

Changes to the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority from 1 April 2025

From April 2025, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) will update arrangements for adventure activities licensing provision. HSE will introduce changes to the way licence duration is determined and to the assessment of applications that will ensure the licensing scheme continues as a fair, simple and cost-effective scheme, maintaining the assurance currently provided by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA).

LICENCE DURATIONS

There will be changes to the method for determining the duration of a licence at first issue and subsequent renewal. The new model will acknowledge a provider's track record by making it possible to extend the duration of a licence by a year at each renewal, up to the maximum permitted duration of three years.

All **new applicants** awarded a licence after 31 March 2025 will begin with a one-year licence regardless of the size and complexity of their business. For those with **existing licences on 1 April 2025**, the duration of the licence will be determined at their next renewal using the new model. This means that, at renewal, anyone with a one-year licence now can expect a two-year licence and those with a two-year licence can expect a three-year licence, providing they meet the following two conditions:

1. They demonstrate satisfactory compliance at renewal application with no significant remedial actions being required, and
2. They have operated without issues of regulatory concern arising during their previous licence period.

ASSESSING APPLICATIONS

To ensure the impact of the assessment process on applicants is proportionate and to provide more flexibility in terms of how and when applications can be reviewed. HSE will make more use of remote inspections for all except first-time applicants. "Remote" means using effective alternative approaches to a site visit to assess applicants' safety management systems. Remote inspections were adopted by AALA during the Covid19 lockdown period. They were found to be effective and efficient, offering greater flexibility and suitable for wider use for licensing purposes.

All first-time applicants will receive a site visit unless it is impractical and/or of no material value to do so. Where no visit has been undertaken for a first-time licence a visit will occur at the first renewal. For subsequent applications and for all applications from providers who hold an existing licence on 1 April 2025 remote inspections will be used if appropriate. Site visits will continue to be used when necessary to obtain sufficient information to reach a decision, having first considered other available options.

Further information is available in the FAQs documents