

## Instructor Handbook

*"This handbook is intended to provide Instructors working for No Limits Development Ltd with an understanding of how the company operates and what is expected of staff when working with the company. This handbook should be read in conjunction with the No Limits Development operating policies, procedures, and risk assessments."*

## Contents

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Ethos and Vision           | 7. General Safety Operating Procedures |
| 2. Company Background         | 8. Course Budget                       |
| 3. Structure of the Company   | 9. Customer Service                    |
| 4. Employment Procedure       | 10. Kit                                |
| 5. Roles and Responsibilities | 11. Clothing and Presentation          |
| 6. Courses and how they run   | 12. DofE Expeditions                   |

## No Limits Ethos and Vision

Our ambition is for No Limits Development (NLD) to be the best provider we can be of outdoor experiences for young people, with courses and expeditions delivered to the highest standard possible. We believe that all individuals should be given the opportunities and guidance to grow and develop to their full potential. We do this by supporting schools in the provision of Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions, and by offering specialist personal development programmes for young people. But beyond this we offer programmes which are innovative, challenging, exciting and fun.

We utilise facilitation and coaching models such as plan – do – reflect – review, in all our courses to enable young people to develop during their time with us. We encourage our instructors to work with teams allowing students to take ownership of their own experiences. By acting as facilitators your role is to guide teams in completing tasks rather than leading them. Company details

**Ethos** - The No Limits ethos, Live Laugh & Learn, is at the core of everything we do.

**Live** Our aim is to help participants to understand and achieve their potential in life. Through participation in challenging mental and physical tasks participants develop key skills and become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses as well as the scope of their potential.

**Laugh** Crucially, we always make sure fun is part of the process and it's this, as well as our experience and infectious enthusiasm, that make all our programmes safe and enjoyable. After all, people always learn best when they are having fun.

**Learn** All our activities are designed to maximise learning opportunities – whether leadership, team working, interpersonal or other life skills, students come away from our programmes with a better sense of independence, respect for themselves and their peers and taking responsibility for their actions.

## Instructor Handbook

# Company Background

No Limits Development was established in 2008 by Tony Ward, with the aim of being a high-quality provider of expeditions and outdoor adventure programmes to schools across the UK. Although initially focusing on DofE expeditions, we now offer a range of courses to schools all over the country, including the following:

- Duke of Edinburgh's Award – expeditions at all levels and in a variety of mediums e.g. Walking, Canoeing and Cycling.
- Adventure Programmes – including Mountain Adventures, River Adventures and Bushcraft courses
- Development programmes – Including 6<sup>th</sup> Form induction, prefect Training and Leadership and Teamwork courses
- Explorer Series – a progressive programme of courses run in primary schools focusing on an understanding of contrasting environments.

## Structure of the company

The company is run by an experienced team of people, mostly based in our head office in Buxton

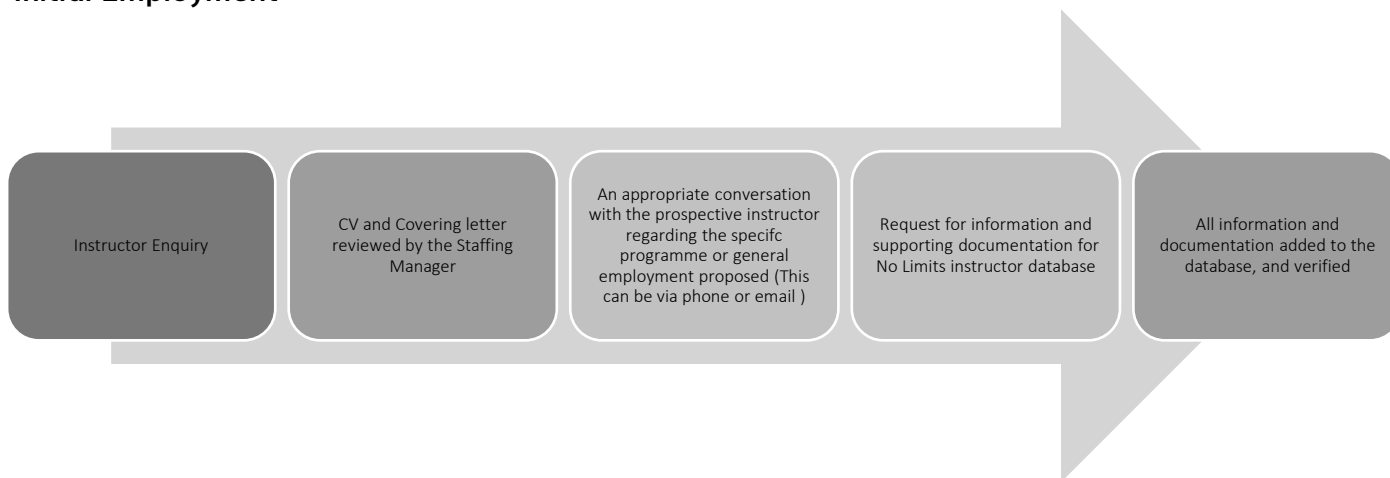
- **Tony Ward** (Managing Director) Tony set up, owns and runs No Limits Development and is constantly looking for new business and driving the company forward.
- **Matt Simmon** (Operations Manager) Matt is responsible for the day to day delivery of No Limits course, ensuring all parts of the team come together to deliver at a consistently high standard
- **Anthony Kelly** (Planning Manager) Anthony is responsible for the research and planning of our courses and expeditions behind the scenes.
- **Sally Burton** (Customer Relationship Manager) Sally is responsible for all the communication between us and the school, ensuring everyone has the right information at the right time!
- **Davina Ross** (Freelance Relationship Manager) Davina works to provide outstanding administration for all our freelance staff, ensuring both you and we have all the information we need to perform to the best of our ability!
- **Paul Rhodes** (Stores Manager) Paul is responsible for the maintenance and logistics behind getting the right kit to the right course, in the best condition it can be
- **Ian Barker** (Technical Advisor) Ian is responsible for offering expert external insight and guidance to the No Limits team, to ensure it operates at an industry leading standard

## Employment procedures

No Limits Development drives itself to employ the very best of staff, and to ensure our recruitment procedure is thorough but efficient. We not only have a responsibility to ensure we recruit competent and appropriate staff for our programmes, but to ensure we are open and honest with prospective instructors about the nature of our operations and programmes. No Limits prides itself on its ability to create and maintain long term relationships with its staff.

# Instructor Handbook

## Initial Employment



## Information Required

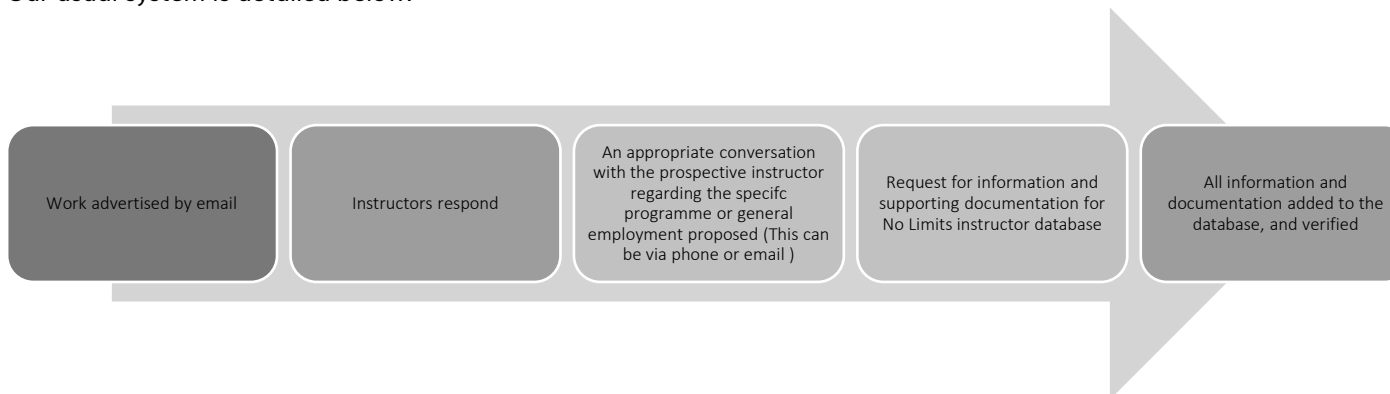
No Limits requires the following information from instructors, which is held on a secure database in-line with our GDPR Policy. This information is required to satisfy a variety of criteria, which can be found within this handbook, Safeguarding Policy and Policy Handbook.

- Personal Information (Name, Phone Number, email address)
- Next of Kin Name and Phone number (For use in emergency situations)
- Enhanced DBS check (Within the last 3 years, or registered on the DBS update service)
- First Aid Certificate (Within 3 years)
- Copies of any relevant NGB Qualifications or training (Including Safeguarding)
- ID (with proof of right to work in UK if needed) – This must match the DBS Check provided
- A signed copy of the NLD Instructor contract
- 2 References

We also require instructors to thoroughly read our policies and procedures which can be found on our website, and send an email to us confirming they have read them and agree to abide by them

## Work Available

Once the above has been completed and approved you are eligible to apply for work with No Limits Development. Our usual system is detailed below:



## Instructor Handbook

Work on courses is usually offered via email from Davina. She will send basic details of dates and location of the course at the point of engagement. This will be followed up with the distribution of Course Information. Course Directors will receive these 3 weeks before the course, and Instructors will receive their pack 2 weeks before the course.

### Cancellations

There are rare occasions when for some reason either the school decides to change dates or numbers drop on a course. In these circumstances, when we have to cancel your place on a course, we are unable to pay any fees. However, we will do our utmost to find alternative work for you with the company to compensate & will offer first refusal on the next available course.

If for any reason you need to cancel your employment on a course, please inform Davina as soon as possible so that we can replace you. We work on a 3-strike policy i.e. if you cancel work at short notice, without a valid reason or finding a replacement, more than three times in 1 season we may no longer use your services.

### Pay

Our Instructor fees are generally as follows:

- Instructor Day Rate £130 per day (for all courses including DofE)
- Course Director Day Rate £150 per day (for all courses including DofE)
- Van collection and driving £50.00 in total
- Travel Supplement payable for all multi day DofE Courses
  - Bronze - £20 per 2-day course
  - Silver - £25 per 3-day course
  - Gold - £30 per course - 4 days and over

Some courses have slightly different pay rates due to varied start and finish times so please ensure you are happy with the pay rate for a course before agreeing to work on it.

Invoices should be submitted to Davina as soon as possible after the course but will only be paid upon receipt of any completed "Post Course Reports", DofE reports and incident reports. Payments for work completed are made within 30 days of receipt of invoices.

### Staff training

This usually takes place on an annual basis – usually in February/March time. Instructors will be invited to attend a training day which will include an update on the company, any changes in policy or safety practices and anything else which the NLD team feels is relevant to cover based on outcomes from the previous year.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Safety is paramount and whilst risk cannot be fully eliminated, all activities should be carried out in a manner that ensures that staff and participants are exposed to the minimum risk possible.

### Course Directors or Lead Instructors

## Instructor Handbook

All courses will have a designated Course Director (CD) or Lead Instructor. This person has overall responsibility for the management of the experience. Ensuring that the programme and logistics run smoothly and safely. Liaising between the NLD operations team and those on the ground as necessary. The Course Director or Lead Instructor will hold regular briefings to ensure that all members of the team, (NLD and School staff) are fully informed and have everything required for their role.

NB. It is critical for the success of the expedition that the Lead Teacher and Course Director communicate and work well together. Ensuring NLD and school staff work as one, and all information is shared including all medical and dietary information declared on consent forms.

### Instructors

Instructors have responsibility for the safety and supervision of their allocated teams, in accordance to No Limits operating procedures. They are responsible for the safe delivery of the programmed activities, taking into account the participants needs and environmental conditions on the day. On expeditions they are also responsible for delivering training as required to ensure their team/s are safe and competent for the level of the award and mode of travel in which they are participating. Instructors also ensure there is development opportunity for all participants, in terms of expedition and interpersonal skills.

### Lead Teacher

The lead teacher (visit leader) always retains a duty of care for the group, unless there has been a clear hand-over of responsibility for providing care and supervision for a specific period such as a set activity session. The Lead Teacher has overall responsibility for student welfare, behaviour, the management of school staff and ensuring the schools offsite policies and ratios are adhered too. They also liaise with the course director, flagging any concerns, issues or highlighting success to help ensure the expedition runs smoothly safely and enjoyably

### School staff

School staff have responsibility for the behaviour and welfare of students, and are usually allocated a specific group, based on the school's offsite supervision ratios. If a student is injured or ill during an experience and that student is removed from the team, they will then become the responsibility of school staff. Whilst on offsite activity's School staff will need to be with teams to assist the Instructors as required. Where activities are onsite, staff can agree with the Course Director to be within a reasonable proximity of the activity. During an expedition school staff maybe required to provide additional expedition support, be this with logistics or out in the field, this will be coordinated by the Course Director.

### Overnight

At the end of the programmed day, or on expeditions once all teams are in their camp site and have been seen by their instructor to be safe, comfortable and briefed for the evening, then pastoral care of students falls to the school staff, with the NLD Course Director responsible for safety and "on-call" to support school staff should the need arise. Whilst "pastoral responsibility" has been handed over to the school staff acting in loco parentis, a portion of responsibility for safety and supervision remains with NLD staff particularly when in remote locations. Therefore, its standard practice for instructors to remain onsite in the same accommodation as our groups (other than gold and silver DofE).

### General Standards

#### Pre-Course responsibilities:

- Ensure you receive the Pre-Course information

## Instructor Handbook

- Ensure you are aware of any specific requirements for the course and that you have bought any required personal equipment
- Arrive at the course venue in enough time to be ready and prepared for the briefing run by the Course Director
- Attend the pre course briefing
- Be aware of the forecasted weather conditions for the area

### On Course Responsibilities

- Be aware of any medical or dietary requirements of your group
- Set appropriate professional standards in terms of clothing, appearance and behaviour whilst working for No Limits Development.
- To communicate professionally and in a way best representing No Limits Development with all clients and students
- Inspect all equipment provided to you prior for its use to ensure you are satisfied with its functionality.
- Carry a mobile phone and first aid kit during all courses. Also ensure groups have access to other safety equipment e.g. group shelters.
- To constantly monitor and dynamically assess risks and adapt the activities appropriately in consultation with the course director
- To provide the students with specific learning objectives as briefed by the course director and to facilitate their success
- Ensure students are appropriately equipped for the activity and weather
- To raise any concerns you have with the Course Director in a discrete and professional manner

### Post Course Responsibilities

- Ensure all kit is returned to stores clean and report any damaged items to the Course Director
- Fully fill in any course reports ensuring comments are constructive and positive
- Return any Incident forms to the Course Director

## Our courses and how they run

The way in which our courses and expeditions are run can vary depending on the type of course. For example, a multi activity residential will be very different to a Gold DofE expedition. You can think of each course as being broken down into sections as follows for which there are various checks and/or steps to take place:

- Pre-course
- Briefing
- Course delivery
- Post course

### Pre-course

#### Joining Instructions

You will be sent information relating to the course approximately 2 weeks before it starts by email from a member of the operations team. Please ensure you have received this and read it carefully as it will tell you meeting times and places, details of the group's proposed course or expedition and will confirm the pay for the course.

#### Briefings

## Instructor Handbook

On most of our courses you will be asked to arrive early in the morning or the night before for a briefing with the Course Director. This is a vital part of the programme, as you will be given more detailed information about the group attending, any changes to the itinerary and all other relevant information, including specific safety information. It is also your opportunity to ask any questions before the course starts. If for any reason you cannot attend this briefing, you **must** inform the Course Director & the operations team in advance. We do not usually provide accommodation the night before a course starts (if we do, this will be highlighted separately during the recruitment process for that course).

### Kit check

Prior to a course starting Course Directors are to check all kit has been received & that it is in good order, if any items have not been delivered this is to be reported back to the office immediately as we will endeavour to get missing items to you ASAP.

### Introduction to groups

Our courses usually begin with a whole group introduction from the Course Director. Students are then split into teams and allocated to an Instructor. You will then be expected to brief your team about what to expect during the course. If the course is residential you will need to carry out a site familiarization tour with your team. Course Directors are to discuss the course, usually over coffee and biscuits, with teaching staff to include their roles and responsibilities.

Throughout our courses, we rely on our Instructors to facilitate groups in a way that encourages personal development and teamwork amongst the students. They are not simply with us to go climbing or pitch a tent, we must encourage them to be working together and looking for ways to develop relationships with others and increase in self-confidence.

It is your responsibility to sign out kit to the team at the beginning of the course, ensuring it is all returned at the end. We cannot afford to lose any items of kit, no matter how small, so please encourage the students respect the equipment. When items such as boots, fleeces, hats, gloves & waterproofs are given out at the start of a course this must be recorded and signed back in at the end of the course.

### During the course

You will usually follow the itinerary you have been given. During the course we ask that you develop a good working relationship with the teacher(s) and a rapport with the team of students you are responsible for. Any issues that arise during the course should be dealt with quickly in consultation with the Course Director.

Often there will be regular briefings e.g. each morning or evening, with the rest of the delivery team. This is an opportunity to highlight any issues or discuss challenges with a group or itinerary. This is an important feedback mechanism as it allows the Course Director to make improvements or offer support immediately, rather than waiting for negative feedback from a school once they have left.

### Conclusion of course

It is important to review a course at the end with the student team members to highlight what they have learnt; how they have benefitted from the experience and look back with pride on what they have achieved. This should be guided by the Instructor but encouraging most input from the team members.

### Post Course



## Instructor Handbook

### Incidents, Accident and Near Misses

All Incidents, Accident and Near Misses must be recorded appropriately, and the Course Director informed. Minor incidents should be reported to the No Limits Development operations team at the end of the course, serious and major incidents should be reported ASAP to the duty operations manager. For all Incidents and Accidents an Incident form must be filled in this must be clearly filled in by the instructors present. Near misses should be reported to the course director who will include these in the post course report. Incident reports can be initially handwritten but must be subsequently submitted as a typed and preferably electronic copies. No two incidents are the same and it would therefore be virtually impossible to provide an incident procedure script to follow, however available is the Emergency Action Plan, which is contained within a separate document, which can be applied to most situations with some parts omitted dependent on the severity

### Course de-brief

After the group have left the delivery team are to have a thorough de-brief of the course. Where appropriate this should be a critical analysis highlighting areas of excellence & points for improvement including itinerary infrastructure, delivery staff or NLD admin.

### Campsite/ venue

Ensure the venue has been thoroughly cleaned including toilets, showers, cooking areas etc., and all keys have been returned. Course Directors are to check in with venue owners or managers prior to leaving to ensure there are no issues & they are happy with our stay.

### Kit

All kit is to be checked into the kit van & once done Course Directors are to phone the office reporting on funds to be returned, how the course has run, any issues & that all kit has been returned, highlighting any losses or damage.

### Admin

Please then email in your invoice, along with any other pre course information or reports, to Davina which will be paid within 30 days. Invoices will only be processed once all post course reports such as incident forms, DofE reports and other documentation have been submitted. Course Directors must complete the Post course report and send this back with any Incident forms, Budget forms and Feedback forms before their invoice will be paid.

### Feedback

We always welcome any feedback from Instructors as to how courses can be improved so feel free to contact us at any time with comments or constructive feedback.

Course Directors are asked to provide feedback on the course as a whole via the Post Course Report. As part of this they rate and give feedback on Instructors who have worked on the course and you are welcome to see and discuss this feedback at any time.

## General Safety and Operating Procedures

### General Standards

- All instructors will be suitably qualified and hold a current First Aid certificate which will be relevant to the appropriate environment which we sometimes work
- Prior to a course commencing joining instructions, including pre course information will be sent via email to all instructors. This will be followed up with a verbal briefing prior to arrival of participants.



## Instructor Handbook

- All course participants must complete a parent consent form including medical, dietary and next of kin details prior to each expedition. These details are to be kept by the Course Director or lead member of school staff for the duration of the course. The Course Director should be aware of any serious medical or dietary issues, whilst each instructor should be aware of any specific issues within their team of participants.
- Each course will commence with a participant safety brief. This brief will be thorough and all participants, school staff and No Limits Development staff must attend.
- Where participants are required to comply with a safety dress code, instructors should set the standard by making sure they are wearing appropriate clothing i.e. waterproofs, boots etc.
- Generally participants will not be allowed to leave the group during an expedition or activities unless accompanied by an adult. The resulting effect on the supervisory ratios will need to be considered by the instructor
- Instructors must inspect all technical equipment before it is used for any activity, in particular: climbing & abseil ropes, harnesses and buoyancy aids.
- All instructors are required to carry a mobile phone and a first aid kit whilst working with a group.
- All groups are to have access to a mobile phone, emergency shelter, first aid kit and any other safety equipment relevant to the environmental conditions.
- When walking on roads is necessary the team must walk in a single file and on the right hand of the road, i.e. towards oncoming traffic. The front and rear markers will wear high visibility vests whenever on the road.
- Should groups find themselves on roads at night the front and rear person must carry a torch. Additional torches should be distributed throughout the group.
- The course instructor or Technician will find out who wants to take part in the activity and who is and is not a swimmer or water confident. No one will be excluded from taking part in the activity unless there are reasonable grounds for doing so.

### Hill Walking

Hill Walking will be conducted in areas that include a variety of low and high level routes to cater for all abilities

- A master map, or similar, will be held with the course director which will show all routes in permanent marker pen.

### Climbing & Abseiling

- All participants including instructors will wear helmets and a suitable harness when climbing, belaying or standing within the designated area. It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure that the manufacturers' instructions are followed
- The participant briefing should include the use of safety equipment, calling system, alternative routes for ascent or descent, behaviour when not directly involved and the importance of not wandering off.

### Kayaking, open canoeing & improvised rafting

- All participants must wear buoyancy aids at all times during the session on the water and thought should be given to whether they are needed whilst setting up dependent on location. Helmets are required for all rafting sessions and are at the discretion of the lead instructor for canoeing and kayaking. It is the responsibility of the instructor or Technician to make sure that the manufacturers' fitting instructions are followed.
- The student briefing should include details of the safe use of paddles in the paddling area, safety equipment, capsizing procedures and signals, as well as a procedure in case of immersion under water

## Instructor Handbook

- Teams on the water will be accompanied by an appropriate safety boat

### Transportation

- No one is permitted to ride on the roof, bonnet, bumpers, sideboards, footplates or trailers of vehicles
- Everyone must wear seat belts where provided
- Drivers who drive participants in mini buses must hold a PCV licence or D1 licence as required by the hire company.

### Discipline Issues

In most cases, issues of discipline will need to be referred to the teaching staff accompanying the participants. Participants can and will be sent home should the situation warrant. Instructors will not continue any activity which is being interrupted by behavioural issues, until the situation is resolved and it is safe to continue. Use of illegal substances is not permitted. If such are discovered we will immediately refer to the school or parents concerned to discuss an appropriate course of action.

## Course Budgets

Course Budgets are provided on courses where No Limits staff are catering, paying for campsites or where we envisage additional spending will be required to support a programme. Course Budgets will be issued to a responsible person, who will be briefed by a member of the operations team. There will always be enough funds for throughout each course and often provide a surplus for unexpected costs related to the course. This surplus is only to be used if necessary and isn't intended to purchase unnecessary luxury items or for items not directly required for the course.

The responsible person may at times had over responsibility to the course director, but the budget shouldn't be handed over to students or school staff. The responsible person issued the budget will be responsible for returning the surplus and completed Budget sheet(s) at the end of the course with receipts for all spending. If any money is not accounted for by an Instructor or Course Director at the end of a course, the missing money may be docked from their invoice.

## Customer service

We pride ourselves on our customer service & it is extremely important that our customer facing Instructors feel confident in their role during any given course to ensure we provide excellent customer service to our clients.

Whilst working with us you are the face of NLD and represent the company. We therefore rely on you to deliver a good impression of the way we work. This will mean developing a positive relationship with the teachers of any school groups you work with and acting in a professional manner around pupils. Many children will look upon our staff as role models – particularly when they take part in our more challenging expeditions. It is therefore important to maintain the right balance between friendship and authority when interacting with young people.

It is vital to respond quickly to any problems that arise during a course, by first discussing them with the Course Director and then the teachers so that appropriate action can be taken to address any issues and keep the course running successfully. Whilst working for NLD we respectfully ask that you do not promote your own business or services to our clients, either through the wearing of your own branded clothing or by arriving at courses with

## Instructor Handbook

branded vehicles etc. Please wear NLD branded clothing which will be provided to all our Instructors and follow the dress code as detailed in this handbook.

### Kit

No Limits Development provides a wide variety of specialized kit for students on our courses where needed. In addition, we carry a stock of spare waterproofs & rucksacks. Instructors are usually expected to provide their own full outdoor kit including tent, stove, waterproofs etc.

It is expected that Instructors take responsibility for the care and maintenance of any kit provided to their groups from NLD. Lost or damaged kit is a serious financial concern in a small company such as ours, and therefore we need those working with it to look after it with respect. Your group will be issued with a set of kit at the start of a course and asked to check and sign for it. This kit should then be returned (cleaned if applicable) at the end, highlighting to the Course Director any damage or loss which has occurred during the course.

Instructors must convey the importance of looking after kit to their groups of young people and guide them to manage it appropriately and with respect.

### Clothing and Presentation

It is important that staff working with No Limits Development dress in a way that represents the Company in a professional manner. All members of staff should appear presentable at all times, and it is the responsibility of the CD to ensure that all delivery staff comply with the following guidelines. Staff must at all times ensure that they set a good example in the wearing of personal protective equipment during activities.

#### General

Clothing should be clean, tidy and free of burns, tears etc. Clothing that has other outdoor activity provider's branding visible should not be worn. Staff must also appear presentable and with no excessive visible facial piercings or unkempt facial hair.

- **Footwear.** Members of staff should be wearing the same type of footwear that they would expect Students to be wearing for safety purposes during the activity, which will be walking boots or smart approach shoes/trainers for most land-based activities. In the summer months, during certain activities and in campsites, it may be appropriate to wear sports style sandals but not 'flip-flops'.
- **Trousers/shorts.** Staff should wear plain-coloured, outdoor trousers whilst delivering outdoor activities, and may choose to wear smart-casual trousers during the evening e.g. corduroys but not denim. During the summer months, whilst delivering activities, it may be appropriate to wear plain-coloured, non-patterned knee-length shorts or three-quarter length trousers. Hawaiian-style shorts are not appropriate.
- **T-shirts/tops.** All staff should wear a visible No Limits Development branded top. During activities, staff can wear their own technical clothing, but this must be presentable

## Instructor Handbook

# Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions and Training

In keeping with the DofE ethos that expeditions should be challenging, fun and accessible to all, No Limits Development (NLD) provides support to a wide range of youth organisations. We deliver DofE expeditions in the UK and abroad creating truly memorable experiences for participants. Modes of travel include:

- Walking
- Cycling
- Canoeing
- Horse Riding

No Limits Development firmly believes that DofE Expeditions provide a unique opportunity in terms of building character and personal development of young people. However due to the nature of expeditions, The Award, working with schools and the diverse personalities of young people, working on and managing DofE Expeditions is rarely a straightforward process. At times this can require a great deal of patience, tact and the ability to switch teaching styles depending upon a given situation. As it is quite feasible that during a single expedition you can find yourself interchanging between the 3 roles of trainer, supervisor and assessor.

We at NLD recognise this and recruit staff based on their personality, interpersonal skills, diverse life experiences and ability to work with and develop young people in an outdoor setting. As we feel it is these traits that provide the confidence to facilitate expeditions, as set by The DofE guidelines, whilst adopting a pragmatic but safe approach.

## Transitional Role and Responsibility of No Limits Development in DofE

Given the nature of the Award and the development journey that participants undertake, the role of No Limits Development staff in the delivery of DofE Expedition is transitional, adapting an appropriate level of input and support to enable the participant's progress through The Award. These transitions are:

1. **Training** - a high input phase with a focus of teaching participants the skills required to be successful in the expedition section of The Award, such as navigation, camp craft etc. In addition to this, Instructors also need to facilitate opportunities for participants to develop their problem solving, teamwork and communication skills.
2. **Practice** – a potential high input phase where No Limits Development staff provide coaching and guidance to enable the participants to apply and refine the expedition skills and knowledge, they have learnt through their training sessions or previous expeditions. This support is gradually withdrawn from the teams, until the instructor is confident that participants have sufficient competency and confidence to journey alone in their chosen environment. During this phase participants will probably make mistakes, but a key aspect to the role is facilitating the learning process, helping teams identify where they went wrong and how to avoid this in future. This not only includes facilitation in expedition skills but also includes interpersonal and other life skills.

**Bronze Practice** – this maybe the first time that some participants have walked or camped in an expedition setting, for some it will be their first outdoor experience. As such, it is important to gauge the level of competency within each team and provide the appropriate level of training so that teams are prepared for their qualifying expedition.

## Instructor Handbook

3. **Assessment** – light input – during this phase the role is to observe and assess how well the skills and knowledge are applied during the final expedition. Whilst this phase requires staff to adopt a low-key approach, it is still a continuation of learning and should be remembered that this is not an MLTB assessment. Participants should be assessed against an appropriate level of the criteria as set out in the DofE Frameworks. During this phase of The Award No Limits Development staff retain overall accountability for participant safety and should not hesitate to intervene if there is a safety or welfare concern. This does not necessarily mean a team will fail but should be seen as a learning opportunity.

### Additional Role and Responsibility

Alongside our standards instructor requirements, all Instructors supervising DofE programmes will need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the DofE and how to support participants to develop the skills and knowledge to evidence they meet the requirements and 20 conditions during Training, Practice and Qualifying Expeditions. At training and practice NLD staff are responsible for ensuring their teams are trained and competent in the DofE Training Syllabus for the level of the award being undertaken.

### Course Directors

Course Directors should keep a master route map, ensuring they are aware of the plans and routes of all teams and instructors throughout the day, this includes start times and ETA at campsites. When out in the hills it is good practice for instructors to check in with the Course Director once you have returned to your camp or base.

During the assessment phase if there are any questions regarding whether a group should pass/fail the expedition, the Course Director will act as an independent adjudicator, to assist in formulating a considered decision. This can include a full review of the team's performance against the DofE requirements and take into account any mitigating circumstances, including overall performance, work ethic and behaviour. School staff should be included in the review and any decision making.

### Instructors

Prior to the departure of all expeditions onto the hills, Instructors are to cover kit check, food check, menu plan, rucksack packing, route planning and are to discuss the weather forecast & emergency procedures etc.

Instructors need to have good knowledge of where all participants within their respective teams are at all times and take reasonable steps to ensure they are safe at all times, by being aware of any key hazards and meeting the groups at highlighted major hazards. Instructors are responsible for participants until they are deemed safe at a campsite. At Bronze this is usually after they have erected tents and finished cooking and cleaning up. For other DofE Groups this is once the team/s have arrived at camp and each participant has been observed to be fit and well, and the group have demonstrated adequate competency in camp craft, prior to being left unaccompanied. Groups should always be reminded to wear footwear. Instructors should be aware of the groups plan for the following morning and have highlighted this with the Course Director.

The Instructor is also responsible for briefing the team on route requirements and ensuring that routes submitted by their team of participants are aligned to those provided by No Limits Development. These have been developed taking into account programme logistics such as transport, campsites, supervision ratios etc. Any route changes can therefore have significant implications. Any concerns regarding routes should be flagged to Course Director.

### School staff

School staff have the responsibility for the behaviour and welfare of students. If a student is injured or ill during an expedition & that student is removed from the team, they will then become the responsibility of school staff. School

## Instructor Handbook

staff will need to be within the expedition area to assist the Instructors as required. Dependent on expedition school staff may offer additional expedition support, be this on the hill or with logistics, this will be coordinated by the Course Director.

### Delivery

There are a number of particular requirements for running DofE courses that NLD expect of all our delivery staff to be aware of, as follows:

### Ratios

**Training expeditions** - There will usually (but not always) be 1 instructor per team. Instructors are to teach all the necessary skills appropriate to the level of award and in line with DofE training framework.

**Practice expeditions** - There will usually be 1 instructor per 2 teams. This is a continuation of training; on Day 1 students may require guidance and further skills training. Instructors are only to remotely supervise once they are happy that teams are safe. Even when remotely supervising Instructors are to have visual contact with their teams at intervals as appropriate for the level of The Award being undertaken and the competency of the team. The role of the Instructor is to provide guidance and support throughout the expedition.

**Qualifying expeditions** - There will usually be 1 instructor per 2 teams. Although this is a qualifying expedition, it may have been some months since participants were last out in the hills. Again Day 1 should be reasonably closely supervised, with supervision becoming more remote as teams develop confidence. Please remember they are students at school and are not participating in an ML assessment. As such we have responsibility for their safety, wellbeing & personal development.

### Additional Considerations and Information

#### Road Safety

If a team/s route appears to spend more time on a road/s than is necessary, the team's instructor should discuss with the Course Director and school staff & change the route as required.

Participants are to be briefed on road safety and made aware of & to use recognized crossings such as bridges, tunnels, traffic lights etc. Where this is not possible than groups should be made aware of the following

- Is there enough space to safely the road with the group?
- Choose a location with good visibility along the road in both directions, away from sharp or sweeping bends, or near to the brow of a hill.
- Is there enough space on the other side of the road if the entire group cross at once? Will rucksacks be hanging in the road, is it a pavement big enough?
- Hi-Vis. Ensure that the person at each end of the line is clearly visible by wearing a high visibility jacket. In low light this can also be helped by having rucksack covers (sometimes bright colours), and bright jackets worn.
- Is there a pedestrian or zebra crossing nearby?

#### Briefing

- Do the group know where and when to go?
- Are they walking straight across or to a gate on the other side with limited footpath space?
- Will they be walking in the same direction on the other side (save changing order whilst on a narrow pavement).

## Instructor Handbook

- Awareness of other pavement users. Ensure they are not blocking pavement and forcing other users into road.

NLD recommend 2 ways to cross roads safely with groups.

- **Method 1.**  
Using a person at either end of the line, both having clear visibility of the road at either end, the group walk across the road as instructed. The group will cross parallel to the road. There should be a clear command by the leader as explained to group in briefing.
- **Method 2.**  
The person giving the crossing command will be on the opposite side of the road from the group (still in earshot) with clear view of the road. On their command the group should cross in one line, parallel to the road. Groups should only walk on roads in poor light conditions such as fog, dusk or darkness once a dynamic risk assessment has been made by the instructor and endorsed by the Course Director.

Where possible groups should be check pointed and met when crossing A-Roads or busy rural roads where there are no recognized crossings.

## Remote Supervision

The method of supervision used for a group is entirely at the discretion of the instructor on the ground and is a combination of many factors. The appropriate level of supervision for any groups is a sliding scale, and not something which is black and white. Conditions, terrain, and group dynamics may dictate an increase or decrease of supervision style at any point and should be constantly reviewed

For instructors new to the award or recently qualified, we would strongly recommend reading the guidance on remote supervision published by Mountain training. The in depth understand of the risk and principals are important underpinning knowledge and not a replacement for this summary and tips

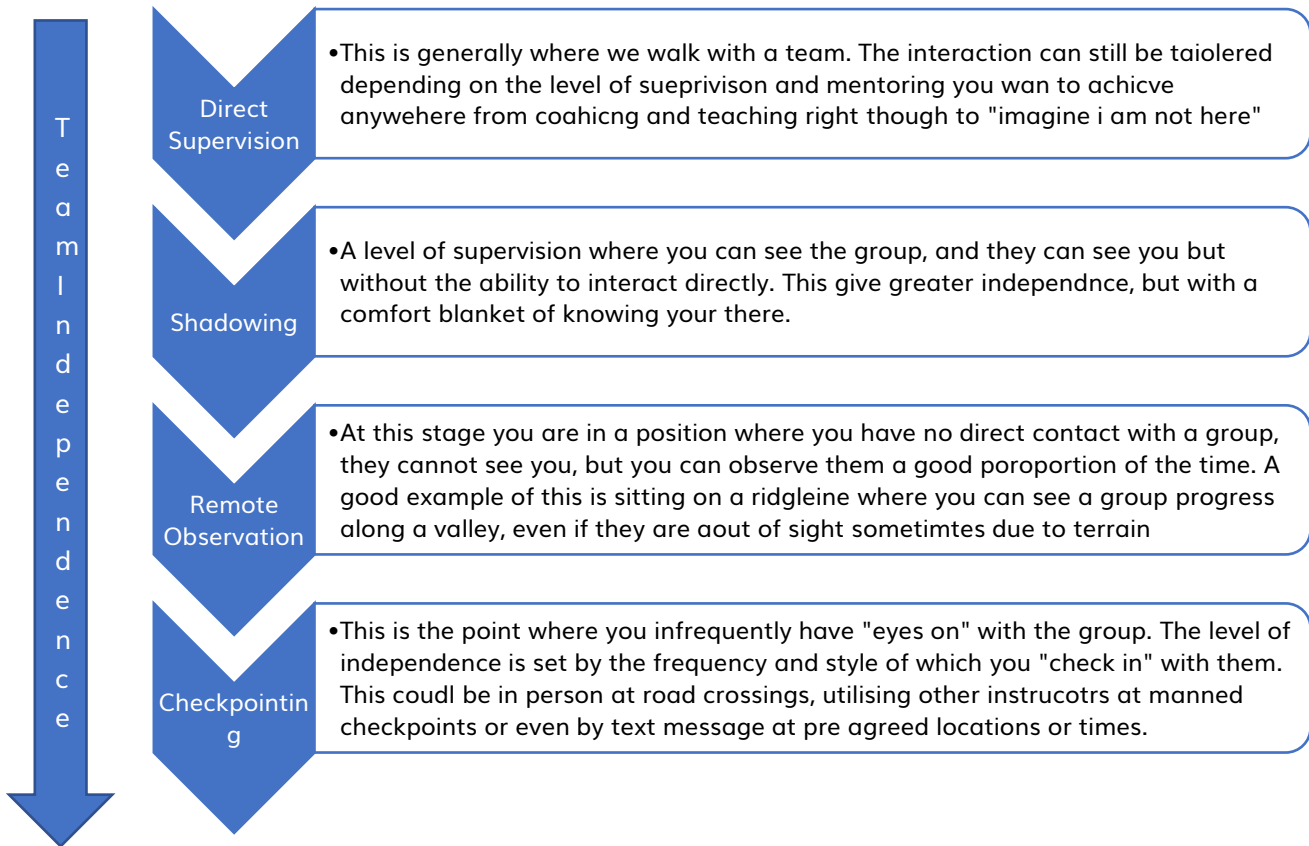
When deciding on a supervision style, try to keep in mind the cost versus benefit of your supervision. There are times where direct contact and coaching are required, but a fundamental part of DofE and our ethos of "Developing through adventure and experience" is giving participants the opportunity of independence to learn and experience for themselves the wonder of the outdoors. To quote the DofE "All meetings (with the team) represent an intrusion into the team's own expedition"

### Supervision options

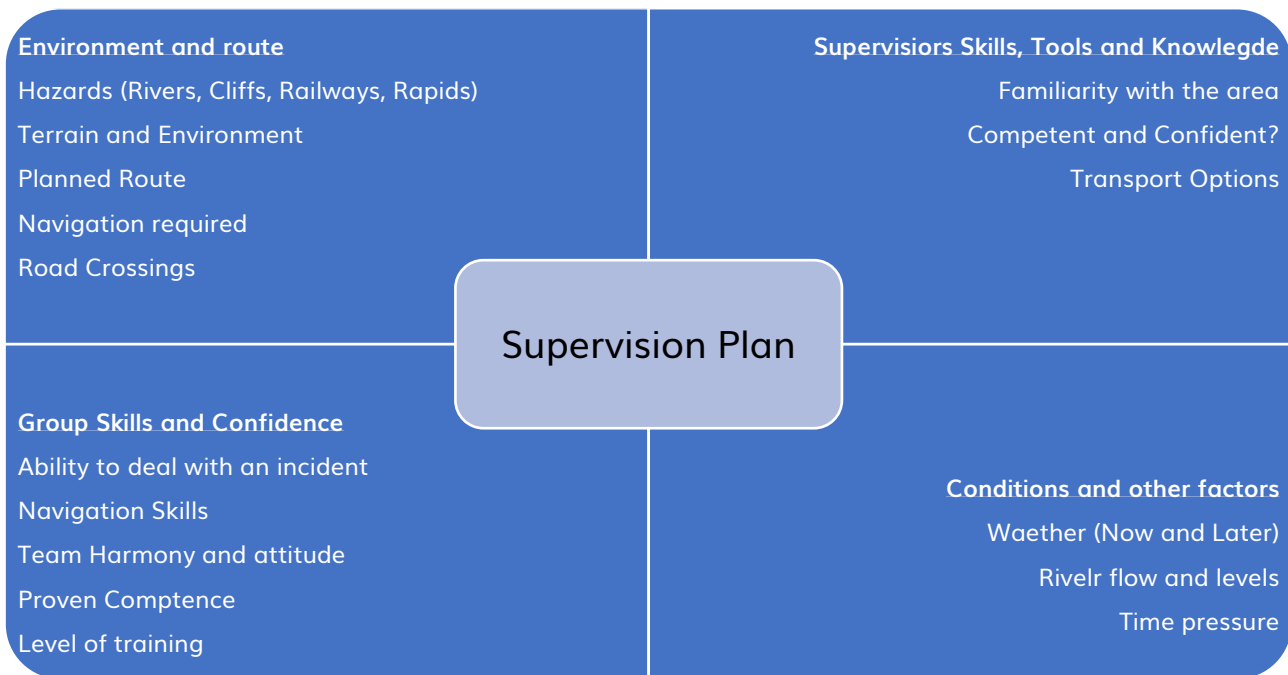
The following scale is not exhaustive but gives an indication to the range of appropriate options.



# Instructor Handbook



## Influencing Factors



## Instructor Handbook

### Example Scenarios

#### Scenario 1

Group and Experience - A Bronze DofE group are on Day 2 of their practice expedition. This is their first time out of the classroom navigating for real but have shown good skills yesterday and have demonstrated planning and leading legs of up to 2km without input from their instructor. The weather is fair, and the group have been working well together. The instructor knows the route and area well, and has no concerns with the team being more independent

Appropriate Supervision – Checkpoint at road crossings 30 to 60 minutes apart with simple navigation in between. Potentially using WhatsApp tracking as an added element of supervision

Inappropriate Supervision – Checkpointing at 3 hour intervals with no other observation or supervision in between.

#### Scenario 2

Group and Experience - A Silver DofE group are on Day 1 of their assessed expedition. There has been no feedback or comment about their practice, but the team tell you they are confident and are all expert map readers. The weather is clear. The instructor knows the route and area well, it is all within 1 valley, but the footpaths through the fields can be tricky to find.

Appropriate Supervision – Shadowing to start with to get a feel for the group's skills and dynamic. Moving to remote observation from a hill, and using agreed check-in times for the team to text their location.

Inappropriate Supervision – Remote supervision at 3 hour intervals with no other observation or supervision in between.

#### Scenario 3

Group and Experience - A Gold DofE canoe group are on Day 3 of their assessed expedition. The team have shown great maturity and responsibility and have made non-navigational errors throughout the expedition. The instructor knows the river well and has worked with the team on their practice. The day's route is all flat water from Hereford to Ross on Wye, and the weather is clear and warm.

Appropriate Supervision – Check-in texts every three hours, meeting the group at lunchtime and then once again at camp.

Inappropriate Supervision – Direct supervision (Whilst it is the "most safe" option and is not unacceptable, it does not weigh the benefit of independence against the risk posed)

### When remote supervision goes wrong!

Firstly, it is important to appreciate that "getting lost" or "being late" is not in itself a negative. There is learning that comes from these opportunities and neither are conditions that the DofE is assessed against. However, the reasons for being lost or late need to be debriefed so that teams can benefit from the learning and have a better outcome next time they are faced with that scenario.

The first question you as an instructor must establish is "where are they?" This can be achieved in a variety of ways:

- Is there an obvious explanation? – Review their plans since the last known location. Was the checkpoint time realistic, are there any obvious navigation errors they may have made, is it lunchtime, have the team been slowing down all day?
- Indirect Observation – Did you have any tracking set up, or has another team at your checkpoint seen them recently ("oh yes, we passed them sat having lunch" is a classic!)
- Direct Observation by you or anyone else in the team (a quick WhatsApp "has anyone seen Team 11" is often fruitful)

## Instructor Handbook

- A phone call or text to the team – This should be done when either the need to find a team is urgent (incoming weather) or a significant period has passed (30mins overdue). Be cautious doing this too quickly if not needed, if there is no great hazard or time pressure, its ok to let the team sort themselves out before worrying.

If after all this the team's location remains unknown, efforts should be made to track them down. The scale of search will be dictated by many factors, and often walking their route back from their next checkpoint will work. If going down this route, it is important to ensure some level of "containment" (stopping the team becoming unlost and carrying on to leg 3 while you're searching leg 2). This can be by having agreed in advance that the team does not leave a checkpoint till seeing you, or asking a colleague to wait at the checkpoint. It may also be a good idea at this point to reach out to the team around you to ask for help. Teachers and instructors who don't have groups, or whose groups are in camp can assist by walking the route from the last location they were seen or searching paths they may have taken by mistake (a not so obvious turn off the bridleway they should have made, perhaps they are still on the bridleway!)

Once the obvious has been exhausted, or if there is a significant hazard developing (nightfall, time pressure, weather, dangerous terrain). The situation should be raised to an incident and external agency assistance considered. This should then be scaled up using the incident management plan and in coordination with the NLD duty manager. It is very difficult to give a set time at which you should be "concerned" however early conversation with the Course Director and Duty Manager are key in deciding when to escalate and will perhaps open up other tools and resources to deal with the situation (additional technology, knowledge and personnel)

### Communication

NLD use texting between staff and students as a means of communication. It is acceptable for staff to exchange mobile numbers with students participating in a DofE Expedition in line with their duties and responsibilities for the duration of an expedition. Once an expedition is completed NLD staff must then delete any student numbers & under no circumstances contact those students unless authorized to do so by the school or parents. Should a member of staff receive communication from a student post expedition this must be reported to the Ops team, who will inform the school.

Texts are used as a means of keeping up to date with a team's location and progress and should be at pre-arranged points. Although if there is uncertainty around a team/s whereabouts & there has been reasonably considerable time since last seen or communicated with it is acceptable to contact a team.

If a team is planning to leave a campsite before an instructor is there to see them off. The team must send a text either when leaving camp, if there is a signal, or ASAP after setting off. Texts should contain the teams name or number, time at location and a short comment or smiley face to show all is well.

### WhatsApp Tracking

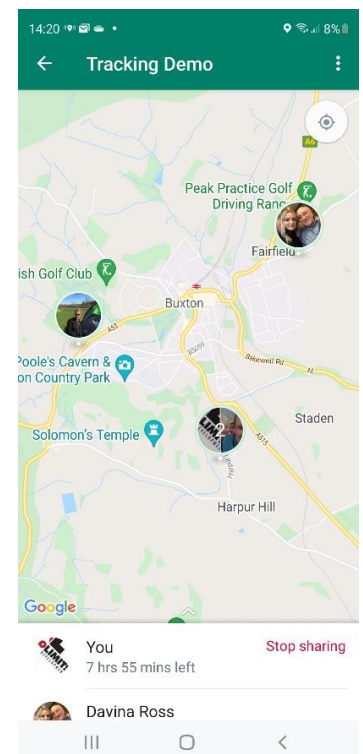
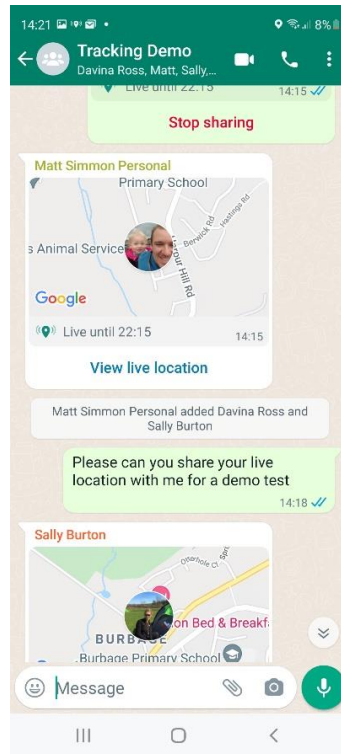
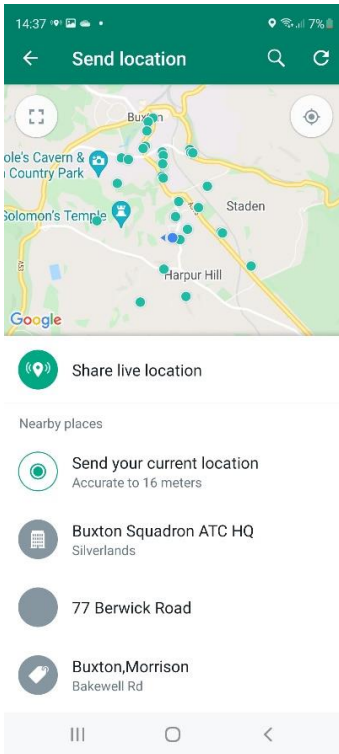
The "WhatsApp" Platform is not only a great way of keeping the staff team in the loop, but also has a really handy tracking tool, which when used appropriately can be an extra tool in your bag to increase the efficiency of your supervision.

#### Instructions for use

- Make a new group, including participants you want to track (a phone per team) and a minimum of two staff (teachers, instructors of course directors), but this can be the whole staff team and all the teams
- Ask the participant to share their live location by
  - Clicking the "paperclip" and "location"

## Instructor Handbook

- Choose "Live Location" and select "8 hours"
- Once done with all those you want to track, they will all show up on the map for the next 8 hours (beware if they plan on being out for longer, they may need to reshare at lunchtime)



### Top Tips

- Keep in mind that this does drain a battery more than not using a phone at all. It is a good idea to have 2 phones turned on within the team allowing you the ability to get in touch even if the tracked phone dies
- This method relies on phone reception. It may be that whilst phones are in a blackspot that the tracker does not move even though the group are.
- This tool is great for bronze and silver expeditions in more urban and lowland areas which typically have good reception. This pairs well with the fact that as the most likely to have limited skill and be in complex navigational environments, they are the most beneficially of tracking. For gold expedition areas, this is still of use (rivers and some areas of national parks) but is much less reliable and potentially "black spots" are likely to be much larger. On the flipside however they have had more time for input to increase their skill and less likely to make navigational errors.
- If you click on a person's icon, it will tell you the time it was last updated and give an estimate on the accuracy (e.g., accurate to 20m)
- This is a "tool in the bag" and not a substitute to eyes on and you being happy with a group ability before moving to remote supervision. Treat tracking locations as a confirmation or suggestions to knowledge you already have (e.g. intended route, last know location, knowledge of hazards) not as a gospel.
- Map's can be switched between Standard and Satellite, giving different perspectives that can be compared with an OS Map
- From a safeguarding perspective there must be another responsible adult within the group, if there is no willing teacher or an instructor, you are welcome to add a member of the office team.

## Instructor Handbook

### Stove Safety and Cooking

Stoves used by No Limits Development are the classic Trangia 25 (or extremely similar endurance Lava). Whilst cooking and sharing a meal is a fundamental part of an expedition with a myriad of benefits to participants, it is also an activity with a number of dangers which must be managed.

Fundamentally whilst the team are responsible for cooking their meal, you as their instructor are ultimately responsible for their safety and should either supervise the team cooking or be satisfied that the team have the appropriate skills, tools, and attitude to do so safely on their own. It is highly unlikely that a team using a stove for the first time on expedition at any level possess that level of skill and would usually be mentored and coached directly. However, for a team on their second or third night, or if they have demonstrated to you personally their skills and attitude, it would be appropriate to let them cook independently without direct supervision.

### Top Tips of Trangia Use

- "Location, Location, Location" – Get yourself set up in a safe flat spot, free from hazards (Tents, overhanging branches etc.), distractions and interference (not in the middle of a football game!)
- Preparation – Make sure you have all the kit need to cook and eat your meal in one place. Have you got your stove and fuel, food to cook, kit to eat with, and a drink to sup whilst cooking?
- Setting up your stove – Is it set up correctly, is it stable, do you have matches and water?
- Fuel (Gas)
  1. Is the gas valve turned off?
  2. Screw on the canister and place it on a flat service, with the hose on top and not kinked or twisted
  3. If you run out whilst cooking, you can carefully swap out the canister, being cautious not to pull over your stove with the gas hose
- Fuel (Meths)
  1. Fill up your burner at least 3 m away from your stove and tent from the Trangia Safety bottle. (Leave the bottle here afterwards)
  2. Put the screw top lid back on to carry it over to your stove and leave the lid on till you are ready to light it
  3. If you run out whilst cooking, you must wait until the burner is cool enough for you to carry it over to the fuel bottle to refill.
- "Get Ready" – Fill your pans with water (or food) make sure everyone is ready and set
- Safe position and behaviours – Sit comfortably and calmly near your stove so you don't have to stretch or lean to get things. Never pass a hot pan over a person to avoid spills, and always wear sensible shoes.
- Light your stove – Once lit set it to an appropriate heat for the tasks (not full whack!) and pop a pan on, making sure it's not empty as they will melt!
- Cook your meal – Think efficiency (warming pittas on top of the lids, using boil in the bag water for hot drinks etc.) and make sure to pay attention, stir your food, don't let the pans boil over etc.
- Cleaning – The most important part! Once cool use the cleaning kit provided to clean all parts of your stove (not just the inside of your pan!) until it is as you were issued it. This should be done after every meal, not just at the end of the expedition.



## Instructor Handbook

### What is an acceptable meal?

This is an emotive DofE question, the inevitable Pot noodle debate! In order to maintain DofE expeditions as an accessible to all opportunity we do need to ensure our guidance is dynamic and adaptable.



The "20 conditions" define this as "a substantial meal should be cooked and eaten by participants each day". If we avoid focussing our energy on defining "what does not meet the standard" or critiquing what a participant has brought, accepting that often external factors such as personal circumstance, dietary needs, dislikes and culture can often influence these decisions. Instead, we can focus our time on "inspiring" and promoting better future choices, by sharing alternative ideas, methods or menus. To answer the original questions – Yes, a pot noodle does "meet the standard" and is "acceptable" if that is a "meal" to the participant. However we would like to see participants looking to meal times as a chance to "enjoy a meal with friends" as an experience, and encourage them to produce more interesting and expansive choice. If noodles is what you eat at home and like, how about adding to that meal with a starter (warm pitta breads and houmous) or jazz up the noodles with some salami or cheese. Maybe even add in a desert hot chocolate with marshmallows with some warmed scotch pancakes spread with Nutella! Subtle improvements towards that three star meal shared as a team are much better than telling a participant that what they consider a meal is not good enough!

### Campsites

Please ensure these are always kept tidy i.e. kit stowed away, Trangia's washed and packed away after use, and all waste food disposed of appropriately and not left lying on the ground around cooking area.

Please also try to ensure that the groups are not disturbing other campers or residents late into the evening with high noise levels.

Prior to leaving students unaccompanied, Instructors should check tents and guidelines to ensure all are secure and check the camp site for cleanliness i.e. no waste food or kit left lying around. Also check that all participants are well, warm & comfortable and have either eaten and rehydrated or been briefed to do so.

Instructors should also check in with the campsite owners or manager after teams have left to check everything went ok, and to thank them.

### Changing routes

If Instructors feel that a route is inappropriate or unsafe, they are to discuss potential changes with CD but cannot change routes without CD authorization.

## Instructor Handbook

Prior to changing routes, Course Directors should contact the NLD Operations Team to discuss potential route changes. If they cannot contact the team, they can make provisional changes as needed but they must make the office aware of these changes ASAP for sign off. Any changes in route must be discussed and agreed as provisional pending NLD sign off with school staff. It must be remembered that a great deal of planning has gone into an expedition, and that a route or area has been chosen for a specific reason, usually in collaboration with the school – always check with the office before commenting to teachers.

### Additional points

- Where possible groups should aim to be in camp site by 4pm, and certainly not planning to be out past 6pm. This is to allow time for them to set up camp and cook a decent meal as well as to leave a margin for error should a team be delayed or misplaced throughout the day
- Instructors should aim to be out supervising teams on the hill where possible. Whilst it is acceptable to use vehicles to aid supervision of teams it is expected that staff will meet teams at key points in the hills. This goes some way in re-affirming to students that they are in the right location & confidence in knowing you are in their immediate area. Also, you then get to physically see their team spirit and individual welfare.

## Policy History (What's Changed)

- Reissued July 2022 with the following revisions: (Highlighted in Blue Text)
  - Pay rates updated for 2022
  - Accreditation and Insurance details removed (These are in the Safety Policy)
  - Further information added to the DofE section including, WhatsApp tracking, Information on Remote Supervision, Further detail on Stove Safety and Cooking
  - General Standard Operating Procedures moved to the instructor handbook from the Safety Policy
  - Minor formatting to improve user experience