

Specialist Accreditation Standard: Outdoor Pursuits and camp programmes for children and young people

Level 3

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Introduction

The Social Sector Accreditation Standards were produced by the New Zealand Government for the accreditation of providers funded by government to deliver social services.

Specialist standard

Specialist standards supplement the standards to ensure providers can safely deliver specific services or programmes.

This specialist standard will ensure Outdoor Pursuits and camp providers can deliver these services and programmes to children and young people in a safe and appropriate manner.

Further information

All levels of the standards, including specialist standards, are periodically reviewed to ensure that content and references are up to date. To access the latest versions, or for more information about the accreditation process, visit [Social Services Accreditation](#) at the Ministry of Social Development website.

You can email Social Services Accreditation at: Social_Services_Accreditation@msd.govt.nz.

Outdoor Pursuits and camp programmes for children and young people

In line with industry standards, the organisation safely plans and delivers to young people and children wilderness-based, adventure-based and other such programmes and camps.

1. The organisation ensures the safety and wellbeing of children and young people on the programme.

1.1 The physical location of the programme is appropriate and safe for the age, background and capabilities of those participating.

Guidance:

The organisation will have written records of health and safety policies and procedures, and meet applicable health and safety standards, including:

- hazard identification and management processes
- emergency management
- risk assessment and management plans for all programmes or activities
- maintenance and availability of equipment, including all appropriate safety gear
- maintenance and availability of first-aid and safety equipment
- clean and appropriate toilet facilities
- clean and appropriate beds, mattresses, bedding (sheets/duvets/pillows)
- appropriate storage for clothes
- sleeping facilities for young people and staff
- adequate health and hygiene approvals and facilities to serve food, where required
- site compliance with local body Code of Compliance requirements.

The organisation will have written records that demonstrate the age, background and capabilities of those participating, including:

- an individual assessment of all participants
- an outline to all staff of all children and young people's medical/health issues
- consents/clearances obtained for any child or young person participating in outdoor/adventure activities where health/medical issues or problems have been identified
- written behaviour management strategies.

The organisation will demonstrate that appropriate staff ratios are in place, including:

- ratios that are appropriate to: the dynamics of the group; the risk assessment of the activity being undertaken; and the skill level of the group
- staff records (for example, rosters) that confirm staffing ratios are maintained and that supervision is gender appropriate at all times
- overnight supervision that is managed, recorded, monitored, and gender appropriate.

1.2 Appropriate staff members know where the participants are at all times during the programme.

Processes are in place to ensure that the whereabouts of staff and participants are known at all times, including:

- maintaining attendance records
- ensuring that an appropriate, responsible person is aware of the group's plans, including the estimated time of returning to the facility
- registering of planned itineraries for outdoor pursuit activities
- ensuring staff carry emergency equipment, such as cell phones, radios and emergency beacons.

1.3 Activities are managed by suitably qualified and experienced staff.

Staff records are maintained, and staff are licensed or certified to engage children and young people in any high-risk activity.

For example:

- lead instructors/facilitators have a New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA) qualification (Level 2), or equivalent documented experience
- support instructors/facilitators have NZOIA Level 1 or equivalent documented experience
- copies of NZOIA or NZQA qualifications for all staff and leaders
- relevant documented experience
- certificates relating to appropriate, activity-specific qualifications.

The programme uses the services of qualified and professional instructors for activities requiring specific experience, qualifications and skills.

If external, contracted experts are involved in the delivery of outdoor/adventure activities for at-risk young people, the organisation must support this with appropriate staff, to ensure the risks associated with working with at-risk young people are mitigated.