



## Local school takes on exporting competition as students prove they don't shy away from a challenge!

On the face of it, exporting doesn't seem like an interest that many young people would share. However, following a unique competition launched in partnership by The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) North team and ICC Solutions, young people from across the North of England challenged themselves to think outside the box and choose a product or service to export to a country that delivers the DofE.

At the Exporting Excellence Northern Final at the Peace Centre in Warrington, Cheshire, six schools met in the final round of the competition. Supported throughout the competition by both a DofE Operations Officer and an ICC Solutions Export Champion, the young people pitched their ideas using their new-found knowledge of exporting to a panel of judges, including representatives from the Department for International Trade, the Institution of Export and International Trade, ICC Solutions and the DofE.

Congratulations to The Laurence Jackson School from Guisborough, Teesside who won the competition. The Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire (Mr David Briggs M.B.E, K.St.J.) proudly presented them with the £2,500 prize that can be used to develop DofE within their school. The winning idea was to export life-saving equipment to Uganda along with two people to teach them how to use the equipment.

Walkden High School from Salford, Greater Manchester came second and received £1,500 and in third place was Great Sankey High School from Warrington, Cheshire who received £1,000. The remaining highly commended finalists won £500 each. In addition to the prize fund, all young people participating received a commemorative plaque.

Commenting on the competition Rebecca Lax, DofE Operations Officer, said, *"Reflecting on it this morning, it was amazing how well the 6 schools did, I think every school had put in far more the 12 hours! I sat at lunch with the students, which was a great reminder of what it was all about. On each of the table sat excited but nervous young people ready to do their very best for the school and themselves. After the winners were announced, I saw each school came over and congratulated Laurence Jackson, which shows the maturity of the young people"*.

Following the presentation of the prizes, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award team announced that exporting would now be included as part of the Skills Section of the DofE Award on a national basis. Young people throughout Britain will now have the opportunity for focussed education, training and mentoring on exporting. This initiative is intended to ignite a passion for export in young people, who could be the international traders of tomorrow – ensuring Britain thrives as a powerful global trading nation.

As a three times Queen's Award for Enterprise winner, two for International Trade and one for Innovation, ICC Solutions is committed to inspiring others to embrace the opportunities offered by international trade. Dave Maisey, Chief Executive of ICC Solutions, stated *"The objective of this*

*competition was to make young people aware of the opportunities and excitement of international trade, whilst highlighting some of the considerations that need be applied to be a successful exporter. Our aim was to ignite a passion for export within young people, and inspire them with the confidence that they can embrace opportunities to do business within the global marketplace. These young people could be the successful exporters of the future ensuring that Britain thrives in international trade. Working together, with the youth of today, let's ensure that Britain is clearly seen as excelling in exporting and seize the opportunities offered by Brexit!"*

To complete a Duke of Edinburgh's Award, young people volunteer in their communities, learn a skill, get fit and plan and undertake an expedition, fulfilling six to 18 months of challenging activity. Through this sustained, meaningful activity, young people develop key life and employability skills, such as self-management, problem solving, team working, communication and confidence.

Speaking about the event and the DofE, Robert Johnston, Director of The North of England said, "This is a unique opportunity for young people in the North of England to develop existing skills and learn new ones whilst equipping them with knowledge for life and work."

To find out more about the DofE Charity and how it enables young people to succeed, please visit [www.DofE.org](http://www.DofE.org).

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#### **About ICC Solutions Limited**

Established in 1996, ICC Solutions Limited is an independent company headquartered in Cheshire, UK. It is a global leader in the provision of Chip & PIN test tools and services, offering the complete set of qualified test suites for payment brand accreditation of contact and contactless Chip & PIN terminals.

The tools are used worldwide enabling development, quality assurance and regression testing in addition to formal merchant certifications.

Investing in R&D, ICC Solutions developed an innovative and highly efficient closed-loop solution designed to simplify the Chip & PIN enablement, testing and validation process. This solution places our clients in full control of their Chip & PIN certification activities.

#### **Notes to editors – figures correct as of 2015-16 stats**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is the world's leading youth achievement award that develops over 300,000 young people for life and work every year in the UK. Founded by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 1956, the DofE is currently being delivered in 13,218 DofE centres, supported by 1,800 partner organisations and approximately 50,000 adult volunteers from all walks of life.

In total, over 5.8 million people have participated in DofE programmes in the UK and achieved over 2.5 million Awards since 1956. In 2015/2016, 119,892 achieved a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The DofE is supported by UK employers, including Amey, British Gas, Heathrow and RSM, who endorse the skills and attributes developed whilst doing a DofE programme such as resilience, commitment, self-motivation and team working.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a Registered Charity No 1072490 and in Scotland No SC038254 and a Royal Charter Corporation RC000806. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation is a Registered Charity in England and Wales, No 1072453. There are more than one million young people currently participating globally in more than 141 countries and territories.

**Accompanying photos:**



**Students from Laurence Jackson School presented with award for winning the Exporting Excellence Northern Final by The Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire.**



**Students from the Laurence Jackson School win the Exporting Excellence Northern Final.  
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