



How to get started Guide

The role of a Young Ambassador

Congratulations on being selected as a Young Ambassador this year. At the heart of the Young Ambassadors programme is the principle that your views, and those of other young people are heard, valued and influence decision making; and that you are engaged in driving change. A Young Ambassador (YA) has two key roles:

- To promote sport, and motivate and inspire other young people to get involved in sport in a wide range of settings within their local communities, including schools, clubs and community organisations
- To influence six key aspects of school sport:
 - extra-curricular sport provision
 - links to community sport opportunities
 - opportunities for competition
 - celebration of pupil achievements in sport
 - leadership opportunities for young people
 - PE in schools

We have designed this 'How to get started' guide to support you in the initial stages of your journey as a YA by providing you with some useful information along with tools and hints/tips.

This 'How to get started' guide is split into four sections:

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 Follow our YA dedicated Instagram page which will contain lots more handy resources. Follow [@YAScotland](#)



How to plan

Goal setting

Goal setting helps you to think about the future and organise your time and resources effectively to turn your vision into reality. Setting clear, defined goals will help motivate you and keep you on track. Think of something you want to do or work towards. Ideally something you're interested in or feel excited by – this will increase your chances of achieving it. It can be something big or small - sometimes it's easier to start with smaller goals.

Make sure your goals are clear and reachable. Each one should be:

- **Specific** – Be as clear and specific as possible with what you want to achieve.
- **Measurable** – What evidence will demonstrate you're making progress toward your goal?
- **Achievable** – Have you set a goal that is manageable and realistic?
- **Relevant** – Is this goal relevant to your role as a YA?
- **Time-based** – When does it need to happen?

Writing about your goals increases your chances of sticking to them. Write how you will measure whether you've reached your goals and when you'd like to have achieved it by. e.g. 'I want to start a lunch time basketball class for S1-S3 by March.'

Telling someone about your goals will increase the likelihood that they will happen. For example – letting your mentor know what you hope to achieve will make you feel more accountable and will motivate you to reach it.

Planning the first step will really help to get you started. Even if you don't know where to begin, your first step could simply be asking your mentor for advice on how to get started. Then plan your next step... and the next...

Working towards goals can sometimes be difficult and frustrating – so you need to persevere. If something you're doing isn't working, think of an alternative that would still move you forward, even a tiny bit. If you're struggling, ask for help! Your mentor or teachers may help you see a different way. If you need to adjust your goal – that's okay too.

When you reach your goal, take time to enjoy it! Think about what you enjoyed and what you learned along the way.



Personal development plan

As a YA, not only will you have the chance to make an impact in your school/community by motivating and inspiring others, but you have the chance to develop your own skill set. Once you have identified your goals, think about what skills you might need to help you achieve them by the end of the year. Discuss this with your mentor and identify what you will do to develop these skills and outline who can help you on your way.

'How you will' and 'when you will'

While producing your action plan, you should think about how you prioritise your actions. Think about the different factors that might influence your plan, such as the school calendar (exams, school holidays etc), and your own personal circumstances (work commitments, hobbies etc). Also remember to add deadlines to keep you on track but make sure that they are realistic.

KEY TIP

Setting personal milestones can be considered mini goals leading up to the main goal at the end. Achieving personal milestones can help you stay motivated even though achieving the final goal might still be further away.

Finally, allocate some time to evaluate the progress you have made with your plan with your mentor. You can mark actions that are completed as done on your action plan, discussing with your mentor how you have progressed toward your goal. This will give you the opportunity to discuss actions that are incomplete and/or delayed, in which case you can work with your mentor to figure out why and find some solutions. Once this is done, you can update your action plan accordingly.



"We planned lunchtime meetings to discuss goals as Young Ambassadors. In order to get the clubs up and running in the first month of the new school year, we immediately created a survey about what sports and clubs people would like to see. However, in order to achieve this, we needed to include our peers and hear their suggestions. We then had a meeting with the teachers to discuss the results and start making a schedule. We made a display showing what times each club meets and now have a comprehensive programme with clubs that suit everyone."

KYLE FROM GRANGEMOUTH



YA planning template

Once you have set your goals for the academic year, you should outline what you will do to achieve these goals. It's important that you involve other people who will support you in this process so that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities. We have developed a planning template that allows you to capture the relevant information you will need for an effective plan.

Firstly, consider the key areas where you are looking to make an impact. As a YA there are six aspects of school sport that we feel you can influence and make a difference in:

- extra-curricular sport provision
- links to community sport opportunities
- opportunities for competition
- celebration of pupil achievements in sport
- leadership opportunities for young people
- PE in schools



It is worth remembering that your plan has to be right for both you and your school/ community. Think about the wider context of your own workload and commitments before you start your plan, and only commit to tasks that you know you can fit into your schedule.

Fill out your own Planner on the page opposite.

KEY TIP

Everyone within your school should be able to participate in sport regardless of where they live, household income, gender, sexual orientation, ability, cultural background and ethnicity.

Everyone should be treated with respect and dignity, and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse.

Think about how everyone in your school can be included or reach out to your peers who may not be comfortable speaking out.

When – timescales						
Tools and resources – what do I need?						
Team – who can help?						
Actions – what do I need to do?						
Goals – what do I want to achieve?						
Key area						

How to connect

In your role as a YA you will have the opportunity to work with a variety of people who can support you to achieve your goals. These will be people you may already know, or people that you have never met before but they will all be important in your journey. Making these connections as soon as you can is important.

Key connections to make

Mentor

Your mentor will support you to reach your goals. Built on a foundation of rapport and trust, mentors will empower you to identify where you are now, where you want to get to, and how you will get there. Mentors should support YAs to self-reflect and look at things from a different perspective, either in a formal or informal environment.

Mentors trust that you can find the best solutions for yourself and you are encouraged to operate in a non-directive way to enable you to identify your options and opportunities.

Active Schools Coordinator

Your Active Schools Coordinator (ASC) will be responsible for providing quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school. They will work closely with your P.E. department, other key school staff and the primary schools which feed into your secondary school. They are also responsible for developing effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. You may find that your mentor is also your ASC.

P.E. department

The staff within your P.E. Department will be vital in supporting you in your role as a YA. You will need to have a strong connection with them if you are to be successful in influencing P.E., while access to their facilities and equipment might also be important to your goals.

Senior management team

As they are vital in the decision-making processes within your school, fostering a connection with your school senior management team (SMT) will be important. They can grant permissions for various sports-related activity, assist with your own time management, and provide you with key information that will help you plan and organise.

School sport committee/pupil council

One of the key principles of the YA programme is that the views of YAs and those of other young people are heard, valued and influence decision making; and that they are engaged in driving change. Connecting with your school sport committee and/or pupil council will give you a platform to discuss topics with likeminded pupils. If your school does not have a school sport committee or pupil council, you may want to explore setting one up.

Community clubs/organisations

Connecting with local community clubs/organisations will allow you to understand what is on offer for you and your fellow pupils out with the school environment, and to make strong links to these clubs/organisations.

“Being able to connect and work with my YA mentor and PE teachers throughout the year was crucial in allowing me and my YA partner to reach our 2 big goals for the year – Hosting an Active Girls Day and a whole school summer sports day. For Active Girls Day, I was able to connect with the Falkirk Girls Sports Forum to deliver the event, our PE staff who helped to organise equipment for the day and our head teacher who allowed the event to run.

MOLLY FROM FALKIRK



Ways to connect

Organising meetings with people you want to connect with is a basic but necessary step that you will need to take. Planning meetings in advance allows all attendees to ensure that they can manage their own time to attend. Additionally, it gives everyone time to prepare in advance. Most professional staff (teachers, ASCs etc) will value the opportunity to be organised rather than a casual drop-in appointment.

KEY TIP

Make sure you know exactly why you want to meet so that everyone knows the purpose of the meeting. You can set an agenda (example below) that helps to structure a meeting by providing the outline of the meeting, who is responsible for each section of the meeting and how



Example of a simple agenda

Young Ambassadors/Mentor Meeting
Tuesday 1st December
PE classroom
1:15pm – 2pm

1	Welcome		
2	Previous notes and actions	Mr Smith	5 minutes
3	Consultation discussion	All	20 minutes
4	Planning for events	All	10 minutes
5	Future meeting with SMT	both YA's	10 minutes
6	AOB		



Networking

Networking is a great way to meet other YAs, make new friends, and to share ideas and experiences. The following points will help you organise a meeting that will allow you to share ideas and best practice that can be implemented in your school.

1. Speak to your Active Schools Coordinator

Your ASC will know the other ASCs in your area. Speak to them and see if it would be possible to arrange a meeting with the other YAs in the area to meet and discuss their experiences.

2. Time and location

Face-to-face networking may prove challenging, so consider how you could make this work. Alternatively, an online meeting might work better with YAs from other areas. Your networking session should take place at a time when everyone can attend, so consider how you plan this.

How long would you like your session to last? We would suggest not making your session any longer than 2 hours. Once you have a start and end time, notify attendees so that access to video conferencing or transport can be arranged, if appropriate.

3. Discussion points and follow up

It's good to prepare an agenda for your session. Even if it's not very detailed, having a few talking points to fall back on is always a safe option. Think in advance what you would like to take away from the discussion and ask the other attendees if there is anything they would like to discuss.

That way everyone's views are considered, and you have a clear plan of what to talk about. When holding the meeting, make sure to take notes so that you can follow up on any ideas that might have been discussed and any actions you need to do when back at your school.

4. Keep the communication going

Make sure that after the session everyone knows how they can reach one each other. It might be worth setting up a Facebook or WhatsApp group, so that anyone can keep in touch.

Young Ambassador Delivery Team

We have a dedicated group of current and former Young Ambassadors who are here to support you in your role. They will be providing useful hints and tips from their own experience as a YA.

Feel free to get in touch with them at youngambassadors@sportscotland.org.uk



Space for reflections/notes



How to deal with difficult situations

In your role as a Young Ambassador, you may face difficult situations. Some of the challenges you will come up against may be familiar to you and you may be equipped with solutions to help you, however others may be new to you. Within this section, we will highlight some of the difficult situations you may face and try to help you with how to generate solutions for these challenges.

Challenges you may face

The following list of challenges have been provided by current and former Young Ambassadors who have experienced them during their own journey:

- My fellow YA wasn't very motivated
- Lack of engagement from pupils
- Senior management team didn't support us

- Targeting specific groups
- Self-confidence issues
- Self-motivation
- Managing YA time with other commitments
- Peer pressure
- Lack of support from mentor

However, it is more important that you can generate solutions for overcoming any challenge that you come across in your role.

You can use the table below to work through the key points to consider when facing a challenge. Use the blank column to write down the answers to each question.

What is the challenge?	
Who or what is causing it?	
What effect is the challenge having on you?	
How do you think you can overcome it?	
What skills do you need to overcome it?	

Space for reflections/notes



How to use Social Media

Social media and community reach

During your time as a YA you will work closely with your school and with community sport hubs and clubs in your local area.

The following guide will give you tips on using social media in your role as a YA to help you communicate with your audience and to promote your events and initiatives.

You can follow **sportscotland** and the YA programme on all the social media channels using the usernames below. Be sure to tag us in all your YA content along with the hashtag #YAScotland

 **Twitter:** @sportscotland

 **Instagram:** @YAScotland and @sportscotland_

 **Facebook:** facebook.com/sportscotland






Benefits - why should you use social media?

When used properly, social media can be a great (and free!) tool for promoting your events and initiatives to a large audience.

You can also create and maintain relationships with your local clubs and teams. It is easy to keep everyone informed about your plans and get their opinions – simply tag them in your announcement. There is a good chance they will share your update with their own audiences, allowing you to reach more people.

Another benefit of being active on social media is recognition – there are plenty of schools with YAs but they are not always well known by their peers. By being active on social media you will reach out to them, get noticed and promote yourself as a key person for all things sport.

The best channels to use?

-  **Twitter:** Allows you to update your audience quickly with short snappy messages
-  **Instagram:** Is great for posting photos and videos you've taken at events
-  **Facebook:** Can be really handy for creating event pages to keep everyone updated without risk of your message being lost

How to create an account?

If you don't have Twitter, Instagram or Facebook for personal use you could start a YA account and keep it strictly business! The best way to do it is to use your name or nickname and add YA at the end. You can also include the name of your school or your surname if you want to be easily recognised within your local community.

Who is your target audience?

It is very important that you know who you are trying to reach. Those individuals are your target audience. You should keep in mind who they are, what do they like, which social media channels are they most likely to use and when are they active on social media.

When identifying that group, you can think about factors such as age, gender, profession and interests. While most of the time your target audience will be pupils of your school, some of your events and initiatives might be aimed at parents, teachers or the wider community. Always think before you post – who am I talking to? And ensure that your content is adjusted accordingly.



Social media post hints and tips

Below are some tips on how to make posts more presentable and in line with **sportscotland** branding.

Types of content to post

You may want to use your social media platforms to give your audience information about:

- Sports clubs at the school
- Events or initiatives you and your YA partner are hosting (think about the 5Ws – what, when, where, why and who)
- Opportunities to participate in sport within the community
- Ways for people to get in touch if they want to discuss sport with you and your partner
- Photos or images of sport happening in your school to inspire others

Do's and don'ts

- Remember to be careful taking photos or videos of members of the public, especially younger children. Check you have their permission – it's worth checking with your PE department or Active Schools Coordinator. If possible, ask for people's permission and explain what the content is being used for
- Be sensible about what you post and remember that you are representing your school, **sportscotland** and the YA Programme. Think before you post – will you offend anyone with your message? We ask that you don't feature anything inappropriate

Instagram tips

Content

- Consider whether what your posting should be in the form of a story (up for 24 hours) or a post
 - note: things with deadlines such as nomination dates may be better as a story if posted regularly
- If you want people to take an action after you post i.e sign up for an event, make your call-to-actions as quick and easy as possible. Include a link to direct the viewer somewhere. You can add it to your main page bio and direct people via 'link in bio', and tag other accounts you refer to
- Make sure your posts aren't blurry and of good quality so that people will engage with your posts

Stories

- If you are adding writing to your story, make sure you add a block colour background to the text so it is legible
- Try to make them look clean, not cluttered
- If you're adding a video to your story, try to make sure it's not too fast so that people can see what you're showing
- Stories should be eye-catching, or people will just click through them
- You can use the sticker, hashtag, GIF and location options (use common sense as to which stickers/GIFs are appropriate) You can also use the poll and questions functions where you think they're a good fit



Posts/grid view

- Try to make sure each tile is of a picture or an infographic so when you view the profile it looks clean
- Try to avoid posting the same photo more than once

Captions

- Captions can be used to provide more information on your post
- Don't post links in captions – they can't be copied or clicked on – they just make the caption look messy
- Try to keep them to the point – no one will read if they're super long
- Appropriate hashtags and emojis can be used to separate a caption

Covering an event on social media

Be prepared and organised

- Create a plan of what you want to post and when. That way you know specifically when all your posts are going out

Before:

- Who is your audience? Who do you want to attend or know about event?
- Start promoting your event at least 2 weeks in advance to ensure awareness and generate interest
- Create a hashtag if you want people to share content. Keep it relevant, short and unique.
- Social media post ideas – the event announcement (include date, location, what event is, how to register), do you have any special guests attending, how people can get involved, countdown post until the event starts

During:

- Good imagery or video – not blurry, try and make it look engaging to really sell the event so people wish they were there
- Try and mix the posts up throughout the day so you're not posting similar things
- Don't overdo it and spam people with lots of posts at once or they will just tune out
- Remember to add hashtag or location so people know whichever event it is
- Social media post ideas – interviews with participants, video of the event in progress, pictures of people having fun, interview with special guest, get followers to send in questions

After:

- Measure success: What worked and what could improve?
- How can you keep the momentum going after your event? You could post highlights or throwback posts
- How can you get people to continue to participate? Provide information and links on how to get involved in future.

Useful links



YA Instagram page

Follow our YA dedicated Instagram page which contains lots more handy resources



YA YouTube channel

We have our own YA dedicated YouTube channel which will contain case studies and webinars for you to use



YA resources

From more how to guides to newsletter templates, we've lots more tools and templates for you to use on our website

Space for reflections/notes

