



Rotary District 1210

Rotary Youth Leadership Award Course

RYLA 2022

Notes for Rotarians Recruiting, Interviewing and Supporting RYLA Candidates

RYLA courses have been run successfully in District 1210 for many years. During this time the RYLA Organising Team has become aware of a range of different approaches and practices by Clubs in seeking and selecting candidates.

These notes share that learning and outline the best practice to ensure your candidate(s) has an unforgettable experience at RYLA.

RYLA Scrutiny

The majority of Rotary Clubs in District 1210 are very diligent in the recruitment, selection and support of their chosen RYLA participants. However, a number of Clubs rely on schools/youth organisations to select and recommend participants to attend the District's RYLA courses, and the Club may not have had the opportunity to interview potential candidates prior to their selection by the school. The Club then has to rely heavily on the information, or lack of it, provided by the school or youth organisation

Regardless of the selection process which Clubs have historically used, often it is the case that potential candidates have no real knowledge of what the RYLA course entails or given the opportunity to disclose any medical, physical or mental conditions. The potential consequence of these non-disclosures can be reduced participation in the programmed events, limiting the enjoyment of others attending the course and, more seriously, for injury or illness whilst away from home, ***in addition to the adverse publicity to Rotary, should an emergency or potential conflict incident occur.***

We should strive, at all times, to follow the information below. This process will, hopefully, provide you with a good pool of candidates to interview; provide an honest outline of the RYLA course activities and health requirements and the opportunity to check that a potential participant will gain from attending the RYLA course.

Occasionally, where there is doubt about the suitability of a potential participant the Club should contact the District Youth Services Chair **before** offering a place on the course. The District Youth Chair will consult with, but not be limited to:

- RYLA Course Leaders
- RYLA Instructors
- Parents
- Club RYLA Officers
- District Health and Safety Officer
- District Compliance Officer
- Independent medical advisors
- Our Insurers (in exceptional circumstances)



to decide if the candidate should be allowed to attend the RYLA course. If the RYLA Organising Team has no objection, **only then** should the Club offer the candidate at the RYLA course.

Parents or respective Rotary Clubs also have equal rights to withdraw candidates if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved.

All Rotary Clubs wish participants to enjoy the RYLA experience and gain the most benefit from the challenge offered by the RYLA courses, but this can only be achieved by Clubs following correct selection procedures and making sure that the participant, parents and the RYLA course leaders are fully aware of any limitations or adaptations which might be required for a given participant.

Application Process

Stage 1: Clubs are asked to give notice, by **Mon 31 Jan 2022**, of the number of candidates they are intending to send to RYLA 2019 and pay a deposit of £150 per candidate.

Stage 2: Detailed Participant Registration Forms will be sent to candidates (and copied to Clubs) Completed application forms, together with the balance of payment (£160) per candidate must be sent to the District Youth Services Chair, by 1 April 2022.

All aspects of the Participant's Registration Form must be completed and the, up to 150 words, personal statement attached.

- The application form **must** have the correct contact details of the named Rotarian and Rotary Club so that candidate(s) and the **RYLA** team know who to contact should circumstances change prior to the course, including on the day the course begins. Please check that each application form is completed in full and is legible.
- Ideally candidates will have met their named Rotarian and visited the Club prior to **RYLA** course. This reduces the anxiety around presenting to the Club after the course and allows the opportunity for candidates and their parents/guardians to experience Rotary for themselves.
- Candidates should be 16 or 17 for the full duration of the course.
- Ensure **all** medication and health issues are included on the application form. Double check with parents/guardians that the information given is complete. Should your candidate and/or their parent/guardian have concerns regarding confidentiality or any other aspect which may prevent them from disclosing their true health status they **must** contact the District **RYLA** officer to discuss?
- Candidates are encouraged to participate in fund raising activities with their Club for at least the duration of their **RYLA** year. Maintaining a database of supported candidates allows Clubs to communicate and build relationships with candidates with a view to future Rotaractors or/and Rotarians.

Selection Process

This is a suggested guide as to how Clubs identify potential RYLA Candidates and select those they wish to sponsor.

- The participants should be 16 or 17 for the full duration of the course.



- The participants should be considered as having leadership potential and be reasonably fit as the activities are challenging and cover such things as, hill walking and map reading. There are many activities which include water, although the candidate may not be a strong swimmer, they must be willing to participate in all water activities including the raft race.
- When seeking candidates look in Interact Clubs, schools, colleges, youth clubs, Scouts, Guides, Cadet Forces etc in your area.

However, do not leave it to the organisation to choose the candidates, your Rotary Club should carry out the selection process and interview the potential participants.

Previously some pupils selected by a school have been offered a free holiday and have turned up not knowing which Rotary Club had sponsored them. Often those selected with no Rotary input are the ones who call off at the last moment. They, nor do their parents, have little understanding of the content and objectives of the course or commitment to the week.

- Give schools and organisations a copy of the RYLA Information sheet to help attract the widest range of candidates.
- Make sure that each candidate has a copy of the RYLA Information sheet.
- Rotarians should interview all candidates and select the number being sponsored by their Club.

Also select at least one reserve. Frequently there are candidates who cannot attend at the last minute because of illness or a family problem. It is good to have a reserve that can step in at the last moment.

Do not send the Preliminary Application Form to the District Youth Chair. The Club will need their contact details in the event of the call off of one of your participants.

Candidates (and reserves) should be selected before 1 April 2022.

- If the Club has sponsored participants before ask them to help with the interviews. They can give an overview of their experiences. Ideally the successful candidate(s) should be invited to attend one of your Rotary Club meetings before the course so that they are aware what Rotary is all about.
- Also, consider sending a press release to the local newspaper revealing who is your successful RYLA candidate(s). This helps promote Rotary's commitment to young people and the local community.
- Ideally, within a month or two after the course, invite them back to your Club to give a presentation on how they benefitted from the week at RYLA. Help them with the content and presentation.

This also provides an opportunity for the Club President to sign their RYLA Participation Certificate that they will have been given by the District Governor at the end of the course.



Sample Interview Questions

It is very important that each candidate is interviewed. It may be helpful to schedule the interviews back to back so you can more clearly compare the candidates. The interview should focus on things not included on the Preliminary Application Form.

It would be good to have a least two and no more than three Rotarians on the interview panel. They should be Rotarians with no connection to the candidates so that there is no bias.

The interview can be as long or as short as you want, but it is suggested to be between five to ten minutes in length and contain between four to six questions. Below are some suggested questions but feel free to choose your own.

PROPOSED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: (

1. Are you willing and able to commit to attending the RYLA course on all days from Sat 6 Aug to Fri 12 Aug 2022?
(This question could be asked last, but is important that the candidate confirms that they can attend the whole course.)
2. Outside of your school/work, what activity has been the most important in terms of your personal growth?
3. Many employers and others are looking to social media sites like Facebook to get a true picture of who an individual is. People will often put things on Facebook they wouldn't post anywhere else. If we were to look at your Facebook page, what would it tell us about who you are?
4. Tell us what you know about Rotary?
5. What do you see as your role in the community? (eg setting examples, community service, etc.)
6. Why do you want to attend RYLA 2022?
7. What are your plans for next year and in the future?
8. Who has been the most important person in your life?
9. If you were trying to convince a new company to relocate in your town, what are three positive features of your community you would stress?
10. What are your three most important values?
11. If you could make one major change affecting your school or organisation, what would it be?
12. Outside your family and friends, who do you most respect?
13. What is the most important issue facing the UK Government at this present moment?
14. What is the last book you read for pleasure?
15. What are your feelings about the grade requirements for participation in extracurricular activities?



16. Outside of your classes, what activity has been the most important in terms of your personal growth?
17. What makes a good leader?
18. Why are ethics important in leadership?
19. Who do you know that you feel is an outstanding leader and why
20. If five candidates - including you - are equally qualified, why should you be the one selected for RYLA?
21. If you had the power and money to do something good for mankind, what would it be and why?
22. Name your hero or role model you look up to. Tell us why he/she is important to you.
23. Name one thing that you have done that made you feel good about yourself.

Final Plea: Please honour the deadlines, timescales and requests for information with regards to your candidates. Coordinating the many facets of RYLA is time consuming and complex. Your help with this would be much appreciated.

David J C Shelmerdine
District Youth Services Chair, D1210