

National Adventurous Activity Framework



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Scouts Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands where we play the game of Scouting. We would also like to pay respects to their leaders past, present and emerging, and any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are a part of our Movement today.

AN AUSTRALIAN SCOUT PUBLICATION

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National Adventurous Activities Framework

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Introduction

The National Adventurous Activity Framework (NAAF) is a cornerstone of Scouts Australia's commitment to delivering safe, inclusive, and high-quality adventurous experiences for young people.

It provides a nationally consistent structure for the planning, leadership, and qualification requirements of Adventurous Activities across all Branches.

Rooted in the principles of the Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAAS), informed by the Sport Fitness and Recreation Training Package – Outdoor Recreation and Leadership qualifications, the NAAF ensures that Scouting activities meet contemporary and safety benchmarks.

It supports the facilitation of Outdoor Adventure Skills (OAS) within the Youth Program and offers clear pathways for adult members to progress skill and competence development, recognised from Safe Participant to Guide and beyond.

The framework reflects Scouts Australia's dedication to empowering youth leadership while maintaining a robust duty of care. It outlines the proficiencies required for Scout activity leaders, the supervision standards, and the recognition of proficiency through both Scouting and verified external pathways.

Through periodic consultation and refinement, the NAAF remains responsive to the evolving needs of the Scouting community and the diverse environments in which Adventurous Activities take place.

Whether navigating a canyon, sailing across open waters, or leading a mountain expedition, the NAAF ensures that every adventure is underpinned by preparation, skill, and safety enabling Scouts to explore their potential and embrace the spirit of adventure.

Application of the Australian Adventure Activity Standard

The AAAS and Good Practice Guides (GPGs) are a good practice framework for activity providers to ensure the safe planning and delivery of Adventurous Activities involving dependent participants.

An adventure activity provider is any organisation, business, community group, government agency, school or others who organise and lead adventurous activities with dependent participants.¹

Scouts Australia is a provider within this definition and will apply the principles of the AAAS to its outdoor activities.

A dependent participant is a person owed a duty of care by the activity provider who is reliant upon the activity leaders for supervision, guidance, or instruction to support a person's participation in an activity. For example, this includes participants under the age of 18, participants lacking the ability to safely undertake the activity, or participants reasonably relying on the activity provider for their safety. The degree of dependence may vary during an activity.²

The NAAF represents Scouts Australia's alignment to applying the AAAS and GPGs to its activity offering, particularly those documented in the OAS element of the Youth Program. The NAAF assists Scouts Australia to exercise the duty when providing Adventurous Activities with dependent participants. It also provides a pathway for young people, recognising skills obtained through Scouting achievements.

The AAAS and associated GPGs are voluntary guidelines for organisations conducting outdoor recreation activities for dependent groups (where participants have a level of dependence upon any leaders).

¹ Outdoor Council of Australia (2019), *Australia Adventure Activity Standard*, pg. 4

² Outdoor Council of Australia (2019), *Core Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide*, pg. 5

Even though the AAAS is not legally binding, compliance with the AAAS may assist in demonstrating that an operator has fulfilled their duty of care to dependent activity participants.

The NAAF is a tool to inform elements of the risk management plan for an adventure-based activity.

The formation of the AAAS and GPGs have been supported and is maintained with funding from the state and territory sport and recreation ministers of Australia. The ongoing management of the AAAS is undertaken by the Outdoor Council of Australia.

As a full member of the Outdoor Council of Australia, Scouts Australia is a signatory of the AAAS.

The good practice framework is provided in:

- **The AAAS:** this addresses the common requirements for all types of adventurous activities
- **The Core GPG:** this provides additional information to help support implementing the AAAS
- **The various activity GPG:** these provide guidance specific to the various activities.

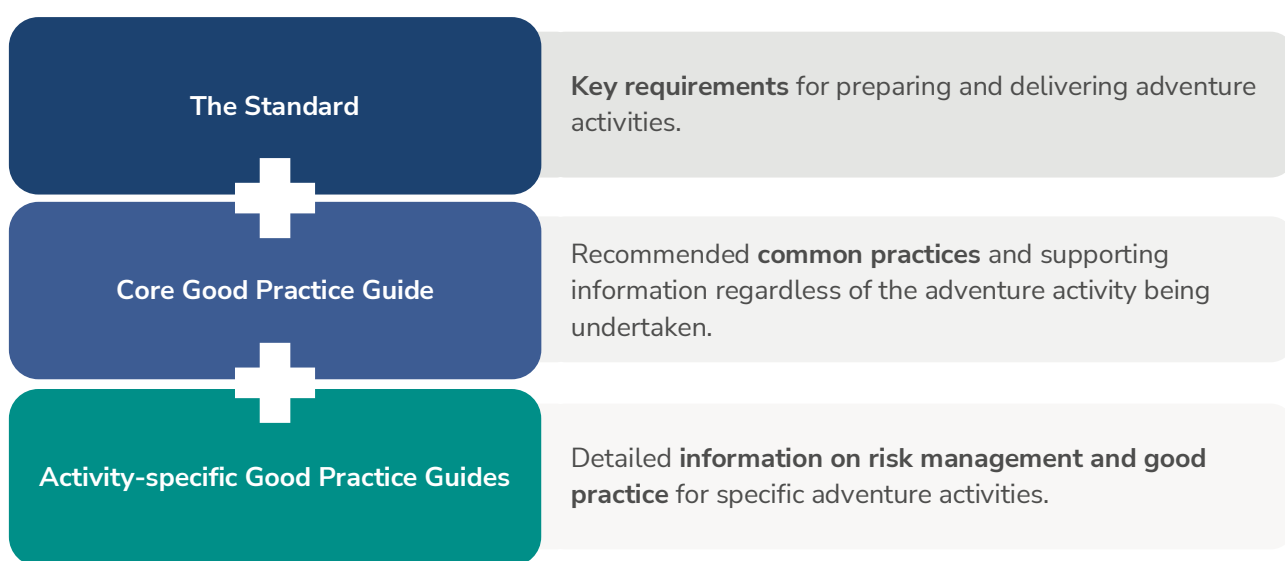


Figure 1: Diagram of AAAS and GPG documents.

Recognition of proficiency

The AAAS Core GPG provides pathways for recognising competence, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Training qualifications and/or a training course
- Outdoor sector or organisational accreditation scheme
- Leader registration scheme
- Peer recognition and verification process.

The Scouts Australia approach to the recognition of competence is an *Outdoor sector or organisational accreditation scheme*, as outlined further in this framework.

Skill recognition classifications and appointments for Adventurous Activities

A Youth Program Leader with a Certificate of Proficiency has the competency to lead groups of Scouts on general and core outdoor activities, in line with Branch policies, procedures and instructions. In addition, Scouts Australia has in place the following skill recognition classifications and appointments for Adventurous Activities:

- Safe Participant skill recognition
- Trained Participant skill recognition
- Assistant Guide appointment
- Guide appointment
- Assistant Leader Trainer appointment
- Leader Trainer appointment.

Skill recognition pathway – Safe Participant

A Safe Participant is a member who has undertaken entry-level training at an activity pursuit and has the skills and knowledge to operate or support activities under a Scouting activity supervision model of direct or indirect supervision, depending on the activity context.

Pathway requirements	Safe Participant skill recognition occurs in line with the requirements in Appendix 3 .
Training pathway	Suitable members of the National Training Team deliver Training Programs leading to Safe Participant skill recognition based on the National Adventurous Activity Program Learning Plan for the pursuit.
Recognition pathway	Existing skills in the different pursuits can be reviewed by a suitable member of the National Training Team for under the relevant skill recognition process. Members may use certain OAS progressions for Safe Participant skill recognition and can have Safe Participant requirements recognised under the <i>Scouting Adventure, Safe Participant, Trained Participant Youth Pathway Handbook</i> .
Administrative recording	Skill recognition is recorded in the Branch Membership System.
Validity	Safe Participant skill recognition remains current as long as activity participation continues regularly. A gap of five years with no participation may require the member to undertake retraining or supervised participation.
Renewal	Safe Participant skill recognition does not expire, and ongoing participation should be recorded by the member in a suitable form (for example, a logbook).
External recognition	The Scouts Australia Institute of Training (SAIT) provides opportunities for members to have their developed skills and knowledge assessed for the issue of nationally recognised units of competency and qualifications.

Skill recognition pathway – Trained Participant

A Trained Participant is a member who has undertaken intermediate-level training at an activity pursuit and has the skills and knowledge to operate independently and support activities under a Scouting activity supervision model of direct or indirect supervision, depending on the activity context.

Pathway requirements	Trained Participant skill recognition occurs in line with the requirements in Appendix 3 .
Training pathway	Suitable members of the National Training Team deliver Training Programs leading to Trained Participant skill recognition based on the National Adventurous Activity Program Learning Plan for the pursuit.
Recognition pathway	Existing skills in the different pursuits can be reviewed by a suitable member of the National Training Team for under the relevant skill recognition process. Members may use certain OAS progressions for Trained Participant skill recognition and can have Trained Participant requirements recognised under the <i>Scouting Adventure, Safe Participant, Trained Participant Youth Pathway Handbook</i> .
Administrative recording	Skill recognition is recorded in the Branch Membership System.
Validity	Trained Participant skill recognition remains current for three years from date of recognition.
Renewal	Trained Participant skill recognition expires after three years and can be renewed. Ongoing participation should be recorded by the member in a suitable form (for example, a logbook).
External recognition	SAIT provides opportunities for members to have their developed skills and knowledge assessed for the issue of nationally recognised units of competency and qualifications.



Appointment pathway – Assistant Guide

An Assistant Guide is a member who has undertaken further-level training at an activity pursuit and has the skills and knowledge to assist with leading adventurous activities in their area of experience under supervision, as part of their recognition pathway to a Guide appointment.

Pathway requirements	Appointment as an Assistant Guide can occur in line with the requirements in Appendix 3 and the <i>Adult Training and Development Standard</i> .
Training pathway	Suitable members of the National Training Team deliver Training Programs leading to Assistant Guide appointments based on the National Adventurous Activity Program Learning Plan for the pursuit.
Recognition pathway	Existing skills in the different pursuits can be reviewed by a suitable member of the National Training Team for under the relevant skill recognition process. Members may use certain OAS progressions for recognition towards an Assistant Guide appointment.
Administrative recording	Appointment is recorded in the Branch Membership System.
Validity	An Assistant Guide appointment remains current for three years from the date of appointment in line with the <i>Adult Training and Development Standard</i> .
Renewal	An Assistant Guide appointment expires after three years and can be renewed. Ongoing participation and rescue skill maintenance should be recorded by the member in a suitable form (for example, a logbook) to demonstrate currency.
External recognition	SAIT provides opportunities for members to have their developed skills and knowledge assessed for the issue of nationally recognised units of competency and qualifications.



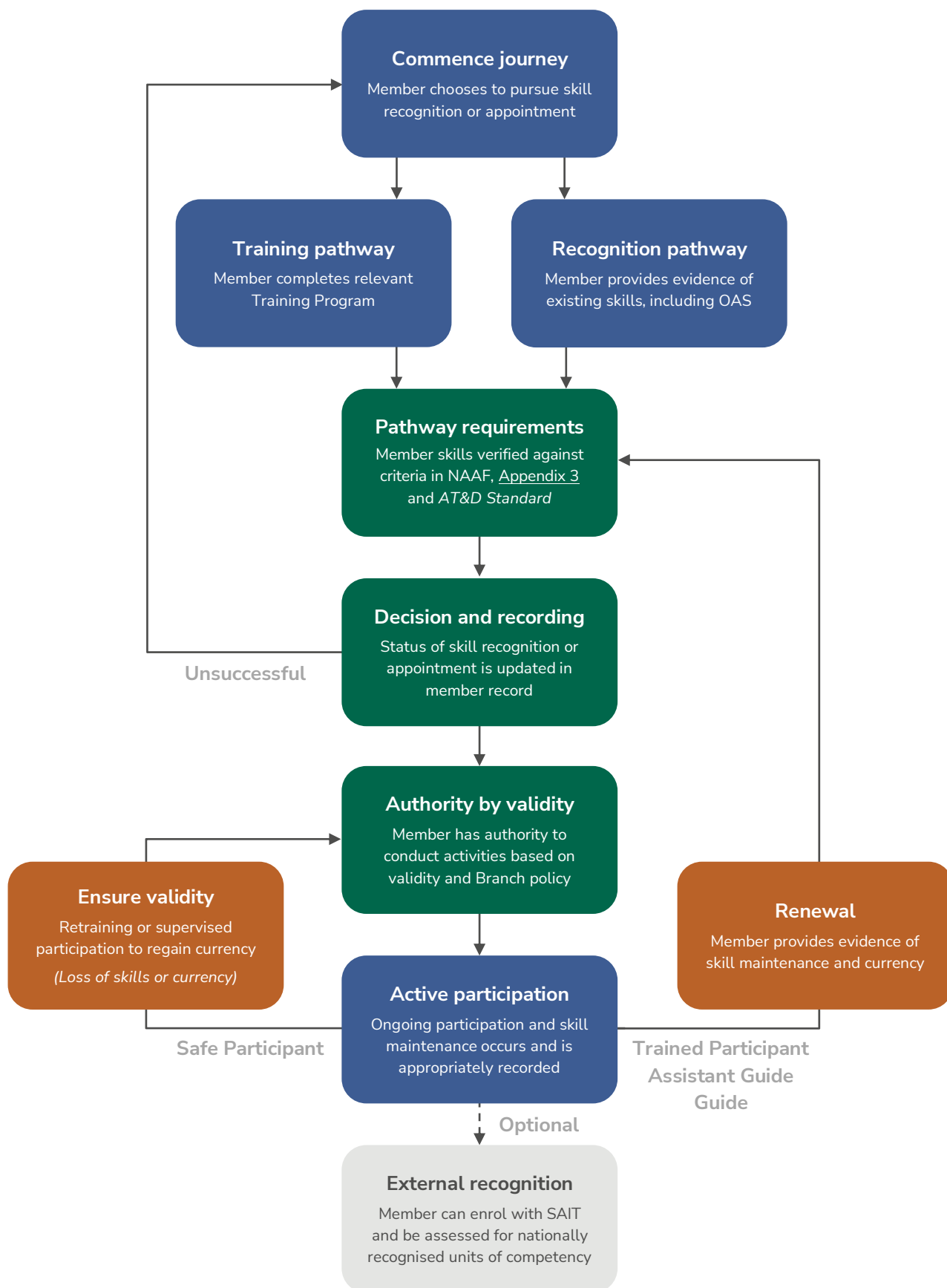
Appointment pathway – Guide

A Guide is a member who has undertaken advanced-level training at an activity pursuit and has the skills and knowledge to lead adventurous activities in their area of experience. They can assist youth members with planning and undertaking activities under indirect or remote supervision.

Pathway requirements	<p>Appointment as a Guide can occur in line with the requirements in Appendix 3 and the <i>Adult Training and Development Standard</i>.</p> <p>Note: In addition to other requirements, members can only be appointed as a Guide if they hold a Certificate of Adult Appointment or membership as a Rover Scout. Appointment as a Guide does not result in the issue of a Certificate of Adult Appointment, as detailed in the <i>Certifications Standard (Adult Members)</i>. A Guide appointment is a secondary appointment.</p>
Training pathway	<p>Suitable members of the National Training Team deliver Training Programs leading to Guide appointments based on the National Adventurous Activity Program Learning Plan for the pursuit.</p>
Recognition pathway	<p>Existing skills in the different pursuits can be reviewed by a suitable member of the National Training Team for under the relevant skill recognition process.</p> <p>Members may use certain OAS progressions for recognition towards a Guide appointment.</p>
Administrative recording	<p>Appointment is recorded in the Branch Membership System.</p>
Validity	<p>A Guide appointment remains current for three years from the date of appointment in line with the <i>Adult Training and Development Standard</i>.</p>
Renewal	<p>A Guide appointment expires after three years and can be renewed. Ongoing participation and rescue skill maintenance should be recorded by the member in a suitable form (for example, a logbook) to demonstrate currency.</p>
External recognition	<p>SAIT provides opportunities for members to have their developed skills and knowledge assessed for the issue of nationally recognised units of competency and qualifications.</p>



Process for Adventurous Activities skill recognition and appointment



Supervision and management during an activity

The AAAS requires that ‘adventurous activities must be led by competent people who have appropriate skills, knowledge and experience’.

The AAAS uses the term ‘activity leader’ to describe the leaders and assistant leaders for the activity.

In Scouts Australia, adventurous activities are defined in *Policy and Rules*.³ The requirements to approve and to run an activity differ across jurisdictions:

- Adventurous activities for dependent participants are approved in accordance with Branch policies. Most activities will require approval from one or more of Group Leaders, Leader-in-Charge, Section Leaders, or the Commissioner responsible for the activity discipline. The person approving the activity does not need to hold adventurous activities qualifications but should ensure the activity will be conducted by qualified people and in line with relevant Branch policies and procedures.
- Adventurous activities for dependent participants are conducted by members of Scouts Australia holding the appointment criteria detailed later in this document. Where the AAAS refer to ‘activity leader’, the reference is to the person conducting the activity and, hence, will be a member of Scouts Australia holding the relevant qualifications.

In some instances, a third-party provider or Subject Matter Expert (SME) may be used in place of a member of Scouts Australia. In such case, the SME must hold appropriate external qualifications, and the youth members must still be supervised by a member of Scouts Australia holding a Certificate of Adult Appointment. Scouts Australia’s child protection policies and procedures apply to SMEs.

Levels of supervision for Adventurous Activities

The level of supervision required for participants may vary depending on the context. The levels of supervision are:

- Direct supervision
- Indirect supervision
- Remote supervision.

The level of supervision utilised for an Adventurous Activity should be based on a risk assessment of the activity.



³ Scouts Australia (2026), *Policy and Rules – P2.4*, pg. 35

Direct supervision

Direct supervision is where a nominated activity leader is responsible for managing participants during all or part of the adventurous activity and is **able** to intervene immediately.

Indirect supervision

Indirect supervision is where a nominated activity leader responsible for managing participants during all or part of the adventurous activity is in the vicinity but is **unable** to intervene immediately.

Remote supervision

Remote supervision is where a nominated activity leader responsible for managing participants during all or part of the adventurous activity is not involved in direct or indirect supervision and is unlikely to be in the vicinity and would therefore **take time to respond**.

Further supervision guidance

Where a participant is a minor or vulnerable person, details of responsibilities and how indirect or remote supervision functions should be provided to the parent and/or guardian prior to obtaining their consent.

Prior to approving an activity with indirect or remote supervision reference should be made to Core GPG 7.8.1 for guidance on aspects of the activity to be considered, and any Branch activity approvals requirements that may apply.

The Core GPG and Activity-specific GPGs provide further guidance on the minimum supervision requirement, leadership and other considerations under the headings of:

1. Introduction
2. Management of Risk
3. Planning
4. Participants
5. Environment
6. Equipment and Logistics
7. Leadership

Where Branches formulate supporting documentation for the NAAF, it should use content references and follow the recommended headings in the AAAS and GPGs.

No supporting documentation should contradict the *Program Handbook, Policy and Rules*, NAAF, or other national policy documents.

First aid provisions for activity delivery

Scouts Australia recognises first aid training as a risk control as part of activity management.

As per *Policy and Rules*, adult leaders are obligated to render first aid and emergency assistance to youth members consistent with their training.⁴

⁴ Scouts Australia (2026), *Policy and Rules – P2.5*, pg. 36

All Adventurous Activities should be conducted in accordance with an emergency management plan framed around Appendix G of the Core GPG.⁵

The AAAS outlined Leader Competencies relating to first aid as:

The minimum requirement for first aid training must be the unit Provide First Aid unit code HLTAID003, or its equivalent.

A higher level of first aid qualification should be used for activities and programs that are in remote areas, with the minimum requirement being the unit Provide First Aid in a Remote Locations Unit code SISOFLD004, or its equivalent.⁶

A suitable first aid service should be considered in the planning of any outdoor or adventurous activity based on the hazards of the activity, participants and location.

As such first aid qualifications are not prescribed for skill recognition classifications or appointments under the NAAF, as the emergency management plan and risk assessment for the activity will determine the first aid service put in place for the activity.

To cater for the variety of activities and locations, first aid qualifications have been divided into three categories: standard first aid, remote first aid and wilderness first aid. These are described as:

Standard first aid

- Typically used in urban or suburban settings.
- Medical facilities and professional help are easily accessible in under an hour from the location of the activity.
- Emergency services can be easily contacted and are expected to arrive quickly.

Remote first aid

- Typically used in locations that are deemed to be remote or isolated from definitive medical care (hospital and/or medical facility) may be delayed for more than one hour.
- Medical facilities and professional help are not immediately accessible due to the location of the casualty.
- Emergency services can be easily contacted and are expected to arrive within a few hours.

Wilderness first aid

- Used in settings where access to definitive medical intervention is may be many hours or even days away.
- Communication with emergency services can be limited or non-existent.
- The field environment can be harsh with varying weather conditions, challenging terrain and limited resources available.

When reviewing the emergency management plan and determining the first aid support requirements for an activity, the Guides supporting the activity and Leader-in-Charge should be consulted. Ensuring the designated first aider(s) have the appropriate first aid currency, skills and supplies to provide an effective first aid service should an emergency arise during the activity.

⁵ Outdoor Council of Australia (2019), *Core Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide*, pg. 54

⁶ Outdoor Council of Australia (2019), *Core Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide*, pg. 63

Obtaining first aid qualifications

To provide capability for first aid services, Branches should offer training that meets the three categories of first aid skill sets:

- **Standard first aid** is provided to members through Branch relationships with training providers or community offering based around the nationally recognised unit of competency HLTAID0011 – Provide first aid.
- **Remote first aid** is provided to members through the provision of a Scout training product based around the nationally recognised unit of competency SISOFLD004 – Provide first aid in remote locations.
- **Wilderness first aid** is provided to members through the continuation of the Scouts Australia Wilderness First Aid course based on the nationally recognised wilderness first aid skill set.

All members who hold NAAF-related appointments are to hold the suitable category of first aid training relevant to the activities they conduct.

All members who hold Guide Appointments shall hold and maintain competency in the category of first aid suitable to the scope of activities they conduct.

Members conducting activities requiring remote first aid are required to also hold relevant skills and knowledge to operate communications systems and equipment.

Members conducting activities requiring wilderness first aid are required to also hold relevant skills and knowledge to operate communications systems and equipment and to conduct search and rescue.

Leader support of the Youth Program – Outdoor Adventure Skills

The OAS provide a pathway throughout a youth member's Scouting journey that challenges them to participate in and lead activities in the outdoors.

A fundamental principle of the OAS is the two-down verification method, where a youth member can support the progression of another youth member working towards OAS "I..." statements two or more Stages below their achieved capability. For example, a youth member holding Bushwalking Stage 7 can support the verification of another youth member seeking to progress up to Bushwalking Stage 5. This approach builds the leadership skills of Scouts who are supporting and verifying other youth members.

It is recognised that a youth member may not always be available to provide two-down verification – including for completion of "I..." statements in Stage 8 and 9 – and that Leaders and SMEs need to assist youth members to build their skills and progress through the Stages.

There are two parts to this:

- **Mentoring:** where the Leader or SME provides support including instruction, guidance on conducting activities and feedback on areas for improvement.
- **Verifying progression:** where the Leader or SME assesses the youth member's progression against the "I..." statements in each Stage. It is important to note that the Leader or SME does not sign-off Stage completion; that is the Unit Council's role.

To do this, the Leaders and SMEs providing mentoring or verifying stage progression should be themselves appropriately qualified. While some "I..." statements can be supported by a Leader with a Youth Program Leader Certificate of Proficiency, some require specific Adventurous Activities classifications and

appointments. The minimum level of adult Scouting recognition required for a member to support verification of OAS “I...” statements is detailed in [Appendix 1](#).

“I...” statements within each OAS Stage are broad – some statements are more technical than others. All “I...” statements are equally valuable to the development of the Stage outcome. Leaders and SMEs providing verification should use their best judgment, and available resources to carefully consider the youth members competence in the scope of each “I...” statement when providing verification or further mentoring.

While [Appendix 1](#) provides the minimum level of adult Scouting recognition required to verify, if you are uncertain of the sufficiency of a statement, then you must seek further support.

It is critical to note that providing mentoring and verification support to youth members **is not** associated with activity approval or the adult qualifications required to conduct or lead an adventurous activity. [Appendix 1](#) **does not** illustrate who may approve or oversee the conduct of an activity. Activity supervision and approval requirements are provided by each Branch.

Youth participation in National Adventurous Activity Framework skill recognition and appointments

Skill recognition and appointments outlined in NAAF are primarily concerned with adult recognition of competency to lead and support Adventurous Activities of dependent participants within the Scouting supervision model. The Achievement Pathways is the recognition pathway for youth members, where an Outdoor Adventure Skill Stream exists for the activity.

Youth skills change over time with growth and Stage progression. The level of adult support required to ensure safe participation, sound mentoring and peer leadership is fluid and needs ongoing responsible monitoring.

Youth members can form part of adventurous activity operational teams, within the *youth leading, adults supporting* model. Adult leaders have the responsibility and duty of care to ensure that youth members participating in operational activity teams, or in youth-led outdoor adventures, are adequately supported and supervised for the activity and role they are performing. This could be to work on a specific “I...” statement, build leadership or activity skills, or general participation.

Where a young person engages in non-OAS pursuits outlined in the NAAF, any youth participation and skill recognition must still be appropriately supported by adults. Youth members may choose to recognise achievement in pursuits, particularly non-OAS pursuits, through a Special Interest Area project, in line with the *Program Handbook*.

The Achievement Pathways must be the primary pathway for youth in Adventurous Activities. Youth can participate in NAAF-centred training programs, where they are delivered to support specific “I...” statements, however, communication must focus on Achievement Pathways outcomes.



Appendices to the National Adventurous Activity Framework

This document should be read in conjunction with four appendices.

1. **Appointment level for OAS support** – details the minimum level of adult Scouting recognition required for a member to support verification of OAS “I...” statements, where two-down support is not available.
2. **Training and recognition pathway: Core proficiency curriculum** – details the training or recognition alignment within the core Adventurous Activities curriculums.
3. **Requirements for skill recognition and appointments for Adventurous Activities** – details training or recognition requirements for skill recognition or appointment within each pursuit.
4. **External body qualification recognition mapping** – details the extent to which qualifications and/or defined outcomes from reputable external organisations satisfy Scouts Australia skill recognition or appointment requirements. External body outcomes included in the mapping have been verified by Scouts Australia’s Adult Training and Development team.

