Criterion A: Initial consultation

Interview with: Mr Cole

Occupation: International Award for Young People programme coordinator

Date: 14 May 2011

Location: ABC School, San Salvador

Note: This interview was conducted in Spanish as Mr Cole does not speak English. My teacher is able to confirm that this document is an accurate English translation of the original.

Please describe your duties as International Award coordinator.

As the International Award coordinator, I am responsible for ensuring each student in the programme has appropriate activities for each of their sections: skill, physical recreation, adventurous journey, and service.

What information do you need to keep track of for each student?

I need to keep a record of the activities each student as described above. I also need to know the number of hours completed for each activity, because there are different requirements for each level – the Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards.

How do you do this at the moment?

Students have a paper diary which they are supposed to get signed by their activity supervisors each time they attend. I check the diaries every so often to make sure students are attending, and once they have met the required number of hours they bring the diaries to me for final signing.

What problems do you face with this method?

Students are generally good at getting their diaries signed. The big problem is that the programme's activities can last for more than a year, and if a student loses their diary during that time, they have lost all of their evidence of attendance.

It is also a problem chasing some students who forget to bring their diaries to show me. With 65 students in the programme, it is hard for me to remember who has presented their diary to me recently and who has not, and what stage in the program they are in. I started to use a spreadsheet to record this information, but it is not an ideal solution. There have been a few times when I have

been asked to write reference letters for students, and I am unable to easily find information about the activities they undertook in the International Award and the level they attained.

Is there anything you like to be able to do, but cannot with the current system?

I would like to keep a record of the different organisations which offer activities for our students, so I can build a better relationship with them. At the moment students record this information themselves in their diaries. This is a problem because students might attend, for example, an orphanage one year, but the next year we might not send any students there, simply because the students are unaware of the opportunity to work with them. So I would like a catalogue of all organisations we work with, the activities they offer, and the number of students they require. This would also help me if I had doubts that a student was really attending an activity, because I could easily find the organization's contact details and call them or email them.

Although I could do this with the current system easily, I don't: I would like a photo of each student if possible, so that I can better remember who is who – there are many students in the program and some of them are not taught by me, so it is difficult to remember them.