



**Young
Leaders
Pathway**

Young Archaeologists' Club

**Welcome to the
YAC Young
Leaders**



You're joining a group of passionate young people who help make archaeology fun, hands-on and accessible for everyone. As a YAC Young Leader, you'll support your local branch, develop new skills and help younger members discover the work of archaeology and heritage.

This pack provides everything you need to get started, understand your role, and make the most of your time as part of YAC.



Being a YAC Young Leader

As a Young Leader, you'll assist in designing and delivering sessions, support YAC members, and acquire new skills. As a volunteer, your goal is to learn, contribute, and grow - YAC Leaders are responsible for managing the branch and ensuring everyone's safety, including your own.

What to Expect

You'll start by observing and assisting with sessions, helping with simple tasks such as setting up activities, supporting members, or demonstrating something you've learned.

Over time, you'll have opportunities to plan parts of a session, lead small groups and contribute ideas.

You'll meet regularly with your Mentor to talk about your progress and goals.

Moving from Young Leader to YAC Leader

YAC Young Leaders are usually aged 16-17. When you turn 18, you can apply to become a YAC Assistant Leader and take on more responsibility within your branch, helping plan sessions and supporting new Young Leaders or the wider YAC network.

It's a great next step if you've enjoyed volunteering and want to stay part of the YAC community as an adult volunteer!

Your Progression Pathway

As a YAC Young Leader, you'll build skills that will help you in YAC and beyond, from communication and teamwork to leadership and problem-solving.

Your Progression Pathway is a simple record of your journey. You'll use it to:

- Track the activities you've helped with
- Reflect on what you've learned
- Set new goals with your Mentor
- Record achievements for school, college or future opportunities

You'll review your Progression Pathway during meetings with your mentor and complete a final review before you finish your time as a Young Leader.

When you turn 18, your Progression Pathway can also support your application to become a YAC Leader. Showing the experience, commitment and skills you've gained as part of the YAC community.

About your Branch:

Here you will find all the important contact details for your YAC branch. Please make sure you save all important phone numbers and emails.

Your branch is one of over 80 Young Archaeologists' Club branches across the UK, all of which are supported by the Council for British Archaeology. Together, these branches create a national network of young people who explore archaeology and heritage in fun, hands-on ways.

Branch name:

Branch address:

Branch Leader:

Contact number:

Contact email:

Safeguarding Lead:

Contact at the Council for British Archaeology:

Meeting/planning location:

Meeting/planning times:

Branch calendar:

Your branch will have its own calendar of events. Always check with your Branch Leader or Mentor if you're unsure about dates or meeting arrangements.

Emergency Contact:

Fill in your emergency contact details and share them with your Branch Leader and Mentor.

Full name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Medical Information (including allergies):

Emergency Contact

Full name:

Relationship to you:

Phone number:

Your branch holds your emergency contact and health information securely. Make sure your details are up to date and tell your Branch Leader or Mentor if anything changes (for example, new phone number, medical conditions or allergies).

If there's ever an emergency during a YAC activity, follow your Branch Leaders' instructions.

Attendance, Punctuality and Communication

As a YAC Young Leader, you're part of the branch team, and it's important to let others know if you can't attend a session or will be late. Good communication helps everyone plan sessions safely and ensures that activities run smoothly.

If you can't attend a session:

- Let your Branch Leader and Mentor know as soon as possible, ideally at least 24 hours before the session.
- Provide a reason for not attending
- Don't worry, things come up! It's important to let the team know as early as possible.

If you're unwell:

- Please don't attend if you are unwell, especially with symptoms that could spread to others.
- Let your Branch Leader and Mentor know by phone or email before the session starts.

If you are running late:

- Contact your Branch Leader or Mentor as soon as you can to let them know when to expect you.
- When you arrive, check in with a Leader before joining the group.



Mentor

Your Mentor is an experienced YAC Leader who is there to support, guide, and check in with you throughout your time as a Young Leader. They'll help you set goals, answer questions, and ensure you feel confident and safe during YAC activities. You'll meet your mentor at least every eight weeks to discuss what's going well, what you're learning, and the challenges you would like help with.

Name:

Contact email:

About your Mentor:

Your mentor has shared a bit about themselves, including how long they've been part of YAC, what inspired them to get involved, and a little about their occupation or hobbies that relate to archaeology or heritage.

Mentor Meeting Schedule

My first meeting is on:

Notes:

My second meeting is on:

Notes:

My third meeting is on:

Notes:

Safeguarding



Everyone at YAC has the right to be safe and feel safe.

Safeguarding means looking after the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. They ensure that YAC sessions are welcoming, inclusive, and free from harm.

As a Young Leader, you are covered by the same safeguarding policy as all other volunteers and YAC members (even though you are aged 16-17). You also play an important role in ensuring that other members are safe and supported.

During your induction, you'll be introduced to the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) Safeguarding Policy, and your Branch Leader will explain what actions to take if you have any concerns. You will also discuss the Code of Conduct between YAC Leaders and Young Leaders, which are a set of shared values that help create a safe, welcoming and positive environment where everyone can contribute, learn and feel supported. All YAC Leaders agree to uphold these values through their time with YAC.

If you feel worried about anything, or if something doesn't feel right, speak straight away to your Mentor, Branch Leader, or Safeguarding Lead. You should not try to solve the problem yourself.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and your awareness helps keep the YAC a safe and positive space for everyone.



Here's what that means for you:

- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
- Never be left alone with younger members or in a one-to-one situation.
- If you're worried about someone's safety or behaviour, tell your Branch Leader, Mentor or the Safeguarding Lead straight away.
- You do not need to fix the problem. Just tell an adult who can help.
- Keep clear personal boundaries online and in person
- Only take photos or videos if a Leader has given permission and you're using a YAC-approved device
- If something doesn't feel right, it's always okay to speak up

Do's and Don'ts of Working with Children and Young People

When you're helping at YAC, you're a role model for younger members. These simple Do's and Don'ts will help you keep everyone safe, supported and respected during activities. They're part of YAC's safeguarding rules and help make sure every session is a positive experience for everyone.

Do:

- Be friendly, kind and respectful to all members.
- Follow the YAC Leaders' instructions and work as part of a team.
- Keep information about members private.
- Ask for help if you're unsure what to do.



Don't:

- Be alone with a member or communicate with them privately.
- Share personal contact details or social media accounts.
- Take photos or videos on your own phone or device.
- Ignore or dismiss something that worries you – always tell a Leader.



Code of Conduct for YAC Leaders and YAC Young Leaders

These shared values guide how we work together during all YAC sessions. They help create a safe, welcoming and positive environment where everyone can contribute, learn and feel supported. All YAC Leaders agree to uphold these values through their time with YAC. Feel free to talk this through together.

Inclusivity

We help create a space where everyone feels welcome. We support members with different needs and work together to ensure everyone can take part

Respect

Treat all members, volunteers and families with kindness. Listen to others and value their contributions.

Safety

We prioritise physical and emotional safety. We follow safeguarding guidance and seek help if unsure.

Support and encouragement

We help each other grow. We notice effort, celebrate achievements and offer encouragement.

Responsibility

We take our roles seriously. We arrive prepared, contribute to the session and follow agreed expectations

Positive communication

We speak clearly, calmly and kindly. We listen to others, ask questions if we're unsure and share ideas respectfully.

GDPR: What It Means for You as a YAC Young Leader

As a YAC Young Leader, you may sometimes help with small tasks that involve information about YAC members. GDPR is a set of rules that helps keep everyone's personal information safe. You don't need to know the law in detail; you just need to understand how to handle information responsibly.

What is GDPR?

GDPR stands for the General Data Protection Regulation. It is a rule that helps protect people's personal information, such as their names, ages, addresses, or contact details. It makes sure data is kept safe, used properly and only shared with the right people.

Why does it matter at YAC?

GDPR helps keep all young people in YAC safe. It makes sure that anything we know about our members is treated with care and respect.

What this means for you as a Young Leader

1. Keep information private

If you see or hear anything about another member (for example, their name, allergies, or anything personal), you keep it private. Other YAC Leaders will be aware of this information, but you do not share it with other members, friends or family outside of the YAC.

2. Use information only for YAC activities

If you help take a register, support a shy member or help a Leader with an activity, use the information only for that purpose.

3. Ask a Leader if you're unsure

If someone asks you for information, or if you are not sure what you can share, speak to a YAC Leader or your Mentor. You never need to make that decision alone.

4. Do not take photos without permission

Only take photos when a YAC Leader asks you to, and only if they have confirmed permission has been granted.

5. Respect everyone's safety and comfort

GDPR helps protect personal information, and your role helps protect the trust and privacy of all members.

Remember: If you see it or hear it at YAC, keep it private and ask a Leader if you're unsure.

YAC Young Leader Progression Passport

Your Progression Pathway helps you record everything you do and learn as a YAC Young Leader. It's a way to see how your skills grow over time and it's also great evidence for college, apprenticeships, job applications, or future volunteering.

How to Use This Pathway

- After each session, write down what you helped with, for example, setting up an activity, leading a small group, or supporting younger members.
- Think about what you learned, such as communication, teamwork or planning skills.
- Talk about it with your Mentor during your check-ins. They can add comments to help you reflect and plan your next steps.
- Set small goals for yourself. Like trying something new, helping lead part of a session or improving confidence when talking to the group.
- At your final review, reflect on everything you've achieved and consider what's next. Maybe apply to be a YAC Leader when you turn 18!

Skills Reference Guide

When filling in your Progression Passport, think about the skills you're developing. These can be soft skills or hard skills. Both are valuable.

Quick Formula for determining if it's a soft or hard skill

Hard Skill = What you do

Soft Skill = How you do it

Soft Skills

They are about how you work with people and handle situations. They're transferable, meaning they'll help you in any career or role. Examples include:

- **Communication:** Speaking clearly, listening and sharing ideas.
- **Teamwork:** Working well with others, helping and supporting the group.
- **Leadership:** Taking responsibility, guiding younger members, setting an example.
- **Confidence:** Believing in yourself and trying new things.
- **Problem-solving:** Staying calm, finding solutions and adapting when things change.

Hard Skills

They are specific, practical skills you can learn or measure. Examples include:

- **Setting up archaeological activities or demonstrations.**
- **Using simple archaeological tools or techniques safely.**
- **Organising materials, equipment or resources for a session.**
- **Researching and presenting topics about history or archaeology.**

You will be developing a mix of both hard and soft skills, for example, planning an activity (hard skill) while communicating with younger members (soft skill).

Examples:

Activity	What (Hard Skill)	How (Soft Skill)
Arriving on time to prepare the space	Completing setup tasks before members arrive, organising materials efficiently	Showing professionalism, reliability and readiness to take responsibility
Helping younger members	Explaining tasks	Communicating clearly and being organised
Asking for help or clarification	Approaching YAC Leaders to check instructions	Showing self-awareness, being proactive and demonstrating professionalism

Activity	What (Hard Skill)	How (Soft Skill)
Planning part of a session	Creating a plan or timeline	Sharing ideas, managing time
Giving a short talk or introduction	Researching and/or writing notes	Public speaking, confidence
Demonstrating how to use a simple tool	Showing the correct technique	Speaking clearly and being patient with younger members
Helping set up a display table	Arranging objects neatly and safely	Using creativity and working collaboratively
Supporting a YAC Leader with closing the session	Helping gather equipment, guiding members to tidy up	Demonstrating organisation, demonstrating teamwork and modelling positive behaviour
Documenting workshop progress	Taking clear photos of activities (with permission), noting what members created	Paying attention to detail, staying aware of surroundings, and showing initiative
Helping plan a simple hands-on activity	Creating a step-by-step outline, organising materials needed	Using teamwork to agree on roles, contributing ideas respectfully and managing time.
Troubleshooting minor issues during an activity	Identifying what has gone wrong and fixing it (e.g., missing materials, unclear steps)	Problem-solving, staying patient and keeping the group engaged.
Reflecting after a workshop (verbally and/or in the Progression Passport)	Writing down what went well and what they would like to improve.	Developing self-reflection, honesty and professional growth

When filling in your Progression Passport, try writing one "what" (hard skill) and one "how" (soft skill) for each activity.

Remember:

“What I did” = Hard skill (what) “What I learned” = Soft skill (how)

YAC Young Leader Reward Certificate Schedule

As a YAC Young Leader, your progress will be recognised at regular points throughout the year. Certificates are awarded to celebrate your contribution, your developing skills and milestones you reach as you use your Progression Passport.

Six-Month Recognition Cycle

You will receive a certificate every six months, based on your completed Progression Passport Entries and your Mentor check-ins.

Certificate Schedule

- a. Six-Month Participation Certificate
- b. One-Year Achievement Certificate
- c. Eighteen-Month Milestone certificates (Branches will choose which one(s) are relevant to you,
- d. End-of-Programme Certificate

How This Links to Your Progression Passport

Your mentor will review your Passport with you at each milestone. This helps you:

- Reflect on what you have achieved
- Recognise how your confidence and skills are growing
- Set new goals
- Plan your next steps as a Young Leader

Your passport reflections and activities help Branch Leaders decide which certificate you receive.

Progression Passport Table

Use this table to record what you do, what you learn and how you're developing your skills as a YAC Young Leader.

You and/or your Mentor can fill this in together after sessions or during your review meetings. It also helps show when milestones are reached and when certificates may be planned.

Understanding the Columns

Column	What it's for	Type of Skill	Example
What I did	The main task or activity you helped with. Something you can show, teach, or measure.	Hard skill	"Help set up a mock excavation."
What I Learned/ Development	What did you gain or improve from that activity? How has it helped you grow or work with others?	Soft skill	"Improved teamwork and communication."

Date	Skill Area	Activity /Session	What I did (Hard skill)	What I Learned/Developed. (Soft Skill)	Young Leaders Comments	Mentors Comments	Next Steps Agreed?	Certificate
Example 12/10/2025	Communication & Teamwork	Mock excavation activity	Helped set up the dig area and explained the task to YAC members	Improved confidence in giving instructions and working with the group	It was fun leading part of the activity. I felt more confident speaking to the group.	Great communication and clear instructions. Showed leadership potential	Yes- see below.	

Reflection and Next Steps

This section gives you and your mentor the chance to look back on what you've achieved, think about what you'd like to work on next and agree on your next steps together.

What I am most proud of:

Skills I'd like to develop next:

Mentors' summary of progress:

Young Leaders signature:

Date:

Mentor's signature:

Date

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Skills I'd like to develop next:

Mentors' summary of progress:

Young Leaders signature:

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Young Leaders signature:

Date:

Mentor's signature:

Date

Information on the Council for British Archaeology's Youth Engagement Programmes

As a YAC Young Leader, you are part of a wider community of young people across the UK who are passionate about archaeology, heritage and the historic environment. YAC is one of several youth programmes run by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), all designed to help young people develop skills, build confidence and explore their interests in meaningful ways.

Your journey doesn't end with YAC. As you gain experience, you can continue to develop your voice, influence national projects, and connect with other young people who share your interests. The CBA offers several pathways to get involved, try new roles and shape the future of archaeology.

Below, you'll find information about different youth programmes you can progress into or be part of, along with links to find out more. If anything interests you, speak to your Mentor; they're there to support you every step of the way.

Youth Engagement

The CBA creates and supports a range of projects, events and online resources for young people of all ages. These include hands-on activities, training opportunities and digital content designed to help young people explore archaeology in accessible and inspiring ways.

[Explore the CBA's Youth Engagement resources here.](#)

Youth Advisory Board

A group of 12 young people aged 18-25 who help shape national archaeology projects and influence the CBA's work. The board ensures that young people's voices, experiences and ideas are central to decision-making. Members gain experience in leadership, advocacy, teamwork and project development.

[Find out more about the Youth Advisory Board here.](#)

Young Associate Network

A community of young people who want to stay connected to archaeology, heritage and the historic environment. Young Associates receive a monthly youth newsletter featuring articles, jobs, volunteer opportunities and updates across the sector. There are also chances to contribute to CBA projects and partner activities.

[Find out more here.](#)

Important Link, Contact Details and Information

These links help you find the information you need during your time as a YAC Young Leader. You can use them to check policies, learn more about your role and explore opportunities with the Council for British Archaeology.

Safeguarding

- [CBA Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#): Explains how we keep everyone safe,
- [YAC Young Leaders Safeguarding Induction](#): You must complete this as part of your onboarding.
- How to report a safeguarding concern: Who to speak to if you are ever worried about someone.

Safeguarding Lead contact details

Dr Jo Kirton
Delivery and Engagement Manager
Council for British Archaeology
Email: joannekirton@archaeologyuk.org
Contact number: 07738591744



GDPR and Confidentiality

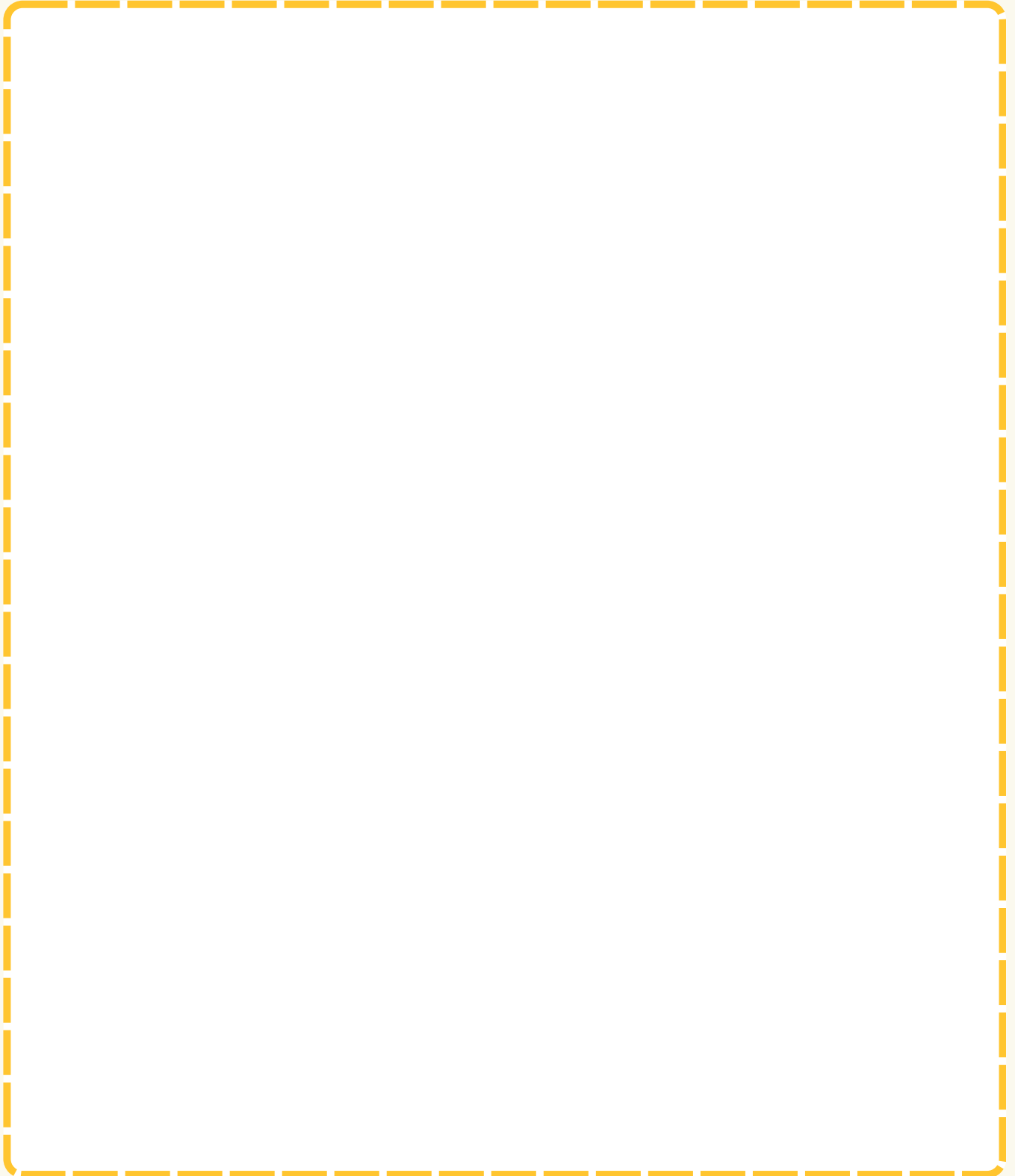
- [Information on keeping personal details private and safe](#).
- [Photo and video guidance](#): What you can and cannot record/photograph at YAC.
- How to handle information responsibly as a Young Leader

YAC and CBA Youth Opportunities

- [About the Young Archaeologists' Club](#): Learn more about the branches around the UK.
- [CBA Youth Engagement](#): Online activities, projects and resources.
- [Youth Advisory Board \(YAB\)](#): a group of 18-25 year olds who help shape CBA projects.
- [Young Associates Network \(YAN\)](#): opportunities, newsletters and ways to stay involved.

Your Branch Information

- **Branch Calendar and upcoming sessions.**
- **Any branch-specific rules or guidance.**
- **Who to contact if you have any questions or need help.**



YAC Young Leaders – Quick FAQ

Is the Young Leader Pathway mandatory for YAC groups?

No – YAC groups are not required to have Young Leaders. This decision must be made by the individual branches themselves based on capacity and need. However, if you are a CBA-managed group and choose to have Young Leaders you must follow the recruitment process as set out in this guidance. Affiliate groups should follow their own safer recruitment policies.

Once recruited we recommend using the pathway guidance to support your Young Leaders. You may wish to adapt it for your branch or specifically for the Young Leader. YAC-HQ are happy to discuss this with you if useful.

How long is the YAC Young Leader programme?

The programme runs for 24 months, with review meetings every three months and certificates awarded at fixed milestones.

Can affiliate groups use this guidance for their own Young Leaders?

Yes, affiliate branches can use this guidance. However, affiliate branches follow their own safeguarding procedures, health & safety policies etc., so please refer to these when recruiting and training volunteer posts for minors.

Do YAC Young Leaders need to have a DBS, PVG or AccessNI check?

This depends on where the branch is based:

Scotland: Yes. YAC Young Leaders aged 16–17 must have a PVG check because their role is classed as regulated work under Scottish safeguarding legislation.

England and Wales: No. YAC Young Leaders do not require a DBS check because their role does not meet the criteria for a regulated role when supervised.

Northern Ireland: No. YAC Young Leaders do not require an AccessNI check because supervision removes the need for vetting.

All adult YAC Leaders must continue to hold the appropriate vetting for their nation. A vetted adult must always supervise young Leaders.

PLEASE NOTE: If you belong to an Affiliate YAC Branch you must follow your organisation's own safeguarding proceedings.

Is it only the mentor's responsibility to support the YAC Young Leader?

No. The mentor is the main point of contact, but supporting the Young Leader is the shared responsibility of the whole YAC leadership team.

What if a Young Leader misses a review meeting?

The review should be rearranged as soon as possible. Reviews must be completed to keep the Progression Passport and certificate schedule on track.

Can a Young Leader take a break during exams or busy periods?

Yes. Young Leaders can pause or reduce involvement during exam seasons or other commitments. Branch Leaders should record this in the Communication Log.

What if a Young Leader's mentor changes?

Branches should update the Welcome Pack, inform the Young Leader and parents/carers, and ensure a smooth handover between mentors.

Are Young Leaders counted as volunteers?

Yes. Although they are still young people within the group (and should be included in adult:child ratios), they take on supported volunteer responsibilities. They must always be supervised by YAC Leaders.

Can Young Leaders take photos or videos?

No. Young Leaders must not use personal devices to take photos or videos. All images must follow CBA safeguarding and GDPR guidance.

What if a Young Leader is struggling or needs extra support?

Use the support section in the review meeting template to identify needs and adjust responsibilities. Speak with the Branch Leader or safeguarding lead if concerns continue. You can always seek advice from the CBA.

How do we manage safeguarding concerns?

CBA Managed Groups: Follow the CBA Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Young Leaders must know who to speak to and how to report worries. Leaders must log all relevant communication.

Affiliate Groups: Follow your own organisations safeguarding policies and procedures.

What happens if a Young Leader leaves early?

Record the reason in the Communication Log. They can still receive a summary of their involvement or a partial certificate if appropriate.

Can Young Leaders progress after the programme?

Yes. They may become a YAC Leader at 18, apply for the Youth Advisory Board (18–25) or join the Young Associates Network.

We already have Young Leaders at our branch. Can we still use this guidance?

Absolutely! We've put together a section about what to do if you have Young Leaders already in post.

