was a great way for me to gain new skills. It’s an 18-month course where under-23s can work towards achieving a Gold Award – with Tarmac supporting us all the way. To get the award – and get the chance to meet Prince Edward at St James’ Palace – we’ll need to complete all the award sections, including volunteering, physical, skills, expedition and residential.

I wasn’t sure if the residential trip would be my cup of tea. But I loved it. I’ve worked at Sevenoaks quarry for seven months and wanted to make the most of new opportunities at Tarmac, and set myself up for the future. A big highlight of the trip was getting to meet other young people at Tarmac. I’m quite a confident bloke anyway – as my

Sevenoaks colleagues will tell you! – so I made friends quickly. We now have a messenger group to stay in touch, too.

Raft-building was great fun – and got pretty competitive! We split into teams and had to float our DIY rafts out to a buoy in the middle of the lake. The canoeing was a challenge to start with – it was the coldest day and the water was freezing! But it was a lot of fun.

I can see I have a great future here. Tarmac is really investing in its young people, and giving us a brilliant way to develop valuable skills for business, like team-working, leadership, time management and communication. My advice to other colleagues thinking about the Award is to go for it. It’s a great way to get involved, learn more from others and do things you never thought possible.

