

Student Leadership Accreditation – Step-by-Step guide for students

Welcome from SSAT

Congratulations on taking the first steps to gaining SSAT's Student Leadership Accreditation (SLA). SSAT is a member organisation which represents the views of thousands of school leaders, teachers and students like yourself. SSAT, the Schools, Students and Teachers network exists to improve outcomes for all young people. As a membership organisation of schools and academies across the UK and internationally, we work with leaders, teachers and students to drive school improvement and innovation, and celebrate their successes; the SLA recognises the role that students can play in this process.

Within this guide you will find:

- Step-by-step instructions on how to complete your SLA
- Student Leadership Accreditation criteria – Guide to the principles of the award
- Student Leadership Accreditation – Portfolio cover sheet
- Student Leadership Accreditation – My goals
- Student Leadership Accreditation – My self-reflection statement

What do we mean by leadership?

Leadership means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. You might want to start by researching different views on leadership with your fellow students or teacher. This award recognises all sorts of different leadership activities, some of which you may well already have done or be doing. You might be on the school council, write for the school blog, be captain of a sports team, be doing your Duke of Edinburgh award . . . it really doesn't matter as long as you are displaying the skills listed on the criteria grid.

Step 1 – Reflecting on where you are

To begin with, you'll need the **Guide to the principles of the award grid** (page 3). We suggest that you take time on your own to think about each of the ten strands listed in the grid, read the criteria, and decide which level you are currently at. You should record your decisions on the **SLA Portfolio Cover Sheet** (page 4).

This should not be a snap decision; you should really reflect carefully on what you are doing and where you fit best on the grid. After reflecting on your own, we suggest you talk about your decisions with another student, a teacher or other adult and see whether they agree.

Are you able to give concrete examples to back up where you put yourself? Are you selling yourself short – maybe you're leading more than you realise? When you have discussed this, make a note of where you are in each of the strands.

Step 2 – Collecting evidence and writing supporting statements

In order to gain an award, you will need to provide evidence for each of the ten strands. This could be evidence from things you have already done, are doing or you might need to plan some activities to make sure you have all the evidence you need. We suggest that you collect this evidence together in a portfolio (folder) – with at least one piece of evidence for each strand. The evidence could be anything: screenshots from the web, letters or emails, photos, stills from videos, certificates, meeting agendas or minutes, PowerPoint slides, etc.

For each of the ten strands, you will also need to write a supporting statement on your **My self-reflection statement** form (page 6). This statement should explain how the piece of evidence you've submitted shows that you are displaying the skills from the **Guide to the principles** grid. You may ask your teacher for help on this – but you must write the statement yourself. Remember, this doesn't have to be done at once – it might take you a term or a year to collect the evidence.

Before you write your self-reflecting statement, you may wish to reflect on your goals for achieving certain levels. This can be done using the 'My Goals' sheet (page 5). This can be included in your portfolio for reflection using the SMART goals outline provided.

All of your evidence, supporting statements and criteria grid must be collected together. There is no set-way that you should organise this, but you should think carefully about how to make it simple to see where you are, and what your evidence for this is. This will be a great resource to take to interviews for jobs, college and universities in the future.

To get any level of the award, you must reach that level (or higher) in all of the ten strands. For example, if a student reached silver in nine strands but had bronze in one, they would only qualify for a bronze award.

Step 3 – Peer Moderation

At some point in the year, your teacher will arrange a moderation session. Your portfolio will be given to another student to review, and you will receive someone else's to moderate.

When moderating their portfolio you should ask yourself two questions:

1. Does the work they are doing reflect the skills needed for that level? Please use the **Student Leadership Award criteria – Guide to the principles of the award**.
2. Does the evidence they provided, along with their supporting statement, explain this clearly enough?

If you agree with their self-reflection and evidence, you should sign your name in the appropriate box on the **Portfolio Cover Sheet**. If you feel they are not showing the skills well enough, you, should have a discussion with them and your teacher about where they are and reach an agreement. Your teacher will then collect in the portfolios, and send your name to us, so that we can moderate and accredit you with the appropriate award.

Good luck – we look forward to accrediting you!

Student Leadership Accreditation criteria – Guide to the principles of the award

	Strands	Level		
		Bronze	Silver	Gold
Developing myself	1. Commitment	Being punctual & regular	Being dedicated	Getting others involved
	2. Organisation and planning	Knowing what to do	Planning ahead	Organising a group
	3. Communication	Communicating within a group	Communicating outside a group	Communicating with a range of people including in public
	4. Being accountable	Being trustworthy	Having a responsibility	Having responsibility for success
Contributing to my community	5. Being a role model	Behaving well	Being respected	Being respected and helping others become respected
	6. Using my skills to help others	Recognising personal skills	Using skills to help others	Actively looking for opportunities to help others
	7. Understanding my community	Being aware of my community	Contributing to my community	Making a lasting contribution to my community
Working with others	8. Team working	Being part of a team	Working well in a team	Leading a team
	9. Presenting	Telling the audience things	Explaining things to the audience	Convincing the audience
	10. Challenge and reflection	Acting on others' comments to improve	Acting on self-reflection to improve	Acting on my own and others' reflections to improve at the same time

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Portfolio cover sheet – please include at the front of your portfolio

Name: _____

	<i>Self-assessor</i>			<i>Peer moderator</i>	
	Self-assessment? <i>Write 'Bronze', 'Silver' or 'Gold'</i>	Evidence complete? <i>Please tick</i>	Supporting statement complete? <i>Please tick</i>	Peer moderated? <i>Please initial if you agree with the level</i>	Peer moderator comments <i>Optional</i>
Strands					
Commitment					
Organisation and planning					
Communication					
Being accountable					
Being a role model					
Using my skills to help others					
Understanding my community					
Team working					
Presenting					
Reflection					

Level achieved overall*:	
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Candidate's signature: _____

Peer moderator's signature: _____

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My goals – if you wish to use goals and reflect before undertaking the accreditation, please include this within your portfolio

Name: _____

SLA Current Level <i>e.g. Beginning</i>	
SLA Target Level <i>e.g. Bronze, Silver, Gold</i>	
Theme <i>e.g. Developing Myself</i>	
Skill <i>e.g. Commitment</i>	
Date <i>e.g. January 2014</i>	

SMART Goal setting: Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Realistic, Time-based

Specific: What is the award you are aiming for?
Measurable: When will you know that this is complete?
Achievable: How will you track this?
Relevant: Will the evidence meet the theme and skill?
Time-based: When is the deadline set for this?

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My self-reflection statement – please include this within your portfolio

Name: _____

SLA Level <i>e.g. Bronze</i>	
Theme <i>e.g. Developing Myself</i>	
Skill <i>e.g. Commitment</i>	
Evidence <i>e.g. Certificate</i>	
Date <i>e.g. January 2014</i>	
On a scale of 1 - 4, how beneficial has this theme been in developing this skill? (1 = very beneficial, 4 = not beneficial)	

My supporting statement (this should reflect what you have achieved and explain how the evidence provided reflects the skills needed for the level you are entering for. To support this process, you may want to use **PEE: Point, Evidence, Explain.**):