

## Employability and the John Muir Award

Building skills, recognition of achievement, and real life tangible experiences - for reference in personal statements, applications and interviews - are invaluable for moving towards employment. Organisations that deliver the John Muir Award (Providers) tell us they use it to help participants in these three areas.

### Skills

*"We are constantly reminded by our members that it is the 'soft skills' that are needed to ensure an effective workforce. These skills — such as leadership, teamwork, and enterprise — often don't come with a formal academic diploma or degree attached to them... Participating in the various youth awards is an important way of developing these 'soft skills'."*

Iain McMillan, Director, Confederation of British Industry<sup>1</sup>

See over for five examples of employability skills highlighted by John Muir Award Providers.

### Recognising Achievement

Across the UK, Award Providers tell us that recognition of achievement with a John Muir Award certificate helps move participants towards employment. Curriculum documents also highlight the Award as helping celebrate success<sup>2</sup>. Participants include the John Muir Award in their Record of Achievement and curriculum vitae.

*"One student mentioned her Award achievement on her successful application for a Talent Scholarship at the University of Glasgow. It will also be advantageous to mention in CVs and in personal statements for postgraduate study or employment."*

Dr Lisa Marsilli, Scottish Wider Access Programme, North Glasgow College

### Personal statements and interviews

John Muir Award experiences provide positive examples and experiences to include in personal statements and discuss at interviews, putting learning into real life context.

*"The skills learnt and challenges overcome by completing a John Muir Award are easily transferred to the work place, demonstrating tangible experience to potential employers, identifying young people who have commitment and motivation to further their career opportunities."*

Arwel Elias, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Bangor



<sup>1</sup> Quote from 'Amazing Things – a guide to the youth awards in Scotland' [www.awardsnetwork.org](http://www.awardsnetwork.org)

<sup>2</sup> Curriculum for Excellence and the John Muir Award [http://issuu.com/johnmuirtrust/docs/jma\\_curriculum](http://issuu.com/johnmuirtrust/docs/jma_curriculum)

<sup>3</sup> Wordle showing frequency of key employability themes referenced in Award Provider documentation

## What do we mean by 'employability skills'?

### Leadership

Extended Outreach, North Ayrshire, works with young people who are not in mainstream secondary school. They deliver education packages that include the John Muir Award to add a structure to their activities.

*"The most important employability skill developed is that of leadership. On a weekly basis a team leader is appointed. They discuss targets with tutors and Park Rangers. They then allocate tasks to other group members and monitor progress and ensure all group members participate fully."* Simon Hasler, teacher

### Risk-evaluation

Outdoor Adventure Course students at Kendal College, Cumbria, learn traditional

skills such as walling, hedge laying and coppicing. Important employability skills are developed such as risk evaluation and how to keep themselves, and members of the public, safe. Working towards the John Muir Award gives students recognition for their achievements.

*"The students are able to gain confidence through undertaking new activities and put into practice the health and safety learning in the classroom into a real working environment."* Steve Randles, course lecturer



### Teamwork

53 pupils at St. Paul's High School, Glasgow, participate in the John Muir Award through the Global Schools Partnership. The project aims to increase confidence and aspirations and help pupils move into positive destinations on leaving school. Achieving their Award certificate helps build pupils' self-esteem. Teamwork is key when working together practically to plant trees and complete more adventurous orienteering challenges.

*"I liked this way of learning by experiencing nature and being outside better than sitting in a classroom. My favourite task was orienteering because we had to work as part of a team and cooperate with each other to find the markers."* George, pupil

### Practical

Volunteering on John Muir Trust Sconser Estate, on Skye, pupils from Portree High School learn vocational skills such as fencing, path maintenance and bridge building as part of a yearlong rural skills course.

*"It's fantastic to see local young people getting involved in this project which combines learning rural skills, enhancing their local environment and celebrating wild land."* Mike Daniels, Head of Land, John Muir Trust

### Confidence

Phoenix Futures works with people across the UK to help them conquer drug and alcohol addiction.

Working in the outdoors as part of a team, and making a positive contribution can be powerful ways of building self-esteem and confidence. Fiona completed a John Muir Award that led to an apprenticeship with the Forestry Commission Scotland.

*"Doing the John Muir Award has helped Fiona find her interest, and she is convinced it helped her gain the apprenticeship."*

Marion Logan, Director of Operations, Phoenix Futures Scotland

*"I've learned lots of new skills and I'm more confident and happier all round than ever before."* Fiona



The John Muir Award is an environmental award scheme focused on wild places. It encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment in a spirit of fun, adventure and exploration.

Connect, enjoy and care for wild places [www.johnmuiraward.org](http://www.johnmuiraward.org)