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Management Circular No 33

To Heads of all Educational Establishments

Safety in Educational Outdoor Activities – A Code of Practice

This management circular provides staff in educational establishments with the guidance and support to ensure our children and young people benefit from outdoor experiences. More information can be found in [Going Out There](#), the Scottish framework for safe practice in off-site visits.

In addition, staff embarking on outdoor activities must also adhere to the procedures and guidance in Management Circular 48 – School Excursions and Educational Visits.

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1 Introduction

Giving more children and young people access to outdoor learning and play opportunities provides invaluable life experiences which could not be achieved without 'going out there' more regularly and more frequently. This document provides user-friendly processes compliant with health and safety legislation and aims to increase opportunities for all Glasgow's children and young people to access their learning through off-site visits and the outdoors, improving learning outcomes for all.

This management circular provides staff in educational establishments with the guidance and support to ensure our children and young people benefit from outdoor experiences. More information can be found in [Going Out There](#), the Scottish framework for safe practice in off-site visits.

Procedures for the organisation and approval of Educational Outdoor Activities

1.1 Scope of Document

This document has been written to take account of the various National Governing Body Guidelines, United Kingdom Legislation and other Local Directives.

The document provides a framework of checks to follow when organising such outings and excursions. In this document, the term "*must*" is mandatory. The term "*should*" applies to guidance that is highly recommended and there must be a very well justified and documented reason for not following that advice.

This documentation does not remove the responsibility from the Head of Establishment to ensure that those agencies and persons responsible for organising or delivering the activity on their behalf are, suitably licensed or qualified at least to standards comparable with those described in this document.

This document should be read in conjunction with [MC48 for the management of School Excursions and Educational Visits](#).

Where the activity falls outside the scope of this document, or no appropriate qualification exists, advice should be obtained from the appropriate person designated by the Executive Director.

1.2 Risk Management

Participation in any adventurous outdoor activity will inevitably involve a physical and psychological challenge and can never be free of some risk.

The elimination of all risk is not possible but it is indefensible to expose young people to dangerous conditions and unnecessary risk and so there must always be an acceptable framework of safety. Any risk must be balanced against the benefit of undertaking that activity.

Current blank Risk Assessments can be found in the Health & Safety area on Glasgow Online.

1.3 Licensed Activities

The Health and Safety Executive is currently designated as the [Adventure Activities Licensing Authority \(AALA\)](#).

1.4 Procedures

It is recognised that many Heads of Establishment may have difficulty in the exercise of judgment on certain outdoor activities. In these circumstances, advice may be obtained from the person designated by the Executive Director.

A Risk Assessment must be undertaken for all activities by a competent person.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders or supervisors must have regard to the guidance and instruction as laid out for specific approved activities in [Section 3](#), and will find the service's '[School Excursions and Educational Visits](#)' ([Management Circular No. 48](#)) and its appropriate appendices, of further assistance. [Going Out There](#) " published in 2011 by SAPOE on behalf of the Scottish Government contains additional information.

1.5 The Role of Glasgow City Council's Outdoor Education Centre

Glasgow City Council has one outdoor education centre at Blairvadach which operates from a residential base near Helensburgh and a city centre base at the Pinkston Basin. Blairvadach and Pinkston Basin are licensed to operate under the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority and its own Health and Safety Policy which is approved by the Executive Director and forms part of the requirements for the issue of a license. www.blairvadach.org.uk

Annually Blairvadach supplies Glasgow City Council Insurance Section with standard comprehensive details of all adventurous activity undertaken at the centre. This removes the need for each establishment requesting and supplying the same information.

In circumstances where groups make use of an outdoor education centre operated by Education Services on a "*self programming*" basis the leaders must give careful consideration to any advice offered by the Head of the Centre or appointed representative, relating to the safe and proper conduct of outdoor activities.

1.6 Definitions and Exclusions

The **Head of Establishment** is defined as the person in charge of an establishment which is organising the activity and to which participants belong or are associated.

The **visit organiser** is defined as the person within the establishment who has the responsibility of organising the trip or visit.

The **group leader** is the person who has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the children and young people for the duration of the activity and/or visit.

The **activity provider** is defined as the individual or agency responsible for providing the trip or visit.

2 General guidance on safety during outdoor activities

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities

2.1 Activities involving exposure to strong sunlight

Consideration should be given to the length of time participants are exposed to strong sunlight and appropriate barrier creams and protective clothing should be worn.

The occurrence of severe sunburn should be reported on the [Glasgow City Council HANDS reporting system](#). It is important that such records are kept because the incidence of avoidable sunburn injuries may, in the future, have legal implications.

2.2 Activities in proximity of natural waters

The water environment presents a number of potential hazards of which any person responsible for the health and safety of others must be fully aware. These are too numerous to list, but it is essential that group leaders understand the significance of both the effect of wind and tide and the risk of hypothermia associated with undertaking activities in cold water especially on cold wet windy days.

Further information on water safety can be found at <http://www.rlss.org.uk/water-safety/>

Whenever there is a risk of young people getting into difficulty during activities in close proximity to areas of water consideration should be given to the hazards and reflected in a Risk Assessment.

2.3 First Aid

A valid Standard First Aid Certificate is essential for all GROUP leaders of activities. Careful consideration should be given to the type of first aid certificate and speed of access to emergency services.

All group leaders and supervisors should carry a First Aid kit appropriate to the seriousness of the activity for which they are responsible.

These awards must be kept up to date and valid (currently three years). Unless otherwise stated the level of first aid training required by the authority for all activities is a course comprising of 16 hours of instruction, which meets the requirements of the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. Course time formats vary with different providers.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/index.htm>

2.4 Equipment

An appropriate and effective inspection and defect reporting/repair monitoring system must be in place for *all* equipment used. All equipment must be inspected regularly for wear /damage and the results recorded. The manufacturers' advice as to lifespan must be adhered to.

At all times, participants should be clothed appropriate to the weather conditions, water temperature, personal ability and level/type of activity being undertaken. Appropriate head covering should be available to suit the conditions.

Kayaks and Canoes: Only craft supplied by recognised manufacturers built to current BSI/ENSI Code of Practice can be used. Use of the craft must conform to the manufacturers guidelines for use, and current BCU/ SCA guidelines with regard to buoyancy, footrests and end loops/toggles.

Helmets and Footwear: Appropriate helmets must be worn for all activities that present a risk of injuries to the head. Helmets must be inspected regularly for wear/damage and the results recorded. The manufacturers' advice as to helmet lifespan must be adhered to. At all times participants must wear

suitable footwear to prevent injury to the feet.

Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids (Personal Flotation Devices).

All participants must wear either a lifejacket or a buoyancy aid that conforms to current CE standards.

All equipment supplied must be fit for purpose and meet all the points above.

2.5 Weather & Tide

When undertaking any outdoor activity where participants are exposed to the weather, group leaders must always get a weather forecast and consider whether the activities should proceed if there is any indication that the weather is expected to be particularly inclement.

'Winter' means when winter conditions, including snow and ice, prevail or are forecast. This cannot be defined by a portion of the year. Summer means any conditions not covered under 'winter'

When working in tidal areas sea conditions and the state of the tide must always be considered prior to undertaking any activity.

2.6 Qualifications and Validity

There are four ways to demonstrate competence in this sector – NGB qualifications, equivalent qualifications, in-house training and competence through experience. Further detail on possible means of demonstrating competence are given in the HSE publication "[Guidance to the Licensing Authority on the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996](#)" (L77- HSE Books).

It has become the practice for most leadership and instructional awards to be subject to regular update procedures. This typically can involve: membership of the awarding body, the holding of a valid approved First Aid Certificate, periodic attendance at workshops and a logged personal commitment to participation in the activity and coaching practice. Consequently award holders receive regular updates on best practice, equipment developments, dissemination of lessons learned from "*near misses*", in all, leading to the better management of activities for groups in their care.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders can get further information concerning the conditions which limit the validity of any of the awards specified in this document by contacting the awarding organisations. Details of these awarding organisations are detailed under activity headings in [section 3](#).

2.7 Ticks

Due to the apparent increasing prevalence of sheep and deer ticks and with the possibility of developing Lyme Disease, leaders are advised to insist on full arm and leg cover when in areas of bracken and similar high grass.

A record of any tick bite should be kept.

In the case of a pupil receiving a tick bite, this information should be passed to the parent/carer to ensure they understand how to monitor the bite. Information on tick bites can be found here: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-tick-bites>

2.8 Activities involving the use of camping stoves

All stoves commonly used for cooking during expeditions can be dangerous if mishandled with a consequent risk of fire and burn injuries. All reasonable care must, therefore, be taken by all persons responsible for introducing young persons to the use of camping stoves so that any risk can be reduced as far as possible. The introduction to the use of such stoves by children and young people must be closely supervised.

It is essential that thorough training in a controlled environment is given before stoves are used during expeditions. As in all outdoor activities, consideration must be given to the venue used when camping with novices with due regard to the means of access to emergency services.

All staff must ensure that they are fully conversant with the safest method of using a particular type of stove, fully understand the method of operation, and the hazards associated with the fuels used.

The suitability or otherwise of a particular stove and fuel type must be evaluated within the risk assessment. An appreciation of this aspect is a feature of many outdoor leadership courses.

When introducing others to the use of camping stoves, the stoves should be in a stable position on a non-combustible surface, and where possible, out of doors. A suitable fire blanket must be close at hand.

When cooking on a stove, it is advised that it should be used at ground level, to minimise the possibility of scalds resulting from the spillage of hot liquids. The stove must also be in a position where fires resulting from misuse can be quickly smothered and controlled. The smothering and control of accidental fires must be demonstrated during instruction.

Spare fuel containers must be kept well clear of lighted stoves. When not in use they should be kept outside the tent or bothy whilst taking consideration of forecast weather conditions. All fuel containers must be appropriate for the fuel used and clearly labelled.

All persons using camping stoves must be made aware of the risks associated with flammable materials such as straw, dry grass, paper, cooking oil and cooking fat, tentage, sleeping bags and loose nylon clothing.

In the early stages of introducing children and young people to the use of stoves, the group leader must control the spare fuel supply, and closely supervise the process of refueling, and reigniting. These are occasions when dangerous incidents often occur.

Children and young people must be fully trained and practised before being permitted to refuel a stove.

2.9 Types of Stove

There are a great variety of camping stoves currently in use with new versions becoming available regularly.

It is therefore inappropriate to give specific guidance pertaining to the use of every type of stove which may be available.

However, it is imperative that the suitability or otherwise of a particular stove and fuel is evaluated within the risk assessment.

2.10 Campfires

The lighting of campfires, and especially the use of them for cooking is forbidden, unless these activities take place in established camping grounds or barbecue sites, where there are safe, properly constructed fireplaces or barbecues and associated fire appliances. These constraints are imposed for safety reasons as well as in the interest of the conservation of the environment and in conformity with the spirit of the access code.

2a Communications

2.11 School base contact

Heads of Establishment must ensure all outdoor activity excursion leaders appoint a school base contact who will be the focus of all communications whilst the group is in the field.

This school base contact must have:

- a complete record of all participating children and young people and staff including copies of Parental/Carer Consent Forms
- complete details of the planned activity, alternatives and emergency plans
- travel details, including vehicle registrations and description, vehicle parking locations

- description of all significant equipment deployed, e.g. kayaks, boats, bikes, tents etc.

The school base contact will be fully briefed to be able to reach the Head of Establishment and appropriate emergency services. The home contact should be aware of any pre-existing data held on an emergency services database.

2.12 Means of communication

An appropriate communications strategy will be implemented, including an overdue (delays) procedure for activity excursions.

All groups must be fully conversant and equipped with internationally recognised means of signaling distress (visual and sound) appropriate to the particular environment/activity.

2.13 Access

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 clearly sets down in statute a presumption in favour of access, if taken responsibly, over most areas of land and inland water. It establishes statutory rights of non-motorised access (e.g. for walking, cycling, horse riding, canoeing) to land and inland water for passage, recreation, education and commercial activities. The access rights must be exercised in a responsible manner and there are reciprocal obligations on land managers to act in a responsible manner towards access takers, both in their behaviour and in the way they manage the land.

Heads of Establishment must ensure that group leaders and young people are fully conversant with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, a comprehensive explanation of responsible conduct in the outdoors. <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/>

3 Specific approved outdoor activities

3.1 Bathing in Natural Waters

- 3.1.1 Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and shared with all appropriate staff and leaders.
- 3.1.2 Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.
- 3.1.3 The categories of activities covered by the guidance given in this section are:
 - Bathing in areas of natural water which are unsupervised by a professional lifeguard service.
 - Outdoor activity groups incidentally using beaches, river pools and lakes for casual bathing and paddling.
 - Outdoor activity groups involved in excursions, physical activities or environmental investigations in close proximity to areas of natural water.
- 3.1.4 Those involved in the supervision of these activities will not need to be reminded of the high incidence of fatalities during activities involving water. It is imperative that sensible safety precautions are adhered to, and the utmost vigilance applied, when bathers are actually in the water. There are no formal qualifications for the full range of activities that have been subsumed under the guidance provided in this section. Therefore, the guidance should be understood to be indicative of good practice and provided to raise group leaders' awareness of the factors that have to be considered if a high standard of safety is to be achieved.
- 3.1.5 Many drowning incidents are associated with the consumption of alcohol, or the onset of hypothermia, therefore swimming and bathing activities must not take place:
 - soon after a meal;
 - if there is reason to believe alcohol or drugs have been consumed by participants;

- in very cold waters;
 - after nightfall;
 - on cold, wet or windy days.
- 3.1.6 Group leaders must also ensure that nobody goes swimming alone and unsupervised, and that young people do not forcibly throw others into cold water against their will. Inflatable toys and air beds must not be used on tidal waters and open lochs but may be used on very confined areas of still water.
- 3.1.7 Groups involved in bathing in natural waters must always be supervised by a person holding at least a lifesaving qualification equivalent to a Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) Bronze Medallion (General).
- 3.1.8 If the activity takes place outwith the United Kingdom, the qualification of any foreign lifeguard deployed for supervisory purposes should be one officially recognised by the country in which the activity takes place, appropriate to the situation being supervised and of an equivalent or higher standard than the RLSS Bronze Medallion (General).
- 3.1.9 The maximum number of people in the water at any one time should not exceed eight per qualified lifesaver or lifeguard. The lifesaver or lifeguard and the leader in charge must be constantly watching the bathers from a safe point, either outwith or on the water, from which the bathers are all visible.
- 3.1.10 Before any bathers enter the water the group leader must have careful regard for any hazards that might contribute to participants being put at risk. These might include the cleanliness of the water, the wind and tidal conditions, the presence of surf and waves that might imply the presence of undertow or strong currents, the temperature of the water, the depth and clarity, and the presence of any hidden rocks or obstructions. The number of other people in the water may also be significant if this makes it more difficult to keep a proper watch over members of the group. The group leader must also be aware of the significance of any hazard warning signs or flags displayed in the beach area.
- 3.1.11 A limited area must be identified for the bathers to stay within and this should be delineated by clearly identifiable physical features or flags and this must be made known to bathers. The area identified must be such that the group leader(s) can feel confident that a rescue can be executed without themselves being exposed to unnecessary danger.
- 3.1.12 If the group leader is unfamiliar with the swimming ability of the participants the area identified should be limited to one within which the bathers will remain within their depth. The limited area must not generally exceed 1.25 metres in depth. If the water is generally deeper than 1.25 metres, and the surface area of water is greater than a hundred square metres, a competently manned boat must be at hand for rescue purposes.
- 3.1.13 The participants must be paired, and the individuals in each pair must be asked to watch out for the welfare of each other while in the water. Bathers must be made aware of an appropriate method of alerting the supervising lifeguard from the water in the event of an emergency.
- 3.1.14 Bathers wishing to swim long distances must be asked to swim back and forward parallel to and close to the shore in an area within which a rescue could be effected and not far out to sea or into the middle of an open loch or reservoir.
- 3.1.15 Diving must be forbidden - children and young people should stay on the surface and visible at all times.
- 3.1.16 Particular Activities
- a) Bathing in areas of water which are unsupervised by a professional lifeguard service;
 - i) Means of rescue

The lifesaver or lifeguard supervising the bathers must have, close at hand, and available for immediate use a long pole, or a floating throw line with a buoyant object attached that can be thrown to a bather experiencing difficulty, and used

to draw them to the shore, without the rescuer themselves entering the water and being put at risk.

ii) Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids

To help to ensure their own safety the lifesaver or lifeguard must have, close at hand, a life jacket or buoyancy aid to wear in the event of having to enter the water to assist a bather.

iii) Spare clothing

The group must have appropriate equipment and clothing to use in the event of any bather(s) becoming cold and showing symptoms of hypothermia.

b) Outdoor activity groups incidentally using beaches, rivers and lochs for casual bathing.

i) The group leader should have regard to the guidance in the preceding paragraphs.

Groups should only go bathing if supervised by an appropriately qualified lifesaver or lifeguard.

ii) The waters must be well known to the group leader and free of hazards. In the case of lochans situated high in the mountains special regard should be paid to the temperature of the waters. Group leaders must ensure that bathers do not swim out of their depth or jump into deep cold pools because the water temperature below the surface is seldom much above freezing.

iii) The number in the water must not exceed eight per supervising lifesaver at any one time. (1:8).

iv) The limited area of water to be used must be clearly identified.

v) If the water is anywhere deeper than 1.25 metres, a floating throw line and buoyant object must be available.

vi) The group must have with them spare warm and windproof clothing and provision to make a hot drink in case group members show symptoms of hypothermia.

c) Outdoor activity groups involved in excursions, physical or environmental investigations in close proximity to areas of natural water.

This guidance would apply to groups wading in shallow waters and crossing shallow burns. In the course of other activities where a water hazard is believed to exist leaders must ensure that every possible care is taken and the following guidance is indicative of the matters that must be given consideration.

i) Group leaders/teachers must have regard to the preceding paragraphs and must familiarise themselves with the area to be used in advance of the visit, and assess the area for likely hazards.

ii) The group leader must be particularly aware of such things as; stagnant water, steep slippery banking, deep pools, fast flowing streams and rivers, undercut banks, and overhanging trees and bushes together with an understanding of the effect of the preceding and anticipated weather forecast on water level conditions.

iii) Potential hazards must be brought to the attention of the members of the group at an appropriate time and the actions they must take in the event of an incident explained.

iv) If, in the initial visit to the area, after conducting a risk assessment, a group leader believes that there may be a significant degree of risk because of the existence of areas of potentially hazardous natural waters then the action to be taken in the event of an emergency must be carefully considered.

In particular, consideration should be given to:

- The need for a lifesaver, holding an appropriate lifesaving qualification to accompany the group.
 - Whether a throw line, flotation aid, and lifejacket or buoyancy aid should be at hand in case of an incident.
 - Whether there is a need to have a bag containing spare warm and windproof clothing and a flask of hot drink available, in case anybody accidentally becomes immersed in cold water.
 - During an initial pre-visit to the site the nearest effective means of communicating with the emergency services should be assessed.
 - The group must always be expected to work in at least pairs, and no individual must be allowed to go off alone.
- v) The group leader must apply the utmost vigilance and not lose contact with any member(s) of the group for an extended period of time.
- vi) If the visibility in the area is poor because of the topography or trees and undergrowth, the members of the group must be supplied with whistles to attract attention in the event of an incident occurring.

Other acceptable Lifesaving and Lifeguard qualifications

- The Corps of Canoe Lifeguards Canoeing Safety Test (BCU Lifeguards);
- The Corps of Canoe Lifeguards Rescue Test (BCU Lifeguards);
- The Royal Life Saving Society Bronze Medallion (General);
- The Surf Life Saving Association Bronze Award;

or any qualification that is of an equivalent or of a higher standard to any of those detailed above.

Note: Heads of Establishment and group leaders may gain further information concerning safety procedures appropriate to particular activities that take place in or near areas of natural water, by contacting [The Royal Life Saving Society](#), [The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents](#), or the [Scottish Council for the Prevention of Accidents](#).

3.2 Paddlesports activity

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

British Canoeing is the National Governing Body for paddlesports in the UK.

The Scottish Canoe Association is the National Governing Body for paddlesports in Scotland.

Guidance relevant to anyone involved in the provision of paddlesport activity together with recommendations on appropriate qualifications, ratios and environmental definitions can be found in the "[BCU Terms of Reference Document](#)"

Personal Water Confidence: It is common for non-swimmers to be involved in introductory water activities.

3.3 Educational Field Visits/Day Excursions

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

It is recommended that the group leaders of educational field visits using remote moorland, wild country or exposed coastal areas should have attended a course in safety and leadership procedures for practical fieldwork and the relevant parts of this document must also be referred to for further guidance.

Education Services recognise that lower standards of experience and training are sufficient for supervision and leadership during day excursions or walking activities, taking place in less elevated or rugged environments. No qualification is required, providing the activity is confined to low level, recognised or forest walks below 300 metres or less than 30 minutes from a road, staying on paths in populated country and rural areas.

In preparation and prior to an activity, leaders must;

- obtain any necessary permission for access to the proposed fieldwork area.
- arrange for a preliminary examination or investigation of the area to assess any hazards and to prepare the necessary work programme. During this pre-visit to the site the nearest effective means of communicating with the emergency services/home contact should be checked. The availability or otherwise of a reliable mobile phone signal should be ascertained. In locations with a positive result a mobile phone may form part of the emergency communication strategy.
- advise participants on the type of clothing to be worn and the equipment required. This should include clothing that can provide full arm and leg cover.
- check the health and safety file in the establishment and ensure that participants comply with the regulations and specific Codes of Practice therein, as they relate to particular disciplines.
- consider carefully the staff to children and young people ratio appropriate to the needs of the children and young people, and the nature of the activity/terrain. This should be adjusted accordingly if children and young people with individual additional support needs are involved.

While engaged in the activity the group leader should:

- carry a list of all participants and parental/carer consent forms;
- have available a contact phone number for the home (emergency) contact;
- be in possession of a suitable first aid kit;
- ensure that children and young people have access to all personal medication that they may require during the excursion.

Heads of Establishment must exercise discretion when authorising individual field studies undertaken by senior students. The nature and location of these projects must be clearly indicated, examined and, if necessary, specialist advice should be sought prior to authorisation.

Group leaders must get a weather forecast before departure and give careful consideration to whether the activity should proceed as planned if the weather is expected to be particularly inclement. During the activity the weather should be carefully monitored and the activity modified or curtailed as required.

3.4 Hillwalking

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

Safety on the hills is dependent on good leadership and skilled supervision provided by group leaders with a combination of appropriate training and practical experience.

The qualifications of leaders should be those endorsed by Mountain Training UK (MTUK). Heads of establishment should also refer to the 'National Guidelines for climbing and walking leaders' which have been prepared by MTUK) and gives information concerning the status of the various national mountain leader and instructor awards. <http://www.mountain-training.org/latest-news/national-guidelines>

Persons performing the role of expedition supervisor as defined in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition Guide or similarly responsible for the remote supervision of a group should comply with guidance provided in this section. (Reference to 'Remote Supervision Guidance', published by Mountain Training England (MTE), <http://www.mountain-training.org/england/resources>. He/She should possess, as a minimum, the experience and qualifications appropriate to the category of area within which the expedition takes place to ensure both the safety of themselves and the young people for whom they are responsible.

3.4.1 Day walking and Hillwalking Qualifications

Scope	Examples	Leader Qualifications
Lowland Terrain outside Urban areas See- http://www.mountain-training.org/Content/Uploaded/Downloads/469bb03d-4b3a-4863-99bc-f99db8999f13.pdf page5	Country Parks, Forest parks	Lowland Leader Award Maximum Ratio1:10
Hill and moorland	Campsie Hills, Kilpatrick Hills, Southern Uplands	Hill and Moorland Leader Award Maximum Ratio1:10
Mountains (Summer Conditions) excluding technical routes and ridges which normally require the use of a rope to safeguard progress	Luss Hills, Galloway Hills, Highland mountains	Summer Mountain Leader Award Maximum Ratio 1:10
Mountain (Summer Conditions) technical routes and ridges which normally require the use of a climbing rope to safeguard progress		Mountain and Climbing Instructor Maximum Ratio1:4
Mountains (Winter conditions) excluding technical routes and ridges which normally require the use of a rope to safeguard progress		Winter Mountain Leader Award Maximum Ratio 1:8
Mountain (Winter Conditions) technical routes and ridges which normally require the use of a climbing rope to safeguard progress		Winter Mountain and Climbing Instructor Maximum Ratio1:4

Notes:

'Winter' means when winter conditions, including snow and ice, prevail or are forecast. This cannot be defined by a portion of the year.

'Summer' means any conditions not covered under 'winter'.

3.4.2 Overnight Walking Expeditions

If an overnight stopover is planned, then additional qualifications of the group leader may be required.

Level of Award	Additional award required.
Lowland Leader	Mountain Training Expedition Skills Module
Hill and Moorland Leader	Mountain Training Expedition Skills Module
Summer Mountain Leader	None

It is beneficial for leaders to be familiar with the hills and mountain areas prior to leading groups on them so that they are already aware of any difficulties or hazards which may be present.

3.5 Horse Riding

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

Education Services does not have riding facilities of its own and it is assumed, therefore, that any riding will be undertaken at a recognised commercial riding or pony trekking school. There are two organisations which control riding in Scotland, the [British Horse Society](#), which is the national controlling body and the [Trekking and Riding Society of Scotland](#).

Heads of Establishment and group leaders of pony trekking excursions must comply with Section 2 of this document.

3.5.1 When approaching a stable, riding school or pony trekking establishment for riding tuition the group leader/teacher should ensure that:

- it is an approved establishment of the British Horse Society or the Trekking and Riding Society of Scotland
- if the establishment is approved by the British Horse Society and that the instructors have the Society's **assistant instructor certificate**, or
- if the establishment is certified by the Trekking and Riding Society of Scotland that the instructor has the [British Horse Society assistant instructor Certificate](#);
- the instructor to student ratio does not exceed 1:8
- all students wear suitable riding hats and that they are properly fitted prior to riding. if hats are not available riding should not take place; all participants have adequate protective outdoor clothing and waterproofs even in summer, particularly in the case of pony trekking excursions to areas of remote, wild moorland or highland country.
- participants do not wear flat heeled shoes which can slip through the stirrup. The most commonly available adequate footwear are wellington boots which must have a separate heel. When using a riding school properly equipped for use by persons with physical disabilities which provides tack with safety stirrups, then the wearing of flat heel shoes may be safer for participants with certain disabilities. Individual risk assessments and support plans for persons will identify what is necessary. The information should be recorded and available for other staff.

3.5.2 The minimum qualification of leaders in charge of groups wishing to ride horses in the

controlled area of the riding school is the [British Horse Society Assistant Instructor Certificate](#).

- 3.5.3 For groups wishing to leave the environment for a short trek, or a hack of no more than two hours duration, the minimum qualification is the Ride Leader Qualification of the TRSS.
- 3.5.4 For rides of longer duration including day ride and trail rides away from base the minimum qualification is the Senior Ride Leader Qualifications of the TRSS.
- 3.5.5 Should a group leader or teacher wish to hire horses and tack without professional tuition, and lead or instruct children and young people themselves, then the group leader must hold the minimum qualifications noted above and adhere to the same basic safety points mentioned.
- 3.5.6 Recognition of other national qualifications

If the activity takes place outwith the UK, the qualification of any foreign instructor deployed for supervision or instructional purposes must be one officially recognised by the country in which the activity takes place and of an equivalent or higher standard than outlined above.
- 3.5.7 Children/Young People and Additional Support Needs (Physical and Mental Disability)

Where staff are considering riding or trekking for such children/young people it should be noted that such arrangements can only proceed under the auspices of the Riding for the Disabled Association. Heads of Establishment must, in the first instance, contact the Regional Chairman of the Riding for the Disabled Association for advice in all cases.

3.6 Mounting Biking, Off Road Cycling and On Road Cycling

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

- 3.6.1 Examples of Environment Classification and Qualifications / Skills / Knowledge required

Leading Terrain	Example Environment	Example Location	Group Leader Qualifications
Mountain Biking	Identifiable routes with obvious navigational features requiring technical ability, which are rideable for 90 to 95% of their total length or which are longer than day excursions in summer conditions	7 Stains Mountain Bike Venues, Cathkin Braes single track areas, remote expeditions.	British Cycling mountain bike leader Level 2 or 3 dependent on terrain and duration: https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/coaching/20160202-Health_and_Safety_Guidelines_Feb_2016_FINAL.pdf Or Cycling UK advance Mountain Bike Leader : https://www.cyclinguk.org/courses-and-training/leading-instructing-and-training-others/courses-for-leaders/technical-mountain-bi
Off Road	Identifiable routes, tracks	Cathkin Braes	Any of the above

Cycling Rural	and trails with obvious navigational features below 600m and less than 30 minutes walk from shelter or communication and with low to medium technical difficulty, in summer conditions	forestry trails (not single track), Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Aberfoyle. Forestry Tracks	Or UK Cycling Mountain Bike Leader https://www.cyclinguk.org/course-s-and-training/courses-available
Off Road Cycling Urban	Designated cycle paths, urban cycle paths (not on the road), canal tow paths, parks, country estates and quiet private roads.	Pollok Park, Forth Clyde Canal Tow Path,	Any of the above Or Cycle Scotland: Cycle Ride Leader
On Road Cycling	Public high ways, rights of way on which cycles are permitted or private roads which are also used by motor vehicles	Roads and highways appropriate to the ability of the group	Cycle Scotland: Cycle Ride Leader

Ride leaders should be aware of their own level of experience and qualification. For any British Cycling leadership license to be valid, the leader must be a current member of British Cycling (Race Gold, Race Silver or Ride Level) and hold a valid first aid certificate.

- 3.6.2 Leader: Rider ratios are provided in the guidance relating to each type of operating environment and qualification. Leaders should not exceed recommended ratios.

[Descriptions of each Mountain Bike Leader and Coaching Qualification within British Cycling.](#)

Teaching on road cycling requires group leaders to comply with the requirements set out in the [British Cycling Bikeability Guidance](#)

3.7 Orienteering

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

- 3.7.1 [British Orienteering Federation](#) (BOF) is the national governing body for orienteering in the UK
- 3.7.2 [Scottish Orienteering Association](#) is the governing body for orienteering in Scotland.
- 3.7.3 Orienteering activities must comply with "British Orienteering Safety Guidelines"

Note:Facilitators of orienteering activities must comply with the national orienteering coaching scheme:

[A Description of British Orienteering's Coaching Award Scheme](#)

[License to Coach](#)

[A Guide to Safeguarding Children and At-Risk Adults in Orienteering](#)

3.8 Racing Rowing

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

The governing body for rowing in Scotland is [Scottish Rowing](#)

Qualification of Instructors : The minimum qualification for group instructors of racing rowing activities is the amateur rowing association instructors award.

Lif jackets and Buoyancy Aids: It is not possible for participants to wear buoyancy aids or life jackets while actually rowing, therefore, the group instructor must ensure that participants conform to the procedures adopted in the practice of the sport which are designed to secure the safety of participants. Coxes should wear either a life jacket or buoyancy aid of an appropriate design (as determined by the sport) which conforms to EN/ISO standards.

Safety Boats: A safety boat, which is appropriate to the waters being used, must be in attendance at all times. In circumstances where rowing takes place on extensive open waters, exceeding 500 metres in width, the safety boat should be a powered craft capable of maintaining station in close proximity to racing rowing craft.

In such circumstances the appropriate qualification for the driver of the safety boat is the Royal Yachting Association Safety Boat Certificate.

3.9 Rock Climbing and Abseiling Activities

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

3.9.1 Group leaders should hold the following level of awards as laid down by Mountain TrainingUK

Scope	Examples	Minimum Leader Qualifications
On site traversing wall	Primary School Traverse wall	Nil
On site climbing wall	Climbing wall in a school Open access climbing such as Cuningar Loop	Site specific Training and assessment Ratio as specified by the Technical Adviser
Commercial Bouldering Wall	The Climbing Academy	Climbing Wall Instructor (CWI) Ratio 1:10
Roped Commercial Climbing wall + Leading or Abseiling	Glasgow Climbing Centre, INTU	Climbing Wall Instructor (CWI) Ratio 1:8 Climbing Wall Development Instructor Climbing Wall Instructor + Abseil Module
Single Pitch Crag	Neilston, Quadrocks, Bennybeg	Rock Climbing Instructor Max Ratio 1:8
Multi Pitch Climbing, Summer conditions	Any Crag in UK	Mountain and Climbing Instructor (MCI) Max Ratio 1:4

Multi Pitch Climbing (Winter Conditions)		Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (WMCI) Max Ratio 1:4
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Notes:

'Winter' means when winter conditions, including snow and ice, prevail or are forecast. This cannot be defined by a portion of the year. Summer means any conditions not covered under 'winter'

3.9.2 Site Specific Schemes

The training and assessment of unqualified instructors undertaking rock climbing and abseiling activities under such a scheme must be done following the guidance laid down by MTUK in Site specific [Climbing wall guidance notes](#)

It should be overseen by a Mountain and Climbing Instructor (MCI), as a minimum, as the technical adviser.

Regular monitoring of the scheme should take place through the Head of Establishment and the MCI.

3.9.3 Climbing Coaching Awards

Climbing Coaching Awards are available at 3 levels, Foundation, Development and Performance Coaching.

Holders of these awards must also hold a leadership award at a minimum of CWA level. It is the Leadership award that will govern the scope of operation of the coach in these instances.

Further information can be found at: [Mountain Training](#)

Note: Qualifications of Group Leaders

Venue & Activity	Examples	Leader Qualifications in Summer	Leader Qualifications in Winter conditions
Designated roadside, single pitch crag or on-site climbing wall	Areas of Craigmor or Neilston quarry, school climbing wall	Local site specific scheme overseen by MCI as Technical adviser and current First Aid Certificate (FAC)	Local site specific scheme overseen by MCI as Technical adviser and current First Aid Certificate (FAC)
Single Pitch Crag as defined by the Rock Climbing Instructor Candidate Handbook or commercial climbing wall	Craigmor, Neilston quarry, Quadrocks, The Whangie, Glasgow Climbing Centre	RCI + First Aid Certificate 1:2 active ropes	RCI + First Aid Certificate 1:2 active ropes
Multi Pitch Climbing	Any Crag	MCI + First Aid Certificate 1:2 active ropes	WMCI + First Aid Certificate 1:2 active ropes

Notes: 'Winter' means when winter conditions, including snow and ice, prevail or are forecast. This cannot be defined by a portion of the year. Summer means any conditions not covered under 'winter'

3.10 Sailing and Windsurfing.

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment/group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

- 3.10.1 [Adventure Activity License Authority \(AALA\)](#) licensed or [Royal Yachting Association \(RYA\)](#) recognised training centres must be used when participating in sailing or windsurfing activities.

A current version of the revisions of RYA Guidance Notes for Training Centre's can be found here ["RYA Recognition Guidance Notes"](#).

- 3.10.2 Use of Stoves in Boats. The use of stoves in boats presents particular risks, because of the presence of petrol, paraffin, diesel or gas, and the possible accumulation of explosive vapour inside the hull. Where boats with stoves are used by the authority then it must be ensured that they comply with the current [MCA Codes of Practice for small vessels](#). Craft used exclusively on canals operated by British Waterways must comply with the [BWB Boat Safety Scheme](#).

3.11 Small commercial vessels operating at sea, sail or power (Yachts).

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

Use of small commercial vessels at sea take place in a number of different locations with varying levels of hazard. The following table outlines the appropriate level of manning for each of the different locations.

In addition to the manning requirements given below all vessels used should have a current MCA coding.

Qualification table:

Hazard Level	Qualification (sail or power specific)	Instructor: Group ratio
Sheltered coastal waters during day light hours and in favourable weather, within 20 miles of a nominated departure point and <u>after a Yachtmaster Offshore has reviewed itinerary.</u>	Commercially endorsed Day Skipper (theory and practical). A second adult capable of assisting the skipper in an emergency should be aboard	1: "coded capacity of vessel" (max 8)
Up to 20 miles from a safe haven by day or night.	Commercially endorsed Yachtmaster (Coastal). A second adult capable of assisting the skipper in an emergency should be aboard.	1: "coded capacity of vessel" (max 8)
Up to 150 miles from a safe haven by day or night.	Commercially endorsed Yachtmaster (Off shore) Between 20NM and 60NM from a safe haven another "experienced" adult should be on board Between 60NM and 150NM from a safe haven the other adult should be a person holding a minimum of Yachtmaster (Coastal).	1: "coded capacity of vessel" (max 8)
More than 150NM from a safe haven	Commercially endorsed Yachtmaster (Ocean) A second adult holding a minimum of Yachtmaster (Off shore) should be aboard.	1: "coded capacity of vessel" (max 8)

3.12 Sea Fishing and Charter Boats

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

When larger charter boats are used, for example for sea fishing, the Head of Establishment? must ensure that the skipper of the boat and the craft are currently licensed for such operations.

A specimen Charter Agreement is attached at [Appendix 1](#).

3.13 Alpine Downhill Skiing (On-Piste), Snowboarding (On-Piste), Nordic/Cross Country Skiing

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

3.13.1 [Snowsport Scotland](#) are the national governing body for skiing and snowboarding in Scotland.

[British Association of Snowports Instructors \(BASI\)](#) is the UK association responsible for the training and licensing of snowsports instructors and coaches

3.13.2 The terrain, size of group and type of session being facilitated will dictate the level of instruction or leadership qualification required. BASI and Snowsport Scotland qualifications are recognised by Glasgow City Council.

[Snowsport Scotland Leadership Qualifications](#)

[Snowsport Scotland Instructional Qualifications](#)

[British Association of Snowsport Instructors \(BASI\) Qualifications](#)

3.13.3 Recognition of other National Qualifications

If the activity takes place outwith the United Kingdom, the qualification of any foreign instructor deployed for supervision or instructional purposes must be one officially recognised by the country in which the activity takes place and of an equivalent or higher standard than outlined in Paragraphs 3.1.12.5 to 3.1.12.7

3.14 Caving and Potholing

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

3.14.1 The underground environment can offer a wealth of experiences suitable for all ages and abilities and gives opportunities for adventure at differing levels. However, the unique context in which it takes place is both potentially dangerous and environmentally fragile and those leading groups have a duty to ensure the wellbeing of both participants and surroundings.

3.14.2 A progressive scheme of venue related qualifications has been developed by the [British Caving Association](#) and Heads of Establishment should ensure that these guidelines are followed where appropriate.

Alternatively, the presence of a local scheme approved under the Adventure Activities

Licensing Scheme (AALA) may be appropriate.

Where swimming is part of the activity then Section 3.1, the use of natural waters should also be referred to.

Venue	Qualification of group leader	Maximum Ratio
Show Caves areas accessed by the public	Responsible Adult	1:10
Site specific cave, no vertical pitches requiring ladders or SRT. Show caves beyond public access areas	Site specific scheme managed within a health and safety framework	1:8
Limited objectives within a single region. Non-vertical systems	Valid Local Cave and Mine Leader Assessment (LCMLA) Level One	1:8
Limited objectives within a single region. Vertical systems up to 18m explored with Ladders	Valid Local Cave and Mine Leader Assessment (LCMLA) Level Two	1:6
All other caves not included in those above	Cave Instructor Certificate	As appropriate Max 1:6

3.14.4 Where numerous vertical pitches are encountered within a trip then consideration should be given to the presence of an additional adult.

3.14.5 The venue, group and environment will dictate which qualification is required for group leaders facilitating caving activities. [Guidance on these qualifications can be found here.](#)

3.15 Gorge Walking, Canyoning and Coasteering

Risk assessments must be carried out, recorded and be available before undertaking these activities.

Heads of Establishment and group leaders must comply with [Section 2](#) of this Management Circular.

3.15.1 Gorge walking / canyoning is a “*hybrid*” activity that lies somewhere between walking and climbing but has also the added dimension of flowing water.

3.15.2 Due to its very nature, the conditions in which the activity takes place are variable and conditions may alter rapidly during a session due to the presence or absence of water. At the lower end of the scale it may involve a walk up a dry river bed whilst at its extreme end it is akin to the sport of “*canyoning*”.

3.15.3 Where swimming activities are part of the gorge walk/canyoning then Section 3 the use of natural waters must also be referred to.

3.15.4 Access and egress to and from the gorge or canyon must be carefully considered prior to the start of the journey.

3.15.5 Qualifications

It is recognised that a lower standard of experience and training are sufficient for the

supervision of Gorge walks in less technical terrain.

The qualifications and experience of group leaders therefore match the remoteness, difficulty and potential hazard of the environment.

Further guidance can be found at: <https://ukcanyoning.org/>

Description	Equipment/terrain	Remoteness and difficulty of access/ egress	Qualification/ experience	Max ratio
Gorge Walking and Gill Scrambling Non-technical	No planned use of climbing equipment (including rope) required for progress/safety, equivalent of ungraded ground May involve some easy scrambling requiring the occasional use of hands for balance and support. Travel is possible up or down canyon	< 30 mins from road with easy access/egress from all points within gorge	Summer ML or Site specific training Or UK Canyon Guides: Gorge & Ghyll Leader Award	1:10
Basic Canyoning / Gorge Walking / Gill Scrambling	Scrambling, easy vertical or near vertical climbing and/or down-climbing requiring frequent use of hands. Rope recommended for hand lines, belays, lowering packs and possible emergency use. Travel is possible up or down canyon.	< 30 mins from road with easy access/egress from all points within gorge	Summer ML + Lifesaving or Site specific training and Lifesaving, or UK Canyon Guides: Gorge & Ghyll Leader Award	1:10
Intermediate Canyoning (Single Pitch Canyon)	Exposed technical climbing. Down-climbing could be difficult and dangerous; most people will rappel. Rope required for belays and single-pitch rappels. Obvious natural or fixed anchors. Access after each pitch is possible.	> 30 mins from road or with regular access/egress points, maximum escape time from gorge < 10 minutes	MCI or Summer ML + SPA + Site specific training + Lifesaving or UK Canyon Guides: Guide Level 2	1:8
Advanced-Expert Canyoning	Route may involve any combination of the following: 1) difficult and exposed free climbing and/or down-climbing, 2) climbing using direct aid, 3) multi-pitch rappels, 4) complex rope work (i.e. guided rappels, deviations, rebelay), 5) obscure or indistinct natural anchors, 6) advanced problem-solving and anchor-building skills. See route description for more information	Limited access/egress once committed to ascent/descent, maximum escape time from gorge > 10 minutes	Canyon Guides: Canyon Instructor	

Douglas Hutchison
Executive Director of Education



Appendix 1

Charter Agreement

Please Use Black Ink and Block Letters

The group leader hiring/chartering the vessel(s) has been instructed by Glasgow City Council Education Services, which has the primary duty of care for the welfare of the members of the group, to secure written confirmation that the owner/master of the vessel(s) is (are) currently licensed and qualified to operate, and that the vessel(s) is (are) seaworthy, and is (are) equipped to comply with current regulations and is (are) properly insured for hire or charter. Please co-operate with the authority by providing the information requested and signing the charter agreement.

Thank you for your assistance.

1

Name of Charter Vessel
Date(s) of Charter
I, _____ skipper of the above vessel certify that I hold the Maritime and Coastguard Agency Certificate of Competence as outlined on the Vessel Certificate (SCV1/2).
The charter vessel(s) _____ is/are licensed to carry _____ passengers
_____ is/are licensed to carry _____ passengers
_____ is/are licensed to carry _____ passengers
_____ is/are licensed to carry _____ passengers
and is/are fully equipped/manned to meet current applicable Codes of Practice for the operation of Small Commercial Vessels.

2

Details of use to be made of the vessel(s)
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Skipper's Signature _____ Date _____