

## **OUTDOOR ACTIVITY SAFETY GUIDELINES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

These guidelines have been drawn up as a health and safety supplement for outdoor activities run by Perth and Kinross Council and partners. They outline measures to be taken to ensure safe incident free enjoyment of outdoor activities by both leaders and participants. They have been drawn up by the Outdoor Activity Corporate Advisory Group to ensure compliance with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA), approved by respective technical advisers and submitted for inspection during AALA licence submission.

These guidelines are to be followed by all employees, or agents and voluntary workers, either, full or part-time, permanent or temporary and, as such, must be issued to all staff working in this area at commencement of their employment, contract or period of voluntary work.

Subject to prior risk assessment, management agreement and relevant technical advisor approval it may be possible to work out with the ratios guidelines.

### **2. STAFF QUALIFICATION AND LEADERSHIP RATIOS**

#### **2.1 Requirements for all Activities**

For any activity there should always be a minimum of two adults in the party or immediate area. For adult groups it is not always necessary to have two adults who are acting in a leadership capacity. It is recognised as good practice to have both male and female members of staff working with mixed groups. If an overnight stay is involved mixed groups must have both male and female members of staff.

All groups should have a qualified first aider and a suitable first aid kit in the activity area at all times.

#### **2.2 Seasonal Activity Guidelines**

It is essential that instructor ratio/qualifications and other factors are taken into account depending on the time of year. Common sense must be used depending on weather conditions and weather forecasts.

#### **2.3 Qualification and Ratio Matrices**

The following matrices should be adhered to at all times.

**Abbreviations used in the Matrices**

BASI	British Association of Ski Instructors
BCU	British Canoe Union
BEL	Basic Expedition Leader
BMG	British Association of Mountain Guides
BOF	British Orienteering Federation
MLTB	Mountain Leader Training Board
MIA	Mountain Instructor Award (UKMTB)
MIC	Mountain Instructor Certificate (UKMTB)
ML	Mountain Leader Award (UKMTB/SMLTB/WMLTB)
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SCA	Scottish Canoe Association
SPA	Single Pitch Award
SI	Senior Instructor (RYA)
SMLTB	Scottish Mountain Leader Training Board
SRA	Scottish Rafting Association
Snowsport S	Snowsport Scotland
IML	International Mountain Leader
WGL	Walking Group Leader

ACTIVITY	MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SESSION	SUPERVISION RATIO
Indoor walls	Refer to wall policy	Refer to wall policy
Single pitch rock climbing	SPA	1:9
Multi pitch rock climbing	MIA	1:2
Snow and ice climbing	MIC	1:2
<p><b>NOTE:</b> For any climbing session an MIA may be assisted by an Instructor who holds no formal climbing qualification as long as the MIA is satisfied that the assistant has sufficient climbing experience to do so, and is registered as training for a National Governing Body Award in climbing.</p>		

<b>2.3.2 Skiing</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR PERSON LEADING THE TRIP</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>
<b>Skiing</b> Cross Country (High Level)	1. Mountain Leader Certificate (winter) and British Association of Ski Instructors Nordic instructor 2. Snowsport Scotland Mountain Ski Leader (Nordic)	1:5
<b>Skiing</b> (Tracks, Trails and Pistes) Downhill	1. Ski Leader Award (for leading parties) 2. BASI ski instructor (for instructing)	1:10
Cross-Country (Forest trails) or low-level below 1500'.	1. British Association of Ski Instructors (Nordic Instructor) 2. Winter Mountain Leader and experienced Nordic skier	1:10
<b>Note:</b> Alpine ski leader qualification does not qualify leaders to instruct.		

<b>2.3.3 RAFTING</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRIP</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM</b>
White Water Rafting	<p>Level 3 trip leader (Subsequent raft guides must be level 2 restricted or higher)</p> <p>Grade III Water is the highest level of difficulty permitted for white water rafting unless all participants are over 18 years of age and have rafting experience (minimum 10 hours).</p>	<p>As per capacity of craft up to manufacturers recommendations.</p> <p>Supervision Ratio Max 1:8 Minimum of 2 craft on the water or 1 raft and safety kayaker at least 5* or coach 4 inland kayak. Raft Guide level 3</p>	Yes
<b>Note: White water grades as defined by the international Canoe Federation.</b>			

<b>2.3.4 WINDSURFING</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRIP</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM</b>
Windsurfing Inland Waters	Instructor Level 1 Inland	Sheltered 1:8	Must be confident in water
Windsurfing Sea/Tidal Waters	Instructor Level 1 Open Sea	Exposed 1:6	Yes - strong swimmers
<b>Note:</b> Immediate accessibility to safety power boat cover minimum RYA level 2 & safety boat test.			

2.3.5 SAILING			
ACTIVITY	MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON LEADING THE ACTIVITY	SUPERVISION RATIO	PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM
Small boat sailing Inland waters	RYA Instructor Inland	1:6	Yes
Small boat sailing sea/tidal waters from a harbour or suitable beach	RYA Instructor Coastal/Endorsement	1:6	
Small boat sailing sea/tidal waters - coastal journeys	RYA Senior Instructor Coastal	1:3	
<b>Note:</b> Immediate availability to power boat cover minimum RYA Level 2 (power boat)			

<b>2.3.6 KAYAKING</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM</b>
Indoor Pool	Level 1 Coach kayak or canoe.	1:10 (+ Life Guard)	Water confident in Conditions.
Sheltered Inland Water	Level 2 Coach kayak or level 2 canoe with 3 star kayak.	1:8	
Medium Lochs	Level 3 Coach kayak or level 3 canoe with 4 star kayak	1:8	
Large Lochs	Level 4 Coach kayak or level 4 canoe with 5 star kayak	1:6	
White Water - Grade II	Level 3 Coach kayak or level 3 canoe with 4 star kayak	1:6	
Advanced white water Grade III and above	Level 4 Coach	1:6	Have received Training relevant to conditions and confident.
<p><b>NOTE:</b> Instructor qualifications referred to above must be relevant to the discipline being delivered, i.e. Kayaking, inland or sea.</p> <p><b>White water grades as defined by the international Canoe Federation.</b></p>			

<b>2.3.6 Canoeing</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM</b>
Sheltered Inland Water	Level 2 Coach Canoe or level 2 Kayak with 3 star canoe	1:4 boats	Water confident in Conditions
Medium Lochs	Level 3 Coach canoe or level 3 Kayak with 4 star canoe.	1:4 boats	
Large Lochs	Level 4 Coach canoe or level 4 Kayak with 5 star canoe	1:4 boats	
White Water - Grade II	Level 3 Coach canoe or level 3 Kayak with 4 star canoe	1:4 boats	
Advanced white water Grade III and above	Level 4 Coach	1:4 boats	Have received Training relevant to conditions and confident.
<b>NOTE: White water grades as defined by the international Canoe Federation.</b>			

**2.3.7 WALKING AND MOUNTAINEERING**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON LEADING THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>
Forests and lowland tracks (not involving overnight stop)	BELA or PKC level 2 competency	1:10
Lowland open country (see WGL suitable terrain)	WGL or PKC level 2 competency.	1:10
Upland hill country below 800m. Not including scree, crags or difficult ground.	ML Training appropriate for season involved and PKC level 3 competency	1:8
Mountain country not involving Roped scrambling or Technical Climbing.	ML appropriate for season involved.	1:8 (summer) 1:6 (winter)
Scrambling/Technical Climbing	MIA	1:2
Winter Climbing	MIC	1:2

**2.3.8 ORIENTEERING**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>
Orienteering in a contained area with clear boundaries Example local park small wood land with clearly recognisable boundaries	BOF level 2 coach or BEL, PKC Level 2 hillwalking competency	1:20
Orienteering tuition below (600m)	BOF level 2 coach or BEL, PKC Level 2 hillwalking competency	1:12

**NOTE:** Orienteering in (enclosed) school grounds is not restricted by these ratios or minimum qualifications Orienteering above 600 m should be treated as mountain walking. See appropriate matrix.

<b>2.3.9 MOUNTAIN BIKING</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>
Leading groups on routes that are pre-planned and risk assessed by a level 2 or above. Easy in terms of both physical and technical difficulty.	Ride Cycle Leader (Level 1)	1:8
Public highways, way-marked routes, rights of way, identifiable routes, tracks and trails with obvious navigational features, low to medium technical difficulty. Normal summer conditions, less than 600 m, no more than 30 mins from shelter and communication, only 1 days length.	Trail Cycle Leader (Level 2)	1:8
As above, but also routes requiring considerable technical ability and multi-day trips, or above 600m, or more than 30 mins from shelter and communication.	Mountain Bike Leader (Level 3)	1:8

<b>2.3.10 GORGE WALKING</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>SUPERVISION RATIO</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS ABILITY TO SWIM</b>
Riverbank walk (staying dry)	First Aid Certificate and significant experience of working with groups outdoors	1:10	No
Gorge exploration / walk (no immersion)	SML.	1:8	No
Gorge walking - ropes used for hand lines or - swimming / jumping.	SPA / SML and BCU water safety and rescue training or swift water rescue technician	1:8	Confident in water
Gorge walking - technical use of ropes or - difficult access / egress	MIA with BCU white water safety and rescue training or swift water rescue technician	1:6	Confident in water



2:3:11 Bushcraft + Rural Skills			
Activity	Minimum Qualification for the person responsible for organising/ running activity	Supervisory Ratio	Other notes
<p>Use of edged tools eg, knives, billhooks, folding saws, bushman saws etc for shelter building, camp crafts and woodland crafts also fire lighting by all methods</p>	<p>There are currently no NGB awards for Bushcraft. However it is to be expected that such a person will have considerable logged and demonstratable outdoor leadership experience with a variety of groups, in a variety of contexts. They should also have considerable bushcraft/ rural skills experience. This should be backed up by recognised NGBs in other related subjects to a minimum of <b>WGL award but preferably ML(S). Level 3 Forest School Leader would be classed as a relevant award.</b></p>	<p>1:10 instructor ratio but with minimum of 1 other staff member or parent helper</p>	<p>Bushcraft is often seen as a low intensity activity, however the use of edged tools and saws and also the use of fires often in a woodland setting, dictates that this has to be a closely managed activity.</p> <p>Also the level of responsibility put onto participants in using these tools means that if a dangerous situation develops it can happen very quickly and with very damaging consequences.</p> <p>Therefore the need for leaders to have considerable outdoors leadership experience and qualifications as well as bushcraft/ rural skills experience is paramount. To identify situations and forstall them before they get out of hand.</p>

### **3.0 Physical Capability**

The physical capability of each member of the party must be determined and matched to the activity. This will normally be determined from medical records, parental information and the instructor's experience of, or information on, the group involved.

If any doubt arises over capability, an individual participant must provide written medical advice, or a care plan, as to his or her level of fitness. It is essential that the medical officer involved in this certification is aware of the level of activity involved and the hazards.

### **4.0 Weather**

Due attention must be paid to obtaining weather forecasts both prior to and, if multi-day, during the activity if possible. Suitable sources for weather forecast should be used such [www.mwis.org.uk/](http://www.mwis.org.uk/) for more accurate mountain forecasts rather than general national broadcasts.

### **5.0 The Duke of Edinburgh's Award - Expedition Training and Supervision**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Groups must comply with these guidelines as well as additional guidelines set out by the Award at national and/or local level.

### **6.0 External Providers of Outdoor Activities**

If you are planning to use an external organisation for the provision of outdoor activities, it is essential that an Agency Agreement exists between Perth and Kinross Council and that organisation. This process will ensure that the agency has an Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) licence if required.

**Corporate Services can be contacted on 017328 475128 to check whether an Agency Agreement is in place with a particular organisation.**

### **7.0 The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996**

In 1996 it became a legal requirement under The Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 for providers of certain adventure activities to undergo inspection of their safety management systems and become Registered as licensed. This licensing scheme only applies to those who offer activities to young people under the age of 18 years and who operate these activities in a commercial manner.

Generally, licensing only applies to these activities where they are done in remote or isolated environments. For example, climbing on natural terrain requires a licence, climbing on a purpose built climbing wall does not.

Licences are issued when inspectors are assured that the provider's management of safety is satisfactory. It is important to note inspection does not include standards of accommodation or service.

On 1st October 1997 it became a legal requirement that only licensed activity providers will be able to offer activities as described below.

<b>CLIMBING</b>	<b>WATERSPORTS</b>	<b>TREKKING</b>	<b>CAVING</b>
(on natural outdoor features)	(on most lakes, fast flowing rivers & the sea)	(in remote moorland or mountain areas)	
Rock climbing	Canoeing	Hillwalking	Caving
Abseiling	Kayaking	Mountaineering	Pot-holing
Ice climbing	Dragon boating	Fell running	Mine exploration
Gorge walking	Wave skiing	Orienteering	
Ghyll scrambling	White-water rafting	Pony trekking	
Sea level traversing	Improvised rafting	Mountain biking	
	Sailing	Off-piste skiing	
	Sailboarding		
	Windsurfing		

A licence is not required for:

- Voluntary associations offering activities to their members, (e.g. scout groups, local canoe clubs, etc.).
- Schools and colleges offering activities only to their own pupils or students.
- As the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Perth and Kinross is covered by the licence, then the school award activities are covered also

- Activities where youngsters are each accompanied by their parent or legally appointed guardian. (does not include, teacher or youth leader).

Information about the Licensing Scheme is available in the Health and Safety publication entitled "Guidance to The Licensing Authority on The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996" (available from HSE Books or good booksellers, price £9.00)

Information source:

Adventure Activities Licencing Authority

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