

# Adventure Activity Safety Guidance for The Highland Council and High Life Highland

<b>Document Version</b>	3.0
<b>Date Amended</b>	09/11/21
<b>Intended for use by</b>	All staff involved in the planning, delivery, management or supervision of staff led adventurous activity for young people, including families, and vulnerable adults within the Highland Council and High Life Highland

## Contents

1	General.....	3
1.1	Introduction .....	3
1.2	Using this guidance .....	3
1.3	Activities considered to be Adventurous Activities within EVOLVE .....	3
1.4	Activities not covered by this guidance .....	3
1.5	Adventure Activity Safety Management.....	4
1.6	Travel, Accommodation, Equipment and Third Party Providers .....	5
2	Risk Management .....	5
2.1	Risk Assessment .....	5
2.2	Adventure Activity Venues .....	5
2.3	Contingency Planning and Incident Management.....	5
3	Staffing Arrangements .....	6
3.1	Staff.....	6
3.2	Staff Ratios and Party Size .....	6
3.3	Participants .....	6
3.4	First Aid .....	7
3.5	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) .....	7
3.6	Leader Approval Request (LAR) .....	7
3.7	Deploying Adventurous Activity Instructors and Leaders .....	7
4	Operational Arrangements .....	8
4.1	Introduction .....	8
4.2	Adventure Activity Instructors Recruitment.....	9
4.3	Pre Activity .....	9
4.4	Activity Delivery .....	11
4.5	Post Activity .....	13
5	Equipment.....	14
5.1	Introduction .....	14
5.2	Adventure Activity Resources Storage Facilities.....	14

5.3	Staff .....	14
5.4	Procurement .....	15
5.5	Equipment Management and Accountability .....	15
5.6	Storage of Equipment .....	16
5.7	Equipment Care and Cleaning.....	17
5.8	Inspections, Records and Checks .....	17
5.9	Inspection Types .....	18
5.10	Repairs, Quarantine and Disposal.....	18
5.11	Remote facility Inspection and Reporting Issues and Loans.....	19
5.12	Equipment Issues and Loans.....	19
6	Activity Specific Guidance .....	20
6.1	Archery.....	21
6.2	Bushcraft .....	22
6.3	Camping or Bothying.....	25
6.4	Caving.....	26
6.5	Coastal Rowing (Skiff) .....	27
6.6	Combined rock/water activities (coasteering, gorge walking, canyoning).....	28
6.7	Hill / Mountain Walking (Summer) .....	30
6.8	Off Road and Trail Cycling (Day) .....	32
6.9	Off Road and Trail Cycling (Night).....	34
6.10	Orienteering .....	36
6.11	Paddlesport (canoeing, kayaking and stand up paddle boarding).....	37
6.12	Rock Climbing & Abseiling (rock, indoor/outdoor, single/multi-pitch) .....	39
6.13	Scrambling.....	40
6.14	Small Boat Sailing .....	41
6.15	Snow Sports – on Piste.....	43
6.16	Swimming in Natural Waters .....	44
6.17	Water Margin Activity.....	46
6.18	Weaselling.....	50
7	Change Log.....	51

## 1 General

### 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines support the 'THC HLH - Excursions Guidance' which is contained in EVOLVE along with other guidance. Further guidance is provided by the Scottish Government online resource 'Going Out There' (GOT). This guidance provides operational flexibility to staff and volunteers within The Highland Council (THC) and High Life Highland (HLH). They do not stipulate content for Outdoor Education including adventure activities, but they do allow competent persons to make appropriate judgements in order to develop SEAL:

- Safety
- Enjoyment
- Adventure
- Learning

### 1.2 Using this guidance

All staff with responsibilities for the management of or the delivery of adventure activities within THC and HLH are to read this document and the relevant adventure activity specific guidance.

For the purpose of this document 'adventure activity' is taken in the broader context than as defined by the Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations 2004 definitions summarised in section 5 below and detailed in L77 Guidance from the Licensing Authority on the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.

When planning an excursion containing an adventure activity (whether staff led or provider led), staff must ensure that the associated EVOLVE Visit Plan is clear and details staff / provider that are responsible and associated evidence of competence. Visit Plans without this will be returned. Where an activity is planned and contained in the Annexes as 'Activity Specific Guidance', staff are strongly advised to refer to this and to the HLH and HC Generic Adventure Activity Risk Assessments contained in EVOLVE and on the HLH web pages here.

### 1.3 Activities considered to be Adventurous Activities within EVOLVE

The following activities, whether led by establishment staff (including volunteers or freelancers) or external providers, are considered adventurous in the context of EVOLVE.

- Archery
- Bushcraft (with some exceptions, see the activity specific guidance in section 22 for more details)
- Camping or Bothying
- Caving
- Combined rock / water activities (Coasteering, Gorge walking, Canyoning,)
- Fishing
- High and low rope courses (including Jacobs ladder or crate stack type activities)
- Hill / mountain walking (with some exceptions, see the activity specific guidance in section 19 for more details)
- Hill running
- Horse riding
- Ice climbing
- Off road and trail cycling (e.g. mountain biking or gravel biking etc.)
- Open water snorkelling and SCUBA diving
- Orienteering

- Paddlesport (Canoeing, Kayaking (including pool sessions), Stand Up Paddleboarding, Rafting, Improvised Raft Building)
- Powerboat trips
- Rock climbing and abseiling (including indoors)
- Sailing
- Scrambling
- Sculling and rowing (canals, lochs and Coastal Rowing)
- Shooting (air rifle, small bore, shot gun, paintball)
- Snowsports (Skiing inc. Alpine and Nordic, Snowboarding)
- Surfing
- Swimming (in natural waters)
- Water Margin Activities (with some exceptions, see the activity specific guidance in section 6 for more details)
- Weaselling

#### 1.4 Activities not covered by this guidance

While this document covers the range of most common activities it is recognised that from time to time establishments will wish to organise and take part in other activities that may be considered ‘adventurous’ due to their nature or the perception of hazard.

Where there is no specific reference to an activity in this document, planning staff should seek advice from their EVC who can if required, seek advice from; [outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com](mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com)

#### 1.5 Adventure Activity Safety Management

Within THC and HLH adventure activities are governed either directly, as activities are within scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (AALR) or indirectly where the principles are expected to be applied. Adventure activities that are defined as within scope of the AALR are:

- Caving - underground exploration in natural caves and mines including potholing, cave diving and mine exploration
- Climbing - climbing, traversing, abseiling and scrambling activities except on purpose-designed climbing walls or abseiling towers
- Trekking - walking, running, pony trekking, mountain biking, off-piste skiing and related activities when done in moor or mountain country which is remote i.e., over 30 minutes travelling time from the nearest road or refuge
- Watersports - canoeing, rafting, sailing and related activities when done on the sea, tidal waters or larger non-placid inland waters.

The key elements of adventure activity safety management are:

- Well defined desired outcomes
- Activities designed to meet outcomes
- Risk assessment (People, Environment, Activity - PEA)
- Adequate supervision (ratios and competent staff)
- Effective communication – with and from all
- Good planning, preparation, activity management and adequate contingencies
- Appropriate level of activities to the participants (consider inclusion)
- Evaluation

## 1.6 Travel, Accommodation, Equipment and Third Party Providers

Associated with most activities involving adventure activities are arrangements for travel, accommodation, equipment and third party providers. Staff planning and approving activities should follow appropriate and relevant HLH / THC / national guidance. Staff must be assured that travel, accommodation, equipment and third party providers are of an acceptable standard. There are many quality assurance mechanisms; at HLH / THC level, national and international standards. Other sources of guidance referred to in Section 2 should be used to develop a complete safety management picture. Planning staff should seek guidance from their EVC who if necessary can contact [outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com](mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com) for guidance.

## 2 Risk Management

### 2.1 Risk Assessment

Risk management is the responsibility of all however, risk assessments must be completed by those that are competent in both the planned activity and the process of undertaking a risk assessment. THC and HLH can provide risk assessment training. Generic risk assessments for common adventurous activities can be found on EVOLVE.

Where an activity is led by establishment staff the EVOLVE should include risk assessments covering the activity (this could be in the form of the provided activity generic risk assessment), the venue (see Section 18 Adventure Activity Venues for more information) and any people specific hazards (such as medical, behavioural or emotional needs and supervision arrangements).

Where an activity is led by an external provider there is no need to include risk assessments in the EVOLVE that relate to the parts of the excursion the external provider is responsible for. However, any elements of the excursion that establishment staff (including freelancers and volunteers) are responsible for must be appropriately risk assessed. For example, where an assured external provider is running canoeing sessions there is no need to include a canoeing risk assessment with the EVOLVE, but if staff are supervising the young people at lunch time and on the bus journey those must be risk assessed.

### 2.2 Adventure Activity Venues

Adventure activity venues in Highland vary enormously in factors such as scale, severity, accessibility, ability to summon help etc. Staff must therefore consider the People, Environment and Activity (PEA) in appropriate measures and ensure that all are an appropriate match. This means for example, novices will not be undertaking or committing to remote activities without the appropriate control measures. A key question for staff organising adventure activities is 'will the activity and environment match the needs of all of the participants'?

Staff assessing a venue must be competent to do so. In most cases, the expectation would be that they were qualified in the activity to be undertaken there. The level of qualification (in accordance with NGB guidance and remit) should reflect the level of the planned adventure activity. Exceptions to this should gain 'sign off' from a Technical Advisor. Staff should seek guidance from qualified colleagues or external technical advice (and record this advice) if necessary. If in doubt, contact [outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com](mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com) for guidance.

Establishments using a venue for the first time must complete a site specific risk assessment, which should then be reviewed on an annual basis. A Site Specific Risk Assessment template and completed examples are available in EVOLVE Resources.

### 2.3 Contingency Planning and Incident Management

Each establishment must have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that must cover late back, incident management and emergency procedures that relate to off-site excursions. Staff should be briefed to the appropriate level. It is recommended that staff carry an Incident Card – providing basic guidance and contact details.

## 3 Staffing Arrangements

### 3.1 Staff

Staff may be employees of THC or HLH, volunteers or freelance staff. All must be aware of their responsibilities and the expectations of them in the event of an incident. Events may well take place out of normal office hours. Planned contact arrangements must take account of this.

The proper training of staff forms one of the key elements essential for achieving consistent safe practice in outdoor education.

UK Health and Safety legislation requires an employer to provide the necessary training for staff to undertake their duties.

- THC and HLH must provide adequate training for staff. This is achieved through the in service training programmes and NGB qualifications
- Heads of establishments must only allow staff to undertake programmes of work for which the required competencies have been acquired.
- Recognition of competence is based on relevant experience, recognised training, and Council Accreditation or National Governing Body Awards. Staff should not be permitted to undertake tasks for which they are not accredited or qualified EVC and VLT training courses must be undertaken by appropriate staff within THC and HLH. These courses clearly explain the roles and responsibilities of those leading and supervising visits. They also include risk assessment training and an introduction to the EVOLVE system.

When engaged in the delivery of adventurous activity freelance instructors and volunteers will be considered as if they are establishment staff. They must receive the same induction, supervision and training as a staff member delivering adventurous activity would. The one key difference to be aware of is that freelance instructors will not be covered under the Highland Council's Public Liability cover and must provide their own Public Liability Insurance of at least £5 million.

The head of establishment has the same responsibilities for protecting the health, safety and welfare of volunteers and freelance instructors as any other member of staff.

### 3.2 Staff Ratios and Party Size

Staff ratios for supervision of a group are the outcome of the excursion specific risk assessment that follows the 'PEA' principle (People, Environment and Activity). In many situations it is desirable for there to be more than one member of staff present. Supervision must be such that it is adequate throughout the activity and allows for contingencies. Maximum ratios are in the Annexes below. Ratios stated are the maximum permissible in ideal conditions, in reality we expect ratios to be lower after the people, environment and activity have been fully risk assessed. The ratios in this document apply to young people, adult only groups may operate to other ratios.

Staffing ratios assume all staff are competent. Many factors will affect the ratios, in general PEA – as mentioned above.

Staff may at times be 'lone working' e.g. DofE supervision, leading walking / biking / basic watersports activities. Risk assessments should take this into account and control measures must consider actions to be taken by the group if the lone working staff member is incapacitated.

### 3.3 Participants

Due consideration should be given to the recruitment, selection and participation of participants. Exclusion as well as inclusion must be considered given reasonable adjustments. Factors that should be considered are:

- Relevance of the activity to the participant/s
- Existing health / ASN / behavioural conditions / factors
- Fitness required to safely participate
- Welfare of participants and potential reaction to adventure induced stress
- Clothing and equipment

### 3.4 First Aid

Each National or Scottish Governing Body (N/SGB) will lay out the minimum first aid requirements for coaches and leaders qualified under their schemes. Most such qualifications require a valid 16 hour outdoor emergency first aid qualification (valid for 3 years). Where the governing body does not specify, and the activity takes place away from a facility, a 16 hour outdoor emergency first aid qualification would be the minimum requirement for leaders or coaches of HC or HLH groups. All coaches and Leaders must ensure their current First Aid Certificate is uploaded to their EVOLVE profile, for support please contact [evolvehelp@highlifehighland.com](mailto:evolvehelp@highlifehighland.com).

Where individuals are medically qualified (e.g. Paramedics, Nurses or Doctors) and registered with a relevant authority (e.g. HCPC, RCN or GMC) they may be exempted from the requirement to hold a 16 hour outdoor emergency first aid certificate. However, it should be recognised that medically qualified people are generally trained to work within a team of other qualified people with immediate access to specialist equipment and support, which may not be available in remote outdoor setting. Completing an outdoor specific first aid award may be of value to some practitioners.

The medically qualified individual should submit a letter from their employer, professional body or an outdoor first aid provider stating their current skills and experience is equivalent to, or greater than, those required for [IOL Band 3 First Aid](#). The letter should be on the organisation's letter head and dated. It should be renewed every 3 years.

### 3.5 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Some qualifications also require mandatory CPD for a qualification to remain valid. In most cases these schemes provide the preferred form of training for staff undertaking adventure activities.

Where the governing body does not specify a CPD requirement, HLH and HC recommend coaches and leaders take part in at least one day of CPD every three years for each activity they are qualified in.

### 3.6 Leader Approval Request (LAR)

This can be applied for via EVOLVE. Staff with sufficient experience but insufficient / no relevant qualification may apply for a LAR. Staff awarded a LAR will be able to operate under supervision. The LAR is a useful way for staff aiming to complete a NGB qualification to gain experience.

LAR should only be seen as a temporary solution whilst the staff member completes an appropriate qualification. Depending on the activity and experience of the individual a LAR will be issued for 1 to 3 years. After 3 years a LAR would not normally be renewed as this would be moving beyond temporary into permanent.

### 3.7 Deploying Adventurous Activity Instructors and Leaders

When looking to offer adventurous activity to our groups we have three broad options; use staff we already employ (or volunteers), bring in freelance instructors or sub contract to an external provider like an outdoor centre. Each of these has various pros and cons, using our own staff or freelancers may be cheaper but will require a significant amount of background work and knowledge to make it work. Using an external provider will shift a significant amount of liability but may require a longer lead time.

The statements below set out in general terms what must be in place when using each of the three options:

When can an establishment deploy their own qualified staff or volunteers?

- When the establishment has access to appropriate equipment (with an inspection and maintenance regime in place), venues and transport.
- When line management have sufficient knowledge of activity, qualifications required and venue.
- When management are willing to accept the liability associated with deploying staff to deliver adventurous activity.
- When the establishment has the competence to thoroughly risk assess the activity and venue.

When should an establishment deploy freelance instructors?

- When the establishment has access to appropriate equipment (with an inspection and maintenance regime in place), venues and transport.
- When the staff member engaging the freelancer has sufficient knowledge of activity, qualifications required and venue.
- When management are willing to accept the liability associated with deploying adventurous activity instructors.
- When the establishment has the competence to thoroughly risk assess the activity and venue.

When should an external provider be used?

- When the establishment does not have the knowledge and experience to deploy or deliver adventurous activities themselves.
- When looking for the convenience of having a complete package supplied to us
- When management need to rely on the competence of others to risk assess the activity, venue, conditions or required ratios.
- When the establishment does not have access to appropriate adventure equipment, and this needs to be supplied.

## 4 Operational Arrangements

### 4.1 Introduction

**Aim** –This guidance aims to ensure the professional, safe and high quality delivery of outdoor activities by all THC & HLH staff (including volunteers and paid freelance staff) involved in the planning and delivery of adventure activities. This guidance must be read and followed by all THC & HLH staff, volunteers and contracted staff. Any feedback on the content of this guidance should be directed to [outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com](mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com)

**Management** – All adventure activities undertaken within THC & HLH are approved by the head of the establishment or their appointed deputy and further approved via the EVOLVE system by Outdoor Education Officers. Staff will report on all matters to their line management and will be responsible for managing any volunteers or contracted adventure activity staff deployed on an activity. Outdoor Education staff are available for advice and guidance relating to the delivery of adventurous activities.

**External Providers** - This document does not directly apply to HLH / THC assured third party external adventure activity providers which may be used on a sub contract basis periodically. They would be expected to possess and operate to their own procedures which should not differ significantly from the content of this guidance. Some, but not all, adventure activity providers will require an AALA License. More guidance on using External Providers can be found in the THC & HLH Excursions Guidance.

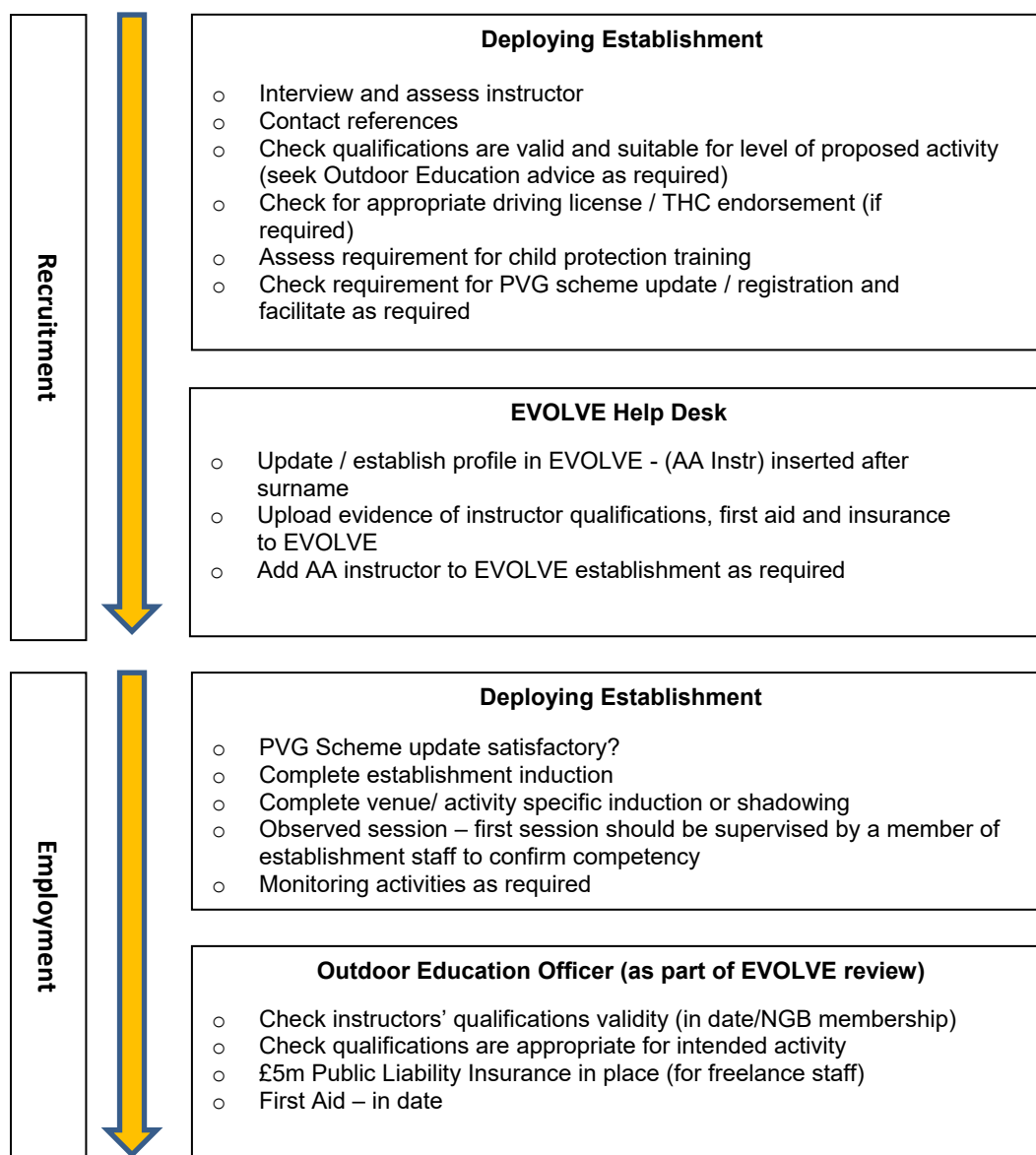


## 4.2 Adventure Activity Instructors Recruitment

Adventure activity instructors can be full and part time staff, volunteer or contracted (freelance) staff. Employment will be in line with THC / HLH employment guidance and procedures in terms of recruitment, engagement, vetting and employment.

Staff leading, and instructing adventure activities for THC and HLH establishments are expected to demonstrate professionalism, currency and competence (in their discipline). Volunteer adventure activity instructors will be insured by THC, freelance staff will be expected to provide a certificate of professional liability insurance.

Adventure activity instructor registration is detailed below:



## 4.3 Pre Activity

### Responsibility

The overall accountability and responsibility for planning, preparation and logistics for an adventure activity / activity programme will sit with the Head of Establishment. As necessary, responsibilities can be delegated to establishment staff, volunteers and freelance staff that possess the appropriate technical competence. When using adventure

activity staff including third party providers, such as an outdoor centre, the HLH or THC establishment retains a welfare role. A member of establishment staff must retain oversight of activities both during the day and out of hours (if residential). Members of establishment staff retain the ability to halt an activity – if it is safe to do so, in order to clarify any concern or detail relating to an activity or a participant.

#### Guidance

Staff involved in planning and leading adventure activities should consult THC/HLH Adventure Activities Guidance where detailed guidance is provided on a broad range of adventure activities. Where further guidance is needed staff should contact HLH Outdoor Education Officers.

#### Collaboration

Where participants have additional support needs all necessary and appropriate staff are to collaborate prior to an activity taking place in order to ensure that the appropriate staff with the appropriate skills and training take the appropriate action. This should include ensuring that staff know who is first aid trained and where equipment is located.

#### Lead Staff

Where one session is being run by two members of staff of equal standing, one should be allocated lead instructor for the session, so responsibility for the session is clear. Volunteers and freelance adventure activity staff should be competent (this usually requires a qualification) to deliver the activity requested of them. Where they do not feel they are competent they should highlight this to establishment staff. Where knowledge of a venue is required adventure activity staff are to evidence this current knowledge or the establishment is to make suitable arrangements such as a thorough briefing (maps, images etc).

#### EVOLVE

Any activity under the governance of a HLH or THC establishment must be authorised via an EVOLVE Visit Plan. This must be approved by the Head of Establishment (and will be automatically submitted to Outdoor Education) at least 10 working days before the excursion starts. Overseas excursions are required by Outdoor Education at least 30 working days before the excursion starts.

#### Activity and / or residential plans and briefing

An activity plan with timings as necessary should be created for a residential and uploaded to EVOLVE. All staff in the leader team (staff, adventure activity volunteers and freelance staff) must be briefed on the details of the activity. Contents of the brief may include the details bulleted below:

- Details of the activity content, timings and expected outcomes
- Participant details, including any relevant personal details, medical / behavioural information, media consent and specific known individual/group risks (including data protection requirements)
- Specific details e.g. logistic plans, booking information; accommodation,
- Emergency / call-out procedure and staff contact details
- Weather and conditions forecast (this maybe instructor's responsibility)
- Equipment and resource details
- Transport details
- Generic risk assessment for the activity and specific (PEA) risk assessment for the excursion
- Site specific information and additional risk considerations
- Contingency and incident plans and alternative activity options

## Communications

All staff are expected to be in possession of a fully charged mobile phone (waterproofed as required). Staff are expected to ensure they possess emergency contact numbers and other leader team mobile numbers as necessary and should be clear on the information that will need to be supplied in the event of an incident. See THC / HLH Excursions Incident Guidance for more details.

The site specific risk assessment should include a note of likely signal strength and available networks. Where mobile phone communication may not be reliable other methods of communication (such as marine VHF radio or Personal Locator Beacons etc.) should be considered.

## Staff Equipment

Staff may wish to use their own equipment. They will be expected to be able to demonstrate that any personal safety or PPE equipment they use has been checked and kept in line with manufacturers and industry expected practice/regulation.

## Pre Activity Equipment Checks

All adventure activity equipment held by THC and HLH must be appropriately stored and managed. See Adventure Activity Equipment Guidance for more details. All items issued should still be checked prior to use by competent staff.

## Change of Activity Plans

Weather and conditions as well as people and road conditions may cause activity plans to require changing. If this is the case the excursion leader is expected to contact the 24/7 contact with updated details. Where dates change the establishment visit leader is to contact [evolvehelp@highlifehighland.com](mailto:evolvehelp@highlifehighland.com) who can change dates in EVOLVE.

## 4.4 Activity Delivery

### Safety Management

All staff are expected to work within the environmental conditions, their own professional competence and the abilities of the participants. Staff must ensure that any identified risks posed by the activity being delivered are mitigated by control measures identified in the risk assessments or identified as part of a dynamic risk assessment. Staff will have access to regularly reviewed HLH Generic Risk Assessments and are expected to discuss the People, Environment and Activity (PEA) with other staff and participants as necessary create activity specific risk assessments.

### Working with Providers of Adventure Activities

Where using a provider, whether activities are in the scope of AALA Licensing or not, staff are to recognize their responsibilities to those they remain responsible for. As such, staff are empowered to halt an activity – if it is safe to do so, in order to clarify any concern or detail relating to an activity or a participant.

### Lone Working with a Group

The following additional information should be considered by staff that are lone working with a group / individual and, where necessary included in the activity risk assessment:

- Ensure all participants know the emergency procedures in the event that the single staff member is incapacitated- example emergency information cards are available in the Resources Section of EVOLVE
- A thorough risk assessment must be in place for any 1:1 working considering the practicalities of the activity, emergency arrangements and any child protection/ welfare implications.
- Ensure parental consent is provided and explicit where working 1:1
- Additional contact numbers and options for a mobile signal / other help e.g. land line

### Lone Working whilst conducting Remote Supervision

The following additional information should be considered by staff that are lone working and, where necessary included in the activity risk assessment:

- Locations and planned route, meeting times (including grid references)
- Vehicle parking location and VRN
- Ensure all participants know the action to take if the supervisor fails to meet at the planned time
- The late back procedures for the lone worker
- Mobile signal

### Monitoring Activities

Monitoring activities is an important component of the safety management structure. It ensures that the plan is being carried out as planned and it provides an opportunity for 365 feedback. Establishment management staff can carry out desk top monitoring by scrutinizing details in EVOLVE, contacting 24/7 emergency contacts and speaking with

### Late Back Procedures

If an activity is expected to return late or change (significantly) the 24/7 contact should be contacted at the earliest opportunity so information can be relayed to relevant parties as necessary. If a group is expected back at a set time or have agreed a cut off time a Call out plan should be agreed e.g. contact management / local support after 30 minutes. Relevant staff must be briefed on the establishment late back procedure and 24/7 contact/s on the call out procedure.

### Incident Management

In the event of an incident, staff should act only within their own levels of training and experience in order to safeguard self and others from further harm. Staff should be briefed on the HLH / THC Excursions Incident Guidance. In the event of a significant incident and or emergency:

- Take immediate action to save life and prevent further harm
- Administer first aid and care for those uninjured
- Contact emergency services and rescue teams as necessary
- Contact the 24/7 contact and seek their support
- 24/7 should contact management and parents/guardians as required

### Session Delivery

Staff are expected to maximise the learning opportunities for those they work with and should include the following in session delivery:

- Ensure desired outcomes are agreed and understood by all
- Outline the behavioural expectations
- Give due consideration to those with ASN / medical needs
- Be clear on the use of relevant equipment and what to take
- Be clear on actions by all in the event of an incident
- Ensure fun is a component of the learning
- Ensure staff and participants understand the known risks and the reasonable steps / expectations to reduce these to a reasonable level given the people, environment and planned activity (PES)
- Ensure challenge by choice – explain this to participants
- Assess base skills and make no assumptions (this may include activity and questioning), adapt activity as appropriate

- Ensure that instructions have been understood and the planned activity is still within participant's expectations. Check by questioning. This should be revisited periodically through the day or as incremental personal skills / competence is expected
- Conduct reflective reviews and gain feedback at the end of sessions

#### Group Safety Equipment and First Aid

Should any equipment, be new or unfamiliar to any staff they should seek guidance from appropriate staff before the activity starts. A first aid kit should be carried for all activities. Other group safety kit such as shelters must be taken where identified as control measures in risk assessments and in the Outdoor Safety Document. If staff feel additional specialist equipment is required they should highlight this. Any subcontracted third party provider is expected to supply their own safety equipment and or group equipment unless agreed in advance, and should hold their own AALA license.

#### 4.5 Post Activity

##### End of Adventure Activity

Prior to departing from a venue, a 'hot washup' should be completed with staff and participants to capture immediate feedback. This discussion should provide the participants with an opportunity to reflect on what they did, how they did it and what they have learned. They might then consider how the learning can be transferred to other aspects of life. At the same time an equipment check and a check of the local area should be carried out.

##### End of Activity Review

Where possible and practicable staff should seek to provide opportunities for participants and staff to reflect on the activity / programme and where relevant identify what development opportunities there might be. This may be over and above the 'hot washup' or this may be sufficient. Areas for review might include:

- achievement of outcomes
- quality of instructional delivery
- admin arrangements

##### Reporting and Record Keeping

All incidents, including minor injuries or incidents involving near misses and poor behaviour should be recorded. Staff should ensure that they follow the appropriate accident / incident reporting guidance at the earliest opportunity. Where appropriate photo, video or physical evidence (equipment issue) should be taken and or retained.

##### Return of Personal Details

Any electronic information or paperwork relating to staff or participant personal / medical detail, medications, etc must be confirmed as destroyed or returned after the activity and when no longer required. Relevant permissions must be sought from parents and other parties as necessary for media and or images taken by staff, volunteer and freelance adventure activity instructors and leaders. If any personal and sensitive data is thought to have been lost management should be informed immediately.

##### Equipment Return

It is expected that all HLH / THC equipment is returned to the agreed location in the best possible condition. Any damage / fault should be noted and any relevant feedback passed on to responsible staff. Any normal packing, post use care and cleaning expected as part of the normal activity should be included in the activity plan e.g., dunking wetsuits, packing tents, airing sleeping bags, cleaning stoves, waxing boots etc. NB: Where items require overnight drying, laundering or significant maintenance checks post use (e.g. bikes) this must be factored in to staff time. Items of equipment should be then stored (as they are fit for use), identified as in need of repair or appropriately disposed of. See Adventure Activity Equipment Guidance for further details.

## 5 Equipment

### 5.1 Introduction

This guidance governs the management of all adventurous outdoor activity resources under the governance of The Highland Council (THC) and High Life Highland (HLH). HLH Outdoor Education staff are responsible for monitoring adventure activity equipment that is the responsibility of THC and HLH. Such items are subject to the requirements of the HSE via an Adventure Activity Licences; THC – R1999 and HLH – R0059, issued by the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALA). Individual facilities are responsible for following this guidance and guidance from AALA.

The procedures contained within this guidance are to be applied with wholly and with due diligence and will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that resources are well maintained, serviceable, of a high quality and above all are safe for storage and use.

AALS guidance L77 and Appendices provide details to managers and adventure activity equipment managers in THC and HLH.

### 5.2 Adventure Activity Resources Storage Facilities

Many THC and HLH establishments possess outdoor activity resources which are stored in their own facilities. These facilities are managed and operated by the establishments in line with these procedures, manufacturer's guidance and with support available from HLH Outdoor Education on request.

All adventurous outdoor activity resource facilities are subject to monitoring visits by HLH Outdoor Education Officers. All HLH and THC outdoor stores facilities are expected to follow this guidance and possess local arrangements as appropriate.

### 5.3 Staff

#### Staff Competence

Staff involved in procurement, managing, loaning, issuing and inspecting must be competent to carry out these tasks. Different levels of competence may be needed for different tasks. Staff must hold a relevant activity qualification or specific evidenced training competence where inspecting activity and safety related equipment.

#### Staff Equipment

Establishments may make a suitable amount of equipment available for staff use. Where staff (full time, volunteer and freelance) wish to use their own personal equipment it is expected that it has been stored, checked and kept in line with manufactures' guidance and the equipment management section of this policy, with appropriate records available for inspection. THC and HLH staff responsible for activities reserve the right to monitor and inspect adventure activity instructor's (staff, volunteers or freelance staff) equipment on a periodic basis.

#### Staff Induction

Staff may be new to a stores facility or may need guidance. Stores facilities (depending on their size) should have induction procedures for staff that include the following:

- Security – how to gain access to the facility (locks, key pads, alarms etc)
- Lighting – security lighting and internal light switches
- Other facility users – do they need to be informed if stores are accessed out of normal working hours?
- Procedures for booking out equipment
- Procedures for returning equipment
  - Fully serviceable
  - Dirty / wet
  - Damaged – fault reporting and where to put faulty items

- Fault reporting – how to report any issues relating to the stores facility
- Emergencies – who to contact if there is an urgent issue
- Toilet facilities
- First aid equipment
- Lone working considerations – telephone signal, accessing difficult / heavy equipment

#### 5.4 Procurement

The procurement of all equipment must adhere to THC and HLH procurement guidance. In general however, staff are expected to seek the best possible price for the equipment that is both suitable for the purpose and sustainable. This should take into account expected working life due to use and recommended working life due to manufacturers recommended product life span.

It is recommended that equipment should only be purchased when there is a forecast for use, rather than a speculative use. Capital should not be expended unnecessarily and where possible looking at the wider resources held across HLH and THC services may be considered.

Establishments are strongly recommended to retain manufacturer's instructions. However, where necessary instructions can often be accessed online or direct from manufacturers.

Equipment that is purchased 'second hand' should be documented with evidence of the purchase. Equally, equipment that is provided free to THC or HLH should have an associated evidence of supplied, date of transfer and original purchase information where possible. All such equipment must be fit for purpose and managed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Where there is doubt about used equipment's provenance or use history it should not be purchased.

#### 5.5 Equipment Management and Accountability

The head of establishment who has overall responsibility for resources stored in or used by their establishment e.g. the Head Teacher is responsible for equipment kept and maintained at a school. Day to day management responsibilities may be delegated as required to a named party within that establishment.

The ownership of all items of equipment, especially Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and 'trackable' items must be clear and recorded for inspection.

Adventure activity equipment inventories should be reviewed and updated at least annually. Local management of equipment must include equipment that is loaned / hired out with records.

An adventure activity equipment inventory should possess, as a minimum, the information listed below:

- Equipment owner
- Quantity, size, colour
- Item description
- Track-able and non-track-able items
- Date of purchase and equipment lifespan – see point 5.5.
- 'Recorded Thorough Examination' dates and by who
- Record of actions

If equipment remains serviceable, is within the manufacturer's recommended life span and will portray a professional image it can be continued to be used. Where assessed as still fit for purpose items may exceed manufacturer's guidance – with justification and additional regular inspection as required. Equally, equipment that

is deemed to be unserviceable, unsafe, or has become particularly uncomfortable and / or unsightly should be replaced before the end of its recommended lifespan.

Safety chain or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will generally have a manufacturer's lifespan by which time equipment is generally expected to be removed from service – evidence of this life span must be recorded on the inventory. In the rare occasion where the manufacturer's recommended lifespan is not given then the lifespan will be defined by competent staff having done appropriate checks and inspections. The manufacturer's lifespan must be balanced with the equipment usage and condition. Equipment should be removed when deemed no longer fit for use regardless of age. Reasons for this may include:

- It fails to pass inspection (inspection before and during use and the periodic in-depth inspection)
- It has been subjected to a major fall or load
- No full usage history
- It has reached the manufactured recommended lifespan
- There is doubt as to its integrity (if in any doubt, remove it and seek advice from Outdoor Education Officers or manufacturer)

Trackable PPE and safety chain equipment should be marked in a manner / location that does not affect the structural safety or load bearing provision of that item i.e. on the label or manufacturer's stickers. Advice on appropriate marking can be sought from the manufacturer, technical advisors or other competent persons.

All equipment and the instruction in its use should be in line with manufacturer's guidance and or current accepted industry practice / training given. Any equipment used for an activity outside of the manufacturer's guidance should be discussed with Outdoor Education Officers.

## 5.6 Storage of Equipment

### General

All equipment should be stored in a suitable environment given the nature (material) of that equipment and any manufacturers' / good practice storage guidance. This will generally be in a clean, dry and well ventilated room outside of direct sunlight.

Boats such as canoe, kayak, dingy etc. can be stored in a secure sheltered location outside but would be better stored indoors away from UV light, which can cause degradation to plastics over time.

Drying wet equipment can present a challenge for many establishments however to prolong the life and functionality, care should be taken to ensure that items are washed / rinsed and dried thoroughly before being stored. Care should be taken if items are dried in a drying room or on direct heat, not to adversely damage the materials (anything over 40 degrees) or reduce the effective life span.

### Security

It is expected that equipment is stored in a secure location and can only be accessed by approved and competent individuals and or under supervision. This is to avoid interference and unauthorised usage by third parties.

### COSHH and Contaminates

All substances hazardous to health and potential equipment 'contaminates' should be stored away from general equipment and in some cases in a secure container / alternative well ventilated store (depending on quantities / nature). Access should be restricted, and the contents listed and available to staff and Fire Service in the event of a fire. Contaminates include:

- Sun cream
- Insect repellents



- Cleaning and sterilising materials
- Fuels
- Lubricants
- Paints and associated thinners
- Other hazardous (to people and equipment) materials

## 5.7 Equipment Care and Cleaning

While it is understood that certain roles within this procedure require specific technical competence, it is positively encouraged that participants and clients should where possible take a full and active role in the equipment care, storage, pre-use checks (under supervision) to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of what is required.

For the washing of equipment, manufacturer's cleaning guidance should be followed (if unsure use neutral soap). Where disinfection on a regular basis is required then a diluted sterilising solution (such as those used for baby bottles) should be considered. If unsure refer back to manufacturer's guidance.

Where an item has been used and needs replenishing such as a first aid kit it should be put into quarantine with a note until restocked – to avoid it being issued incomplete. Items of equipment used outside of normal operating practice i.e. in an unplanned rescue should be quarantined until checked thoroughly by a competent person.

Checks will be in line with manufacturer's and governing body guidance.

Contaminates such as sun cream, meth's and midge repellent should ideally not be used around any item of safety chain equipment and PPE, particularly textiles and plastics as they can damage equipment very easily. It is advised that when applying items such as these where possible safety equipment should be removed. This should be communicated by staff to all instructors and clients.

## 5.8 Inspections, Records and Checks

### Inspection

All equipment should be checked for serviceability. Safety critical equipment must be subject to pre-use checks and recorded thorough examinations. This will vary according to the item in question, and also to the use it is subject to. Thus, ropes and harnesses which are being used daily may be inspected (visual + manual) on a weekly basis. In the case of buoyancy aids, they are often stored throughout the winter with no use. There would thus be no requirement to inspect them during this period. Links to further guidance can be found in Appendix 3

### Training

If advice is required on appropriate checks and or training it should be sought from the HLH Outdoor Education Officers, manufacturers and or governing bodies.

### Frequency

The Frequency of Recorded Thorough Examinations (as opposed to the pre-use checks made by instructors issuing and fitting equipment) should be dictated by the use. Establishments should have an established inspection regime of weekly, monthly or annual checks, with managers determining the inspection regime, based on their competence or advice gained from a competent person. As a minimum all safety critical equipment should have a 'Recorded Thorough Examination' at least every 6 months, for equipment used at height (e.g. climbing or canyoning) this is a legal requirement under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998.

Recorded checks should be recorded in an inventory database / spreadsheet or by local means and will be monitored by HLH Outdoor Education Officers as appropriate.

Loaned or hired equipment will need a pre-use check and depending on use a recorded thorough examination to be done prior to it being issued again to other parties.

## 5.9 Inspection Types

### Pre-use checks

These are checks that are visual and tactile and check for identifiable obvious faults due to day to day wear and tear, failure or damage of equipment. This is to ensure the equipment is fit for purpose. All activity leaders are expected to carry out these as part of their professional practice.

Pre-use checks need not be recorded although if any item is removed for any reason it should be recorded. These checks should be carried out by competent staff in that activity area.

When using equipment loaned or hired from a provider, the same diligence should be applied in terms of pre-use checks by staff to ensure it is fit for use.

For more detail, refer to the equipment manufacturer's guidance and / or relevant NGBs or seek advice from a competent person and / or HLH Outdoor Education Officers.

### Recorded Thorough Examination

To comply with L77 and LOLER the 'thorough examination' should be carried out by a competent person who has the practical, theoretical knowledge and experience to enable them to detect defects or weakness and assess their importance in relation to safety and continued use. In most instances a qualified activity leader would be appropriate for this however where in doubt or for further guidance please contact HLH Outdoor Education Officers.

### Periodic Unscheduled Inspections

If at any stage an unexpected or abnormal use has occurred or is suspected to have occurred, an additional recorded thorough examination should be carried out. Examples of this could include, a storage issue (with a contaminant), miss-use, a fall, association with other damaged equipment, exceptional use over and above the norm such as a charity abseil or interim damage and concerns raised as part of the pre-use checks. If in doubt remove the item from use and mark for further checks by a competent person.

### Summary

Records of a thorough examination / inspection checks must be kept for all 'Trackable' 'Safety Chain Equipment' and PPE as well as for larger items of group equipment which have a role to play in the safe operation of an activity. If in doubt, seek guidance.

## 5.10 Repairs, Quarantine and Disposal

### Repairs / Quarantine

Any equipment that needs repair or during the pre-use check has been raised as a concern, should be removed from the main stores area, marked appropriately and stored separately (quarantine) until repaired or inspected by a competent person. All items that are deemed to require further checks, actions and or repair should have be clearly marked as such – red tape and or clear signage is the standard approach.

### Disposal (destruction)

Equipment should only be disposed of by a technically competent member of staff. Safety critical equipment beyond repair or unsafe for use, should be disposed of in a manner that means that it cannot be re-used by anybody. Equipment for disposal (destruction) should be made unusable and disposed of as soon as possible and labelled to annotate its status as soon as possible. Records should be kept of all equipment disposed of.

### Disposal (to another user)

Equipment if no longer required can be passed to another party within THC / HLH or out with THC / HLH. Equipment should be fit for purpose and in a safe state. On hand over, a written agreement should be signed by both parties

detailing the state of the equipment and confirming that the receiving party adopts full liability for the received equipment. This agreement should be scanned and saved.

#### Secondary Use (items down-graded)

If equipment is used for a secondary purpose such as a rope for team building activities, it must be clearly labelled and stored separately to avoid misuse. This could be by removing straps or other integral parts or marking them with red paint. If there is a risk a down-graded piece of equipment could be mistaken for a functioning piece of safety critical equipment it should be removed and destroyed.

### 5.11 Remote facility Inspection and Reporting Issues and Loans

Equipment located in THC and HLH establishments must be detailed on either a local electronic means or hard copy. Local arrangements should adhere to these procedures and manufactures guidance.

Monitoring visits will be carried out by HLH Outdoor Education Officers who will complete an HLH Adventure Activity Equipment Monitoring Report on the inspection of the equipment store. This should highlight any deficiencies and must involve the rescheduling of a further inspection / supply of evidence of compliance. This will be brought to the attention of the establishment SMT. Where compliance is not achieved the establishment management will be advised.

### 5.12 Equipment Issues and Loans

Recording needs to be proportional to the item and person loaning or hiring. E.g. if it is for internal students from a school stores borrowing DofE equipment then a simple sign out sheet would be appropriate. If equipment is being loaned / hired to a third party / more formal hire Booking Terms and Conditions (BTCs) may be appropriate.

Equipment should only be loaned to another party under the following conditions:

- it is fit for purpose
- it is issued to a competent person for use by competent people and in line with this guidance
- there is a written agreement (terms and conditions) and a finite loan period
- Pre-use checks are outlined in the load terms and conditions
- Technical equipment is only loaned to those who are qualified to use it (e.g. canoes are only loaned to the holder of an appropriate British Canoeing award)

## 6 Activity Specific Guidance

6.1	Archery.....	21
6.2	Bushcraft.....	22
6.3	Camping or Bothying.....	25
6.4	Caving.....	26
6.5	Coastal Rowing (Skiff) .....	27
6.6	Combined rock/water activities (coasteering, gorge walking, canyoning).....	28
6.7	Hill / Mountain Walking (Summer).....	30
6.8	Off Road and Trail Cycling (Day) .....	32
6.9	Off Road and Trail Cycling (Night).....	34
6.10	Orienteering.....	36
6.11	Paddlesport (canoeing, kayaking and stand up paddle boarding).....	37
6.12	Rock Climbing & Abseiling (rock, indoor/outdoor, single/multi-pitch) .....	39
6.13	Scrambling.....	40
6.14	Small Boat Sailing.....	41
6.15	Snow Sports – on Piste.....	43
6.16	Swimming in Natural Waters .....	44
6.17	Water Margin Activity.....	46
6.18	Weaselling.....	50

## 6.1 Archery

<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GNAS or Archery GB Coach or Instructor (both valid for 3 years, renewal within 4 years otherwise invalid)</li> <li>Site specific accreditation</li> <li>Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Indoor or Outdoor Target and Flu Flu Archery
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:12 max with a second competent member of staff. Ratio depending on risk assessment (PEA). See Archery GB website for more guidance.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of supervision should be dictated by the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>All aspects of the planned venue should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, nature of facility, weather, temperature, wind</li> <li>A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the activity</li> <li>Prior knowledge of the area is essential. Especially public and other user access.</li> <li>Knowledge of establishment emergency procedures and emergency access</li> <li>Prior knowledge of the group is essential (cognitive ability, medical or physical issues)</li> <li>Depending on the risk assessment a motorised support craft or immediate access to motorised rescue craft may be required (see HLH generic Archery risk assessment)</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile communications</li> <li>Whistle</li> <li>Full details on all party members</li> <li>Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>A means of marking the activity area</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>Leader/s possess appropriate activity competence / qualification and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>Appropriate clothing and equipment worn by all as required</li> </ul>

## 6.2 Bushcraft

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Sessions involving fire, tools, shelter building or foraging etc., normally in a woodland or open area.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave no Trace (LNT) Trainer</li> <li>• Level 3 Forest School Leader</li> <li>• IOL Bushcraft Competency Certificate</li> <li>• Any other appropriate Bushcraft certificate / training</li> <li>• Site specific accreditation</li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-16 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned activity area/s, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Permission to use land / light fires may be required</li> <li>• Sites should be left in a good condition when leaving</li> <li>• Hygiene arrangements should be considered when selecting foods and ability to sanitise</li> <li>• Equipment (sharps and fire lighting etc) should be in good working order, training should be given in the use of all equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Fire blanket and water supply</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing and footwear appropriate for environment and conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' - alternatives</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. qualification / accreditation and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the planned activity</li> <li>• Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all</li> </ul>

Onsite/Offsite Basic/Advanced	Planned Activity							Requirements		
	Outdoor Classroom Activities	Foraging & shelter building	Staff led fire	Pupil fire lighting	Tree climbing	Knives	Saws/ Loppers and Axes	EVOLVE required?	Specific training needed	Ratios
On-site Bushcraft (Basic)	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	1:15
On-site Bushcraft	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	1:12
Off-site Bushcraft (Basic no fire)	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓ (non-adventurous)	✗	1:12
Off-site Adventurous Bushcraft (Basic with fire)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓ (Adventurous)	✓	1:12
Off-site Adventurous Bushcraft (Advanced)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓ (Adventurous)	✓	1:4

**Knives and tools:** There should be one qualified person present for every 4 knives or tools that are in use at any one time

#### **Bushcraft Definitions:**

- **On-site:** In the grounds of your establishment where you will have immediate access to first aid and the emergency services
- **Off-site:** Outside the grounds of your establishment where you may be further from help. Depending on the venue your activity may become adventurous purely based on location. Please consult the guidance on Hill/ Mountain Walking above or contact HLH Outdoor Education for more information.
- **Foraging and shelter building:** Foraging for berries and edible plants etc. (never eat anything unless you are completely sure it is edible). Shelter building either using tarps or improvised with branches etc.
- **Staff led fire:** where a member of staff is directly involved in lighting a single fire and will manage it. This could be an open fire or a Kelly Kettle etc. Please also see note below on training.
- **Pupil fire lighting:** where pupils are involved in lighting fires, there could be several fires lit at once.
- **Knives:** the use of knives to make kindling and feather sticks etc.
- **EVOLVE:** stating if an EVOLVE would be required and if it should be adventurous or not
- **Specific training needed:** stating if a specific training course is required or not. Staff should only lead activities that are within the scope of their qualification. Where no specific training is required the Head of Establishment should ensure they have seen evidence of competence in the proposed activity and evidence is retained.
- **Ratios:** stating the maximum permissible in ideal conditions, **in reality we expect ratios to be lower after the people, environment and activity have been fully risk assessed.** The ratios in this document apply to young people, adult only groups may operate to higher ratios.

The **1:4 ratio for advanced bushcraft** only applies to people taking part in specific advanced bushcraft activities (i.e. those involving knives or tools) and may be a subgroup of a larger group e.g. a group of 16 young people with two leaders, a leader can work with four young people doing knife work whilst the other leader is involved in shelter building with the other 12. The group of 4 can be rotated.



### 6.3 Camping or Bothying

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Camping, either wild or in designated campsite. Normally only in summer conditions. Bothying in remote bothies.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
Suitable award for environment and mode of travel
Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-10 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Contingencies should include, alternative / escape routes and discussed by all leaders in advance.</li> <li>• Camping sites should be appropriate to the group and should be chosen taking the Access Legislation into account. Sites should be booked if appropriate.</li> <li>• Sites should be left in a good condition when leaving.</li> <li>• Hygiene arrangements should include appropriate toileting and washing facilities</li> <li>• Camping equipment (tents, stoves etc) should be in good working order, training should be given in the use of stoves particularly re-fuelling.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Appropriate spare clothing within the group</li> <li>• Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>• Torch and spare batteries</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleeping bag (appropriate for expected temperature) and mat</li> <li>• Spare clothes</li> <li>• Food and drink</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' - alternatives</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Where remotely supervising a group a remote supervision plan exists and is communicated to all</li> </ul>

## 6.4 Caving

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Caving in Horizontal Caves
<b>Appropriate Qualifications – venue and activity depending</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site specific accreditation</li> <li>• Local Cave and Mine Leader L1 / L2 (including named on site familiarisation)</li> <li>• Cave Instructor Certificate</li> <li>• Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:4-12 depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned route should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides.</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event</li> <li>• Details of safe water level markers</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the route is essential</li> <li>• Communication e.g. mobile coverage in area around cave entrance</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Map of the area, compass, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Safety and spare kit (in dry bag) to include: spare light, spare batteries, group shelter and survival bag</li> <li>• Rigging kit as necessary</li> <li>• Emergency food</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helmets must be worn for all activities</li> <li>• Appropriate waterproof head light</li> <li>• Appropriate clothing for the activity and weather</li> <li>• Appropriate footwear</li> <li>• PPE should be in fit for purpose and appropriate for the nature of the activity e.g. caving belt and helmet</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather or high water days, these need to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the day</li> <li>• Escape routes</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate and warm equipment worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Effective communication plan</li> </ul>

## 6.5 Coastal Rowing (Skiff)

<p><b>Appropriate Qualifications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>British Rowing - Fixed Seat Rowing Coach or Skiff Cox</li> <li>Coastal sailing or sea kayaking qualification (in order to demonstrate tidal and weather influences)</li> <li>Site specific accreditation</li> <li>Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Description/ Environment</b></p> <p>Coastal Rowing in St. Ayles Skiffs or similar</p>
<p><b>Appropriate Ratios</b></p> <p>1:8 max with a safety boat. Ratio depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See British Rowing '<a href="#">RowSafe</a>' for more guidance.</p>
<p><b>Planning Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>All aspects of the planned venue should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides</li> <li>A detailed weather and tide forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>Details of the planned venue, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>Prior knowledge of the area is essential. Especially where operating around tidal and areas affected by winds and currents, rock features, reefs etc Knowledge of any ferries / shipping lanes may be appropriate</li> <li>Prior knowledge of the group is essential (swimming ability, medical or physical issues)</li> <li>A communication plan needs to be in place (for emergencies)</li> <li>Safe manual handling should be practiced with sufficient hands before access to water</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leader Essential Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile communications (VHF and flares radio will be required for coastal rowing)</li> <li>Full details on all party members</li> <li>Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>Group shelter and survival bag</li> <li>Spare clothing, hats, gloves as necessary</li> <li>Emergency food and a hot drink</li> <li>Waterproofed torch with flash mode</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participant Essential Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All group members must wear an approved buoyancy aid or life jacket.</li> <li>Clothing appropriate to activity and conditions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Quality Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>Ability to gain assistance from motorised rescue craft</li> <li>Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather prior to or during activities, these need to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the day</li> <li>Leader/s possess appropriate activity competence / qualification (knowledge of winds, tides, currents, emergencies, communication with other craft etc) and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>Skiff / boat fitted with appropriate safety equipment (anchor, bailer, flares, shelter, VHF, warm drinks etc)</li> <li>All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>Appropriate PPE is worn and fitted correctly, warm equipment worn by all as required</li> </ul>

## 6.6 Combined rock/water activities (coasteering, gorge walking, canyoning)

<b>Appropriate Qualifications – venue and activity depending (combination of rock and water qualifications required)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Canoeing Instructor, Coach or Leader Award</li> <li>• RYA Assistant Instructor, Dinghy Instructor, Keelboat Instructor, Multihull Instructor, Senior Instructor, Yachtmaster,</li> <li>• Cave Leader L1/2/3 / SPA / MLS / MIA / MIC / BMG</li> <li>• Tech Canyon , Canyon Leader</li> <li>• Site specific accreditation</li> <li>• Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Gorges, canyons or coastal coasteering sites. Normally takes place in summer months.
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:4-12 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">ALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned route should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides.</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the tide state and currents should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Paddlesport PPE equipment should be in good working order and appropriate for the activity.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the venue / route (tides, currents, escape routes and specific hazard) is essential.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of group (swimming ability, medical or physical issues)</li> <li>• Communication e.g. VHF radio, mobile coverage in area etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications, VHF and flares if assessed as necessary</li> <li>• Map of the area, compass, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter and survival / bivi bag</li> <li>• Repair kit</li> <li>• Safety kit for water rescues (knife, saw, karabiners, pulleys, slings, prussic as appropriate)</li> <li>• Emergency food and a hot drink</li> <li>• Throw line and knowledge on how to use it (regular practise)</li> <li>• Waterproof torch with flashing mode (more than one in the group)</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All group members must wear an approved buoyancy aid unless considered by the leader to not be appropriate</li> <li>• Helmets must be worn for all activities</li> <li>• Appropriate clothing for the activity and weather, this may be wetsuit, warm clothing, dry cag etc</li> <li>• Appropriate footwear; trainers / wet boots etc</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' - alternatives</li> </ul>

- Water confidence whilst wearing a buoyancy aid should be assessed prior to commitment to a journey; ideally they should be able to swim 50m
- Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency
- All participants competent and capable of undertaking the activity
- Appropriate warm equipment worn / carried by all

## 6.7 Hill / Mountain Walking (Summer)

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Walking in the glens, moors, forests, hills and mountains of Scotland. Summer conditions (i.e. not when snow and ice prevail or are forecast.), may be on or off path, no planned rope work.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications- See matrix on following page for further details</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLH Walking &amp; Camping Local Accreditation</li> <li>• Mountain Training Lowland Leader</li> <li>• Mountain Training Hill and Moorland Leader</li> <li>• Mountain Training Mountain Leader</li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:4-12 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned walk should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Contingencies should include, alternative / escape routes and discussed by all leaders in advance.</li> <li>• DofE groups should be supervised by holders of an appropriate award for the terrain.</li> <li>• DofE Assessors should possess a relevant NGB, or may provide evidence of experience if not qualified</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)</li> <li>• Paper and Pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter</li> <li>• Appropriate spare clothing within the group</li> <li>• Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>• Torch and spare batteries</li> <li>• Rope if ground dictates (used within level of remit and competence)</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual survival bags for higher or remote walks</li> <li>• Clothing and footwear appropriate for environment and conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate equipment for likely weather and terrain worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Where remotely supervising a group a remote supervision plan exists and is communicated to all</li> </ul>

	Local Area (Non- Adventurous)	Lowland (Adventurous)	Hill and Moorland (Adventurous)	Mountain (Adventurous)
Geographical limits	Within an urban/ residential area (e.g. within a town or village limits) or within an area actively managed for recreation (e.g. a country park or forest) that is familiar to the leader	Lowland countryside and woodland Normally below 400m elevation	Areas enclosed by well-defined geographical or man-made boundaries such as classified roads (areas that merge with mountain regions and do not have well defined boundaries are excluded) Normally below 600m elevation	Mountainous or remote country in the UK There should be no planned use of ropes in your journey
Terrain Type	Pavements, roads or man-made paths or tracks that are mapped and clearly visible on the ground	Paths or tracks that are mapped and clearly visible on the ground	Open, uncultivated, non-mountainous high or remote country known variously as upland, moor, bog, fell, hill or down	May contain unavoidable steep and rocky ground where walkers are dependent upon themselves for immediate help
Specialist Navigation	May require a simple trail map, should not need use of compass	Map and compass may be required	Map and compass may be required	Map and compass will normally be required
Distance from help	Not more than 2km away from a key access point such as a car park, lay-by or populated area.	Not more than 3km away from a key access point such as a car park, lay-by or populated area.	Areas of remoteness that are easily exited in a few hours, returning to a refuge or an accessible road (6 km from road at furthest point)	As appropriate for group, activity and weather
Other notes	The area should have known good mobile signal. Must not include wild camping or remote supervision	Walks must not cross any hazardous terrain (e.g. steep slopes/ rocky hillsides)	You must not walk in areas where movement on steep or rocky terrain is required (in either a planned or unplanned situation)	River Crossings should be avoided where possible
Qualification / maximum ratio	No specific qualification required / 1:15 (or 1:20 for adult only groups)	Lowland Leader or HLH Assessed Competency / 1:12 HLH Walking and Camping Award / 1:12 (highlighted boxes only)	Hill and Moorland Leader or HLH Assessed Competency / 1:10	Mountain Leader Summer /1:8

## 6.8 Off Road and Trail Cycling (Day)

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Any cycling that does not predominantly take place on tarmacked roads, pavements or designated cycle paths (such as the National Cycle Network). This could include forest roads and trails, hills, mountains, moorland and mountain bike trail centres (e.g. Wolftrax, Learnie Red Rocks or the Nevis Range Witch’s Trails)
<b>Appropriate Qualifications – route depending</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMBLA TCL or MBL</li> <li>• British Cycling Level 2 or 3 Mountain Bike Leader Award</li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2 - 10 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned ride should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Contingencies should include, alternative / escape routes and discussed by all leaders in advance.</li> <li>• Routes should be appropriate to the group and should be chosen taking access legislation into account.</li> <li>• Cycling Equipment should be in good working order, training should be given in the use of bikes prior to leaving the meeting point.</li> <li>• Helmets and gloves or mitts must be worn at all times. Waterproofs if wet.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Appropriate spare food, drink and clothing within the group</li> <li>• Group shelter if appropriate (based on weather and environment)</li> <li>• Torch and spare batteries</li> <li>• Spare inner tubes, bike repair kit, pump</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike suitable for terrain and activity</li> <li>• Helmet, full finger gloves and protective glasses</li> <li>• Appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity and weather</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• All bikes ‘M’ checked before heading off</li> <li>• Plan ‘B’ - alternatives</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• Planned route and nature of trail appropriate for the whole group</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the activity – leader to assess competence of all riders before leaving trail head</li> <li>• Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all</li> </ul>



- Where remotely supervising a group a remote supervision plan exists and is communicated to all

## 6.9 Off Road and Trail Cycling (Night)

<b>Appropriate Qualifications – route depending</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMBLA TCL or MBL plus BC Night Leader Award</li> <li>• British Cycling Level 2 or 3 Mountain Bike Leader Award plus BC Night Leader Award</li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Clearly defined trails appropriate to leaders qualification and group ability. Activity will take place in the hours of twilight or darkness. Activity should not take place if the forecasted temperature is less than 3°C or there is a foreseeable risk of encountering snow or ice.
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
2:2 – 7/8* depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more. *Where the second competent person does not hold the BC Night Leader Award the total party size can not exceed 9, i.e. the qualified leader plus 8 others.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• In addition to the qualified leader there should be at least one other competent adult in the group, this should be someone known to the leader who has the technical skills for the planned activity.</li> <li>• Participants must be competent at riding similar terrain in daytime</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned ride should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, e.g. terrain, season, weather</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Contingencies should include alternative / escape routes and discussed by all leaders in advance.</li> <li>• Routes should be clearly defined and appropriate to the group, with access legislation considered.</li> <li>• Cycling equipment must be fit for purpose, leader must verify participants understand how to operate all equipment, including lights, before setting off.</li> <li>• Waterproofs jackets should be worn if raining and trousers considered.</li> <li>• A specific risk assessment to be completed for any riding on roads. If riding on road all bikes must be road legal (front and rear lights, rear red reflector and amber reflectors on front and rear of each pedal), and all riders must wear a high visibility vest.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Survival bag</li> <li>• Appropriate size or number of group shelters within the group</li> <li>• Appropriate spare clothing within the group (give thought to extra insulated layers for casualties)</li> <li>• Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>• Own lights and spares for group</li> <li>• Spare inner tubes, bike repair kit, pump, any tools required to fit lights within the group</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helmets, full finger gloves and protective glasses</li> <li>• Bike suitable for terrain and activity</li> <li>• Bike specific light fitted to handlebar and helmet</li> </ul>

- Appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity and weather

#### Quality Indicators

- A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)
- Activity complies with British Cycling document '[Night Leader Award, Mountain Bike Leadership, Remit and guidelines](#)'
- All bikes 'M' checked before heading off, all other equipment checked and fit for purpose
- Plan in place to keep group together (e.g. buddies with matching coloured glowsticks or slap sticks, back marker etc.)
- Plan in place, and communicated to all, for lost riders- could be written in simple bullet points on cards given to group
- Plan 'B' - alternatives
- Leader/s possess appropriate NGB award and can demonstrate currency
- Planned route and nature of trail appropriate for the whole group
- All participants competent and capable of completing the activity – leader to assess competence of all riders before leaving trail head
- Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all
- Direct supervision only after sunset, no remote supervision

## 6.10 Orienteering

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Orienteering on permanent, temporary and improvised courses.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hill Walking award appropriate to environment</li> <li>• British Orienteering (as appropriate for nature of activity, see <a href="https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/">https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/</a>):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teaching Orienteering (Part 1, Part 2)</li> <li>○ Assistant Coach Level 1</li> <li>○ Coach Level 2 or 3</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:4-12 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather, catching features</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Contingencies could include             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lost participants (should they operate in pairs / groups)</li> <li>○ Issue a whistle to each group</li> <li>○ Are there natural catching features such as roads, tracks, fences etc to identify limits of activity area)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Minimum of two staff at any activity</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)</li> <li>• Paper and Pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter</li> <li>• Appropriate spare clothing within the group</li> <li>• Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>• Torch and spare batteries</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistle (or method of communication)</li> <li>• Watch (or method of telling time)</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of undertaking the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Where remotely supervising a plan exists and is communicated to all – who know what to do in an emergency</li> </ul>

### 6.11 Paddlesport (canoeing, kayaking and stand up paddle boarding)

<p><b>Appropriate Qualifications – venue and route depending, all can be sea kayak, inland kayak, canoe (open water or white water), surf, SUP, competition, freestyle, polo, slalom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant British Canoeing Instructor, Coach or Leader Award and Endorsements</li> <li>• Site specific accreditation</li> <li>• As there are so many permutations please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Description/ Environment</b></p> <p>Paddlesport in fresh or sea water defined as Very Sheltered, Sheltered or Moderate by British Canoeing.</p>
<p><b>Appropriate Ratios</b></p> <p>1:2-12 depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a>, in EVOLVE Resources, for more. <b>There should always be at least 2 craft on the water.</b></p>
<p><b>Planning Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned route should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides.</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Paddlesport equipment should be in good working order. All craft should have appropriate buoyancy air bags to allow the boat to float in the event of capsize.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the venue or route is important. Especially where working around tidal areas where rip currents and flows may change. River levels should be checked prior to going onto the river.</li> <li>• Have prior knowledge of your group, especially if there are any medical or physical issues.</li> <li>• Communication e.g. VHF radio (where appropriate), mobile coverage in area etc.</li> <li>• Surfing groups should always have one person on shore to observe where everybody is and the instructor should ensure that the conditions do not go above their own levels of experience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leader Essential Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications, VHF if on the sea</li> <li>• Map of the area, compass, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter and survival / bivi bag</li> <li>• Appropriate spare hats, gloves and clothing for the group</li> <li>• Repair kit</li> <li>• Safety kit for river rescues (knife, saw, karabiners, pulleys, slings, prussic as appropriate)</li> <li>• Food and a hot drinks as required</li> <li>• Tow line or means of towing.</li> <li>• Throw line and knowledge on how to use it (regular practise)</li> <li>• Waterproofed torch</li> <li>• Spare paddles should be carried where appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participant Essential Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All group members must wear an approved buoyancy aid or life jacket.</li> </ul>

- All canoes and kayaks must have end grab loops, bow and stern, so as not to trap a hand, but just big enough that a karabiner can easily be attached.
- Kayak footrests must be in place, with a bulkhead footrest for white water environments.
- Spray decks should be worn in appropriate environments
- Helmets should be worn for all moving water, and appropriately for other activities (e.g. where capsize is likely in shallow water, or there is a risk of head injury from rescues or games)
- Each canoe should have a painter or a swim line and a bailer
- Appropriate clothing for the activity and weather, this may be waterproofs, wetsuit, warm clothing, wind proof clothing, dry suit etc
- Appropriate footwear, trainers, wellies, sandals, wet boots etc with warm socks if required.

#### Quality Indicators

- A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)
- Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather or high water days, these need to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the day
- Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency
- All participants competent and capable of completing the activity
- Appropriate warm equipment worn / carried by all
- Where remotely supervising a group a remote supervision plan exists and is communicated to all
- Consideration given to changing area

## 6.12 Rock Climbing & Abseiling (rock, indoor/outdoor, single/multi-pitch)

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Climbing on natural or artificial rock in summer conditions.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The appropriate Mountain Training award for the level / nature of activity, see <a href="http://www.mountain-training.org">http://www.mountain-training.org</a></li> <li>British Mountain Guide</li> <li>Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:1-12 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>All aspects of the planned activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain (including access and egress), season, weather</li> <li>A detailed weather forecast (and tide if coastal) for outside activities should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>Details of the activity, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>For more remote areas where mobile coverage is limited a plan must exist for gaining help.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile communications</li> <li>Full details on all party members</li> <li>First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)</li> <li>Paper and Pencil</li> <li>Group shelter, map, compass etc (as required based on venue)</li> <li>Appropriate spare clothing within the group</li> <li>Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>Torch and spare batteries</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helmet (if outdoors, indoors as per risk assessment) and Harness</li> <li>Clothing and footwear appropriate for environment and conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>All staff and participants competent and capable of completing the activity – climbs are of an appropriate grade to include all participants</li> <li>All participants clear on wearing of helmets, safe areas, equipment storage areas</li> <li>All participants demonstrating best practice safety checks and belaying</li> <li>All equipment fitted and worn correctly</li> </ul>

## Scrambling

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Scrambling on recognised routes within the UK in summer conditions. Ropes may be used where required and leader appropriately qualified.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The appropriate Mountain Training award for the level / nature of activity, see <a href="http://www.mountain-training.org">http://www.mountain-training.org</a></li> <li>British Mountain Guide</li> <li>Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-6 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">ALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>All aspects of the activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., terrain, season, weather</li> <li>A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event (where relevant).</li> <li>Details of the planned activity, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile communications</li> <li>Full details on all party members</li> <li>First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)</li> <li>Paper and Pencil</li> <li>Technical climbing equipment as required</li> <li>Group shelter, map, compass etc (as required based on venue)</li> <li>Appropriate spare clothing within the group</li> <li>Appropriate spare food and drink within the group</li> <li>Torch and spare batteries</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helmet</li> <li>Clothing and footwear appropriate for environment and conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>Plan 'B' - alternatives</li> <li>Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>All participants appropriately equipped and fitted for the activity</li> <li>All staff and participants demonstrating best practice safety checks and movement</li> </ul>



### 6.13 Small Boat Sailing

<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RYA Assistant Instructor, Dinghy Instructor, Keelboat Instructor, Multihull Instructor, Senior Instructor</li> <li>• RYA Level 2 powerboat as a minimum for rescue boat cover</li> <li>• Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-12 depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more. <b>There should always be at least 2 craft on the water, a rescue boat that can assist a craft or multiple capsizes should be available.</b>
<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Sailing in dinghies, keelboats or small multihull (e.g. Dart 16) boats on inland fresh water, sea lochs or open sea.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned route should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides.</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast and tide states for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Sailing equipment should be in good working order. All craft should have appropriate buoyancy air bags / intact compartments to allow the boat to float in the event of capsize</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the venue or route is important. Especially where working around tidal areas where rip currents and flows may change. Have prior knowledge of group, especially if there are any medical or physical issues.</li> <li>• Communication e.g. VHF radio, mobile coverage in area etc.</li> <li>• Capsize drill should be well practised in appropriate craft.</li> <li>• All craft should be able to be reefed afloat (with the exception of single handers)</li> <li>• In tidal areas all craft that can carry an anchor easily should do so.</li> <li>• If dinghy cruising then consider all options carefully.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications, VHF and flares if on the open sea</li> <li>• Map / chart of the area, compass, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members (inc knowledge of swimming ability)</li> <li>• Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter and survival bag</li> <li>• Appropriate spare hats, gloves and clothing for the group</li> <li>• Repair kit</li> <li>• Food and a hot drink where appropriate</li> <li>• Tow line or means of towing.</li> <li>• Throw line and knowledge on how to use it (regular practise)</li> <li>• Engine tools and spares (where required), oars for back up</li> <li>• Anchor where appropriate</li> <li>• Waterproofed torch with flash mode</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>

- All group members must wear an approved buoyancy aid or life jacket.
- Participants should be dressed appropriately, taking weather and the risk of immersion into account
- Each craft should have a painter and a bailer
- Spare paddles should be carried unless a removable dagger board is in the boat.
- Appropriate footwear, trainers, wellies, sandals, wet boots etc with warm socks if required.
- Helmets should be worn with beginner groups

#### Quality Indicators

- A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)
- Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather or unsuitable tide days, these need to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the day
- Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency
- All participants competent and capable of completing the activity
- Appropriate warm equipment worn / carried by all

## 6.14 Snow Sports – on Piste

<b>Appropriate Qualifications – route depending</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BASI L2, L3, AST (Alpine, Board, Nordic, Telemark – whichever applicable)</li> <li>• SSS ASL / Snowboard Leader</li> <li>• SSS Instructor (3 levels available)</li> <li>• Contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Skiing on snow or dry slopes, within defined piste area or on prepared cross country tracks (e.g. Glenmore XC Ski Trails).
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:6-12 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., slope nature, snow conditions, weather</li> <li>• A detailed weather and snow condition forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Snowsport equipment should be in good working order.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications</li> <li>• Piste map, whistle, or map of the area (Nordic)</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter (for Nordic)</li> <li>• Appropriate spare hats, gloves, goggles for the group</li> <li>• Repair kit</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helmets, gloves or mitts</li> <li>• Appropriate clothing and equipment for the activity and weather</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' - alternatives</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of undertaking the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate warm equipment worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Where remotely supervising a group a remote supervision plan exists and is communicated to and understood by all</li> </ul>

## 6.15 Swimming in Natural Waters

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Swimming in open water no more than 200m from shore, April to October.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications (combination of coaching and safety award required)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STA Level 2 Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching</li> <li>• Level 2 British Open Water Swimming Coach</li> <li>• Triathlon coaching award L2 or L3</li> <li>• RLSS National Vocational Open Water Lifeguard</li> <li>• RLSS National Vocational Beach Lifeguard Qualification</li> <li>• RLSS National Water Safety Margin Management Programme Levels 3</li> <li>• Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:8 max with a second competent person on shore or afloat in rescue craft as determined by risk assessment. Ratio depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned venue should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours, tides.</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast, tide state (where tidal) and water temperature for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>• Details of the planned venue, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the venue is essential. Especially where operating around tidal areas where rip currents and flows may change.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the group is essential (swimming ability, medical or physical issues)</li> <li>• A communication plan needs to be in place (for emergencies)</li> <li>• Any areas of pollution or restrictions from obstacles, access or landowners.</li> <li>• Access / egress areas should be checked by competent person before group enters</li> <li>• Thorough briefing of area for swimming should be given prior to getting in the water</li> <li>• All should be confident swimmers</li> <li>• All staff should be aware of cold immersion shock and what to do</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile communications (in leader tow bag)</li> <li>• Map / plan of the area, whistle (in leader tow bag)</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• Sun cream (high factor)</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Group shelter and survival bag (on shore)</li> <li>• Spare goggles, hats, gloves as necessary (in leader tow bag)</li> <li>• Emergency food and a hot drink (on shore)</li> <li>• Waterproofed torch with flash mode</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming Tow Float</li> </ul>

- Appropriate clothing for the activity and weather (and post activity), this may be wetsuit, warm clothing, waterproof cags, dry suit etc
- Appropriate footwear, trainers, sandals, wet boots etc with warm socks if required (consider walking to / from water's edge)

#### Quality Indicators

- A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)
- Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather or high water days, these need to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the day
- Leader/s possess appropriate activity competence / qualification and can demonstrate currency
- Support by water craft (kayak / motorised craft) where assessed as necessary
- All participants competent and capable of completing the activity
- Appropriate warm equipment worn by all
- Consideration given to changing area

## 6.16 Water Margin Activity

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
An activity that takes place in or near any body of open water that, at its deepest, is deeper than the knee height of the participants (ankle height if flowing) AND there is the intention to enter that water or a significant risk that a participant, or staff member, will accidentally or deliberately enter the water.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The exact training required will be identified by the risk assessment or by consultation with HLH Outdoor Education staff but may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RLSS National Water Safety Management Programme Level 3</li> <li>Mountain Leader Award (assessed)</li> <li>Mountain Leader Award Training</li> <li>British Canoeing Foundation Safety and Rescue Training</li> <li>British Canoeing White Water Safety and Rescue Training</li> <li>RLSS Pool Lifeguard (NPLQ)</li> <li>RLSS Beach Lifeguard (NVBLQ)</li> <li>Similar training which includes an element of both dynamic risk assessment and practical exercises in the water- contact HLH Outdoor Education for assistance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-8 depending on risk assessment. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratios and risk assessment should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils- number, age, medical needs, behavioural or emotional needs, experience and knowledge, ability to follow instructions</li> <li>Staff/ volunteers- staff to pupil ratio, training and competence, familiarity with group, knowledge of activity and venue, authority to give instructions</li> <li>Members of the public- likelihood to interfere or misunderstand what you are doing, other water users</li> </ul> </li> <li>Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge- have you visited the site before, do you have access to information about it</li> <li>Coastal- times of high and low water, speed and direction of tidal flow, sea state, risk of being cut off by incoming tide, rip tides</li> <li>Lochs and inland waters- gradient of bank, depth, temperature, water quality</li> <li>Rivers- gradient of bank, depth, flow rate, obstacles downstream (strainers, boulders etc.)</li> <li>Beach- risk of sand dunes collapsing</li> <li>Weather- wind speed and direction, temperature, precipitation</li> </ul> </li> <li>Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning- objectives, equipment, briefing, plan B</li> <li>Supervision- ratio, qualifications</li> <li>Emergency- equipment, communication, access to roads, contingency plan, 24/7 contact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>All aspects of the planned activity should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants,</li> <li>A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the event.</li> <li>Details of the planned activity including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile communications</li> <li>Compass, map, whistle</li> <li>Full details on all party members</li> </ul>

- First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity)
- Paper and Pencil
- Group shelter
- Appropriate spare clothing within the group
- Appropriate spare food and drink within the group
- Torch and spare batteries

#### Participant Essential Equipment

- As appropriate for activity

#### Quality Indicators

- A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)
- Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification i.e. HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency
- All participants competent and capable of undertaking the activity
- Appropriate equipment worn / carried by all

### Example scenarios

Below you will find examples of scenarios that would and would not be considered to include a water margin activity. The table also states if each activity requires additional training and/ or specific informed consent.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of examples but simply to give a starting point for considering your own activity. The final decision on whether an excursion includes water margin activity should be made by the head of establishment, with support from HLH Outdoor Education as necessary.

	EVOLVE required?	Adventurous EVOLVE?	Additional Training Required?
Walking along the canal side in Inverness with S3 group	✓	✗	✗
Rockpooling with a group of P3s, at low tide when the sea will be a good distance away from the rockpools on a beach that is escapable at any tide level.	✓	✗	✗
Pond dipping with P7s, at a known venue, within the local village and only a 10 minute walk from the school where ponds are ~20cm deep	✓	✗	✗
Beach visit to play rounder's with S2 class with no intention of going in the water and no concerns that any pupils will disobey instructions	✓	✗	✗
Beach visit with P5 class to play games and do a little paddling no deeper than knee height	✓	✓	✓ (e.g. RLSS National Water Safety Management Programme Level 3 or BC Foundation Safety and Rescue Training)
Geography field studies trip with S4, intention to carry out river investigation work in rivers and burns involving pupils entering the water beyond knee height.	✓	✓	✓ (e.g. RLSS National Water Safety Management Programme Level 3 or BC White Water Safety and Rescue Training)
DofE group at the end of a hot training day in June cooling off in a river approx. 5m wide and 0.75m deep	✓	✓ Must include water margin activity as well as walk	✓ (e.g. RLSS National Water Safety Management Programme Level 3 or BC White Water Safety and Rescue Training)



The key points to considering when deciding if an activity is a water margin activity or not are intention and risk. Simply walking alongside a canal with a group of young people would not be considered a water margin activity. There is no intention to enter the water and the risk of a group member either accidentally or deliberately going in the water is low.

Therefore, for the purposes of EVOLVE this would not be considered a water margin activity. However, it would still be appropriate to mention the canal in your risk assessment and include appropriate control measures (e.g. group will be warned of the dangers of the canal, no paddling or swimming in the canal will be allowed etc.).

Your EVC and Head of Establishment should be able to help advise you about what trips from your establishment have worked well before and what they would recommend for your trip. The HLH Outdoor Education team is also available to answer questions from EVCs and Establishment Heads.

Outdoor Education Advisor's Panel National Guidance produce two documents you may find helpful- [7i Group Safety at Water Margins](#) and [7o Natural water bathing](#) which are available from <https://oeapng.info/downloads/specialist-activities-and-visits/>

The following websites may also provide useful information:

<https://www.respectthewater.com/> - RNLI Respect the Water campaign

<https://rnli.org/safety/beach-safety> -RNLI beach safety advice

<https://www.rospace.com/leisure-safety/water/> -RoSPA water safety advice

<http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide> -UK Hydrographic Office tide times, free for next 6 days

## 6.17 Weaselling

<b>Description/ Environment</b>
Journey over, round and under large rocks or boulders using a combination of techniques from caving and scrambling.
<b>Appropriate Qualifications – venue and activity depending</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site specific accreditation (including named on site familiarisation) – no planned use of rope</li> <li>• Local Cave and Mine Leader L1 / L2 (including named on site familiarisation)</li> <li>• Cave Instructor Certificate</li> <li>• Please contact <a href="mailto:outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com">outdoor.education@highlifehighland.com</a> for further guidance if you have any queries on appropriate qualification for venue or activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Ratios</b>
1:2-8 depending on risk assessment, venue and activity. See <a href="#">AALA Group Size Guidance</a> , in EVOLVE Resources, for more.
<b>Planning Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios should reflect the People, Environment and Activity (PEA).</li> <li>• EVOLVE and risk assessment (including Site Specific Risk Assessment) must be in place- Generic and template RAs available on EVOLVE.</li> <li>• All aspects of the planned route should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the participants, i.e., venue, season, weather, daylight hours</li> <li>• A detailed weather forecast for the area should be obtained prior to the activity</li> <li>• Details of the planned route, including call out cut off time, must be left with 24/7 emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of the route is essential</li> <li>• Prior knowledge of group (medical or physical issues)</li> <li>• Communication plan needed; mobile coverage in the area etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Leader Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map of the area, compass, whistle</li> <li>• Full details on all party members</li> <li>• First aid kit (appropriate for the nature of activity) including paper and pencil</li> <li>• Safety and spare kit (in dry bag) to include: spare light, group shelter and survival bag</li> <li>• Rigging kit (16' sling) as necessary</li> <li>• Torch and spare batteries</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Essential Equipment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helmets must be worn for all activities</li> <li>• Appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity and weather</li> <li>• PPE should be fit for purpose and appropriate for the nature of the activity</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan, including contingencies (adequately detailed and communicated to the group)</li> <li>• Plan 'B' – alternatives for poor weather etc to have been communicated to 24/7 contacts prior to the activity</li> <li>• Escape routes, lost person procedure, meeting places</li> <li>• Leader/s possess appropriate activity qualification HLH Accreditation / NGB and can demonstrate currency</li> <li>• All participants competent and capable of completing the activity</li> <li>• Appropriate warm equipment worn / carried by all</li> <li>• Effective communication plan</li> </ul>

## 7 Change Log

Version	Date	Change	Made by
3.0	05/10/21	Full review and update of document. Incorporated documents 'Walking Activity Matrix 1.3', 'Bushcraft Activity Matrix 1.4', 'Deploying Adventurous Activity Instructors 1.4', 'Adventure Activity Operational Guidance v2', Adventure Activity Equipment Guidance V2.2. Removed sections on snorkelling and SCUBA diving, sculling and rowing and surfing, added sections on night biking and water margin activity. Moved content relating to External Providers to Excursions Guidance Document. Split First Aid and CPD into two sections and updated.	Mark McKerral