

10. Training for staff who manage and lead offsite visits

- 10.1 It is vital that both those who manage and oversee visits, and those who organise and lead visits, are suitably trained and competent.
- 10.2 The competence of visit leaders is of paramount importance for the protection and care of young people on offsite visits. Competence derives from a wide number of factors such as personal attributes, knowledge, experience and training in relevant activities and environments. Competence might be evidenced by appropriate qualifications, but qualifications should not be judged as the sole, or necessarily most important, criterion. Staff enthusiasm and confidence is not always a good indicator of leadership capability. Headteachers and EVC's should take care to distinguish between staff "confidence" and "competence", and ensure that they check levels of qualification, experience and training before approving a visit. If engaged in adventurous activities, each leader or supervisor must hold current and appropriate qualifications (as illustrated in the instructor matrices in Appendices VGA 8.2 and VGA 8.3), and managers should normally verify certificates and levels of experience before giving approval.
- 10.3 Whilst many of the supervisory skills needed on offsite visits are similar to those in the classroom or workplace, new environments and different dynamics can pose unexpected hazards and challenges. It is particularly important that staff are aware of their own skills, knowledge, and limitations, and that they do not take on roles and responsibilities for which they have insufficient experience or expertise.
- 10.4 The Local Authority recommends that appropriate training is provided for all those involved in the management and leadership of visits. Appropriate CPD courses are provided by the Local Authority and can be viewed and booked via www.eridingcpd.net. The courses include:
- Training for all new EVCs and Headteachers/Senior Managers
 - Training for all NQTs and GTPs
 - Practical risk assessment and management for Visit Leaders
 - Visit planning and leadership
 - Planning and leading residential visits
 - ROVER training
 - First aid
 - Planning and leading ski visits
 - Planning and leading overseas visits and expeditions
 - Bronze Expedition Supervisor Award
- 10.5 In-house training should also be provided through the apprentice-style training of newly qualified staff, to enable them to gradually build experience under the direction and supervision of more experienced members of staff.
- 10.6 It is also recommended good practice for managers to routinely organise training regarding the planning and leadership of visits during staff meetings– training might include topics such as:
- First aid and emergency procedures
 - What to do in the event of a coach breakdown or accident
 - Crossing roads safely with groups
 - Supervision of groups when walking along pavements
- 10.7 Records of staff training and experience should be maintained appropriately, and should be accessible to those who are responsible for assessing and approving visits, so that informed judgements can be made regarding their level of competence and leadership capabilities. The ROVER online system enables staff to input and maintain personal records, and these should be updated by Visit Leaders regularly.

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- 10.8 Some types of visit (e.g. overseas ski trips) especially demand a great deal of specific knowledge and understanding, and staff should normally only be approved to take Overall Leadership of such visits once they have had a number of years of relevant experience as an Assistant or Deputy Leader, building up the necessary skills. A staff member who has led a number of residential visits in the UK is not necessarily competent to lead an overseas visit, without first acting several times as an Assistant or Deputy Leader on a similar type of visit.