Youth Cymru's Achievement Awards (YAA)

Raising Aspirations, Realising Potential, Recognising Achievement

26 November 2026

About Youth Cymru

Youth Cymru is a charity at the heart of a network that supports young people to realise their potential. Through our programmes and networks, we reach thousands of young people each year.

For over 90 years, Youth Cymru has developed and promoted innovative non-formal education programmes for and with young people – working with them to develop their potential. Youth Cymru's unique contribution to youth work focuses on the personal and social development of young people in Wales, whose potential can be best realised through non-formal education routes. We apply the principles of effective youth work to contemporary interests and needs through programmes offering accredited learning outcomes.

Youth Cymru has developed the suite of Achievement Awards to support our core principles of raising aspirations, realising potential, and recognising achievement. These awards are widely respected and utilised across both non-formal and formal sectors in Wales.

The Awards are accredited by Agored Cymru. This suite of qualifications enables young people to set group challenges, work on individual challenges with associated targets, and work towards achieving them. The awards provide flexibility and a progressive, transferable qualification that evidences young people’s achievements, demonstrating their ability to set and achieve personal goals.

The awards can be applied across various youth-facing and youth work contexts, whether in formal learning environments or informal youth work activities. They are structured to foster collaboration, peer engagement, and friendships while enabling young people to set aspirations and work towards them. These awards are well-recognised within the youth sector across the UK and beyond.

What are the Youth Cymru's Achievement Awards?

Youth Cymru's Achievement Awards comprise a suite of awards designed for young people aged 11 and above. The different levels of awards reflect the varying degrees of responsibility and participation required from young people.

All of the Awards:

- Are available nationally.
- Follow a 'plan, do, review' model.
- Require young people to evidence their personal involvement.
- Are flexible, allowing young people to choose challenges that match their needs and interests.
- Encourage a peer group approach to planning and reviewing achievements.
- Support young people in progressively taking more responsibility in selecting, planning, and leading activities.
- Recognise a broad range of non-formal learning experiences.
- Serve as a valuable tool for measuring the quality and impact of youth work.
- Reinforce best practices in youth development.

Through participation in the awards, young people:

- Take ownership of their learning.
- Plan ahead and solve problems as they arise.
- Work collaboratively with peers.
- Gain a sense of achievement, increase self-esteem and self confidence.
- Develop communication skills and resolve differences by negotiation.
- Enhance self-awareness and emotional intelligence.
- Build self-esteem and confidence.
- Develop study and organisational skills.

By participating in Youth Cymru's Achievement Awards, young people are empowered to take control of their learning journey, develop essential life skills, and gain nationally recognised qualifications reflecting their personal growth and achievements.

The Awards

Levels of the Awards

Youth Cymru provides a credit-based learning system, allowing young people to earn nationally recognised learning credits through Agored Cymru. These credits can be accumulated as young people continue their learning journey.

Youth Achievement Award

Award	Level	Credit (1 credit = 10 hours)	Equivalent Qualification & Credits
Youth Challenge	Entry 3	1	Foundation for further learning
Bronze	1	3	GCSE Grades D - G
Silver	2	6	GCSE Grades A* - C
Gold	3	9	AS Level / A Level
Platinum	3	12	AS Level / A Level

These qualifications are designed for flexibility, allowing young people to engage in group or individual challenges, with structured progressive learning pathways.

The Process of Completing the Awards

How To Earn Credit?
A workbook guides young people step by step through the required tasks to meet assessment criteria for each unit.

Steps to Completion:

1. **Set a Challenge and Targets** – Choose a personal goal or a shared group challenge and set targets to achieve it.
2. **Work with a tutor** to meet learning outcomes and assessment criteria by completing the required tasks.
3. **Provide supporting evidence** to demonstrate achievements, including training notes, photographs, newspaper articles, videos, handouts, and other materials.
4. **Demonstrate skills in practice** through observed tasks.
5. **Obtain tutor or witness verification** to confirm work completion.
6. **Complete all required tasks** – Additional sheets may be included if needed.
7. **Submit completed work** to a tutor or responsible officer for review.

Assessment and Verification:

- Work is presented to an internal and/or external verifier for accreditation.
- Once verification is complete, work is returned with an official Agored Cymru certificate.

What Can I Do with the Credits?

- Agored Cymru credits are recognised for further education, employment, or training.
- Young people can use credits to demonstrate achievements, support college or job applications, and progress to higher-level courses.

Registration to Run the Awards

For Young People - Young people must be registered at the start of their Youth Achievement Award (YAA) group course. This ensures accurate tracking and supports moderation and verification.

For Organisations or Schools - Organisations must register with Youth Cymru to deliver the awards. Registered agencies are responsible for:

- Maintaining quality and standards in award delivery.
- Ensuring staff complete necessary training.
- Supporting young people through the award process.
- Adhering to Youth Cymru's moderation and verification procedures.
- Signing and following a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Youth Cymru provide mandatory training sessions and resources to support effective award delivery.

Recognition of Prior Learning

- Upon successful completion of Level 1 (Bronze), one youth challenge counts toward Level 2 (Silver), supporting learner progression.
- Upon successful completion of Level 2 (Silver), one youth challenge counts towards Level 3 (Gold), provided it was not used for Level 1.

Entry Requirements

There are no entry requirements for completing the awards however the time required to complete, and the young person's abilities should be considered when deciding which level to enter.

Offering the Qualification

This qualification is only available in Wales through Youth Cymru and accredited by Agored Cymru. More information on the awarding body Agored can be found through Agored Cymru's website. (www.agored.cymru)

Contact Information for more details or to register your organisation or school, please contact Youth Cymru:

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