



AAIAC Scheme Approval for Non Statutory Accreditation

The AAIAC system of non statutory accreditation of providers of adventure activities allows that accreditation to take place through schemes of accreditation that have been approved by AAIAC's Supervising Body – Adventure Activity Associates Ltd.

Scheme – a body that provides accreditation for a defined sector of providers against agreed criteria. In the context of the present work these primarily concern safety. Examples of existing accreditation schemes eligible for approval include those operated by the Royal Yachting Association, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, British Activity Holidays Association, Cumbria Tourist Board and so on

Providers may instead choose to be accredited directly by Adventure Activity Associates Ltd.

This document summarises the criteria against which scheme approval will occur.

AAIAC Scheme Approval

Goal for Scheme Approval

The scheme has management, operating systems and personnel capable of consistently applying the Scheme Approval Criteria to the scheme's target providers

This is the overall requirement that schemes must meet in order to be given approval by the Supervising Body. The Supervising Body must be confident that all aspects of the operation of the scheme are fit for purpose.

The focus, frequency, rigour and intensity of inspection must reflect the scope and scale of the provision for the scheme operates whilst still reflecting nationally agreed standards of safety.

Scheme Approval Criteria

Schemes must demonstrate that they have systems, skills and arrangements that enable them to meet the Scheme Approval Criteria listed here. In each case interpretive guidance is given on the standard required of a scheme. We believe that established schemes will already, in large part, meet these criteria.

Scheme staff are competent to inspect target providers against the Provider Accreditation Criteria

Competent staff are likely to be:

- Widely experienced professionals, highly skilled volunteers or high level practitioners in a particular segment of adventure activities
- Knowledgeable about other segments of adventure activities outside their specialism
- Demonstrably competent by means of qualification, experience or other means
- Knowledgeable about principles of risk management and safety in adventure activity
- Capable of clear communication of the necessary shadings of opinion by speech and by the written word

- Individuals who have undergone training in the principles of inspection and the application of the Core Criteria

There is a credible method for determining frequency and rigour of inspections

Such a method will be:

- Based on the principle that all providers will be inspected
- Objective and not subject to special favours
- Appropriate to the nature of the sector in which the scheme operates whilst still requiring minimum acceptable standards of safety
- In step with the norms of the outdoor sector
- Subject to independent appeal

Multi base providers will be subject to inspection of each primary location

Regular seasonal bases will be subject to inspection additional to that of the main operating base

Occasional seasonal bases will be assessed under the process of inspection of the main base

Risks present in a provider's operation are identified and appropriately addressed by inspectors

The Supervising Body must be convinced that:

- The scheme's processes of inspection are reliably capable of identifying uncontrolled hazards in a provider's operation
- Recommendations are appropriate and are consistent with industry norms
- That clear criteria exist for the withholding of approval in the event of important and uncontrolled hazards
- That inspectors are capable of recognising those hazards

Safety critical equipment, facilities and services are appropriately inspected

The Supervising Body must be convinced that:

- The scheme's processes of inspection are reliably capable of inspecting safety critical equipment, facilities and services to an appropriate standard
- Recommendations are appropriate and are consistent with industry norms and current legislation
- Clear criteria exist for the withholding of approval in the event of important defects or omissions
- That inspectors are capable of recognising those defects or omissions

The scheme and its inspectors are able to provide or source appropriate technical advice

The scheme and its inspectors would be expected to:

- Have considerable technical expertise in their main area of operation
- Have access to specialist advice for unusually specialist information
- For multi activity inspectors to be familiar with the routes of access to specialist advice in other disciplines
- Be familiar with relevant sources of training, assessment and advice

The scheme's operational procedures, administration and communications are fit for purpose

Schemes would be required to demonstrate:

- Effective administration and record keeping
- Proper pecuniary standards relating to fees and expenses
- Appropriate care of confidential and personal information
- Clear and timely communication with providers
- The availability of clear advice and guidance to providers
- An appropriate system of appeal
- An appropriate system of dealing with customer complaints

- A system of learning from accidents, other incidents and complaints

Standards of inspection and approval meet industry norms

The intention is to aim for a consistent approach to the health and safety of participants across the entire sector. An important role for the Managing Forum will be to undertake a process of moderation via an overview of standards and identification of any anomalies where a particular scheme is, for instance considered to applying undue or insufficient rigour.

Declaration of Scope by Scheme Operators

Scheme operators will be expected to provide standard information to the Supervising Body which will include:

- Range of providers / provider activities covered
- Age range of clients
- Details of provision to those under 18 years of age
- Approximate annual participant day numbers covered by accreditation
- Permanent complement of inspection staff
- Temporary complement of inspection staff
- Annual number of inspections undertaken
- Presence of an appeal system
- Accreditation/inspection fee charged

The Supervising Body should be informed of any significant variation to staff, operating method or target provider group