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# A Clear Process

## An Introduction to the Permit Scheme



# Outdoor & Adventure

Outdoor and adventure is a core part of the Scouting Programme. It's about young people trying new things, getting out of their comfort zone and learning skills for life. Through the outdoor and adventure aspects of the Scout Programme, young people can develop greater wellbeing and resilience, which gives them a better chance of having a brighter future.

The purpose of this resource is to explain how to access adventurous activities within Scouting and how you could work towards providing more experiences. It's not a one stop shop for everything you need to know but hopefully it will help you understand the first steps you need to take.

One of the biggest barriers to young people accessing the outdoor and adventure programme is volunteers' understanding of what they need to do or have in order to undertake various activities. This resource will support you through the steps.

It's important that you enjoy developing your own skills when you work towards delivering adventure. It's a great way to learn new things and make new friends while getting a great sense of satisfaction knowing you are helping young people experience life-changing adventure.

**Note:** Unless otherwise states, all references to 'County' or 'Counties' relate to 'Region' or 'Regions' in Scotland and 'Area' or 'Areas' in Wales. Not all appointments apply in all Countries, so please speak to a local Commissioner if in doubt.

# Activity Checklist

When planning to include outdoor and adventure in your programme, there are a number of things to think about:



## 1. Check the A-Z

The Scout Association requires you hold a permit for a number of activities if you wish to deliver them. Every activity has a specific set of rules to support the safe delivery of the activity for young people. These rules include information on when a permit or qualification is required. All the information can be found at [scouts.org.uk/a-z](https://scouts.org.uk/a-z).

This should be the first place you look when wanting to deliver something new. Alongside each activity you'll find links to rules, factsheets, and guidance.

You'll find step-by-step guides to the process you'll need to follow depending on whether you want to deliver the activity yourself, or use an external provider.

**Have you checked the resources at [scouts.org.uk/safety](https://scouts.org.uk/safety)?**

**Have you carried out a Risk Assessment?**

- If you're running the activity, have you completed a risk assessment?
- If another provider is running the activity, have you got a copy of their risk assessment?

**Have you checked with your team?**

- Do your team agree with your assessment?
- Are they aware of the risks (and controls) of the activity?
- Do the Young People know how to complete the activity safely?

**Do you need a permit?**

- Can I deliver it myself?
- Does it require an external qualification?
- Can I find someone in Scouting to deliver the activity?
- Can I find an external provider to deliver the activity?

**Are there any specific rules for the activity?**

- Do you need to notify HQ?
- Do you need additional insurance?
- Are there specific factsheets or rules to ensure the activity is run safely?

**Always check the A-Z for activity rule updates.**

## 2. Excitement not danger

A successful adventure will be exciting and memorable. In order to achieve this we need to make sure we consider the potential hazards and dangers and how we can plan to minimise these as much as possible. Carrying out a risk assessment is a key part of your plan.

You can find out more information on risk assessment via the following resources:

**Activities - Risk Assessment:**  
[scouts.org.uk/FS120000](https://scouts.org.uk/FS120000)

**Safety in Scouting:** [scouts.org.uk/safety](https://scouts.org.uk/safety)

### 3. Stay InTouch

In Scouting we have the InTouch system, which is used to manage communications at all Scout activities and events. This means everyone involved is aware of what communication will take place between leaders, participants, and those not participating in the event.

It is a flexible system that allows those organising events to implement a process best suited to their particular circumstances. It also ensures there is a process in place in the event of an emergency.

To learn more about InTouch, visit [scouts.org.uk/intouch](https://scouts.org.uk/intouch).

A step-by-step approach guiding you through the process of setting up an InTouch system, as well as further guidance on areas can be found at [scouts.org.uk/FS120075](https://scouts.org.uk/FS120075).

#### How can you contact those not participating in the event?

- Have you got up to date contact details for next-of-kin?
- For Leaders, are Compass contact details up to date?
- In an emergency, how will you contact those not at the event?

#### How will those not at the event contact you?

- Do the parents have your or an available leaders number?
- Will you be using a mobile, and if so, will it have enough battery?

#### If young people are leading the event, how will they contact you?

#### How will you contact your commissioner in an emergency?

**Please check InTouch for full step-by-step approach.**

#### Have you checked the A-Z?

#### Have you carried out a risk assessment?

#### Have you got your InTouch System planned?

#### Have you spoken to your line manager about how the approval system works?

- What does your DC require for your activity?
- Does your DC require you to change anything in order to get your activity approved?

### 4. Get your activity approved

Your District Commissioner is responsible for approving all activities for all the sections within the District. This will usually be through your Group Scout Leader, District Explorer Scout Commissioner or District Scout Network Commissioner. They may want to see a copy of your risk assessment and InTouch system in order to approve it as an activity.

If you have any questions regarding the specific process, contact your line manager who will be able to give more specific details of your approval system.

# The Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme

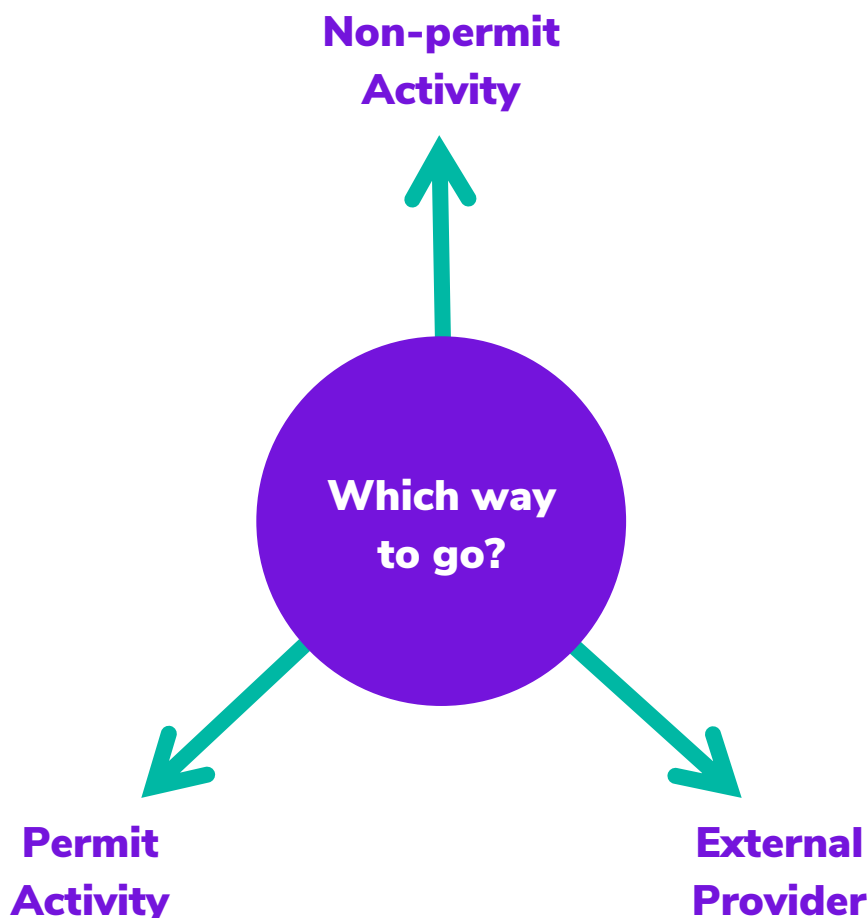
The Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme is a system used by The Scouts to enable those who wish to provide adventurous activities to young people in a safe and accessible way.

Permit holders have been assessed to show required level of skills and knowledge to safely deliver the chosen activity.

Many activities in Scouting can be done without a permit (although some will require external qualifications), but some activities require a permit.

Delivering activities via the permit scheme is just one method of providing adventure to your young people. You could also choose to use external providers to deliver activities or choose activities that don't require a permit. If you are using external providers then the A-Z will tell you whether the instructor needs to hold a certain qualification and it will provide steps to follow in order to use the provider.

The A-Z will also tell you which activities require you to hold a permit and which don't. There is a huge range of activities that don't require a permit and which allow for far more flexibility when it comes to delivering them.



# Types of Permit

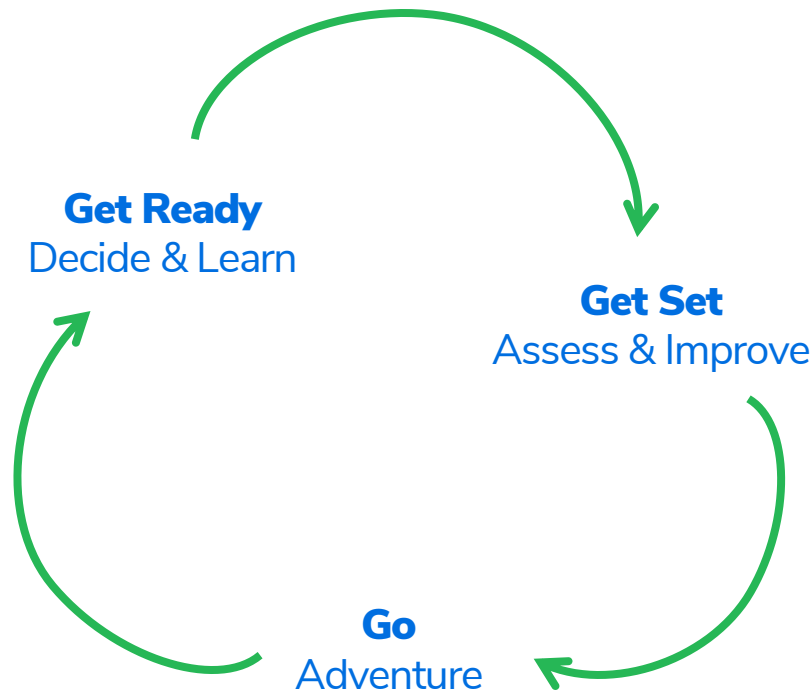
The table below summarises the three types of permit, to show what each type allows you to do.

| I Have...  | I Can...   | I Can't...   |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Personal Activity Permit</b></p> <p>Available to Under 18's only</p>   | <p><b>Take part</b> in activities with other under 18's who also hold a Personal Activity Permit.</p>  | <p><b>Lead</b> the activity for Under 18's without a Leadership or Supervisory Permit or <b>take part</b> with adults.</p> |
| <p><b>Leadership Permit</b></p> <p>Available to adults and Young People</p>  | <p><b>Lead on activities</b> for any section while remaining with them offering close supervision.</p> | <p><b>Supervise</b> multiple groups onsite or remotely.</p>  |
| <p><b>Supervisory Permit</b></p> <p>Available to adults and Young People</p> | <p><b>Supervise up to three</b> activity groups undertaking the same activity.</p>                     | <p><b>Approve</b> groups to do an activity without supervising them.</p>   |



# Delivering Adventure

When you've decided you would like to deliver an adventurous activity, there are three steps that will ensure that you are able to deliver in a safe way:



## Step 1 - Get Ready

Find an activity that you're interested in, and want to offer. This could be a new activity, or an activity that you've been doing for a while. Maybe try it out recreationally first, or try a taster session. It may be something that your section wants to do or something you have taken part in recently that you would like to do more of. See if you like it, and want to pursue it.

Before you start on your journey to leading adventurous activities, you need to make sure that you have completed the appointment process and getting started processes for your Scouting Role. In order to gain a permit, you need to hold a full adult membership role on Compass, or be under 18 and have your membership recorded locally.

Your details  
are recorded  
on Compass

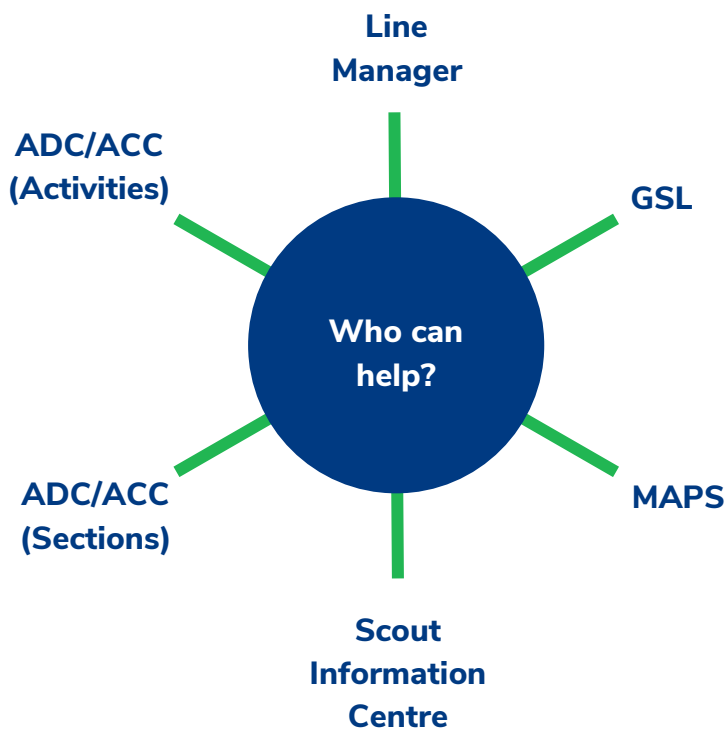


You have completed  
the appointment  
process



You have validated  
the getting started  
modules of the Adult  
Training Scheme

Talk to those around you, as there may be people who can offer help and guidance. This depends on your role, but think about talking to your GSL/DESC or ADC (activities) first.



### You could further your skills in an activity by:

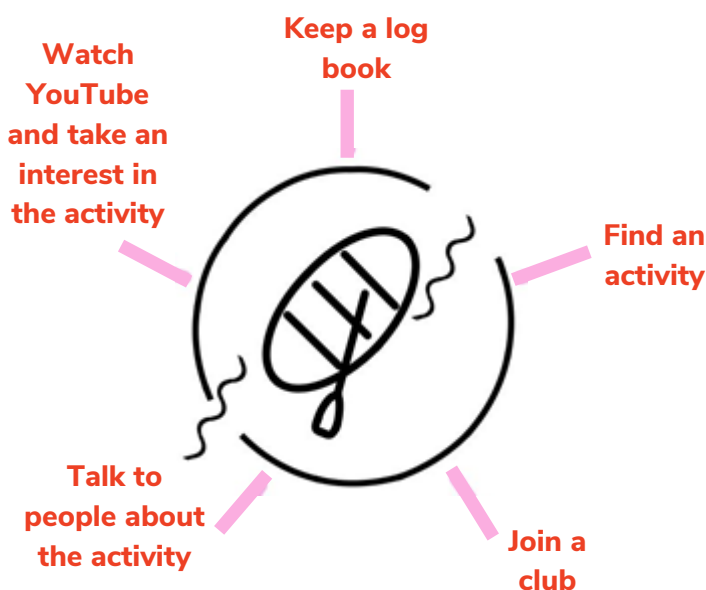
- joining a club or local enthusiasts group
- watching videos online or reading books
- contacting your District or County to see if anyone does the activity regularly
- having a look for taster sessions in your area
- making it a hobby you enjoy yourself
- seeing if someone with a permit or an external provider could deliver it for your section or Group. You can do a permit holder search on Compass.
- try posting on Scout (and other) social media

Make sure you record what you do so that you can track your experience. If you choose to go for a permit or a National Governing Body (NGB) qualification this will be vital. All activities in the permit scheme have an example logbook that can be found at [scouts.org.uk/activitypermits](https://scouts.org.uk/activitypermits).

There are funding opportunities to help you along the way. These can be found nationally at [scouts.org.uk/grants](https://scouts.org.uk/grants) and locally. It is worth speaking to your local activities teams to see what is available.

## Step 2 – Get Set

The first step is to learn about how to use your knowledge and skills to lead the activity for others. The best way to achieve this by attending a training course for your chosen activity. This might be delivered by an activity team in your area, or a Scout activity centre/campsite, or you may benefit from attending an external course.



If you hold a NGB qualification and have recent relevant experience in delivering activities, you should speak to an assessor who will be able to talk about how you can transfer your skills and experiences into a Scouting Permit. Each permit is aligned to a NGB qualification that can be checked in the relevant activities assessment checklist.

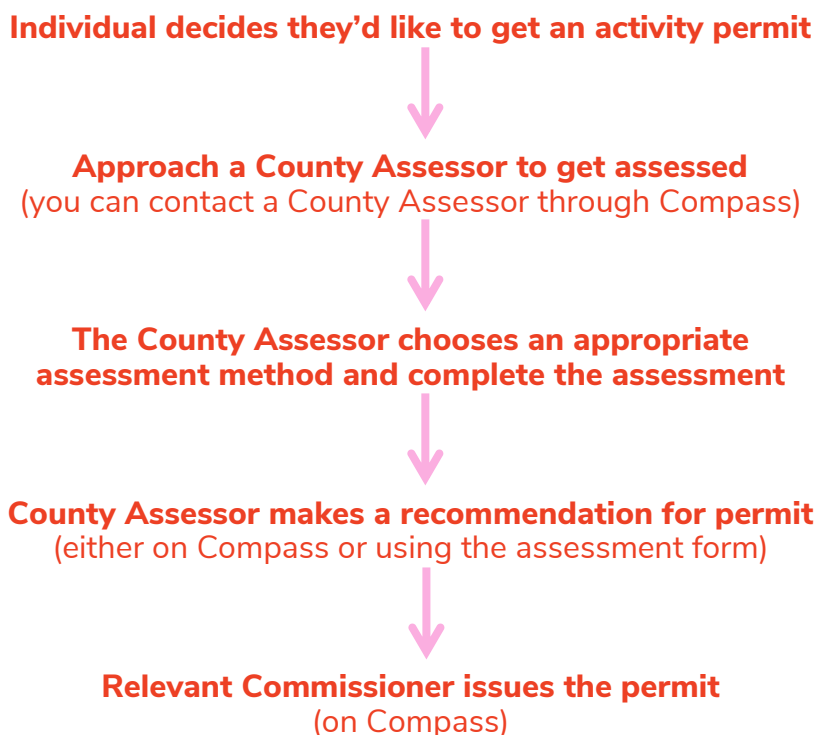
If you choose to attend a training course, you will then have some time to consolidate your leadership skills before being assessed for an activity permit. A good way to consolidate your skills is to practise leading your activity with the support of an experienced mentor who already has a supervisory activity permit. Once you feel confident in your ability to lead your activity, it's time to think about your assessment.



You should fill in your details on the Adventurous Activity Permit Application form, which can be found at [members.scouts.org.uk/activitypermitapplication](https://members.scouts.org.uk/activitypermitapplication). Once you have completed your form, contact an assessor who will be able support you. You can do this either through the messaging function on Compass, or through your local contacts.

Your permit application will be handed to your Assessor and District Commissioner as you go through the assessment process.

## The Assessment Process



To gain an activity permit you will be assessed in the following four areas.

### 1. Technical Competence

The first part of the assessment process focuses on your technical skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the activity.

Your Assessor will use a variety of methods to build a picture of your skills and knowledge in your chosen activity.

To understand your experience they will consider the details you have recorded in your logbook. To assess your technical skills they are likely to carry out a practical assessment, which will involve observing you leading the activity. They may also ask you to consider what you would do in particular situations. If you have an NGB qualification, you may be able to present this in lieu of a practical assessment. Instead, you may be asked some questions or given some scenarios to help demonstrate your skills.

The assessment should be conducted in a way that supports you to demonstrate your skills at your best. It is not supposed to trick you or catch you out, and should be a positive experience for everyone involved.

## **2. Knowledge of The Scout Association's rules for the activity**

The second part of the assessment focuses on your understanding of The Scout rules for the activity you wish to lead.

Your Commissioner, their nominated representative, or possibly the Assessor, will carry out this assessment, at the same time as assessing your technical competence.

## **3. Safeguarding**

The third part of the assessment focuses on ensuring that you have the required safeguarding training.

This will be carried out by your Commissioner.

## **4. Personal Suitability**

The final part of the assessment focuses on your attitude and approach to leading the activity in accordance with the values of The Scouts.

This will be carried out by your Commissioner.

## **What Happens Next?**

Providing your Assessor and Commissioner are confident in your ability to deliver your chosen activity, a permit will be granted by your Commissioner and uploaded on to Compass.

The Assessor may recommend a permit with restrictions or a Commissioner may grant a permit with restrictions. In both cases, these restrictions should reflect your abilities and encourage your future development. They can be used when you may be familiar using certain types of climbing equipment, confident leading water activities only at your local lake, or only currently suitable to lead a smaller group of members than a full permit allows. In all of these cases should you wish you should be able to develop your skills further in order to be reassessed to gain an unrestricted permit.

They could possibly consider you to be unsuitable to lead adventurous activities. Your Assessor should explain the reasons behind these restrictions and be able to support you to identify the next steps in your development. Many Counties have activity teams that can support you with your training and help you get to the point of getting a permit.

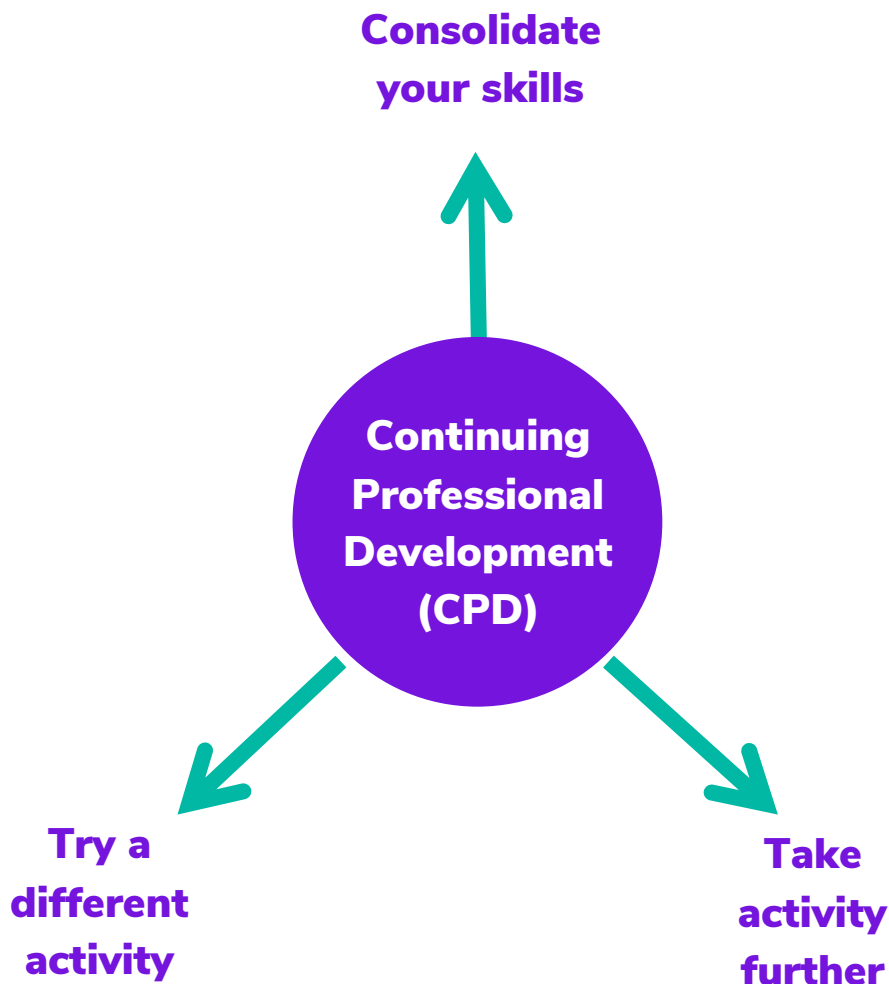
# Step 3 - Go

You're now set to deliver your chosen activity in Scouting and help young people access adventure in your local area.

When delivering activities you have the opportunity to keep developing your skills as you learn more and so you might consider applying for an NGB qualification. If you choose to apply for an NGB qualification you could also look at completing your 'Module 25 - Activity Assessors', so that you could work towards becoming an Assessor and help others gain permits.

A lot of the skills required to gain a permit are transferable to other activities so you could also look at working towards another permit, allowing you to offer a range of activities.

In addition to delivering activities for young people you might consider how you can mentor and support others along their journey to delivering adventure or gaining a permit.



# Glossary

**ACC (Activities/Section)** – Assistant County Commissioner for Activities or a Section, e.g. Beavers

**ADC (Activities/Section)** – Assistant District Commissioner for Activities or a Section, e.g. Beavers

**MAPS** – Manager of the Activity Permit Scheme

**Technical Advisor** – A specialist in a particular activity (there for support)

**The Scouts** – UK Scout Headquarters

**DC** – District Commissioner

**NGB** – National Governing Body

**BASI** – British Association of Snowsport Instructors

**BCA** – British Caving Association

**BSAC** – British Sub Aqua Association

**MTA** – Mountain Training Association

**PADI** – Professional Association of Diving Instructors

**RYA** – Royal Yachting Association

**SGC** – Scout Grants Committee (The Scouts)

**CPD** – Continuing Professional Development

**POR** – Policy, Organisation and Rules

**SASU** - Scout Active Support Unit