

# Standard in Development

## L5: Outdoor Learning Specialist

### Title of occupation

Outdoor Learning Specialist

### UOS reference number

ST0935

### Core and options

No

### Level of occupation

Level 5

### Route

Health and science

### Typical duration of apprenticeship

24 months

### Target date for approval

31/03/2021

### Resubmission

No

### Would your proposed apprenticeship standard replace an existing framework?

No

### Does professional recognition exist for the occupation?

Yes, with the Institute for Outdoor Learning

### Occupation summary

This occupation is found in the outdoor sport, leisure, tourism, public health, youth work and education sectors. Apprentices are employed by charitable outdoor organisations, private and for-profit outdoor learning businesses, schools, expedition providers, social enterprises, etc.

**Outdoor Learning Specialists** work within outdoor activity or education centres; outdoor adventure and activity businesses; expedition and sports tourism providers; early years, schools, colleges and universities; national parks, nature reserves and country parks; youth work and youth development organisations; health, wellbeing and social care contexts; and training and educational organisations.

**The broad purpose of an Outdoor Learning Specialist is the design, planning and delivery of programmes that provide progressive learning and change using outdoor activities and experiences.** Typical impacts are educational achievement, personal and social development, health and wellbeing, nature connection, outdoor science, team cohesion, or practical skills development.

In smaller organisations Outdoor Learning Specialists are likely to perform all duties of this standard within their role. In larger organisations their role may specialise in duties related to programme delivery, customer relationship management, staffing and team support, or safety and risk management for example.

**Outdoor Learning Specialists** apply professional outdoor leadership judgement in order to facilitate safe and effective individual and group learning. Their technical and subject specific outdoor activity competence will have been developed through a mix of academic and vocational qualifications, and experience.

They have a broad and specialised knowledge of the natural outdoor environment and determine likely hazards of undertaking activities and perform in-advance and in the moment (dynamic) risk – benefit assessments. They manage the allocated resources required for an outdoor learning programme, including delivery team, vehicles, trailers, technical equipment, catering, budget, etc.

They are able to work autonomously to direct and support delivery staff and solve problems associated with a dynamic change in group, equipment, or environmental conditions using an appropriate problem solving, recovery, rescue or emergency response.

**In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with:** programme participants; customers and stakeholders to identify needs and expectations, sequence, plan, monitor and report on the delivery of an outdoor learning programme; department heads of stores, hospitality, catering to prepare logistics; the allocated delivery team to direct their work on a programme; the operational or duty manager to report on safety and customer satisfaction; landowners, organisations, local communities, other users (human and fauna) where the outdoor learning programme is operating; and their line manager.

They are able to perform in situations which are often physically and emotionally demanding, remote, unpredictable and complex. When the environment, weather conditions or individual circumstances change they will adapt their programme leadership approach to ensure the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of participants and the securing of interpersonal relationships of participants for prolonged periods of time.

**An employee in this occupation will be responsible for** needs analysis & diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation of outdoor learning development programmes for children, young people and adults. They will be informed by relevant policies, reports, evidence and research and comply with the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) Code of Professional Conduct; first aid, safeguarding and professional liability responsibilities; and legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act, Equality Act and Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations (or any replacement scheme which may come into force).

Outdoor Learning Specialists facilitate the progressive development of activity competence, interpersonal and intra-personal life skills, outdoor and environmental knowledge and understanding. They will coach, mentor and provide feedback to allocated outdoor activity session delivery staff to develop their knowledge and skills in meeting the outcomes of the programme. They follow the principles of sustainable use and minimum impact to the natural environment and promote on-going activity participation and engagement with the outdoors.

## Typical job titles

for Outdoor Learning Specialists are: Senior Instructor, Programme Tutor, Outdoor Educator, Outdoor Education Teacher, Senior/Lead/Area Ranger, Senior Coach, Development Trainer, Senior Tutor, Senior Field Studies Tutor, Course Director

## Are there any statutory/regulatory or other typical entry requirements?

To commence training for the occupation of Outdoor Learning Specialist, apprentices will require consolidated experience of the knowledge, skills and behaviours defined in the IOL Occupational Standard for an Outdoor Activity Instructor.

For many apprentices this will be evidenced by prior completion of the Outdoor Activity Instructor Apprenticeship Standard (L3) plus a suitable period of experience.

## Occupation duties

### Duty

**Duty 1** Establish participants' needs, customer expectations and agree required outcomes for a programme of outdoor activities that delivers progressive learning and change by working in partnership with individual group members, accompanying staff members and stakeholders.

**Duty 2** Design and plan outdoor learning programmes informed by relevant reports, evidence and research, related theories (e.g. theory of change, physiology, risk-benefit, adventure, sustainability, psychology, outdoor coaching, leadership), legislation (e.g. H&SAW, AALR), ethics (e.g. IOL Code of Professional Conduct), and accepted good practice in outdoor learning (e.g. IOL Occupational Standards, IOL Statements of Good Practice, Activity Awarding Body Scope of Practice).

**Duty 3** Evaluate actions, methods, results and impact of an outdoor learning programme and explain qualitative and quantitative data to customers, stakeholders and other interested parties.

**Duty 4** Apply outdoor leadership experience to determine likely hazards of experiential activities and perform in-advance and in the moment (dynamic) risk – benefit assessments for working in an unknown, complex or unpredictable or wild or remote outdoor environment.

**Duty 5** Facilitate individual and group learning outdoors by applying professional outdoor leadership judgement and a wide variety of teaching, development, assessment, reflection, feedback and coaching strategies.

**Duty 6** Manage the allocated resources required for an outdoor learning programme, including delivery team, vehicles, trailers, technical equipment, catering, budget, etc.

**Duty 7** Manage individual and group wellbeing during overnight experiences (including food, shelter, warmth, security, safeguarding, duty of care responsibilities) e.g. wild camp, bunkhouse, residential centre, sail training vessel.

### KSBs

K1, K2, K6, K7, K14, K15

S1, S2, S6, S7, S14,

B2

K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K8, K12

S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S8, S10, S14

B1, B2, B5

K6, K10, K14, K15

S6, S10, S14

B1, B2, B3

K1, K11, K12, K16, K17

S1, S15, S16, S17, S18

B2, B5

K3, K5, K9, K12, K15, K16, K17, K18

S3, S5, S9, S12, S14, S15, S16, S17, S19

B1, B2, B3, B4, B5

K9, K13, K14, K17

S9, S13, S14, S16, S17

B1, B2, B3

K1, K2, K3, K9, K12, K14, K16, K17

S1, S2, S3, S9, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17

B1, B2, B3, B4, B5

**Duty 8** Assess and solve complex and unpredictable problems associated with changing conditions and needs (e.g. individuals, the group, the natural outdoor environment, weather, equipment, etc.) in order to work autonomously in unknown outdoor environments away from immediate help and direct line management.

K11, K12, K14, K16, K17

S11, S14, S15, S16, S17

B1, B2, B5

**Duty 9** Supervise, engage and involve participants demonstrating equality, diversity and inclusion in the learning process; take responsibility for any safety critical tasks they are asked to undertake; and create and implement the necessary changes to ensure the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and interpersonal relationships of participants during an outdoor learning programme.

K1, K12, K13, K15, K16, K17, K18

S1, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S19

B2, B4, B5

**Duty 10** Inspire connection and promote on-going engagement with the natural outdoor environment by explaining the essential facts, principles, values, beliefs, ethics and aesthetics about the outdoor environment they are working in.

K11, K12, K15, K16

S11, S14

B2, B4, B5

**Duty 11** Plan, adapt and develop outdoor activity specific learning approaches, teaching resources and equipment to meet a complex variety of environmental, technical and participant needs.

K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K12, K13, K15, K16, K18

S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S12, S13, S14, S15, S19

B2, B4, B5

**Duty 12** Coach, mentor and provide feedback to allocated programme delivery team to develop their knowledge skills, competence and confidence in meeting the outcomes of the programme.

K9, S13, K15, K18, K19

S9, S13, S14, S19

B1, B2, B3, B5

**Duty 13** Maintain outdoor learning professional competence by taking responsibility for own learning and development with minimum direction.

K1, K19

S1, S20

B1, B2

## KSBs

### Knowledge

- K1. All relevant legislation and codes of practice related to the safe delivery of learning experiences in the outdoor and indoor environments in which they work. To include health & safety legislation; the Adventure Activities Licencing Regulations; legal responsibilities of access to the countryside; use of outdoor equipment, vehicles, trailers and resources; data protection and GDPR; first aid provision; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults; and welfare during overnight experiences.
- K2. An understanding of the history, pedagogy/andragogy and application of at least three approaches to outdoor learning, e.g. Outdoor Education, Outdoor Therapy, Adventure Sports Coaching, Environmental Education, Forest Schools, School Based Outdoor Learning, Field Studies, Expeditions, Sail Training, etc.
- K3. The background and application of relevant theories of learning, reflective practice, human and social development, schools of psychology and neuroscience. e.g. experiential learning, team development, social learning, growth mindsets, character strengths, motivation theories, goal setting/achievement, personality, behavioural habits, cognitive learning, etc.
- K4. The opportunities and benefits for self and participants offered by using a range of digital technologies to support instruction, teaching, coaching and learning in the outdoors, including the use of relevant data gathering apps, live online learning, recorded video, etc.
- K5. Principles of assessment as learning, rules of assessment evidence (valid, authentic, reliable, current, sufficient), and assessment methods suitable for the range of activities and intended outcomes of the outdoor programmes delivered. How to deliver effective feedback that supports participants to achieve intended outcomes and develop further.
- K6. The existing evidence base for outdoor learning and the evaluation and research data relevant to their organisation's areas of work. e.g. health and wellbeing, academic achievement, community development, criminal justice, environmental action, personal and social development, etc.
- K7. Methods to identify and analyse the wants and needs and expectations of participants, customers, and stakeholders. e.g. open questions, structured interviews, etc.
- K8. Methods to establish the elements required to build a theory of change for a programme or service to contribute to the desired long-term impact e.g. programme context, participant profile, constraints, outcomes, long-term impact, underpinning theory/approach, etc. How to organise and align intended outcomes with meaningful/realistic learning opportunities utilising outdoor activities and experiences.
- K9. How to direct a programme following relevant employment legislation and workplace policies including the planning process, safety systems, budgetary control and reporting. Approaches for motivating, supervising, coaching and mentoring staff allocated for a programme, and when each may be appropriate.
- K10. Methods to gather and analyse feedback and evidence data on outputs, outcomes and impacts of an outdoor learning programme. How to use that data within a quality assurance system to influence programme and organisational improvements in the short, medium and longer term.
- K11. The geography and ecology of landscapes in which they practice including local, regional and global perspectives on habitat, biodiversity, the effects of climate change, social history, and local effects such as weather, tides, etc. Practical conservation and land management techniques.
- K12. Identify and explain the physical and emotional capacity, motivation drivers, developmental needs and rights of the population group they work with. e.g. early years, children, teenagers, apprentices, graduates, senior managers, families, etc.

- K13. Anticipate barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion for participants and colleagues and how equality, diversity and inclusion can be further developed within programmes, your organisation and in the sector.
- K14. Principles of good customer service including the types and needs of different customers (internal and external to the organisation), their expectations and managing conflict. The function and procedures of the major departments within their organisation, e.g. advertising, sales, operations, equipment, hospitality, etc.
- K15. Methods to build and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of participants, volunteers, stakeholders and colleagues. How to lead meetings, structure and deliver effective instructions, presentations, written reports, and promote the work of their organisation in a positive light.
- K16. Theories and models for leading groups in the outdoors, engaging participants in stimulating experiences, promoting nature connection and maintaining key ground-rules for safe and effective learning. How to recognise and respond to situational demands and/or a dynamic change in environmental conditions or the group using an appropriate problem solving, recovery, rescue or emergency response.
- K17. Understanding of research and theory on decision making and judgement in the outdoor setting informed by approaches to reflection in-action, reflection on-action-in-context, and reflection-on action. The ethics, theories, legal position and methods of making and recording risk – benefit assessments for outdoor learning experiences.
- K18. The benefits of instruction, teaching, coaching and mentoring approaches and their application in outdoor learning. Methods to differentiate learning in order to respond to different learning preferences, group dynamics and interpersonal communication, emotional and cultural intelligences.
- K19. Ethics and the value of reflective practice for professional development. Contemporary issues and the global challenges faced by Outdoor Learning, including the role and vision of organisations such as the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

## Skills

- S1. Comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice related to the safe delivery of learning experiences in the outdoor and indoor environments in which they work.
- S2. Make programme design and delivery decisions based on the pedagogy/andragogy of the chosen approaches to outdoor learning used by their organisation.
- S3. Use relevant theories of learning, reflective practice, human and social development, psychology and neuroscience to support participants to achieve the intended outcomes of a programme.
- S4. Use digital technologies to support your delivery of outdoor learning sessions and enable participants to confidently engage with technology to achieve the intended outcomes of a programme.
- S5. Use the rules of assessment evidence to determine participants progress towards the intended outcomes and provide appropriate feedback in terms of its timing, frequency, content and delivery that empowers learners in their own independence and development.
- S6. Use evaluation of research data and experience to design evidence based outdoor learning experiences and communicate the value of an outdoor learning programme.
- S7. Use questions, observations, discussions, surveys and active listening to identify the programme needs and expectations of customers, participants and stakeholders.

- S8. Plan a purposeful sequence of outdoor learning activities and experiences matched to an agreed theory of change.
- S9. Supervise, motivate and work alongside the delivery team allocated to an outdoor learning programme taking into account available resources, participant needs, individual and organisational approach, programme budget, intended outcomes, and desired long-term impact.
- S10. Use qualitative, quantitative and mixed sources of data to review and develop practice in self and others and support quality improvement.
- S11. Communicate information about the landscapes in which they practice to inform, educate and inspire participants to care for their local, regional and global environment.
- S12. Lead differentiated outdoor learning sessions to meet the needs and capabilities of individual participants within the group using appropriate resources and techniques.
- S13. Inspire engagement and achievement, ensuring learning is inclusive and supports equality and diversity.
- S14. Engage and communicate confidently, clearly and sensitively with individuals, small groups and larger groups. Be able to lead meetings, deliver presentations and write short reports.
- S15. Instruct others in how to participate in activities correctly and safely and vary the content, tempo and direction of the activities to enable all participants to contribute to and benefit from the experience.
- S16. Deal with a dynamic change in group, equipment, or environmental conditions using an appropriate problem solving, recovery, rescue or emergency response.
- S17. Make decisions informed by observations, experience, reflection in-action (in the moment), reflection on-action-in-context (during the experience), reflection on-action (post experience) and professional judgement.
- S18. Produce risk - benefit assessments for an outdoor learning programme.
- S19. Use appropriate instruction, teaching, coaching and mentoring approaches to assist participants to meet the intended outcomes of a session and programme.
- S20. Recognise strengths, areas of development and sets future goals in line with own and the organisations objectives.

## **Behaviours**

- B1. Has a self-disciplined, self-motivated, proactive and positive approach to work and their profession.
  - B2. Cares for the wellbeing and safety of themselves and others, including members of the public, by demonstrating current, competent and compliant to organisational, ethical, legal and accredited professional standards.
  - B3. Works collaboratively within an organisational team to deliver outdoor learning programmes to individuals and groups.
  - B4. Guides, encourages and supports participants in their development to achieve their potential, always treating others with courtesy, dignity and respect.
  - B5. Shows a passion for the outdoors as a whole and champions, actively respects and protects the environment in which they work.
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## Qualifications

### English and Maths

Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the End-Point Assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.

### Does the apprenticeship need to include any mandated qualifications in addition to the above-mentioned English and maths qualifications?

Level 2 Award in Safeguarding

First Aid Award at a band relevant to their workplace (see IOL Statement of Good Practice on Outdoor First Aid Training for guidance).

## Professional Recognition

This standard aligns with the following professional recognition:

Institute for Outdoor Learning Occupational Standard for Outdoor Learning Specialist. Achieving this apprenticeship will enable Associate Professional Recognition with the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

## Involved Employers

PGL

Outward Bound

Field Studies Council

Plas Y Brenin

Heatree Activity Centre

Locomotivation

Inspiring Learning

## Consultation

Open consultation of the draft Standard and KSB's was held December 3-17 2020 open to the wider group of employers across the breadth of the outdoor learning sector. Members of 11 representative organisations were invited to respond:

- Institute for Outdoor Learning
- Association of Sail Training Organisations
- Scottish Association
- Outdoor Education Advisors Panel
- British Activity Providers Association
- Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres
- Forest Schools Association
- Council for Learning Outside the Classroom
- Youth Explorers Trust
- Outdoor Industries Association



- Christian Camping International

We had a relatively small number of employer responses (28) and this very likely represents the confidence the sector has in the Trailblazer group in representing the sector. Over 50 organisations supported the initial consultation prior to submission for permission to develop this standard.

The responses were received from across the sector and these have all be reviewed and considered for the latest version of the Occupational Standard. Overall, over 80% of respondents felt the role profile, duties, knowledge, skills and behaviours described the role of outdoor learning specialist and 70% of employers committed to backing the further development of this apprenticeship.

- There was a request for additional reference to youth work and this was added to the first paragraph of the occupation profile.
- 57% felt the 30-month duration was about right and 39% felt it could be shorter. Following much discussion and review of the KSB's identified, the trailblazer group felt that a more appropriate typical duration for the programme should be 24 months.
- One comment suggested that greater reference was placed on "*the development of decision-making expertise, adaptability, situational awareness*" and reference to "situational demands" was added to K16.
- In order to give greater clarity to an outdoor learning specialist will have an understanding of relevant "*rationale, policy, pedagogy and curriculum*" example elements required to build a theory of change were added to K8.
- To address a concern that the apprenticeship might be a big jump for some who may have just completed the L3 Outdoor Activity Instructor Apprenticeship, the phrase "consolidated experience" was added to the typical entry requirements.