



# **Trips and Visits Policy**

## **Part 3 – Hazardous Activities**

**POLICY No. 42**

**Version March 2010**

### **Adventure Activities – General Legal Controls**

It is not the intention of these notes and guidance to prevent young people from partaking in adventure activities but indeed to encourage participation in safely managed activities. As there is great benefit for young people to be involved in these activities it would be illogical to stop the activities from taking place. The guidance is provided to give organisers and leaders an overall framework of the measures to be taken to reduce risks to an acceptably low level thereby meeting the requirements of existing legal provisions whilst not totally removing the element of risk which could negate any of the benefits which the activities may produce.

The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act and other relevant statutory provisions do provide the means to carry out adventure activities in a safely managed way but there are, however, inevitably instances where things do go tragically wrong. Following one such an unfortunate incident Parliament introduced some further, specific, legislation aimed at improving the management of safety in the adventure activities industry. The prime purpose of the legislation is to promote and provide for the safe pursuit of activities rather than to restrict them.

### **Adventure Activities – Licensing Legal Basis**

Following the enactment of the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 and the coming into force of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 certain providers of specified, or in-scope, activities are required to register with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and hold a current valid licence for the in-scope activities they provide.

### **Providers Requiring Licences**

Regulation 3 of the Licensing Regulations requires a person to hold a licence in respect of the provision in Great Britain of facilities for adventure activities to young people under the age of 18 if that person:

- provides such facilities in return for payment, or
- is a local authority providing facilities to an educational establishment in respect of pupils (students) of such an establishment.

Facilities for adventure activities is defined as consisting of, or including some element of, instruction or leadership given to one or more young persons under the age of 18 years. The need to hold a licence is therefore dependant upon providing facilities and not the provision of an activity centre, although the two will obviously often be combined.

However, a provider is not required to hold a licence

if they are:

- a voluntary organisation providing facilities to their own members, or
- an educational establishment providing facilities only to their own pupils/students, or
- providing facilities only to family groups where the young persons are each accompanied by their own parent or legally appointed guardian.

This latter exemption does not extend to in loco parentis relationships such as school teachers, social workers or youth workers/leaders. Any queries on the need for a provider to hold a licence should initially be directed to the Education Service's Health & Safety

Section, telephone 01865 428188 or e-mail  
healthandsafety.education@oxfordshire.gov.uk

### **Adventure Activities Requiring Licences (In- Scope Activities)**

The Regulations specify four activities for which a licence is required details of which are given below, but see also the Health & Safety Commission's 'Guidance to the Licensing Authority and Guidance on the Regulations' document.

#### **Caving**

For the purposes of the Regulations and the licensing scheme caving means

- the exploration of underground passages in parts of mines no longer worked or in natural caves where exploration requires, in order for it to be carried out safely, the use of rock climbing or diving equipment or the application of special skills or techniques.

In essence caving therefore covers most activities done underground in natural caves or mines including variants described as pot-holing, cave diving and mine exploration.

However, caves or underground passages principally used as show-places open to the public are excluded from the definition contained in the Health & Safety Commission's 'Guidance to the Licensing Authority and Guidance on the Regulations' document.

#### **Climbing**

For the purposes of the Regulations and the licensing scheme climbing means

- movement over difficult terrain requiring the use of hands as well as feet and which, for the activity to be carried out safely, requires the use of equipment for, or application of the special skills, techniques and procedures in, rock climbing or ice climbing.

In essence climbing therefore covers climbing, traversing, abseiling or scrambling over natural features or terrain or over outdoor man-made structures other than structures specifically designed for such activities.

Rock and ice climbing as well as gorge walking, ghyll scrambling and sea level traversing are activities included.

So too are climbing activities on such structures as bridges and railway viaducts.

**The use of climbing walls and abseiling towers together with similar man-made structures purpose- designed for technique practice and development are outside the scope of the Regulations.**

#### **Trekking**

For the purposes of the Regulations and the licensing scheme trekking means

- walking, pony trekking, mountain biking or offpiste skiing over terrain which is either moorland or more than 600 metres above sea level and from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to reach any refuge or accessible road.

### **Travelling Time, Refuges and Accessible Roads**

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The Health & Safety Commission's Guidance to the Licensing Authority is quite specific in defining travelling time, refuges and accessible roads.

The distance which can be covered in the travelling time (30 minutes) will never exceed 2.5 km and will be less in instances where there are uphill sections.

The distance must also be over a route which can be walked safely and therefore must not include unaffordable rivers and precipitous ground.

A refuge is a building which, in an emergency, would provide shelter and which was, at the time in question, either occupied or provided with a telephone or other means of communication, by which help could be summoned.

An accessible road is one which is accessible, at the time of the activity, to ambulances being road going vehicles not specially adapted for rugged terrain.

Time of year and weather conditions may determine that a road is not always accessible to an ambulance

- what may be accessible during high summer may not be so during winter, late autumn or early spring. Likewise a seasonally open or occupied building is not a refuge at certain times of the year.

### **Water sports**

For the purposes of the Regulations and the licensing scheme water sports means

- most activities which involve unpowered craft on certain specified waters.

### **Craft**

The Regulations include in the definition of water sports

- the use of canoes, kayaks or similar craft propelled by hand-held paddles, rafts including both inflatable or of improvised construction, sailing boats, windsurfers, sailing dinghies and other craft propelled principally by means of wind power.

**Rowing boats propelled or steered by oars, motor propelled or motor-boat towed rafts and craft certificated pursuant to the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 are specifically excluded from in-scope craft.**

### **Specified Waters**

The Regulations define specified waters as

- the sea, tidal waters, inland waters where any part is more than 50 metres from the nearest land (excluding any island) and inland waterways where the surface is made turbulent because of weirs, rapids, waterfalls or fast flowing currents. Inland water which is International Canoe Federation Grade II and above would be subject to licensing as would Grade I waters turbulent in times of spate flow.

### **Potentially Hazardous Activities**

The leadership of potentially hazardous activities must be assigned only to persons who are competent to undertake this role.

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Those providers of adventure activities who offer, in return for payment, in-scope activities to young persons under the age of 18 years are required to hold a licence issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). Where providers have been issued with a licence for in-scope activities they are deemed to be competent by the Licensing Authority. The holding of a licence for an in-scope activity therefore, in itself, determines and confirms the competency of the provider and takes precedence over the requirements of for that activity. A Licence holder offering out of scope activities will, however, need to satisfy the competency requirements in the following Section.

Schools offering the activities included in Hazardous Activities to their own pupils / students, providers offering activities to those aged 18 years and over and providers offering any out of scope activities to any group will need to meet the competency levels contained in Section Four since they will not hold a licence from the AALA and consequently their competency has not already been independently confirmed to the required standard.

Where governing bodies exist for the activity then the relevant nationally recognised qualification of the governing body of the activity is the minimum requirement for leadership and activities must be conducted in accordance with the recommendations of the national governing body.

Competence to lead is, however, not necessarily demonstrated solely by the possession of a qualification. The need for local knowledge of the prevailing conditions and the effects of sudden changes in the weather, water currents, physical and geographical environments cannot be stressed enough.

Additionally the capacity to identify significant changes in participants' actions and responses is a highly important attribute in group leadership in potentially hazardous activities and hostile environments.

Mere paper qualifications may therefore be insufficient to demonstrate competency. The overall competence, that is to say the training and experience and knowledge and other qualities, must be taken into consideration when planning and undertaking any activity and awareness of general health and safety requirements is essential. In all events a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must have been carried out before the commencement of any activity and the necessary risk reduction measures put in hand.

The national governing body qualifications shown in the succeeding paragraphs are the minima and higher levels of appropriate qualifications are obviously acceptable.

### **Safety on Land Trekking and Walking**

Trekking means walking, pony trekking, mountain biking or off-piste skiing over terrain which is either moorland or more than 600 metres above sea level and from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to reach any refuge or accessible road and is an in-scope activity. Hence plain 'walking' can be defined as taking place in environments below the 600 m threshold and can include both locally known areas as well as open remote country.

**Providers of trekking activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities.**

It is therefore appropriate to recognise the limits and suitability of the **Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA)**, the **Walking Group Leader Award (WGL)** and the **Mountain Leader Award (ML)** for the environment in which an activity will take place.

Hazards associated with walking expeditions will vary according to terrain, and local weather conditions and the ability and competence of participants and activity leaders and participants. The Schools and Youth Liaison Service at each of the National Parks can advise or offer material giving advice on safe practice in their areas (see Section Five) but obviously activities will also take place in areas outside National Parks where other sources of advice and information will need to be identified and consulted.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments must always be made using all available information.

In addition to the obvious inland wild country areas many coastal areas are very hazardous and require a high degree of judgement and group management skills.

### **Non Mountainous Country**

The **Walking Group Leader Award (WGL)** is the basic award for leaders of hill walking groups in open, uncultivated country which is remote, below 600m, enclosed by well defined natural or manmade boundaries and exited on foot within a few hours. It will variously be known as upland, moor, bog, fell, hill or down.

This award scheme does not provide the training or assessment of skills needed to cope with the added hazards of winter conditions which can be encountered at any time of the year in some locations.

Where such conditions are likely the more appropriate Mountain Leader award would be required.

The WGL Award is not suitable for remote camping in inaccessible areas, being beyond the scope of the scheme.

### **Mountain Activities - Summer**

Mountainous country has in the past been defined as wild country which is more than 500 metres above sea-level where groups will be dependant on themselves and remote from any help. However, since the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 mention 600 metres in their definition of trekking and the MLTB require evidence of ascent of 30 named peaks over 600 metres above sea level before an Award can be made it seems logical for the County Council to use this height of 600 metres as its benchmark for determining mountainous country. In most cases mountainous country can be found in these areas in the United Kingdom: -

- \* Dartmoor \* Lake District
- \* Exmoor \* North Yorkshire Moors
- \* Brecon Beacons \* North Yorkshire
- \* Black Mountains \* Pennines
- \* Mountains of Mid & North Wales \* Sperrin Mountains
- \* Peak District \* North Antrim Hills
- \* Isle of Man \* Mountains of Mourne

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- \* Yorkshire Dales \* Galloway Hills
- \* Isles of Skye, Arran, Harris & Lewis
- \* Cheviot Hills & Durham Dales
- \* Central, Western and Northern Highlands of Scotland

Note should be made that activities which take place in areas bordering the margins of the 600 metre mountainous country criteria will still be deemed to be in mountainous country. As an example activities taking place at 599 metres in the Lake District are still deemed to be mountain activities since they occur in mountainous country and are not excluded because they do not take place at over 600 metres.

Persons wishing to lead groups in mountainous areas in summer conditions must hold the **Summer Mountain Leader Award (Summer ML)** of the UK Mountain Leader Training Board (UKMLTB), the **Mountain walking Leader Award (Summer)** of the Mountain

Leader Training Board (MLTB) or an equivalent award (**Summer Mountain Leader Award**) from the Mountain Leader Training Boards of Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. Holders of the Mountain Leader Certificate (Summer), which has been replaced by the Summer Mountain Leader Award are still validated to lead these activities as long as all components including First Aid are maintained and are valid.

**NB The above qualifications DO NOT allow anyone to engage in leading parties in WINTER ACTIVITIES and they are NOT ROCK CLIMBING NOR ABSEILING QUALIFICATIONS.**

It should be borne in mind that the requirement of the MLTB syllabus to hold a current valid first aid qualification remains a permanent feature of the Award. If the appropriate first aid qualification lapses then the MLTB Award also ceases to be valid and the Award 'holder' would no longer be deemed to be competent.

**Mountainous activities abroad are subject to the express approval of the Director for Learning and Culture, application to be made by means of the submission of Form MA1 through the School Development Service in accordance with the time requirements for the type of activity specified on the form.**

### **Mountain Activities - Winter**

Winter mountaineering expeditions are beyond the resources of most school and youth organisations bearing in mind the vagaries of mountain weather, the need for specialised equipment and the requirement for the possession by leaders of a **Winter Mountain Leader Award** of the **Scottish Mountain Leader Training Board (Winter ML)**. Only from permanent bases such as recognised Outdoor Education Centres where detailed local knowledge and experience will allow a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to be undertaken, is it likely that the rigorous demands of winter work can be met successfully and safely, and camping and bivouacking in the mountains in winter are not permitted except through these centres.

Acknowledging the possible attendant need for camping and bivouacking on winter expeditions, consent for such expeditions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. However, there are winter activities which may be undertaken quite safely

without venturing into wild country remote from assistance and provided that groups are properly equipped and working from a recognised centre, consent may be granted if a full programme of activities is submitted to the Director for Learning and Culture at least four months before the day of departure.

**Snow and ice work at any location in winter conditions is subject to the express approval by the Director for Learning & Culture - application to be made by means of the submission of Form MA1 through the School Development Service.**

### **Rock Climbing and Abseiling**

Climbing and abseiling over natural terrain or outdoor man-made structures other than those designed for such activities are in-scope activities of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. Providers of climbing and abseiling activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities.

The Mountain Leader Training Board's **Single Pitch Award (SPA)** was introduced and aimed at people who wished to take groups to single pitch crag locations.

This award does not include general mountaineering skills covering approach and retreat from mountain and moorland crags, multi-pitch rock climbing or access to tidal sea cliffs. The Award has been adopted by Oxfordshire County Council as the appropriate qualification for this level of activity as well as for any abseiling activity. In any case abseiling must only be taught by suitably qualified and experienced people.

Where rock climbing takes place on natural features on private land, permission must be obtained from the owners before climbing takes place. When it is intended to use unknown rock faces, those of little previous knowledge or infrequently used locations, private or otherwise, it is imperative that an on-site physical assessment is made of the intended climb before participants engage in the activity.

Consent from the owners of buildings and structures must be obtained before abseiling takes place and special insurances may have to be arranged.

Furthermore, before abseiling from buildings and other structures it is essential that they are checked for suitability and safety in order to ensure that they are able to withstand the forces that might be imposed on them during an abseiling descent. Buildings and structures in Oxfordshire from which abseiling is proposed must be checked for suitability by a competent structural engineer from the County Council's property consultants.

When it is proposed to use Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service drill towers the Chief Fire Officer's permission must be obtained before the commencement of the activity.

Multi-pitch climbing must be under the supervision of a person with **Mountain Instructor Certificate (MIC)** or **Mountain Instructor Award (MIA)** or an **Association of British Mountain Guides (BMG) 'Carnet'**.

### **Artificial Climbing Walls**

At present there are four such known walls on Oxfordshire County Council educational premises, namely : -

- Drayton School, Banbury
- Didcot Sports and Leisure Centre, at St. Birinus School, Didcot
- Gosford Hill School, Kidlington
- Carterton Community College, Carterton

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although it is known that there are other privately owned climbing walls and towers in the County and many more further afield.

Any person wishing to climb or lead groups on these walls must hold the MLTB's **Single Pitch Award** and have obtained permission from the Head of Establishment where the wall is located or from the owner before the activity is undertaken.

It is of paramount importance that access to climbing walls is restricted to only qualified instructors and persons under their direct control and supervision.

Entrances to such facilities must be kept locked when not in use to prevent unauthorised use.

In order to ensure all equipment is fit for purpose all climbing equipment must be in the charge of, be regularly checked, inspected and maintained by a named competent person who must complete and keep appropriate records. **Ropes and other equipment and must not be used for any purpose other than climbing.**

### **General Adventure Climbing Activities**

There is always difficulty in specifying defining safety precautions and procedures for some adventure activities that make use of rocks and steep ground and which fall between actual rock climbing and scrambling. The criteria for safety in these activities must be the same as that which dictates the use of a rope for security on mountain walks.

Adventure activities can never be absolutely safe and therefore informal and unclassified activities of this nature demand the most experienced and qualified of leaders.

Leaders must therefore possess the **Summer Mountain Leader Award** and hold the **MLTB Single Pitch Award (SPA)**. For winter conditions the **Winter Mountain Leader Award** must be held in addition to the **SPA**.

The possession of the **Walking Group Leader Award** is unlikely to be appropriate for general climbing activities which would take place in mountainous country.

General guidance for combined water and rock activities is given in the Health & Safety Executive's Information Sheet Series – Entertainment Sheet

No 13 ref ETIS 13 (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/etis13.pdf>).

### **Camping**

If camping is planned in mountainous areas or wild country, leaders must possess the appropriate **Mountain Leader Award**. Any camping in such areas is dependant on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment having been carried out which will take into consideration the prevailing local conditions together with the age, sex and ability of the students.

The assessment must also take account of possible or likely changes in the local conditions.

In lowland non-remote areas it is essential that the party leader holds a **Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA)** (British Sports Trust) (BST), and an appropriate first aid qualification to the standard stipulated by the BST. Attention is drawn to the fact that should the first aid qualification lapse then the BELA will itself not be valid. As this award

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has replaced the former Basic Expedition Training Award (BETA) that qualification is still acceptable so long as the appropriate first aid qualification is valid.

Similarly if camping is planned for locations falling within the **Walking Guide Leader's Scheme** leaders must hold that Award. Again before the planned activity commences a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must have been carried out which will be revised during the activity in the light of all prevailing conditions and circumstances.

In instances where supervised camping is undertaken in the grounds of the establishment it is not necessary for leaders to hold BELA/BETA. However leaders must be experienced in all aspects of camping and camp craft and planning for the activity must include for emergency situations. It will be for individual Heads of Establishment to assess the competency of leaders in those circumstances and subsequently give their approval following a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. It must be stressed that these arrangements can apply only to camping on establishment sites.

### **Orienteering and Map Reading Activities**

#### **Orienteering**

Competitive orienteering activity organisers and participants must be made aware of the need to take suitable safety precautions and include the requirement to have readily available holders of a current first aid qualification appropriate to the activity.

Depending on where the activity takes place, the provider may be required to hold a licence in accordance with the requirements of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.

The fact that accidents in orienteering are relatively rare does not mean nor does it suggest that there is any room for complacency. Because of the nature of the activity orienteering accidents, for example injury and exhaustion, can be more serious than in some other sports where assistance, including medical attention, is more readily accessible.

Orienteering instructors must hold, as a minimum qualification, a **British Orienteering Federation (BOF) Coach Level One Certificate (Teacher- Leader Certificate)** which will allow leadership in private "safe" areas such as school or outdoor centre grounds. Other local areas and small woods, local parks and permanent courses will require a **Coach Level Two Certificate (Instructor Certificate)**.

For easier country parks and easier forest courses the **BOF Coach Level Three Certificate (Club Coach Award)** is required. For complex, exposed or mountainous areas the **BOF Coach Level Four Certificate (Regional Coach Award)** is necessary or alternatively a **BOF Club Coach with a BOF Grade 2 Controller** is acceptable. The BOF advise that an extra adult without a coaching commitment should be with any group in case of emergencies. Any centre used must be accredited by the BOF.

The safety guidelines, including supervision ratios, for orienteering, published by the BOF, must be studied and followed by all organisers of events.

#### **Map Reading Activities**

Many of the activities undertaken at outdoor education and activity centres would not meet the BOF's very specific definition of orienteering.

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These activities are therefore more likely to come within the alternative title of Map Reading Activities and should be regarded as activities which are under the supervision, although not necessarily immediate and direct, of a competent person and taking place in a relatively closely controlled environment or area.

However, depending on where the activity takes place, the provider may be required to hold a licence in accordance with the requirements of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.

Unfortunately since there is no nationally recognised competency for map reading activities, and in any case the terrain used and anticipated objectives vary so much, it is not possible to identify a single competency for this activity.

The **Basic Expedition Leader Award/Basic Expedition Training Award (BELA/BETA)** may be the most appropriate for straightforward off-site map reading activities although the **Walking Group Leader Award (WGL)** will be more appropriate for any activities in remote country.

However, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment may determine that such an activity is not appropriate.

The responsibility rests very much with the activity leader or provider in carrying out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the planned activity taking all relevant factors into consideration. Detailed knowledge of the whole environment is therefore of the utmost importance.

In those cases where complex, exposed or mountainous areas are used leaders must hold the **Summer Mountain Leader Award** or the **Mountainwalking Leader Award (Summer)** or the **BOF Coach Level Three Certificate (Club Coach) with BOF Grade 2 Controller**.

### **Caving**

Caving, including potholing, cave diving and mine exploration is an in-scope activity of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. Providers of caving activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities.

The leader of any caving group must be an experienced caver and only persons possessing either the **Cave Instructor Certificate (CIC)** or at least the **Local Cave & Mine Leader Award (LCMLA) Level 1**, which are both administered by the National Caving Association, are permitted to undertake the leadership of caving groups. The CIC covers all caves in the British Isles whereas the LCMLA specifies the caves or the region to which the award refers. Accordingly holders of the LCMLA can lead participants only in the caves to which the award refers. Additionally, holders of LCMLA Level 1 can only lead groups in cave or mine systems without vertical climbing pitches. Where there are pitches less than 18 metres the LCMLA Level 2 is required and for pitches greater than 18 metres the CIC is required.

### **Ropes Courses and Jungle Gyms**

An overseer must be a holder of a current HSE recognised **4-day first aid qualification**.

Ropes courses and Jungle Gym structures, whether of a permanent or temporary nature, need careful design. Before construction the precise purpose, nature of use, age of user, supervisory requirements and potential hazards, such as impact with solid objects and entanglement and strangulation must have been considered. Secondary safety features

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must also have been built-in to guard against injuries due to falls, for example harness systems and absorbent ground surfaces. Additionally, personal protective equipment such as helmets must be provided and worn following the completion of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the activity and particular participants.

Since all courses are different a single qualification is unlikely to be an adequate indicator of overall competence and therefore extensive, mainly site specific, practical experience is required by the activity leader or supervisor as an indicator of competence.

Before use the group leader must check that the structure is safe to use and is appropriate for the group intending to use it. This will include not only the physical features of the course but also the overall capabilities and competence of the participants using it which will be determined by considering their ability, experience, special needs, physical and medical conditions. There must be a risk assessment procedure in place to determine any additional measures needed for those with medical conditions or disabilities as well as for changes in environmental and other conditions.

Extreme caution must be applied in instances where it is apparent that the installation has not been used or inspected for some time. If doubt exists the facility should not be used. The greatest care must be taken should any element of competition enter the activity and all users must be under the direct supervision of a competent person at all times. The suitability of each component part and the benefits to each participant must be fully assessed before use. The maximum group size must be assessed according to the course features and participants must be fully briefed on all aspects before the activity starts.

Unsupervised use of any ropes course or Jungle Gym is not permitted under any circumstances.

### **Mountain Biking and Off-Road Cycling**

Mountain biking can cover a multitude of activities from road cycling on mountain bikes to off road cycling in wild or mountainous country.

Mountain biking over terrain which is either moorland or more than 600 metres above sea level and from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to reach any refuge or accessible road and is an in-scope activity of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. Providers of mountain biking activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities if they are provided in the type of terrain which is specified above.

It is possible, however, that the activity will be provided 'in-house' by OCC establishments solely to their students or members and in these circumstances a licence will not be required. However, the HSC Guidance to the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority indicates that leaders of mountain biking in off-road activities should hold the same qualifications as for on-foot trekking in similar locations, but additionally with an award in mountain or off-road biking.

Regrettably there is presently no single universally recognised competency for mountain or off-road biking. British Cycling is the UK Governing Body of the sport but does not itself offer a qualification although it endorses or accredits awards from other bodies.

There are a number of organisations offering qualifications to lead mountain biking and off-road cycling. These include the **British Schools Cycling Association (BSCA)**, **Association of British Cycling Coaches (ABCC)**, **Off-Road Training Consultancy**

**(OTC), Scottish Cyclists Union (SCO) and the Mountain-bike Instructors' Award Scheme (MIAS).**

Leaders of mountain biking must hold a current first aid qualification valid for the environment in which the activity will take place. Cross-country cycling using specially designed and built cycles may be physically demanding and can require skills and safety practices associated with mountain and hill walking. Protective clothing and equipment are necessary, in particular helmets which must be worn at all times.

**Lowland Country Biking**

Lowland cycling can be divided into two categories :

- Trail riding which would include public highways, cycleways, forest tracks, non-technical routes all of which would be less than 30 minutes/2.5 km from a refuge or accessible road
- Off-road cycling which includes cycle routes, bridle ways or other technical routes in open country more than 30 minutes/2.5 km from a refuge or accessible road Competency levels for trail riding are either the **ABCC Preliminary Cycle Coaches Award** or **BCSA Mountain Bike/Off Road Leaders Course** or **OTC Level 1 Leadership Award** each with **BELA** or **MIAS Level 1** or **SCU Trail Cycle Leader Award (Level 1)**.

For off-road cycling the **ABCC Preliminary Cycle Coaches Award** or **BCSA Mountain Bike/Off Road Leaders Course** or **OTC Level 2 Leadership Award** each with **BELA** or **MIAS Level 2** or **SCU Mountain Bike Leader Award (Level 3)** are the required competencies.

### **Mountain Country Biking**

The **OTC Level 3 Leadership Award** together with the on-foot qualification of **Summer ML** or **Winter ML** is required according to the prevailing summer or winter conditions.

Additionally for summer conditions the **MIAS Level 2** and **SCU Scottish Mountain Bike Leader Award Level 3** are acceptable.

In winter conditions the **Winter ML** is required together with **OTC Level 3 Leadership Award** or **SCU Scottish Mountain Bike Leader Award Level 3 (with Level 4 Expedition Endorsement where appropriate)** but it is envisaged this activity would only be accessed through established licensed providers.

In intermediate conditions the relevant mountaineering qualification is not required by SCU Level 3 holders.

Cross-country cycling using specially designed and built cycles may be physically demanding and can require skills and safety practices associated with mountain and hill walking. Protective clothing and equipment are necessary, in particular helmets which must be worn at all times.

### **Cycling**

Formal cycling activities must be organised to the recommendations of the British Schools Cycling Association.

Instructors must hold at least **BSCA's Touring Leaders Certificate** but preferably the **Cycling Teaching Certificate**.

General cycling activities must also follow the appropriate BCF and BSCA guidelines and additionally the advice given in BAALPE's 'Safe Practice in Physical Education' must be followed.

### **Pony Trekking and Horse Riding**

Only centres licensed by the appropriate local authority under the Riding Establishments Acts of 1964 and 1970 must be used.

Since pony trekking and horse riding can take place in any location it must be remembered that, irrespective of the requirement to be licensed under the Riding Establishments Acts of 1964 and 1970, trekking on horse (including ponies) over terrain which is moorland or more than 600 metres above sea level and from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to reach any refuge or accessible road is an in-scope activity of the adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. Providers of trekking activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities if they take place in the type of terrain which is specified above. When the activity takes place in similar environments, leaders of pony trekking or horse riding groups are required to hold **the same qualification as for on-foot trekking as well as the British Horse Society's (BHS) British Equestrian Tourism (BET) Qualification for Ride Leader** or the **Association of British Riding Schools' (ABRS) Trek Leader Certificate**.

Where riding takes place in 'normal country', a lone riding instructor must hold, as a minimum qualification, the **BET Assistant Ride Leader Award**. Under the guidance issued by the BHS the holder of this qualification is competent to take out a ride, short

trek or hack of no more than 2 hours duration and comprising no more than 6 riders. A holder of the **Ride Leader Award** is competent to take sole charge of first time riders or more experienced riders.

Leaders or instructors of all groups must hold a current first aid qualification appropriate to the activity.

Group leaders must ensure that adequate preliminary instruction is given to students concerning conduct and procedures at the stables and on trek and they are advised to check riding establishments personally to ensure equipment and instructional staff are satisfactory before booking.

Riding instructors must have as a minimum qualification the **British Horse Society's Assistant Instructor Certificate**.

Leaders or instructors of all groups must hold a current first aid qualification appropriate to the activity.

## **Skiing**

### **Skiing : On-Piste**

It is essential that group leaders have attended and completed satisfactorily the **English Ski Council's Ski Course Organiser Award**. This level of the scheme is designed to assist and guide group leaders in the organisation of school ski courses. It is desirable that group leaders have achieved the next level of ESC's Award - **Alpine Course Leader Award** - which is designed to improve teachers' own supervision of students on recognised and pisted areas. Only those leaders who have attained a specific instructor's qualification are competent to lead their own groups on snow.

**NONE OF THE ABOVE AWARDS ARE SKI INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND MUST NOT BE SEEN AS SUCH.**

All skiing instruction must be carried out only by recognised and qualified instructors employed in the resort ski school. It is recommended that all groups of secondary age and above should take 4 hours instruction each day with the local ski school.

For those under secondary school age, two hours instruction is more appropriate.

It is evident that in some instances the unacceptable practice of reducing the hours of instruction by qualified instructors and filling spare time with unqualified tuition takes place. Since the advice on the principles and benefits of such actions are open to debate, in the interests of all concerned, only holders of the following awards may undertake instruction: **a qualified coach of the English Ski Council** accompanying and teaching his or her own group; a qualified member of the **British Association of Snowsport Instructors (minimum Grade 3 Certificate holder)** who should be working within the local ski school; the **Ski Party Leader Award of the Scottish National Ski Council** or a **coach of the British Ski and Snowboard Federation**. For those visits abroad the appropriate national qualifications are required.

Heads of Establishment should ensure that confirmation has been obtained from the activity provider, before final arrangements are made, that all instructors to be used, whether at home or abroad, hold the appropriate qualification and competency.

**Since 'free skiing' by students is not permitted, unqualified persons who supervise on the slopes place themselves and others at risk.**

Many establishments now have easy access to artificial ski slopes and it is recommended that the party organiser should arrange at least two sessions under the direction of a

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qualified instructor before the visit to a ski resort. Such instruction must be given only by the holders of the **English Ski Council's Artificial Ski Slope Instructors Award**.

Appropriate specific personal and travel insurances must always be taken out and for groups travelling abroad the Thames Valley Police form (Form TVP/E147) must be completed.

Heads of Establishments must be able to satisfy themselves that appropriate qualifications are held by staff/adults leading ski groups and by those instructing ski groups both in the UK and abroad.

### **Skiing : Off-Piste**

Although it is unlikely that groups will intentionally venture into off-piste skiing activities, the point must still be made that off-piste skiing over snow or ice on skis, skates, sledges, snowboards or improvised sledges is an in-scope activity of the Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of off-piste skiing activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities when they take place in the UK.

Reference must be made to the Health & Safety Section in all cases where group leaders intend to take groups off-piste skiing other than through licensed providers.

Leadership of groups Alpine skiing off-piste in Scotland, away from marked or serviced areas can only be undertaken by a holder of **Winter ML and BASI II Ski Teacher or SNSC Club Coach or Alpine Performance Coach Level 1 or ESC/SCOW Club Coach**. For Alpine off-piste skiing within the recognised boundary of a serviced area one of the above competences or **BASI II Ski Teacher or BASI III Ski Instructor** is required. For Nordic off-piste skiing in Scotland away from marked or serviced areas the **Winter ML and one of BASI III relevant to the discipline or SNSC Nordic Ski Leader , ESC/SCOW Nordic Coach (Touring) or ESC/Club Coach** is required. In all other locations a **UIAGM guide must be used**.

### **Safety in Water**

Water activities abroad are subject to approval by the Director for Learning and Culture and consent may be granted if a full programme of activities is submitted with Form MA1 to the Director for Learning and Culture at least four months before the day of departure.

### **Swimming in the Sea, Lakes, Rivers and Streams**

Water can be a source of danger. The LEA strongly advises and recommends that unstructured and free time swimming activities particularly in open water are not undertaken due to the potentially unforeseeable and uncontrollable risks involved.

**Unplanned spontaneous swimming activities are not acceptable and are not approved.**

However, it is acknowledged that open water swimming activities may be an integral part of other planned structured, properly controlled, supervised and competently led activity programmes or result as a consequence of other water-based activities.

Accordingly the highest level of risk assessment and risk management must be applied. It is incumbent on the person in charge to see that every possible precaution is taken in order to reduce risks to the lowest acceptable level.

Although these activities are generally of a recreational nature, the responsibility of the person in charge is greater than when they are undertaken in the more structured surroundings of a swimming pool. Swimming certificates gained in swimming pools will not be indicative of competence to cope with moving or any other water conditions and the individual's ability must always be considered in relation to these often unfamiliar conditions.

**Parental consent and confirmation of swimming ability must always be obtained in advance of any swimming activities.**

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Where the location so determines the person in charge and leading the activity will be required to hold a **BELA, WGL** or **ML Award** in addition to the appropriate lifesaving award shown below. However no set of regulations can cover every possible situation

likely to pertain to these environments and locations so that the exercise of risk assessment and use of knowledge of local conditions are necessary tools for their interpretation of the following guidance.

However, there are certain essential points that must be observed whenever activities of this nature are undertaken. It is vital to bear in mind that the temperature of outside water is generally much lower than that of indoor pools, that there may be currents and underwater obstructions and that these hazards will have a profound effect on any individual's swimming ability. The nature of the activity, and the locally prevailing circumstances and the competency of the participants are all important when making a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. The person in charge must hold a current **Royal Life Saving Society (United Kingdom) (RLSS) Bronze Medallion** or the **British Canoe Union (BCU) Life Saving Award** and must possess the current first aid and resuscitation qualification which may be required and know how and where to summon professional help with the minimum of delay.

There must be an adequate interval of time – usually at least one hour - between the end of a meal and taking part in swimming activities.

Swimming, paddling and bathing must only take place at times and in areas defined as safe by local experts, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance i.e. lifeguard cover, and the party must be fully conversant with the local circumstances. It is imperative, therefore, that advice is sought from local organisations before the decision to use a particular location is made with spontaneous decisions thus being prevented.

The group leader must personally determine the appropriate level of safe supervision for the particular group in the circumstances and conditions prevailing at the time. This will include consideration amongst other things of:

- individual participants' swimming ability
- local conditions such as currents, weeds, rocks uneven or unstable bottom
- designating safe areas
- suitability for all participants including those with special needs
- operation of distress and recall signals.

Participants must not be allowed to enter the water until permitted to do so by the person in charge and then only after they have been made they are aware of any limitations imposed either by that person or others in authority. Staff must position themselves to have the whole party in sight and under supervision at all times, and it is advisable to

divide the party into pairs so that a 'buddy' system can be operated. An appropriate staff/student ratio must be operated according to the prevailing circumstances and the risk assessment which has previously been made.

**Unsupervised swimming is not permitted.**

### **Snorkelling and Sub-Aqua**

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Underwater swimming makes use of water as an environment rather than merely using water as a surface on which to be active and is proving to be of increasing interest to young people. Any organisation offering these activities must be affiliated to the governing body of the sport, the **British Sub- Aqua Club (BSAC)**, and the supervisor of any group taking part in these activities must hold the appropriate BSAC instructor qualification. For pool training snorkelling this is at least the **BSAC Snorkel Instructor Certificate**. All open water activities must be conducted under the supervision of a **BSAC Open Water Instructor** or **BSAC Advanced Snorkel Instructor**.

Only those students of fifteen years and over can undertake sub-aqua diving.

Those responsible for the establishment-based pre-activity planning and organisation must ensure that all participants possess appropriate swimming ability (>50m freestyle) and water confidence and advise the actual controller of the activity of the participants' individual ability.

### **Safety on Water**

Water activities abroad are subject to approval by the Director for Learning and Culture and consent may be granted if a full programme of activities is submitted with Form MA1 to the Director for Learning and Culture at least four months before the day of departure.

When planning and organising activities on water, leaders must ensure that risk assessments take into account the need for all participants to use personal buoyancy aids and other appropriate personal protective equipment and must subsequently ensure that at all times whilst pursuing the activity such aids and equipment are actually worn and used by all participants.

Additionally the risk assessment must also take account of environmental and weather changes including how quickly fog can form leading to total disorientation.

### **Canoeing and Kayaking**

Canoeing and kayaking on specified waters (see paragraph 2.2.3.4.2) are in-scope activities of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of canoeing and kayaking activities to young persons are required to hold a licence for such activities.

All groups must be under the direct supervision of persons qualified to the **British Canoe Union (BCU)**, **Welsh Canoeing Association (WCA)** or **Scottish Canoe Association (SCA) Coaching Award Scheme**. As a general rule the type and grade of water and the type of craft used determines the qualifications necessary. Shown below are the definitions of grades of water together with the competency qualifications required of leaders which must be in the appropriate canoe type – closed cockpit kayak, canoe or open cockpit kayak. In all cases a current first aid qualification, including resuscitation, appropriate to the activity is also required.

Competition coaching requires additional specific competency.

### **Inland Canoeing**

#### **Very Sheltered Inland Water**

Quiet canals with easy bank-side access and egress, small lakes with no difficult landing areas and which are not large enough for problems to occur should there be a sudden

change in the prevailing conditions and specified stretches on gentle slow moving rivers. Normal weather conditions are implied. The leader must hold the **Level 1 Coach Award** or **Trainee Level 2 Coach Award**.

### **Sheltered Inland Water**

Flat water rivers, faster flowing but not involving the shooting of or playing on weirs or running rapids and lakes, although discretion and care must be applied in determining the use of lakes. Operating off-shore on a large lake can pose similar risks to the sea. Normal weather conditions are implied. Low water temperatures require the exercise of extra care. The leader must hold the **Level 2 Coach Award**. Where short simple journeys are undertaken a Level 2 Coach must be in charge equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 4 Star (Proficiency) Test.

### **Moderate Inland Water**

Grade II white water and equivalent weirs. The leader must hold the **Level 3 Coach Award in the appropriate discipline (i.e. kayak or canoe)**. Additionally, kayaks and canoes are required to be equipped with additional buoyancy. All kayakists are required not only to wear safety helmets but to be equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 4 Star (Proficiency) Test. The leader must also carry a throw line and ensure there are sufficient spare paddles in the group.

### **Advanced Inland Water**

Defined as very large lakes and Grade III white water and above require the leader to hold the **Level 4 Coach Award**. Kayaks and canoes are required to be equipped with additional buoyancy. All participants are required not only to wear safety helmets but to be equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 5 Star (Proficiency) Test.

The leader must also carry a throw line and ensure there are sufficient spare paddles in the group.

### **Sea Kayaking**

#### **Sheltered Tidal Waters**

Small enclosed bays and enclosed harbours where possibility of being blown off-shore is minimal, defined beaches with winds below force 3 (force 2 if off-shore) and the upper reaches of suitable slow moving estuaries. Wind and weather conditions must be favourable. Leaders must hold the **Level 2 Sea Kayak Coach Award**. Tow lines, first aid and emergency equipment must be carried.

#### **Moderate Tidal Waters**

A stretch of coastline or estuary in close proximity to the shore with easy landing and without fast tidal streams, races or overfalls with winds below force 3 (force 2 if off-shore). The leader must hold the **Level 3 Sea Kayak Coach Award**. Tow lines, first aid and emergency equipment must be carried.

#### **Advanced Sea**

This is defined as any journey on the sea where tidal races or overfalls may be encountered which cannot be avoided, coastlines where difficult landings may be encountered or a landing may not be possible and difficult sea states and/or stronger winds (force 5 and above). In these situations the leader is required to hold **Level 4 Sea Coach Award**.

In all circumstances the checklist, recommendations and guidelines of the British Canoe Union Coaching Service relating to craft, equipment and personnel must be followed.

### **Surf Canoeing** **Moderate Surf**

Moderate surf involves beaches which are free of significant hazards such as strong rips or underflow, tidal streams, rocks, groynes and the like. In accordance with BCU guidelines an area of beach must be marked out with flags to contain the group and to prevent any loss of communication. Furthermore the area selected must not interfere with other beach users particularly swimmers and surfers. Waves should not exceed 1 metre to fall within the moderate surf category. In such conditions leaders of surf canoeing must hold the **Level 3 Surf Coach or Trainee Level 3 Surf Coach Award. Advanced Surf** For advanced surf (> 1 metre) the leader must possess the **Level 3 Surf Coach Award.** Activities which involve the surfing of reefs, points and off-shore features as well as surfing from beaches where the surf height exceeds 1 metre or where potential hazards including stronger winds, cold conditions, rips, long shore drift and rocks are involved the leader must possess the **Level 4 Surf Coach Award** although it is advisable where conditions are severe the **Level 5 Surf Coach Award** is necessary. Consideration of these activities will depend on the experience and competence of participants and it is envisaged that these activities will only take place with very accomplished individuals.

### **Rafting**

Rafting on specified waters (see paragraph 2.2.3.4.2) is an in-scope activity of the adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of rafting activities to young people are required to hold a licence for such activities. Rafting can be either the practice of paddling inflatable craft on white water rivers or a practical learning exercise in the location or construction of a suitable raft. Additional hazards exist in these latter cases.

In the case of improvised rafts or inflatable rafts on other waters there are no national qualifications and determining levels of competency are therefore much more difficult.

Leaders must be aware not only of the hazards associated with a particular locality but also with those associated with the construction and suitability of the craft and with the users. In view of this the selection of a known locality with limited depth and flow of water is of the utmost importance.

Close scrutiny of the raft before launch is essential. Leaders of white water rafting using inflatable rafts must have previous experience in this activity and hold the **BCU Raft Trip Leader Award.** For Grade I rivers and controlled sites (i.e. Tryweryn N. Wales, Holme Pierrepont and Teeside) only, it is acceptable for the leader to hold the **BCU Raft Guide Award.** A current first aid qualification appropriate to the activity is also required.

### **Sailing** **Sailing Inland**

Sailing on specified inland waters is an in-scope activity of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of sailing activities to young people are required to hold a licence for such activities. Sailing inland must only take place under the direct supervision of a person with a **Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Instructor Inland**

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**Award** as a minimum who shall be responsible not only for the activity taking place but also for its general organisation and management.

The instructor must be satisfied with the suitability of the craft for the task and ensure compliance with the rules of the local Association and the recommendation of the National School Sailing Association (NSSA).

**Dinghy Instructor Certificate** holders can lead only under the supervision of a Senior Instructor.

**Assistant Instructors** can assist, under supervision, Dinghy and Senior Instructors on beginners' and improvers' courses but only at the centre where they were trained.

Whenever sailing is taking place a suitable escort boat must be available and ready for immediate action use by persons who have satisfied the supervisor and the local association that they are competent to RYA standards to operate the craft. In fostering student self-reliance, competence and confidence it is important that student progress is monitored and that the appropriate training is provided.

The NSSA Scheme and RYA Young Sailor Scheme provide a structure for such training and hence progression towards competence.

### **Tidal and Coastal Sailing**

Sailing on specified tidal and coastal waters is an in-scope activity of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of sailing activities to young people are required to hold a licence for such activities. Sailing in tidal and coastal waters must only take place under the direction of a person holding the relevant, fully completed tidal qualifications of the RYA and/or NSSA. In dinghies undertaking coastal journeys this would be **RYA Advanced Instructor (Coastal)**, for small yachts sailing not more than 20 miles from a safe harbour it would be **RYA Advanced Instructor Coastal/Yachtmaster Skipper** and in all other circumstances it would be **RYA Yachtmaster Certificate**.

All yachts used for activities undertaken or organised by OCC educational establishments must comply with either the Maritime and Coastguard Agency Code of Practice for Small Commercial Vessels or the Large Yacht Safety Code of Practice and hold a Small Commercial Vessel Certificate or a Sail Training Certificate.

### **General Adventure and Water Activities**

There will always be difficulty in specifying safety precautions and procedures for some adventure activities which make use of water. These activities are usually referred to as gorge walking, river crossing and river running. Adventure activities of this nature demand the most experienced and qualified of leaders who, from their experience, are able not only to recognise dangers, but to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and to safeguard the participants by using appropriate safety techniques. Such leaders, with their nationally recognised qualifications and appropriate first aid certificates, are usually only those employed as permanent instructors in recognised Outdoor Education Centres. There may be circumstances, dependant upon the location of the activity, when these activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 in which case providers of the activities will be required to hold a licence covering those activities.

### **Inflatable Dingy Activities**

Only persons who are experienced in dinghy activities and who are thoroughly familiar with the stretch of water on which the activity will take place may take charge of a dinghy. In view of the fact that there are at present no national qualifications covering inflatable dinghy activities, leaders must be in possession of a current **Bronze Medallion** of the **RLSS (UK)** and/or the **BCU Life-saving Award** and it is clearly desirable that they are experienced canoeists. In the circumstances it is prudent to require leaders to hold either a canoeing, kayaking or sailing qualification as the very minimum evidence of their competence. All participants must be able to swim 25 metres in the conditions likely to be encountered.

### **Inland Waterways**

Dependant upon the grade of water on which the activity takes place it may be that the activity falls within scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and providers of activities to young people may be required to hold a licence covering such activities. Activities on inland waterways must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Agency, National Rivers Authority and the British Waterways Board which may vary from area to area. Checks must therefore be made beforehand to ascertain local requirements.

When using hired vessels party leaders must also ensure they comply with all the conditions of hire and also ensure that they are given appropriate training in the use of the vessel, of waterside installations and of emergency procedures.

### **Boardsailing - Windsurfing**

These activities, dependant upon the location of the water, may fall within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 whereby providers of activities to young people are required to hold a licence covering the in-scope activities.

Boardsailing or Windsurfing instruction must only be given by those persons who possess an appropriate qualification of the **Royal Yachting Association**.

For sea and tidal waters instructors must hold the **Instructor Level 1 Open Sea Award**. For inland waters the **Instructor Level 1 Inland Award** or the **Instructor Level 1 Open Sea Award** must be held.

### **Board Surfing**

The Instructor must be very experienced in the activity and locality, possess appropriate current lifesaving and resuscitation skills or as a minimum be a holder of the **British Surf Association (BSA) Surf Coach Level 1** although ideally will hold **Level 2**. In the event of surfing competitions then a **Level 3 Surf Coach** must lead the activity. Board surfing must be organised and conducted to the BSA guidelines.

In view of the fact that knowledge of currents and characteristics of coastal waters is essential, it is required that only competent instructors resident or permanently based in the immediate locality of the proposed activity are used.

### **Rowing**

Rowing must be organised and conducted to the **Amateur Rowing Association (ARA)** Code of Practice for Water Safety. Leaders must have as a minimum qualification the **ARA Bronze Award**. The Association's Instructor Award at Levels One and Two is now incorporated into National Vocational Qualifications. Instructors working under the supervision of a Bronze Award holder must have **NVQ Level II Rowing Coach** as a minimum competency standard.

### **Angling**

It cannot be emphasised too often that all water can be a source of danger and it is incumbent on the organiser to see that appropriate precautions based on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment are taken to ensure the safety of all the participants.

With this in mind it is essential that the party organiser leader ensures all members of the group realise their individual responsibilities and that there is at least one person in the group holding a current and appropriate qualification in first aid and in lifesaving and resuscitation and is in a position to render immediate assistance should it become necessary, no matter what the situation. Leaders must ensure that the appropriate licences are obtained by all age-qualified (12 years and over) party members undertaking this activity. Heavy fines can be imposed by the Courts for unlicensed rod angling and it is therefore imperative that the National Fisheries Bye-laws for Anglers together with any local and regional fisheries bye-laws are complied with. Full copies of these bye-laws can be obtained by calling 0845 933 3111 or contacting the relevant Regional Office of the Environment Agency.

It is normal for angling to be undertaken in the following situations and settings of river, canal, lake and reservoir, sea angling from the shore and angling from a boat on a reservoir, lake or sea. Organisers must ensure, therefore, that all their preparations and risk assessments cover the contingencies which may occur in these locations.,

Since it is impossible to legislate for all events and situations which may prevail in the individual circumstances of angling, the following points are drawn to the attention of the organisers and leaders.

### **River, Canal, Lake and Reservoir Angling**

Although the nature of the sport is essentially individualistic, party leaders and organisers (those in loco parentis) cannot absolve themselves from the responsibility to ensure that contact should be retained at all times between members of the party.

Therefore, and adequate staff/student ratio must apply according to the prevailing circumstances and special consideration must be given to the distances over which participants can be spread whilst taking part in an activity which seemingly appears to be confined to a relatively restricted area.

### **Angling from the Shore**

The staff/student ratio must be appropriate to the prevailing conditions and party leaders must make careful study of weather conditions and be particularly conversant with tide tables. Additionally it is essential that the leader obtains information locally regarding the characteristics of the coastal stretch being used and that the individual members of the party are made aware of the danger of breaking waves and undertow currents, especially

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on and around rocks. Accidents in this environment have increased in national terms, over the last few years.

### **Angling from a Boat at Sea, on Reservoir or Lake**

If angling is undertaken from a hired boat under the supervision of a professional boatperson, the party leader need not have a seamanship qualification.

Should this not be the case then the responsible party leader must ensure that the person in charge of the boat used holds the relevant RYA or NSSA qualification (see Sailing).

Group leaders hiring sea-going vessels must ensure that they comply with the appropriate Maritime and Coastguard Agency Code of Practice which can be applied to UK vessels.

There are currently four codes namely :

The (Yellow) Code of Practice for Small Commercial Motor Vessels,

The (Blue) Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Sailing Vessels,

The (Brown) Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats, and

The (Red) Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure operating from a Nominated Departure Point (NPD).

Group leaders must ensure that the operator of the vessel complies with the code appropriate to the type of vessel.

No attempt to fish must be made in adverse weather conditions. Suitable personal buoyancy must be worn at all times whilst afloat.

### **Safety in the Air**

For activities in the air, other than air travel, specific insurances are required and enquiries must, in the first instance, be referred to the Insurance Manager, Treasury Services, before any planning is undertaken or agreements are entered into.