

Chapter 8 - High Risk Activities and Environments (including water- based activities, farms, and snowsports)

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS – see rest of chapter for full details

- **Leaders who organise visits that involve high-risk activities and environments must be aware that such visits normally require a greater degree of planning and preparation by virtue of their complexity and unpredictability.**
- **All Category 1 and 2 (Day), Category 3 (UK Residential) and Category 4 (Overseas) visits that involve high risk activities and environments should be recorded as subcategory “A” and must be assessed and approved by the Senior Manager/Headteacher, other relevant managers, and the Local Authority.**
- **For any visit involving adventure activities that are provided commercially to young people (aged under 18), the Leader must first check if the activity provider is correctly licensed, and has appropriate safety management procedures in place.** Commercial adventure activity providers are legally required to possess a current Adventure Activities Licence, issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service.
- **For all adventurous and other high-risk activities, managers should check that the leaders are competent to supervise the young people in the activity/environment.** Competence derives from knowledge, experience, training and personal qualities, and may be evidenced by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award (with evidence of recent leadership experience) where appropriate. All East Riding staff who intend to lead adventurous activities (mountain walking, climbing, canoeing, sailing, caving etc.) for young people should first be approved and added to the list of ERYC register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders.
- **It is good practice for Visit Organisers to seek technical or local guidance,** especially if the leaders are relatively inexperienced, or if they are undertaking activities or visiting places which they are less familiar with, or which are prone to sudden change (e.g. coastal or river locations – it is important to be aware of tidal conditions, or the behaviour of local streams rivers in response to heavy rain).
- **Recent tragic accidents have underlined the importance of having a previously risk assessed “plan B”** to provide alternative activities if the original planned activity becomes unsuitable or cannot be delivered for some reason.
- **Visit leaders should be familiar with the relevant generic risk assessment(s) for any high-risk activity/environment, and should also carry out their own specific visit risk assessment for the venue, activity and group members.**
- **It is important that leaders are aware of all the potential dangers of bathing in open waters – especially of cold, deep, or moving water.** Leaders who are planning activities in or near water should have relevant experience and competence. Swimming or bathing in the sea or other natural waters is a potentially dangerous activity, and should only be undertaken at appropriate locations, and when organised and supervised by staff who are suitably experienced and competent.
- **Visits to farms can provide valuable educational experiences for young people, but most should be classed as category “A” (involving high risk environments),** especially if they involve working farms. This is due to the nature of activities, vehicles, chemicals, and machinery on many farms, and also to the possible risk of infection from farm animals.
- **Ski visits can be more complicated to organise and lead than many other types of visit, and visit organisers should be competent and experienced leaders.** It is recommended that all new visit organisers are trained and qualified as Ski Course Organisers (SCO courses are provided by Snowsport England), or at least attend a Ski Visit Leader training course provided specifically by the LA. Unsupervised free-skiing should not normally be permitted. Visit leaders should ensure that alternative activities with appropriate supervision are arranged outside the instructed sessions.
- **For further information, see also the Outdoor Education Adviser Panel national guidance webpages via www.oeapng.info**

8. High Risk Activities and Environments (including water-based activities, farms and snowsports)

8.1 General planning and approval of visits involving high risk activities and environments

- Leaders who organise visits that involve high-risk activities and environments must be aware that such visits normally require a greater degree of planning and preparation by virtue of their complexity and unpredictability.
- All Category 1 and 2 (Day), Category 3 (UK Residential) and Category 4 (Overseas) visits that involve high risk activities and environments should be recorded as subcategory “A” and must be assessed and approved by the Senior Manager/Headteacher, other relevant managers, and the Local Authority (see VG 1 for further details).
- For further information, see the following webpages from the Outdoor Education Adviser Panel national guidance via www.oeapng.info

8.2 What visits should be recorded as Category “A” (i.e. involving “high risk activities or environments”? (refer also to Safety Guidelines chapter 1 – “Types of Visits”)

- All activities and environments have potential hazards and involve some degree of risk.
- An element of personal judgement is needed to decide if an activity or environment should be classified as “high risk”.

Examples of low risk activities and environments

- Many activities and environments present few significant hazards, and pose minimal risks. Such activities might include:
 - walking under supervision in parks or on non-remote lowland country paths;
 - visits to most cinemas, theatres, museums, theme parks etc.

Characteristics of high risk activities and environments

- High risk activities or environments are those that are likely either to:
 - threaten serious harm, if particular care and special precautions are not taken;
 - be new and unfamiliar to at least some of the participants (perhaps even some of the leaders);
 - offer a larger than normal degree of unpredictability (e.g. weather conditions might substantially, and perhaps suddenly, change an activity from being low risk to high risk);
 - require additional and specific leader competence (e.g. qualifications, training or experience);
 - require additional specialist equipment or clothing (e.g. climbing harness or wetsuit);
 - involve locations that are remote or difficult to access, and where it might take emergency services considerable time to provide additional assistance or medical care;
 - involve remote or indirect supervision;
 - involve children/young people whose behaviour is challenging and difficult;
 - involve children/young people with additional special/medical needs.

Examples of high risk activities

- Some activities and environments are generally regarded as “**high risk**”, for example:
 - **all outdoor adventure activities** such as caving, climbing, canoeing, mountain biking, mountain walking, sailing, windsurfing, horse riding, rock or gorge scrambling ;
 - **other activities**, such as dry slope skiing, road cycling, rope courses, rollerblading, water skiing etc. that may involve an extra degree of vulnerability by, for example, travelling at high speeds or at a height above the ground;
 - **remote, challenging or unpredictable environments**, such as rocky mountains, steep or slippery slopes, cliffs, scree/boulder fields, snow/ice, fast moving rivers, sinking sand, or deep water;
 - **activities that are less predictable and controllable**, and use equipment which potentially could cause serious harm such as rifle shooting, paintballing, go-karting, quad biking, archery (N.B. some of these activities may not be permissible due to the lack of insurance cover)
- **most water-based activities** - it should be noted that a high proportion of recent fatalities on visits have involved activities based on or near water. Not all activities associated with water are necessarily “high risk”, but leaders should be aware that water is a particularly unpredictable environment, and extra caution should be exercised when groups are near coasts, and when close to water which is deep, fast moving, tidal, or has waves or currents

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- such environments should be regarded as “high risk”. Additional useful guidance for activities near waterside environments, such as “Group Safety at Water Margins”, is available from RoSPA online via <https://www.rosipa.com/leisure-safety/water/advice/>. There is also detailed guidance available within the LA’s generic risk assessments;

- **adverse climate/weather conditions** - it should be noted that the degree of risk may also be increased by other factors, such as the climate or weather conditions. These, in turn, are often a reflection of the time of year that the activity is planned (e.g. a lowland walk might be considered low risk in the summer, but potentially more hazardous in winter conditions).
- **remote staff supervision** (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions) - adventurous activities or hazardous environments where there is no immediate or direct staff supervision.

- For any visit involving adventure activities that are provided commercially to young people (aged under 18), the Overall Group Leader must first check if the activity provider is correctly licensed, and has appropriate safety management procedures in place. For the provision of most adventure activities commercial Activity Providers are legally required to possess a current Adventure Activities Licence, issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service.

8.3 What is the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS)?

- The Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) was established, following the Adventure Activities (Young Person’s Safety) Act 1995 and Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.
- In 1996 it became a legal requirement, under this Act, for providers of certain adventure activities to undergo inspection of their safety management systems and become licensed by AALS.
- AALS therefore acts as an independent watchdog on the delivery of outdoor adventure activities for young people, and provides assurances to the public about the safety of those activity providers who have been granted a licence.

8.4 What is an AALS licence?

- Holding an AALS licence means that a provider has been inspected, and that the Licensing Service are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place for the provision of the specified licensed adventure activities.
- The licence must be displayed by the provider and it must be clear which activities the provider has been licensed to provide. This can be checked by visiting the AALS web site at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm> or by contacting the Adventure Activities Licensing Service, 17, Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5GG. Tel: 029 2075 5715 Email: info@aals.org.uk
- Licences are normally issued for between one and three years following a detailed inspection and indicate that the provider has sufficient safety measures in place for the specified activities on the licence.

8.5 What is not assessed and covered by an AALS licence?

- The AALS licence only applies to the providers of certain adventurous activities, not all (see list below).
- Other elements of the provision, such as the level of service, catering and accommodation, are not covered by the licensing scheme. The Overall Group Leader should check these separately.

8.6 Who needs an AALS licence? (See Appendix VGA 8.3 at end of chapter)

- The following are specifically exempt from the need to hold a licence:
 - Educational establishments providing activities for their own pupils/students (but not if they provide for pupils/students on another establishment’s roll).
 - This exemption does NOT include outdoor education centres, field study centres or other provision run by Local Authorities (for example DofE award scheme), who, therefore, do need a licence.

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- Voluntary Associations providing activities for their own members, or for members of another voluntary association pursuant to an agreement between them. Voluntary Associations can also hold open days for non-members without holding a licence, provided no individual non-member participates for more than 3 days
- Crown servants (e.g. Ministry of Defence employees) providing facilities for adventure activities in the course of their duties.
- Provision to under-18s who are accompanied by their parents or legally appointed guardians.
- In addition, it should be noted that:
 - these requirements only extend to the UK. There is no licensing provision for any operation conducted by anyone beyond the UK.
 - voluntary associations and clubs (e.g. scout groups, local canoe clubs etc.) do not need an AALS licence unless they are selling courses to a school or the public.
 - activities where youngsters are each accompanied by their parent or legally appointed guardian (this does not include the teacher) do not need an AALS licence.
 - all commercial and charitable providers, including freelance instructors of ‘in scope’ activities must have a valid AALS licence.
 - commercial bodies and Local Authorities are exempt if their activities fall outside the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.
 - local Authorities must hold a licence for ‘in scope’ activities whether or not they make a charge for the provision and therefore East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) holds an AALS licence to cover licensable activities that may be undertaken by ERYC schools and establishments, including all relevant Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme activities
 - the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) issues licences only for specific and named activities that are “in scope”.
 - providers of adventurous activities may have obtained other forms of non-statutory accreditation such as “Adventuremark”, but this is not a legal requirement.

8.7 What are the AALS licensable (or “in scope”) activities? (See Appendix VGA 8.3)

- A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities.
- Separate assurances should be gained by the Visit Organiser for activities that are not covered by the licensing scheme, using the Provider Statement Form EV2 (see appendix VGA 7).
- However, the following activities - where undertaken by young people under 18 years unaccompanied by a parent - need a licence when commercial companies sell them, or when local authorities provide them with or without a charge:

Licensable (or ‘In scope’) Adventure Activities

(as defined by the Adventure Activities Licensing Act 1996)

Climbing	Caving	Trekking	Watersports
rock climbing abseiling ice climbing gorge walking ghyll scrambling sea level traversing	caving pot-holing mine exploration	hillwalking mountaineering fell running orienteering pony trekking off road cycling off-piste skiing	canoeing kayaking wave skiing dragon boating whitewater rafting improving rafting sailing sailboarding windsurfing

Notes:

- The AALS Licence context for trekking covers activity on ground over 600 metres above sea level or when it would take 30 minutes or more to reach a road accessible by a normal vehicle or a refuge.

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- The Licence requirement for all watersports covers any location where any part of those waters are more than 50 metres from the nearest land or where inland waters are turbulent.
- Rowing is exempt from Licensing requirements.
- Specific guidance on the legislation related to Adventurous Activities is described in detail in the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. This is available from bookshops, ISBN number 0-7176-1160-4 or, alternatively can be downloaded free from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l77.htm>

8.8 General principles regarding the supervision of visits involving high-risk activities led by an external provider

- The Overall Group Leader retains responsibility for the group members at all times, and must ensure that:
 - the division of responsibilities between the visiting group's staff and the external provider's staff are agreed and clearly understood by all from the outset;
 - whilst the visiting group's staff may devolve a degree of responsibility for the safety of young people over to an external instructor during activity sessions, they retain an overall duty of care for the young people and still need to ensure that proper supervision and control is maintained during the activity and that the health and safety of the young people is not put at risk. If accompanying staff are not satisfied with the level of safety and care provided by an external instructor, they have authority - indeed it is their duty – to abort the activity.
 - any concern over health and safety is conveyed to the provider immediately.

8.9 Assessing the safety management systems of external activity providers

- In the event of an accident, it is possible that the Overall Group Leader might be deemed negligent if appropriate and reasonable steps were not taken, during the planning of the visit, to check the safety of the services provided - for example, if an accident occurred at an outdoor activity centre due to unqualified staff or poorly maintained equipment, the centre management would clearly be liable. However, the Visit Organiser (and approving authorities, such as the Senior Manager/Headteacher, other relevant managers - such as the EVC in schools - and the Local Authority) may also perhaps be accountable for failing to check that the centre's safety management systems and procedures were satisfactory. A leader cannot reasonably be expected to carry out detailed checks of all the provider's safety management systems, risk assessments, and operating procedures (e.g. checking the qualifications and experience of the activity instructors) – that is the responsibility of technical experts who are specifically qualified and trained to carry out such tasks. However, it is reasonable for the Visit Organiser to ask the manager who is responsible for the venue to confirm that these checks and risk assessments have been carried out, and to provide evidence by means of signed, written assurances.
- Visit organisers should therefore check the standard and safety of services offered by using one or more of the following means:
 - check the provider's website for relevant information and assurances
 - check any literature that has been provided by the organisation for visiting groups
 - check if the provider has a Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. The LOtC Quality Badge is a nationally recognised accreditation scheme which aims to assist visit leaders to identify providers which deliver good quality teaching and learning experiences and manage risk effectively. Badge holders usually display the logo on their website and advertising literature. Further information about the LOtC Badge, and a complete list of all badge holders is available via the website www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk. It is not usually necessary to ask for further assurances regarding safety standards if the provider has already been inspected and awarded an LOtC Badge, but nonetheless it might still be important to visit the venue or request other specific information, as part of the visit planning process.
 - email or write to the manager of the organisation to request information and assurances
 - ask the senior manager of the company/organisation to complete a Provider Statement Form (EV2) – see appendix VGA 7.1 - the Group Leader should check the form once it has been completed, and be prepared to ask further searching questions (or indeed to cancel the visit) if there is still uncertainty regarding safe practice.;

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- carry out a pre- visit inspection;
- carry out an on-site visual inspection on arrival, and ongoing checks during the visit;
- use experience from previous visits by the same leader;
- use experience from previous visits by other groups or other leaders from the same school/establishment.
- In particular Visit Organisers should check if the provider of adventurous activities:
 - holds current and appropriate licensing and accreditation for all relevant activities
 - has adequate written risk assessments and operating procedures in place for all its activities, consistent with national governing body recommendations
 - provides appropriate staff training and assessment
 - outlines clearly the responsibilities of visiting staff, especially with respect to the supervision of activities
 - ensures that all relevant staff are appropriately informed regarding any medical or special needs of the group members
 - makes available suitable programme alternatives, if the planned activities become unsafe
 - provides equipment that is of an adequate standard, and that is maintained and checked correctly
 - has suitably experienced and competent senior staff in charge of the activity programme
 - has satisfactory staff recruitment, training, and assessment procedures
 - has staff with appropriate qualifications, including first aid
 - sets supervision ratios that are appropriate for the specific group of individuals, the particular location and activity, and the prevailing environmental conditions. In order to judge suitable supervision ratios for high-risk activities and environments, reference can be made to the guidance on staffing ratios (see chapter VG 6, and appendix VGA 8.1 “Adventure activities staffing requirements” - especially regarding leader competence and experience) and the relevant National Governing Bodies. Guidance can also be obtained from the LA Educational Visits Consultant;

8.10 Checking an AALS licensed provider

- Visit Organisers can be reasonably assured of a provider’s safety standards and operating procedures if the provider has been inspected and licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service for the relevant activities The Visit Organiser should therefore check:
 - whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers;
 - that the provider actually holds a current licence for all the relevant activities in the context of the agreed programme (N.B. if the provider is correctly licensed, the risk assessments will have been checked by AALS, and do not necessarily need to be further viewed or approved by the visit organiser);
 - that any in-scope activity that is provided by a subcontracted operator holds a valid AALS licence for that activity(ies);
 - that any “out of scope” activities (e.g. archery, ropes course, climbing wall) on the programme have appropriate risk assessments, and are led by suitably trained, experienced and competent staff – this should normally be confirmed by obtaining signed, written assurances from the manager on a Provider Statement Form (EV2 - see appendix VGA 7.1);
 - that any other additional activities that are led/instructed by the school/establishment’s own staff (e.g. a night hike or orienteering exercise) have been appropriately risk assessed and are led by suitably qualified and experienced staff (see below - “ Activities led by staff from your own school/establishment”)

8.11 High-risk activities using external instructors from a non-AALS licensed provider

- This should normally be acceptable providing:
 - the provider is not legally required to hold an AALS licence – for example, voluntary bodies and schools providing directly for their own members and pupils respectively are exempt from the need to be licensed.

or,

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- the activities that are provided fall outside the scope of the regulations (e.g. water skiing). This does not imply lower standards, but merely that the activities offered are not “in scope”.
- In these circumstances, signed written assurances should be sought (using the Provider Statement Form EV2) that the provider’s staff are competent and suitably qualified/experienced to lead and instruct the activities, and that their safety management systems and operating procedures are satisfactory.
- The Overall Group Leader must ensure that any in-scope activity that is provided by a subcontracted operator (for example, that is organised by the non-licensed provider) holds a valid AALS licence for that activity(ies).
- Schools/establishments requiring help with information given by providers should contact the LA Educational Visits Officer for further advice.

8.12 High-risk activities led by staff from your own school/establishment

- School-led adventurous activities are normally exempt from the need to be inspected and licensed by AALS unless they are charging young people (aged under 18) from another school/organisation for the service.
- However, the Governing Body and Headteacher/EVC must be satisfied that:
 - Leaders and other supervisors are sufficiently competent to supervise the young people in the activity/environment. Competence derives from knowledge, experience, training and personal qualities, and may be evidenced by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where appropriate (see section 8.13 “Judging Leader Competence” below for more details). In the event of a last minute change of staff, any replacement leader must also be suitably qualified, experienced and competent to lead the activity.
 - Records are kept of staff qualifications, training and leadership experience. This should normally be stored on the EVOLVE online database, but schools/establishments may alternatively wish to keep additional hard copies of information in the office’s Educational Visits file. All East Riding staff who intend to lead high-risk adventurous activities for young people should first be approved and added to the list of ERYC register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders (see details in 8.14 below).
 - Visit leaders are familiar with the relevant generic risk assessment(s) for the proposed activities and environments and they also complete a specific visit risk assessment (see guidelines chapter VG.9 “Risk Assessment”) to include any additional information that is specific to the location, activity, and group. If no generic risk assessment for the activity/environment is available, contact the LA Educational Visits Officer.
 - Leaders and group members have appropriate clothing and equipment.
 - Suitable and sufficient emergency procedures are in place.

8.13 Judging leader competence for high-risk activities

- For all adventurous and other high-risk activities – i.e. that require technically competent, and usually specially qualified, leadership and supervision (e.g. motor sports, water skiing etc.) – managers should check that the leaders have undergone appropriate courses of training and have been assessed as competent by the relevant National Governing Body.
- Competence for these activities must be evidenced by the appropriate qualification, together with recent and relevant experience (a logbook with recorded leadership experience should be available for inspection, if requested).
- Competence is wider than just holding of qualifications, and managers should check that staff have appropriate recent experience.
- Having the correct clothing or equipment does not also necessarily imply competence to use it – managers should be satisfied that leaders are properly trained and have recent, relevant experience.
- Competence to lead particular activities that have no specific governing body may need to be assessed by a Technical Expert.
- The fact that somebody has led an activity before does not necessarily mean that they are competent.

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- An appropriate and current first aid qualification is usually necessary for the National Governing Body qualification to remain valid (for most outdoor activity leadership, a minimum of 16 hours of first aid training is required).
- If necessary, managers should check the relevance of specific qualifications with the LA Educational Visits Officer.
- Managers should check that all leaders of high-risk activities:
 - are clearly aware of the aims being established for the participants.
 - are physically fit enough to undertake the role of leader or instructor.
 - have the relevant qualification, necessary skills, techniques and experience.
 - are working within their own proven competence and ability to lead or instruct.

8.14 East Riding of Yorkshire Council's register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders (see appendix VGA 8.2)

- All East Riding staff who intend to lead adventurous activities (mountain walking, climbing, canoeing, sailing, caving etc.) for young people should first be approved and added to the list of ERYC register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders (see details below). This register provides a means for the employer (the LA) to check and monitor standards of provision.
- This applies to all adventurous activities that would normally be considered "in-scope" and require an AALS licence if not school led - see list of licensable activities in 8.7 above. Holding a relevant NGB Award for the activity is not necessarily sufficient, as the Local Authority will normally require additional information regarding the leader's past relevant experience and training before giving approval.
- To become registered as an ERYC Approved Adventure Activity Leader, leaders must demonstrate appropriate competence to their employer, the Local Authority. This may be evidenced by some or all of the following:
 - a relevant National Governing Body qualification
 - a "statement of competence" following local assessment by a suitable Technical Expert (for further details see guidance issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service – available via www.hse.gov.uk/aala)
 - a current relevant First Aid award;
- Staff who wish to be registered should complete the necessary registration form (see appendix VGA 8.2 – "Registration of approved activity leaders") and submit it to the LA Educational Visits Officer. All leadership registration will be subject to approval by the LA Educational Visits Officer and/or the relevant Technical Adviser. Registration may, in some cases, be subject to re-validation at regular intervals. Confirmation of registration is recorded in the online database of staff qualifications, training and experience within the "Staff Profile" section of EVOLVE.

8.15 First aid requirements

- Reference should be made to Guidelines chapter LG 5 "Assistant Leaders" for more detailed advice on first aid training requirements. It is recommended that at least one accompanying qualified first-aider is normally available and accessible on all offsite visits.
- If the main party divides into separate sub-groups who will be operating at some distance from each other, it is sensible for a first aider to be available for each group.
- Most outdoor qualifications provided by National Governing Bodies are not valid without an appropriate, current first aid certificate (many require a minimum of 16 hours training that includes consideration to outdoor environments).
- High-risk adventurous activities often involve more remote environments where external help is less accessible. It is vital that staff have an appropriate level of first aid training, sufficient to deal with these circumstances.

8.16 Employing external staff to deliver licensable adventurous activities

- Schools are advised not to employ an unlicensed provider of adventure activities onto the school staff -as a temporary teacher or instructor - for the sole purpose of providing otherwise licensable activities.

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- A competent, appropriately qualified and established member of the school staff should be used if available. If not, a properly licensed external provider should be engaged for this purpose.

8.17 **Qualification and staffing requirements for high-risk activities**

- A table is provided in Appendix LGA 8.1 to show the minimum levels of qualification and staffing normally required to lead/instruct different adventurous activities. It should be noted that these are minimum recommended levels, and should be adapted according to a specific risk assessment of the activity, location, and group concerned.
- Qualification names and requirements change over time, so further advice regarding the latest recommended qualifications and staffing levels should be checked with the LA Educational Visits Officer, the Adventure Activities Licensing Service, or the National Governing Body of the relevant activity.

8.18 **Obtaining expert local or technical advice for leaders of adventurous/high-risk activities**

- Staff who are planning to instruct adventurous/hazardous activities or lead groups in “high-risk” environments, should be suitably qualified and experienced in leading the activity, and familiar with the area to which they will be going.
- It is good practice for Visit Organisers to seek technical or local guidance, especially if the leaders are relatively inexperienced, or if they are undertaking activities or visiting places which they are less familiar with, or which are prone to sudden change (e.g. coastal or river locations – it is important to be aware of tidal conditions, or the behaviour of local streams rivers in response to heavy rain).
- A number of recent accidents might have been prevented had such advice been sought beforehand and acted upon.
- In particular the following personnel might be able to provide relevant and up-to-date information:
 - HM Coastguards (e.g. regarding tides, weather forecasts, hazardous parts of beach etc.)
 - Police (e.g. regarding road conditions)
 - National Park Warden (e.g. regarding weather conditions, state of rivers etc.)
 - Local Outdoor Activity Centres
 - Local activity clubs e.g. caving, climbing, hill walking etc.
 - Mountain/Cave rescue organisations
- Further advice can be sought from the LA Educational Visits officer who can also refer issues to the LA’s Technical Experts (for example, in canoeing, climbing, or mountain walking) for additional guidance and training, if necessary.

8.19 **Sharing risk assessments and management strategies with other leaders and young people**

- It is important that risk assessments and management strategies are shared and discussed by all those involved. Involvement by group members in this process helps them better to recognise, understand, and appreciate the control measures that might be imposed.
- High levels of participant involvement in decision-making ensure that risks and control measures are properly discussed, and participants learn to be “risk aware” rather than “risk averse”.
- As part of the ongoing risk assessment, it is important to listen and give due consideration to any safety warnings or advice given by other members of the group, or others from outside the group. Any such concerns expressed by others should prompt careful consideration and a further risk assessment of the situation.
- A leader could understandably be regarded as foolish and negligent if words of reasonable caution were ignored – whilst strong leadership may involve making bold decisions, the humility and sensitivity to take heed of others’ advice is also an important attribute of a good leader.
- For more information, see sections VG 15.1 – 15.4

8.20 **Planning for changes in circumstances – a need for an alternative “Plan B”**

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- Recent tragic accidents have underlined the importance of having a previously risk assessed “plan B” to provide alternative activities if the original planned activity becomes unsuitable or cannot be delivered for some reason.
- It is important for leaders to ask “what if...?” and to consider what could go wrong.
- Time before the visit should be given to the consideration and planning of alternative activities and venues (including appropriate risk assessments, where appropriate), and other staff should be aware of these possible contingencies.

8.21 Remote supervision of adventurous/high-risk activities - including Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions (see also appendix VGA 8.4 and section VG 6.12)

- Some visits and activities - such as those within the Duke of Edinburgh Award - involve young people working in small groups without direct supervision. Supervisors should be appropriately experienced, trained and qualified (see appendix VGA 8.4 for details).
- Particular attention must be given to the training and information provided to young people before direct supervision can be withdrawn, and parents need to be fully informed and give consent.
- The visit/activity leader should be satisfied that the young people have acquired the necessary skills, experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement to operate safely without direct supervision.
- The withdrawal of direct supervision should be a gradual four-stage process:
 - training and accompanying the group;
 - shadowing the group;
 - checking regularly at agreed locations;
 - checking occasionally at agreed locations.
- This process can be adopted for many activities, such as orienteering.
- Young people should be trained to use any specialist equipment (e.g. tents, stoves), and an element of adult supervision in the proper use of equipment may initially be needed.
- The Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) provides guidance (Inspector Guidance note IGN 5.13) regarding the supervision of Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions – see www.hse.gov.uk/aala

8.22 Examples of specific high-risk activities and environments

- Visit leaders should be familiar with the relevant generic risk assessment(s) for any high-risk activity/environment, and should also carry out their own specific visit risk assessment for the venue, activity and group members.
- The following provides additional information relating to a number of “high-risk” activities that are commonly undertaken:

8.23 Visits near coasts, rivers, lakes or other water environments

- Leaders and other supervising adults should be aware that many of the serious, and sometimes fatal, accidents have occurred during activities beside, in, or on water.
- N.B. 750 children drown in the UK on average each year - half of whom die within 25m of the shore, and 10% are witnessed by an adult who is unaware that the child is drowning or in difficulties.
- As a consequence, leaders who are planning to take groups to these environments should have a high degree of relevant experience and competence, and must take particular care.
- Leaders should refer to the relevant Local Authority’s generic risk assessments, and ensure that all staff are aware of the likely hazards and recommended control measures.
- Expert local knowledge and advice (e.g. from coastguard, local outdoor centre, or national park ranger) should be sought, especially regarding forecast conditions (N.B. it is also often vital to establish what conditions have been like during the previous weeks).
- Visit leaders are strongly advised to refer to and follow the guidance provided in the document “Group Safety at Water Margins”. This document is available from: <http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/Info/WaterSafety/groupsafety-watermargins.pdf>.
- ROSPA provides some useful guidance (2008) on pond dipping which can be downloaded from www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/watersafety/pond-dipping.aspx

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- Visit leaders are strongly advised to refer to and follow the advice provided on the following RoSPA website <http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/watersafety/>. This website provides detailed guidance on the following topics: “Watersport safety abroad”, “Child holiday swimming pool safety”, “Coasteering”, “Ice safety”, “Pond and garden water safety”, “Pond dipping”, “Taking children swimming”, and “Weil’s disease (Leptospirosis)”.
- The EU provided guidance in 2009 on water safety entitled ‘Protecting Children and Youths in Water Recreation: Safety Guidance for Recreation Providers’ which is obtainable via www.eurosafe.eu.com

8.24 All water-based and water/rock-based activities (e.g. gorge scrambling)

- It is important that leaders are aware of all the potential dangers of bathing in open waters – especially of cold, deep, or moving water. Leaders who are planning activities in or near water should have relevant experience and competence. Swimming or bathing in the sea or other natural waters is a potentially dangerous activity, and should only be undertaken at appropriate locations, and when organised and supervised by staff who are suitably experienced and competent.
- In particular, sudden entry into cold water can have the effect of “having the breath knocked out of you” and can be severely debilitating, even for fit and strong adults. This can render the person unable to move or to breathe. This sudden effect should never be underestimated, and there should be adequate control measures and rescue procedures on hand to deal immediately with anyone who experiences breathing or mobility difficulties as a consequence.
- Careful thought and provision should also be given to the potential effects of long periods of immersion in cold water. Whilst participants might appear to be enjoying and coping with the experience initially, the onset of hypothermia can be rapid and often unnoticeable to the person concerned or to onlookers.
- It is important to establish clearly and in advance if participants are effective and confident swimmers, and parents/guardians should be informed and give their written consent to most water-based activities.
- Leaders should understand that even strong swimmers may experience difficulties, especially in cold water, or if they experience cramp.
- The “sudden panicker” phenomenon – where someone becomes panic-stricken and is unable to effectively self-rescue or comply with instructions - is increasingly being recognised as one of the risk factors in outdoor drownings, and leaders should be trained and competent in dealing with such emergencies.
- A number of recent fatal accidents have involved activities such as coasteering (scrambling along the coastline) or gorge scrambling/river walking/plunge pooling – all of which may involve wading, swimming, or jumping into water, or climbing on rocks beside water.
- These should be considered high risk activities, but they should not necessarily be discounted as viable and acceptable activities - if they are led correctly by suitably trained/qualified staff (see Appendix VGA 8.1 “Adventure Activities - Staffing Requirements” – especially section on gorge scrambling) in appropriate locations that have been carefully selected and inspected by competent and qualified staff, they can provide immensely enjoyable and beneficial opportunities for learning.
- Groups undertaking these activities should be appropriately equipped – normally with suitable footwear, wetsuits, helmets, and buoyancy aids.
- Sensible precautions need to be taken in planning and leading all such activities, and rescue procedures should be well rehearsed with correct equipment. Specialist rescue equipment is often useless without the relevant skills and training to operate it. For example, staff should be trained thoroughly before they are expected to use throwlines.
- Because river/gorge environments are prone to change rapidly, leaders should have earlier prepared and risk assessed suitable alternative activities, in the event of conditions on the day of the visit being worse than expected, and leaders should not hesitate to abort an activity if conditions are no longer suitable.
- For further guidance, see the LA generic risk assessment for “Gorge Scrambling”.
- AALS provides guidance regarding the use of personal buoyancy for watersports – download via www.hse.gov.uk/aala

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- In 2012 the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) introduced the National Water Safety Management Programme (see <http://watersafetymanagement.org.uk/>). This flexible water safety training programme may be particularly useful for leaders who plan to take groups regularly in, on, or near water environments.

8.25 Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters (see also VG 8.23 and 8.24)

- Swimming in the sea or other natural waters is a potentially dangerous activity, and should only be undertaken if the activity is carefully planned and managed at an appropriate location, and supervised by staff who are suitably experienced and competent. Impromptu swimming or paddling should normally be avoided unless the venue clearly presents no significant risks, and the accompanying leaders are suitably experienced and competent to assess and manage the risks effectively. Visit leaders should have read and completed the generic risk assessment for “Swimming/bathing in open waters”, and they should be aware of the additional guidance provided.
- Wherever possible, group leaders should seek out recognised bathing areas that have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover.
- All sessions should be supervised by at least one “designated lifeguard” who is either a currently qualified lifeguard or an appropriate group leader who has been judged and approved beforehand by managers as having suitable experience, training, and competence (e.g. has previous lifesaving training and experience and/or is a competent strong swimmer who has adequate knowledge and experience of lifesaving techniques, and is competent and confident in carrying out a rescue of an unconscious person from the water and giving CPR if necessary). If in doubt, contact the LA Educational Visits Officer for further guidance.
- It might be acceptable for swimming/bathing to take place without a qualified lifeguard in the following limited circumstances:
 - all relevant managers (including the LA Educational Visits Officer) have been fully informed and given their approval to the proposed activity beforehand.
 - the location has first been carefully inspected and assessed by a suitably experienced and competent leader, and advice has been sought from local experts (e.g. coastguard or national park warden) who are familiar with the site. A further check is carried out on the day to ensure that conditions are still acceptable.
 - the bathing area is clearly defined (with positioned staff or marked boundaries), and is small enough for the supervising adults to oversee and manage all participants effectively at all times.
 - the group is overseen throughout by at least one “designated lifeguard” who is suitably experienced and competent (see above).
 - group members are briefed to remain in water up to a depth that is judged by the designated lifeguard(s) and visit leaders to be appropriate for the circumstances – e.g. the ages/swimming abilities/special needs of the group, the venue/water conditions, the availability of lifeguards, the number and competence of supervising staff etc. N.B. it is safest for group members to stay within their own depth, but accidents can still happen, even in shallow water.
 - the staffing ratio (i.e. number of supervisors to swimmers) is high enough to ensure that all group members can be overseen and be carefully supervised at all times by the staff.
 - the designated lifeguard and other supervising staff keep track of how many group members are in the water at any time, and they carry out regular headcounts to check everyone is present, taking into account anyone who has left the water early or temporarily to go to the toilet
 - the activity is closely supervised (both onshore and in the water) by a sufficient number (normally at least 3) of experienced staff who are confident and competent swimmers and who have at least basic lifesaving knowledge and skills
 - all participants are confident and competent swimmers (the wearing of a buoyancy aid might be an option to consider, if available, for those who are less competent/confident in water
 - participants are fully briefed beforehand regarding acceptable conduct and behaviour.

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- Paddling, or wading in gentle shallow waters (below knee height) should normally be acceptable providing that:
 - the location has been carefully inspected and risk assessed by an experienced and suitably competent leader who is familiar with the site and, if appropriate, has checked with local experts (e.g. coastguard or national park warden) that it is suitable. A further check should be carried out on the day to ensure that conditions are still acceptable.
 - the activity area can be clearly defined (with positioned staff or marked boundaries), and is small enough for the supervising adults to oversee and manage all participants effectively at all times
 - the water is nowhere more than knee deep (for all participants) and does not drop off steeply beyond the marked area
 - the water flow, waves, tide or currents are negligible and too weak to unbalance participants
 - the number of participants in the water is small (usually < 10) at any one time
 - the activity is closely supervised (both onshore and in the water) by a sufficient number (normally at least 3) of experienced staff who are confident and competent swimmers
 - participants are fully briefed beforehand regarding acceptable conduct and behaviour
 - leaders are aware that drowning can still occur even in shallow waters.
- Visit Leaders should also be familiar with the additional guidance provided in the LA's generic risk assessment for "Swimming/bathing in open waters" and the OEAP national guidance – via website www.oeap.info

8.26 Farm visits

- Visits to farms can provide valuable educational experiences for young people, but most should be classed as category "A" (involving high risk environments), especially if they involve working farms. This is due to the nature of activities, vehicles, chemicals, and machinery on many farms, and also to the possible risk of infection from farm animals. Farm visits should be carefully planned, especially if they involve working farms that are not specifically set up for educational visits. Farmers may be aware of the farm's main hazards, but they may not anticipate the unpredictable behaviour of children not used to such environments.
- The risks to be assessed should include the hazards associated with *E coli 0157* food poisoning and other infections which can cause serious illness in all age groups, but especially in children aged under 5. The risk of infection was highlighted in 2009 when a number of cases arose in the UK following school visits to farms. Particular care is needed when planning visits to "open" or "petting farms", and leaders must ensure that suitable washing facilities are available, and that cleansing procedures are strictly followed by all group members.
- HSE guidance "Avoiding ill health at open farms – advice to farmers" is obtainable online from www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais23.pdf
- The Local Authority generic risk assessment "Visits to farms" should be referred to and followed, and the site should be pre-visited to allow a suitable specific risk assessment to be completed by the Leaders.
- A useful "Guide for Teachers visiting Countryside Events" is available from www.farmsforschools.org.uk . A list of UK farms that have been accredited by the Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme (CEVAS) is also available via this website.

8.28 Ski/Snowsport Visits

- In the context of this document, the term snowsport covers both ski and snowboarding activities. Visit leaders considering snowsport visits overseas should ensure they are also familiar with the contents of the document "Overseas Visits" in chapter 11 of this Guidance.
- A ski or snowboarding visit can be an invaluable learning experience, and it can also provide many opportunities to link in with curriculum learning in subjects such as languages, geology, geography, history and the arts. Anyone seeking to link a Snowsports trip to the

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curriculum is recommended to read *Snowsports and Learning Outside the Classroom* published by Snowsport England.

- In order to provide good value for money, it may be useful for all beginners to undertake pre-course ski lessons on a dry slope or at a snow dome. This might be included in the price of the venture and advertised in the initial information provided to parents.
- Young people with poor levels of personal fitness (particularly if they are significantly overweight) are far more likely to sustain injuries. Injured young people will inevitably put greater strain on day-to-day group supervision. Conversely, fit party members are far more likely to get the best out of their experience. It is good practice to ensure that this is properly explained to both young people and parents, and it can be helpful if a structured programme of fitness training is put in place.
- Tour operators of ski visits who sub-contract to other providers, (e.g. ski school, accommodation and transport) must give the school/establishment assurances that the contractors will provide a suitable level of service to the school/establishment. No contract should be entered into until the school/establishment is satisfied that there is good safety provision.
- Ski visits can be more complicated to organise and lead than many other types of visit, and visit organisers should be competent and experienced leaders. It is recommended that all new visit organisers are trained and qualified as Ski Course Organisers (SCO courses are provided by Snowsport England), or at least attend a Ski Visit Leader training course provided specifically by the LA.
- Leaders should be aware that serious injuries are not uncommon during visits involving snowsports. Snowsports should therefore be regarded as “high-risk” activities, and recorded visits should be classed as Category “A” visits on EVOLVE. It is sensible to make parents/guardians and participants aware from the outset that snowsports have inherent dangers and that injuries are not uncommon. Accompanying staff should also be aware that they might need to spend at least some of the visit supporting injured group members in hospital!
- Visit Organisers should consider carefully the hazards and risk management control measures in the ERYC generic risk assessment for skiing (see also guidance in chapter 11 “Overseas Visits”).
- Visit Leaders should check that participants have suitable clothing and equipment that is fit for purpose and properly fitted. Visit Leaders should ensure that this is checked regularly, session by session, and group members must be reminded regularly to protect themselves adequately from the effects of the sun.
- It is recommended that leaders ensure appropriate spare equipment is carried within each sub-group.
- There has been considerable debate nationally on the wearing of helmets for snowsports, in particular for organised groups from schools, the youth service, and other children’s services. Visit Organisers should be aware that:
 - The Federation International de Ski (FIS) strongly recommends that all skiers and snowboarders, regardless of ability and age, use helmets.
 - The Association for Physical Education (AfPE) take the view that snowsport helmets constitute a necessary item of personal protective equipment for organised groups.
 - The Schools and Youth Committee of Snowsport England (SSE) recommended that the SSE Board makes a clear statement in support of the FIS position on protective headgear.
- In light of this, it is strongly recommended that groups from ERYC establishments taking part in snowsport activities wear suitable protective headgear to mitigate the risk of head injury, unless an assessment of the risks involved (e.g. Nordic skiing) clearly indicates that is acceptable not to do so.
- Leaders should be aware that in some countries it is a legal requirement that young people under a specified age wear helmets at all times whilst engaged in snowsports. For example, in Italy and parts of Austria all children under 14 years old must by law wear helmets whilst skiing or snowboarding. Also helmets are compulsory for all ski or snowboard racing and competitions.

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- Leaders should ensure that helmets are specifically designed for snowsports, are fit for purpose, and are correctly fitted and fastened. However, all participants and parents/guardians should understand that helmets are unlikely to provide protection from serious injury if skiing/snowboarding recklessly, at high speed or beyond the level of competence of the participant.
- Visit organisers are advised to contact their equipment supplier early in the planning process to ensure that suitable helmets are available for all group members during the visit.
- It is recommended that all young people and staff are given a copy of the Skiway Code and that its contents are properly explained. This is equally applicable to snowboarders. Leaders should ensure that this is made clear and that all members of their party understand the implications of crashes at speed. The importance can be further stressed by supplying an extra copy for parental use.
- To avoid unnecessary injuries, leaders should ensure that party members are able to carry their skis or boards in accordance with training. Leaders should also be prepared to monitor and enforce these requirements.
- All group members should be made aware that the most effective way to reduce the likelihood of injury whilst engaged in snowsports is to:
 - Ski/snowboard under control, within the limits of one's own competence
 - Comply with the legally binding FIS International Rules for Conduct (also known as the Ski Way Code in England)
 - Use equipment which is properly maintained, well fitted, and suitable for the participant.
- It is a requirement in all countries that all formal ski instruction is provided by appropriately qualified staff. Tour operators offer different packages, and schools usually arrange between 2 and 6 hours of instruction each day from a recognised ski school. It is good practice for groups undertaking ski visits to book a minimum of two 2-hour lessons in ski school (with a lunch break in between) per day.
- To fulfil their duty of care, the Visit Leader must ensure that there are suitable standards of competent instruction and student care in the chosen Ski School.
- Consider carefully in advance the amount of time needed for instruction given the age, ability, experience, fitness, and motivation of the group members.
- Whenever young people are skiing or snow boarding, they should be under the direct or indirect supervision of either an accredited ski school or an adult with competence accredited by an appropriate snow sport leadership/instructional qualification. All those leading, supervising, guiding or coaching groups on the slope must:
 - possess a National Governing Body supervisory or instructional qualification, in accordance with National Governing Body guidelines.
 - be an active and competent practitioner
 - be suitably experienced and conversant with good practice
 - hold a current, nationally recognised first aid qualification
- Anyone providing hands-on leadership of skiing or snow boarding, or directly supervising a young person or group skiing or snow boarding should hold an appropriate qualification, such as the Snowsport England Alpine Ski Course Leader (ASCL) Award. Managers and visit organisers must note that this is a nationally recognised qualification to supervise and lead young people whilst skiing on piste, but NOT to provide instruction. They should also note that this qualification might not be recognised and accepted in some countries, and the leader might face prosecution. It is therefore important to check this beforehand with the relevant authorities and local ski schools.
- To teach or coach skiing or snowboarding, the expectation is that the teacher/coach holds an appropriate qualification such as the British Association of Snowsport Instructors (BASI) Alpine Coach Level 2 as a minimum.
- Skiing/snowboarding outside the contracted sessions with qualified instructors is acceptable and normal for many family or independently-organised ski holidays, but it is not usually appropriate or acceptable for school/group visits, when the issues of responsibility and accountability are more complex. This should be made clear to all group members and parents/guardians from the outset.
- Unsupervised free-skiing should not normally be permitted. Visit leaders should ensure that alternative activities with appropriate supervision are arranged outside the instructed

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sessions. In exceptional circumstances, it might be permissible for young people to ski/snowboard for brief periods under the supervision of the visit leaders, without the direct supervision of qualified coach/instructors. However, this might be permitted only under the following strict conditions:

- if visit leaders propose to supervise any snowsports activities without the direct supervision of qualified coaches/instructors, this must be clearly requested on the EVOLVE form, and proposed arrangements must first be discussed with and then approved by the LA Educational Visits Officer (this will be indicated on the EVOLVE form).
 - the Visit Organiser, and at least several of the other visit leaders, must be very competent skiers/snowboarders themselves, and they all must have considerable experience of organising and leading previous snowsport visits (at least 10 previous ski visits recommended) so that they are competent to make reasonable informed judgements regarding ski abilities, piste suitability, weather and snow conditions, hazard awareness etc. The Overall Group Leader should also be a Ski Course Organiser or have undertaken Ski Visit Leadership training.
 - a specific risk assessment must be carried out, recorded and shared with all staff supervising.
 - leaders **must not** give skiing instruction during these sessions.
 - there should be a high staffing ratio (a minimum of one leader per 8 skiers is recommended)
 - skiing takes place on a single piste only, and this should be carefully selected to suit the needs of all group members.
 - the overall visit leader should seek prior advice and guidance from the ski school instructors regarding suitable locations and control measures, given the group's abilities and behaviour, and the prevailing snow and weather conditions (and forecast).
 - the prescribed area in which the young people can ski should be limited and clearly defined.
 - the snow conditions and grade of piste should be well within the capabilities of ALL members of the group. Only some resorts may have suitable slopes, and these may only be suitable at particular times of the day - if at the beginning of the day, the group members might not be sufficiently warmed up and not yet “found their ski legs” – however, at the end of the day, the snow may be heavier and less suitable, and young people might be too tired to ski sensibly and safely. The end of the day is also when everyone else is returning to the base station so the lower slopes might be more congested and therefore there is a higher risk of collision/injury.
 - all skiers should be within sight of the supervisor(s) at all times. It is suggested that a leader remains positioned at the top and bottom of any lifts used, whilst other leaders patrol and oversee those skiing on the piste.
 - the session should not commence or should be abandoned, if the daylight, weather, or piste conditions are inappropriate.
 - group members are appropriately briefed regarding procedures, equipment, clothing, conduct and safety prior to the commencement of every session.
 - the leaders should be satisfied that all the participants are suitably mature, responsible and well behaved to be given some independence.
 - first aid provision should be readily available.
 - leaders and young people must be clearly briefed what to do in the event of an accident to prevent additional further injury to the casualty or others, and to alert and summon the ski patrol or other medical assistance.
 - leaders should satisfy themselves that the activity is covered by their insurance policy and must check with their insurers if in doubt.
 - parents/guardians must be informed that this type of activity is planned and this must be included in their written consent for the visit.
- The decision to ski/snowboard outside the contracted sessions provided by qualified instructors should not be taken lightly, especially bearing in mind that a serious accident occurred recently in these circumstances, which resulted in the school being prosecuted, even though the parents had given their written consent beforehand.

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- Leaders should bear in mind that some group members may be tired by the end of the instructed period, and will normally prefer to return to their accommodation to rest and recuperate. Tired skiers are more liable to make mistakes and have accidents, so safety is a key factor. It is therefore normally inappropriate and undesirable for group members to stay longer than the instructed time.
- The decision to ski longer should not be dictated by a few enthusiastic staff, or young people who are experienced skiers, who may want to ski longer.
- Overall staffing and supervision levels must be considered carefully by the Overall Group Leader as the group may need to divide into those who wish to ski longer, and those who wish to return to their accommodation.
- The nature of the terrain and weather conditions in and around ski resorts is such that Visit Leaders should ensure that any downtime is covered by suitably rigorous risk management procedures. Tragedies that are known to have occurred during downtime include:
 - young people sliding into a gorge when the leaders assumed they were eating their packed lunch.
 - young people falling from a hotel balcony.
 - young people developing hypothermia when incapacitated through alcohol.
 - sunburn can also be a significant hazard.
- Ski visits present specific issues relating to safe management. Schools/establishments proposing to run ski visits must refer to the Local Authority's generic risk assessment for such visits early in their planning process. Schools/establishments new to skiing or using a tour operator new to them should contact the LA Educational Visits Officer before confirming arrangements.

Adventure Activities – Staffing Requirements

- The following table details the Council’s recommended minimum qualifications and staffing requirements for leading adventure activities.
- Leaders should also adhere to the ratios and qualifications recommended by the National Governing Body for each activity.
- For some activities, an in-house County assessment by a “Technical Adviser” may be required. This is denoted in the following table as “LA award”. If in any doubt, contact the ERYC Educational Visits Officer.
- If further guidance is required regarding an adventurous or high risk activity that is not included in the table, please contact the LA Educational Visits Officer (see below).
- All staff who intend to lead/instruct activities that would normally be licensable by AALS **must** be on the ERYC Register of Approved Adventure Leaders, and details of their qualifications and experience notified to and assessed by the LA Educational Visits Officer.
- Other competent and suitable volunteers and assistant leaders can also be entered on to the ERYC Register of Approved Adventure Leaders.
- Activities operating under the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme will need to follow that approval system in addition to any required approval specified in these guidelines.
- This section outlines the minimum leadership qualifications and supervision ratios required to lead adventure activities. It should be noted, however, that additional staffing might be required, depending upon the circumstances and conditions. . **Please also note that the names and remits of awards do change quite frequently and therefore checks should always be made beforehand with the current National Governing Body as to the level of accreditation or award required for each activity.**
- The precise levels of staffing should therefore reflect a specific risk assessment, taking into account factors such as the groups’ abilities, the weather conditions, and the competence of the leaders.
- If uncertain, leaders are advised to err on the side of oversupervision!

Technical Advice

Further advice can be obtained from the National Governing Bodies for each activity or from:

Taff Bowles
 Educational Visits Officer
 School Improvement Service
 County Hall
 Beverley
 HU17 9BA
 Telephone: 01482 392417
 Fax: 01482 392490
 Email: taff.bowles@eastriding.gov.uk

Adventure Activities Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are often used in this or other supporting documents:

AALA	Adventure Activities Licensing Authority
AALS	Adventure Activities Licensing Service
afPE	Association for Physical Education
ASL	Alpine Ski Leader
BASI	British Association of Ski Instructors
BCF	British Cycling Federation
BCU	British Canoe Union
BCU UKCC	British Canoe Union United Kingdom Coaching Certificate
BEL (A)	Basic Expedition Leaders (Award)
BESA	Bronze Expedition Supervisor Award (East Riding inhouse award)
BHSAI	British Horse Society Assistant Instructor
BMC	British Mountaineering Council
BOF	British Orienteering Federation
CIC	Cave Instructor Certificate
CLA	Countryside Leader Award
CWA/CWI	Climbing Wall Award/ Climbing Wall Instructor
DofE	Duke of Edinburgh Award
ESC	English Ski Council
ERYC	East Riding of Yorkshire County Council
HML or WGL	Hill and Moorland Leader or Walking Group Leader
LCMLA	Local Cave and Mine Leader Award
LEL	Lowland Expedition Leader
LWL	Lowland Walk Leader
MBL	Mountain Bike Leader
MIA	Mountaineering Instructor Award
MIAS	Mountainbike Instructor Award Scheme
MIC	Mountain Instructors Certificate
ML	Mountain Leader
MTUK	Mountain Training UK
NCA	National Caving Association
NGB	National Governing Body
OTC	Offroad Training Consultancy
RCI	Rock Climbing Instructor
RLSS	Royal Life Saving Society
RRS	Riding & Road Safety Certificate
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SPA	Single Pitch Award

Land Based Activities

ACTIVITY	RANGE OF OPERATION	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR INSTRUCTOR	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR :STUDENT RATIO (and additional adult assistance)
CAMPING (see VGA 8.4 for qualifications needed to supervise D of E expeditions)			
Camping	Lightweight camping/low level	BESA (LA award) BEL or LEL or CLA	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
Camping	Wild camping/high level	ML award	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
CAVING			
Caving – Level 1	Horizontal systems (no pitches) easy climbs e.g. 2-3m with use of life line	Local Cave and Mine Leader Award Level 1	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Caving – Level 2	Caves with some pitches using ladder and life line techniques, up to max 18m	LCMLA Level 2	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Caving – NAMHO Inspected Mines	All other caving	Cave Instructor Certificate	1 : 6 + LCMLA familiar with vertical caving techniques
Mine Exploration – NAMHO Inspected Mines	Level 1 Mines horizontal systems with easy climbs, eg 2-3m with use of life line.	LCMLA Level 1 with mine endorsement	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
Mine Exploration NAMHO Inspected Mines	Level 2 Mines (as caving)	LCMLA Level 2 with mine endorsement	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Mine Exploration NAMHO Inspected Mines	All other inspected mines	CIC with mine endorsement	1 : 6 + LCMLA with mine endorsement
WALKING/MOUNTAINEERING (see VGA 8.4 for D of E expedition supervisor qualifications)			
Normal country - walking/environmental studies field work	Low level farmland 30 minute access to habitation	Experienced Teacher	1 : 12
Higher level fell/moors walking (not winter conditions)	Upland areas of moors/fells, downs, non-mountaineous	WGL Award HML	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
High level Fell/Mountain walking (not winter conditions)	Above 600m ill defined path	ML Award	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
High level fell/mountain walking in winter conditions	As above but in conditions of underlying snow or hard frost Temp below +5°C	ML Winter Award	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Winter mountaineering	Up to Grade III snow and ice	MIC	1 : 3
Coastal walks	Non remote – as for geography fieldwork	Experienced Teacher	1 : 15 + Responsible Adult
ORIENTEERING			

ACTIVITY	RANGE OF OPERATION	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR INSTRUCTOR	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR :STUDENT RATIO (and additional adult assistance)
Orienteering	School grounds	Teacher - relevant experience or BOF level 1 Coach	Class size
Orienteering	Non remote contained areas inc small woods	BOF Level 2 Coach (former 'Instructor')	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
Orienteering	Uncontained open areas (not exposed or remote or complex)	BOF Level 3 Coach (former 'Club Coach')	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
CLIMBING			
Rock climbing	Specified single pitch climbs	RCI SPA	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Rock climbing	Unspecified single pitch climbs with easy access	RCI SPA	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Rock climbing	Unspecified single pitch climbs with remote access	RCI or SPA + ML Award Summer	1 : 10 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Rock climbing	Multi pitch rock climbs	MIA Award	1 : 3
Artificial climbing walls	Indoors or outdoors	CWI CWA SPA In-house assessed	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
CYCLING/ MOUNTAIN BIKING			
Cycling – road	Any cycling on road	Contact Technical Adviser for advice	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Cycling – off road	Below 600m non remote easy tracks	MBL Level 1 OTC Level 1 MIAS Level 1	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Cycling – off road	Below 600m any permissible route	MBL Level 2 OTC Level 2 MIAS Level 2	1 : 10 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
GORGE SCRAMBLING			
Gorge scrambling *	Easy accessibility non technical low water	Summer ML + SPA or RCI	1 : 12 + Responsible Adult
Gorge scrambling *	Water traverse – medium water	Summer ML + SPA or RCI + BCU L3 Coach	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Gorge scrambling *	Technical use of ropes and climbing equipment	MIA	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
* Any gorge in a remote location will also require the appropriate Walking Leader Award			
SKIING			
Skiing – downhill	Resort package but with controlled skiing outside ski school. In UK with suitable local conditions	Alpine Ski Leader	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Skiing – downhill	Teaching and leading. Usually available only in specific resorts (Scotland)	BASI Level 2	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Skiing – dry slope	Specific site	BASI Level 1	1 : 10
Skiing – cross country	Simple slopes, paths,	BASI 1 Nordic	1 : 10

ACTIVITY	RANGE OF OPERATION	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR INSTRUCTOR	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR :STUDENT RATIO (and additional adult assistance)
	tracks, easy open areas in England with suitable local conditions (non remote)		+ Responsible Adult
Skiing – cross country	More remote areas of English uplands	BASI 2 Nordic + ML Summer	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Skiing – cross country	In resort	BASI 2 Nordic/Telemark	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
ROPES COURSE			
Low ropes courses	Purpose built	In house assessed	1 : 10
TEAMBUILDING			
Initiative and team work challenges	Non technical use of equipment	Teacher - relevant experience	1 : 10
Initiative and team work challenges	Technical use of equipment	Teacher - relevant experience +inhouse assessed	1 : 10
HORSES			
Pony trekking	Specific routes	BHS Stage II and TRRS certificate or ABRS Trek Leader Certificate	1 : 6
Horse riding	Specific routes	BHSAI	1 : 4

Water Based Activities

ACTIVITY	RANGE OF OPERATION	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR INSTRUCTOR	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR :STUDENT RATIO (and additional adult assistance)
KAYAKING			
Kayaking – inland	Sheltered water No journeying	BCU Coach Level 2 (or inhouse assessed Level 1) UKCC Level 2	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Kayaking – inland	Flat water journeying including sheltered areas of large lakes	BCU Coach Level 2 UKCC Level 2	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Kayaking – inland	Moving water Grade 2 + (and journeys on open areas of large water)	BCU Coach Level 3 + (and 5 star)	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Kayaking – inland	Above Grade 3+ water	BCU Coach Level 3 + 5 star	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Kayaking – surf	Below 1m waves	BCU Coach 3 – surf BCU Coach 3 – sea	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Wave Ski	Below 1m waves	BCU Coach 3 – surf BCU Coach 3 – sea	1 : 8 + Responsible Adult
Kayaking or Wave Ski – surf	Above 1m waves	BCU Coach 4 – surf	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Kayaking - sea	Sea and large lochs with activities close to suitable beaches	BCU Coach Level 3	
Kayaking – sea	Journeying as defined for BCU Coach Level 3 (+ advanced sea journeys)	BCU Coach 3 – sea (+ 5 star sea kayak)	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
OPEN CANOEING			
Open Canoe	Sheltered water No journeying	BCU Coach Level 2	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Open Canoe	Flat water – journeying including sheltered areas of large lakes	BCU Coach Level 2	1 : 10 + Responsible Adult
Open Canoe	Moving water Grade 2 and open areas of large lakes	BCU Coach Level 3	1 : 8 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
SAILING			
Sailing – 2 person sailing dinghy	Sheltered water wind strength below 15mph with appropriate safety cover	RYA Asst Instructor Venue specific	1 : 4

ACTIVITY	RANGE OF OPERATION	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR INSTRUCTOR	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR :STUDENT RATIO (and additional adult assistance)
Sailing – single handed sailing dinghy	Sheltered water maximum 6 dinghies wind strength below 15mph with appropriate safety cover	RYA Instructor venue specific	1 : 6 + Responsible Adult
Sailing	Inland water Type of dinghies determined by experience, with appropriate safety cover	RYA Instructor - Dinghy (Inland)	1 : 6 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)
Sailing sea dinghy	Open waters Sea estuary Motorised rescue boat with competent helm essential	RYA Senior Instructor Coastal	1 RYA Instructor: up to 6 boats if helms are competent
Sailing	Other types of sailing cruising yachts	Contact Technical Adviser	
WINDSURFING			
Windsurfing	Inland water with appropriate safety cover	RYA Start Windsurfing Instructor (S/NVQ Level 2)	1 : 6 + Responsible Adult
RESCUE BOATS			
Rescue Boat	Where appropriate sailing/windsurfing activity may be accompanied by rescue boat(s)	RYA Powerboat Level 2 Sportboat	Sailsport participants 1:12 per powerboat (dependent upon type of rescue boat)
RAFTING			
Rafting – improvised	Sheltered water Construction and use of improvised rafts for team building type exercises	BCU Coach Level 2 Coach with relevant raftbuilding experience	1 : 10 + Assistant Leader (with technical training)

ERYC Registration of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders

The Local Authority keeps a register of any employees who lead/ instruct adventure activities, and to record the level at which approved leaders are qualified to lead groups of young people.

All staff who intend to lead outdoor adventurous activities that would normally be licensable by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) **must** be on the ERYC Register of Approved Leaders, and details of their qualifications and experience must have been notified to and approved beforehand by the LA Educational Visits Officer.

Other competent and suitable volunteers and assistant leaders can also be entered on to the ERYC Register of Approved Leaders.

Staff who lead/ instruct adventure activities must demonstrate competence to the LA. This may be evidenced by:

- a relevant National Governing Body award
and/or
- a specific local assessment by a recognized, and appropriately qualified technical expert
and
- a current relevant First Aid award
and
- appropriate and relevant leadership experience

Adventurous activity leaders must give a statement confirming they have recent and relevant experience and knowledge of current best practice.

Registration may be subject to re-validation at regular intervals.

All leadership registration will be subject to approval by the LA Educational Visits Officer and/or relevant Technical Adviser.

Staff must not lead or instruct outdoor adventure activities unless they have first been approved and registered on the ERYC Register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders.

Application forms (see next page) for registering should be completed and returned, together with copies of all relevant certificates or logbook pages, to the LA Educational Visits Officer, County Hall, Beverley HU179BA

ERYC Register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders Application Form

(for staff members who wish to lead/instruct outdoor adventurous activities themselves)

Name:.....

School/Organisation:.....

Home Address:.....

.....

.....

Tel.No:.....

Email:.....

Please complete the forms below:

Name of adventure activities that you wish to lead/instruct	Level of relevant qualifications attained and training courses	Date of qualification/training course	Years of relevant experience leading/instructing the activity

First aid training/qualification(s) (most recent last)	Number of hours training involved	Name of course provider	Date of qualification

I confirm that I have recent and relevant leadership experience of the activities above, and have appropriate knowledge of current best practice.

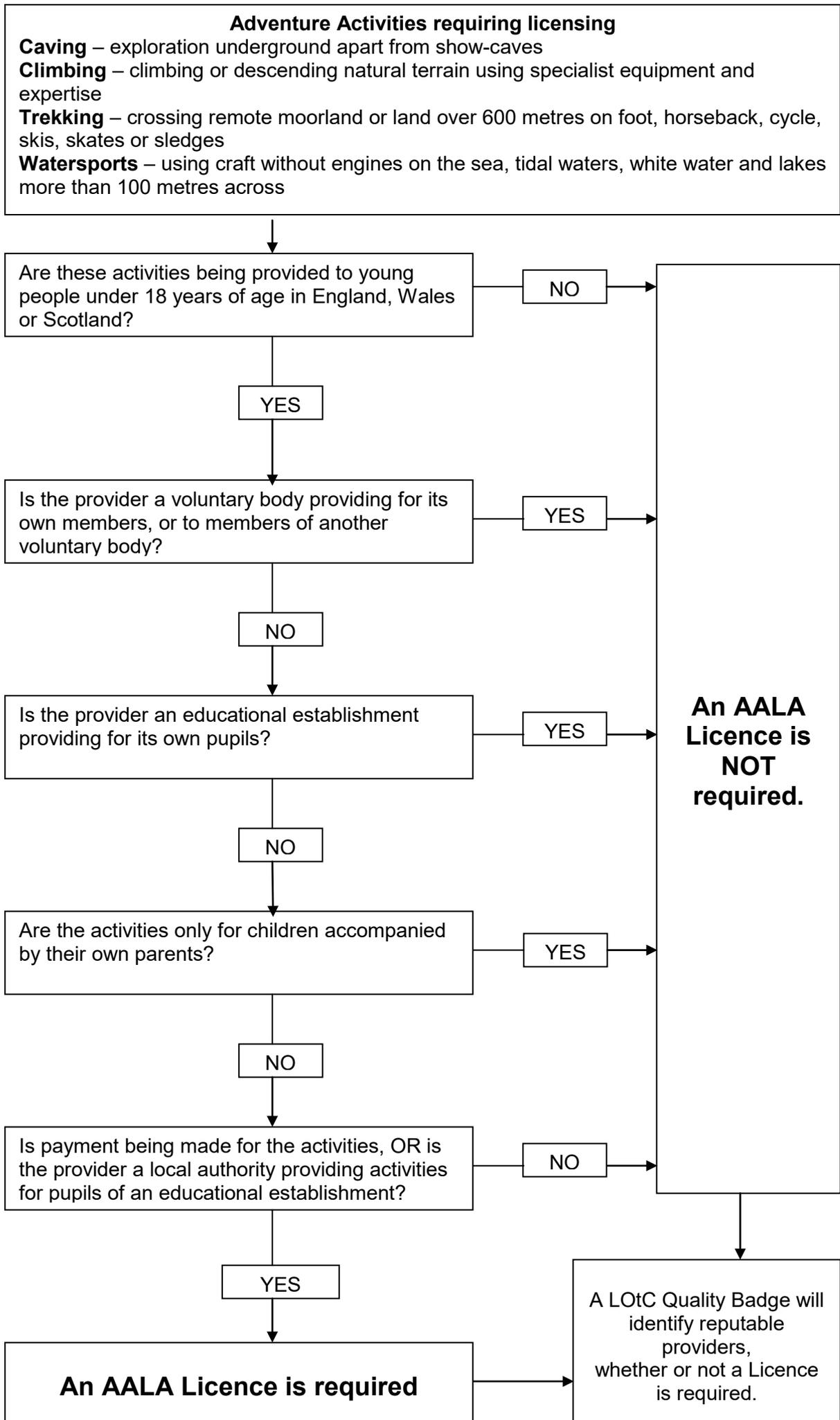
I confirm that I will only instruct/lead those activities and to the level, for which I am qualified and have the necessary competence.

Signed..... Date.....

LA Approval:

The above member of staff is approved to provide instruction/leadership in the following adventure activities to the level for which are appropriately qualified/competent:

Adventure Activity	Date Approved	Revalidation dates (if appropriate)	Name/Signature of Manager



Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award Expeditions Guidance regarding Supervision and Approval procedures

Procedures for checking and approving routecards and maps, and for authorising Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions

- All expeditions must be recorded on EVOLVE Online as “Category 3A” (if in UK) or “Category 4A” (if overseas) visits.
- All Youth Support Services DofE units must have their expeditions authorised beforehand by:
 - the Expedition Supervisor's Line Manager
 - the Youth Support Service Positive Activities Manager
 - the LA Educational Visits Officer (who will also notify the LA Duke of Edinburgh Award Coordinator)
 - the LA Duke of Edinburgh Award Coordinator
- All School DofE units must have their expeditions authorised beforehand by:
 - the Headteacher
 - the Educational Visits Coordinator
 - the Governors, and
 - the LA Educational Visits Officer
 - the LA Duke of Edinburgh Award Coordinator (if applicable)
- A brief description of the expedition area and routes must be recorded on EVOLVE – e.g. *“Based in the Wolds. Staff based at campsite near Millington. The 2 groups will follow similar routes in the Millington/Fridaythorpe/Huggate area”*.
- Maps/routecards do not need to be sent to the LA or necessarily attached to the EVOLVE form (although that option is available). However, there is a section of the EVOLVE form where the Expedition Supervisor (who is responsible for completing and submitting the form) must confirm that the routecards/maps have been checked and approved by an accredited Duke of Ed Expedition Assessor, whose details must be recorded. The Expedition Assessor who checks and approves the routecards/maps must be a different person to the Overall Supervisor, and should be appropriately qualified and experienced, and be familiar with the proposed expedition area (although not necessarily familiar with the exact routes planned).

Terms

Wild country is defined in the D of E handbook as “an area remote from habitation” (a list of recognised “wild country” areas is provided in the D of E Award handbook).

Expedition Supervisor is the adult leader who is overall in charge of the planning and supervision of an expedition, and who is primarily responsible for the safety and welfare of all expedition participants and leaders.

Assistant Supervisors are the adult leaders who assist with the planning and supervision of an expedition.

Duke of Edinburgh Accredited Expedition Assessor is defined as a competent adult who is approved by the Operating Authority, and accredited at the appropriate level through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

East Riding of Yorkshire LA qualifications for Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition planning and supervision

N.B. It is not only the Expedition Supervisor's qualifications and experience that are important for the safety and welfare of participants. Supervisors and managers must decide the overall staffing levels, ratios, qualifications, and experience that are appropriate for each expedition. All the qualifications below are only valid if the leader has an appropriate and up-to-date First Aid Certificate.

Qualification/ Training/ Experience	Remit and Responsibilities
<p>Inexperienced adult assistant - with no relevant qualifications, and limited knowledge and experience</p>	<p>Able to assist with the planning and supervision of all expeditions under the direct supervision of an appropriately experienced and qualified Expedition Supervisor, but they should not be expected to operate independently or take any significant responsibility for others. (N.B. inexperienced assistants are unlikely to have the knowledge and skills to navigate on their own - especially in remote, challenging, or mountainous areas - or to deal with emergency situations. Staffing ratios for the supervision of expeditions should take this into account).</p>
<p>Experienced adult assistant - with no relevant qualifications, but extensive knowledge and experience</p>	<p>Able to assist with the planning and supervision of all expeditions under the general supervision and direction of an appropriately experienced and qualified Expedition Supervisor. They can be asked to operate independently, according to their level of competence and experience, but should be given only limited responsibilities, (N.B. the Expedition Supervisor in charge should carefully assess the experience and competence of all assistants beforehand, and the assistants should only be given appropriate responsibilities. The Expedition Supervisor should not assume that assistants have the knowledge and skills to navigate on their own - especially in remote, challenging, or mountainous areas - or to deal with emergency situations).</p>
<p>East Riding Bronze Expedition Supervisor Award (BESA) Requires logged experience (inc. assistant on at least 2 previous D of E Award expeditions) + 1 day in-house training + 1 day in-house assessment (which might be undertaken separately, or whilst the candidate is assisting with the supervision of an expedition). (N.B. This is a local accreditation award and is not formally recognised elsewhere) Leaders are also encouraged to attend the DofE award's own Expedition Supervisor's Training Course (ESTC)</p>	<p>Remit and responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be the Expedition Supervisor responsible for the training and supervision of Bronze-only groups undertaking walking expeditions in gentle, non-remote, lowland areas (e.g. areas around Raywell) in non-wild country (as described and listed in D of E Award handbook). • Can assist with training/planning/preparation of Bronze/Silver/Gold expeditions • Can assist with supervision of Bronze/Silver/Gold expeditions
<p>Basic Expedition Leader (BEL) Award (run by Sports Leaders UK) replaced in 2017/18 by: Lowland Expedition Leader (LEL) N.B. Lowland Walk Leader only covers walking, but not camping skills</p>	<p>Able to train groups to carry out day journeys and backpacking expeditions, and lead groups in "non-remote, lowland areas" and to organise base/standing camps. Remit and responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be the Overall Supervisor responsible for Silver expeditions in gentle, non-remote, lowland (e.g. Millington in Yorkshire Wolds or around Castle Howard, near Malton) in non-wild country regions (as described and listed in D of E Award handbook).

Qualification/ Training/ Experience	Remit and Responsibilities
<p>Leaders are also encouraged to attend the DofE award's own Expedition Supervisor's Training Course (ESTC)</p>	
<p>Lowland Leader Award (LLA) (run by Mountain Training UK) N.B. The LLA syllabus does not include "wild camping", so leaders should undertake additional training, such as BEL or the East Riding Bronze Expedition Supervisor Award (BESA) or the Mountain Training UK's Expedition Skills module if they do not already have appropriate experience and knowledge of camping skills. Leaders are also encouraged to attend the DofE award's own Expedition Supervisor's Training Course (ESTC)</p>	<p>Able to lead groups in lowland countryside, woodland, coastal paths etc. Navigation is on footpaths which don't generally stray more than 3km from access points. Remit and responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be the Overall Supervisor responsible for Silver expeditions in gentle, non-remote, lowland (e.g. Millington in Yorkshire Wolds or around Castle Howard, near Malton) in non-wild country regions (as described and listed in D of E Award handbook).
<p>Walking Group Leader (WGL) (run by Mountain Training UK) replaced in 2016 by: Hill and Moorland Leader (HML) N.B. The standard WGL and HML syllabus does not include "wild camping", so leaders should undertake additional training, such as BEL or the East Riding Bronze Expedition Supervisor Award (BESA) or the Mountain Training UK's Expedition Skills module if they do not already have appropriate experience and knowledge of camping skills. Leaders are also encouraged to attend the DofE award's own Expedition Supervisor's Training Course (ESTC)</p>	<p>Able to lead groups in open, uncultivated, non-mountainous high or remote country known as upland, moor, bog, fell, hill or down but enclosed by well-defined boundaries such as classified roads. Areas of remoteness can be easily exited in a few hours. Excludes areas where movement on steep or rocky terrain is required. May include navigation on and off paths. Groups should be able to exit their route within about three hours. Remit and responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be the Overall Supervisor responsible for Bronze/Silver/Gold expeditions in areas of upland/ moorland (normally, but not necessarily, below 600m) that are not steep/rocky/mountainous (e.g. moorland covering much of North York Moors or the Peak District or Yorkshire Dales) within "wild country" regions (as described and listed in D of E Award handbook).
<p>Summer Mountain Leader (ML)</p>	<p>Able to lead groups in anywhere in the UK, under summer conditions (where there is minimal risk of snow/ice) Responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be Overall Supervisor responsible for Gold expeditions in more mountainous "wild country" regions (e.g. Snowdonia or Lake District) <p>N.B. Whilst the Summer M.L. is qualified to lead groups in mountainous terrain, all D of E expedition groups operate independently, without direct supervision. Few groups will have the necessary competence and experience to operate safely on their own in challenging mountainous terrain or in poor weather/visibility, so routes should normally be planned through,</p>

Qualification/ Training/ Experience	Remit and Responsibilities
International Mountain Leader (IML)	<p>rather than over, high level mountainous terrain</p> <p>Able to lead groups on any mountaineering activities throughout the world, where the techniques of alpinism are not required. This excludes excursions on glaciers or permanent snowfields or on any other route where the planned use of a rope is required.</p> <p>Responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be Overall Supervisor responsible for Gold expeditions in more mountainous “wild country” regions overseas (e.g. Pyrenees) <p>N.B. Whilst the International Mountain Leader is qualified to lead groups in mountainous terrain, all D of E expedition groups operate independently, without direct supervision. Few Award groups will have the necessary competence and experience to operate safely on their own in challenging mountainous terrain or in poor weather/visibility, so routes should normally be planned through, rather than over, high level mountainous terrain.</p>
International Mountain Guide	<p>Able to lead groups on any mountaineering activities throughout the world, including where the techniques of alpinism are required. This includes excursions on glaciers or permanent snowfields or on any other route where the planned use of a rope is required.</p> <p>Responsibilities as above, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be Overall Supervisor responsible for Gold expeditions in more mountainous “wild country” regions overseas (e.g. Pyrenees) <p>N.B. Whilst the International Mountain Guide is qualified to lead groups in mountainous terrain, all D of E expedition groups operate independently, without direct supervision. Few Award groups will have the necessary competence and experience to operate safely on their own in challenging mountainous terrain or in poor weather/visibility, so routes should normally be planned through, rather than over, high level mountainous terrain</p>

Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition requirements

Level	Number of practice expeditions required	Expedition Duration	Min hours of planned activity per day
Bronze Practice	At least 1	2 days/1 night	At least 6 hours during the daytime (at least 3 of which must be spent journeying)
Bronze Assessment		2 days/1 night	At least 6 hours during the daytime (at least 3 of which must be spent journeying)
Silver Practice	At least 1	2 days/1 night (min) 3 days/2 nights (pref)	At least 7 hours during the daytime (at least 3.5 of which must be spent journeying)
Silver Assessment		3 days/2 nights	At least 7 hours during the daytime (at least 3.5 of which must be spent journeying)
Gold Practice	At least 1 (in similar wild country)	3 days/2 night (min) 4 days/3 nights (pref)	At least 8 hours during the daytime (at least 4 of which must be spent journeying)
Gold Assessment		4 days/3 nights	At least 8 hours during the daytime (at least 4 of which must be spent journeying)

Land Environment (walking, cycling, horse riding)

Level	Suitable terrain (inc. height limits)	Typical examples	Issues to consider
Bronze	Normal rural countryside which can be familiar to the participants	Lowland countryside found locally in much of East Riding or North Lincs e.g. lowland around Beverley/Market Weighton, Yorkshire Wolds	Keep to obvious, clear pathways, with straightforward navigation. Avoid walking along or crossing roads, where possible. Train participants to walk safely along roads, if necessary. Avoid routes alongside hazardous rivers/canals/sea cliffs. Avoid routes near quarries. Avoid towns, but small villages and hamlets acceptable.
Silver	Normal rural, open countryside or forest, which is unfamiliar to the participants – and more demanding than Bronze level.	Gentle, rolling countryside and hills – but not across remote areas (far from habitation) e.g. North York Moors, Peak District, Yorkshire Dales	As above, plus: Check routes through forests carefully beforehand - tracks may change, and sections might be closed for forestry work. Navigation and supervision can be difficult in forested areas. Beware quarries, mines and tunnels.
Gold	Wild country (“remote from habitation”) which is unfamiliar to participants – and more demanding than Silver level. Can include remote estuaries, marshes, fens and coastal areas with emphasis more on exploration.	Remote and uninhabited areas – not necessarily in high, steep, or mountainous areas. Emphasis on travelling through/across remote areas rather than over high mountains (solitude rather than altitude) e.g. North Wales, Snowdonia, Lake District	As above, plus: Ensure bad weather alternative available – groups may have little experience of navigating in and dealing with difficult mountain weather Beware cliffs, exposed ridges, steep and rocky slopes. Beware quarries, mines and tunnels.