

Outdoor Education Standard Operating Procedures

Orienteering



Standard Operating Procedures - Orienteering

Definition and Scope of Activities

The activity involved can use various forms of transport including foot to navigate between set points using maps/charts in order to compete against the clock or improve map reading/compass skills.

Locations are varied and can include country parks, forests, moorland and open countryside.

The major activities covered within this section are: -

- Orienteering in controlled areas (School grounds, country parks, set permanent orienteering courses etc)
- Orienteering in uncontrolled areas (Large forests, open countryside)

Precautions to Minimise Hazards

Suitable venue, and progressive activity - The primary consideration to risk management within orienteering is choosing a venue that is suitable for the group and their ability. The venue should be suitable for the groups to navigate without coming to harm and appropriate to their navigating ability. The activity and development of navigation skills should be developed in such a way to reduce the likelihood of the group getting lost.

Recall Time or signal - It should be highlighted to participants that no matter how far they have progressed around the course they must return by a set time. A re-call signal may also be appropriate for example a whistle or fog horn however this may not be possible in larger orienteering areas.

Seasonal Constraints

Orienteering can take place all year.

Location Constraints

There are no further location constraints outwith military training areas / disease prohibition restrictions.

Tuition Ratios

The tuition ratios are:

1 instructor to 20 participants maximum in controlled areas (e.g. contained country parks) (NOTE- very controlled areas such as closed school grounds then this maybe increased)

1 instructor to 10 participants in uncontrolled areas (e.g. open areas of woodland / forest)

Participants requiring increased leader supervision or possessing certain disabilities may require additional staffing or reduced participant ratios.

A second adult should be present at the group location with participants under 18 years of age.

Tuition Leader Qualifications

Please see the following grid:

Activity	Minimum Tuition Qualification	National Governing Body
All	First Aid Accreditation (minimum 16 hour status)	Accredited first aid agencies.
Orienteering in controlled Areas Eg. School playgrounds, Playparks or Small country parks with Boundaries.		
Orienteering (on Foot)	OLC pack induction Site induction BOF Level 1 or Any other Leadership qualification where navigation is assessed e.g. LLA	British Orienteering Federation British Sports Trust MLTUK
Orienteering in Uncontrolled Areas		
Orienteering on foot	BOF Level 2 or Mountain Leader	British Orienteering federation MLTUK British Sports Trust
PLUS FOR DISABILITIES		
All	Orienteering Training Relative to Disabilities	National Governing Body

Equipment - Participants

Participants must be adequately equipped for the activity and location in use. This may include:

- Map
- Compass
- Water Proof
- Warm Clothing
- Boots
- Sun cream
- Sun Glasses
- Watch

Equipment – Group Safety

In addition, the Group may require on activity access to:

- First aid supplies
- Full area OS map (1:50000 scale) (uncontrolled areas)
- Hot drink or means of making one (if cold)
- Emergency rations
- Shelter

RISK ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT REF NO: Orienteering 1

Activity: Orienteering / Navigation

Location: Various

Assessor: DS, DH

Hazard	Who might be harmed?			Existing controls What makes the hazard less risky? What makes these controls effective?	Risk			Further actions Avoid Control at source Take advantage of technology Protect all Make what you have more effective	Target date dd-mm-yy	Responsibility	Completion Date	New Residual Risk
	Public	Client	Leader		Probability	Severity	Rating					
Slip / trip / fall injury from vegetation and terrain		x		Participants should wear appropriate clothing depending on weather conditions and ground cover	4	2	8	None				
Getting lost/ Loss of group control		x		- Staff should set out proper guidelines for returning times, country codes and boundaries. - Staff suitably qualified/ experienced to supervise course/ venue. - Group suitable trained/briefed/ experienced for course/ route choices. Progressive activity. - Appropriate ratios for venue/ group. - Where appropriate, group re-call signal agreed with group. - Groups accompanied by a responsible adult if appropriate. - Clients new to orienteering should work in groups.	4	2	8	None				
Injury from equipment	x	x		Participants should be given proper training on how to use, hold and control the equipment prior to use	1	2	2	None				

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	Public	Client	Leader		Probability	Severity	Rating					
Traffic danger	x	x		Routes chosen to avoid road and /or participants given good briefing about roads	1	5	5	Consider the maturity of the group and if they would deal with roads responsibly.				
Animals (horses / dogs etc)		x	x	Appropriate briefing on action if group are likely to encounter animals	1	4	4	None				
Vegetation (nettles/ brambles etc)		x	x	Appropriate clothing worn Suitable venue / route choices	4	1	4	None				
Weather		x	x	Appropriate clothing worn Suitable venue / route choices	3	2	6	None				

Further actions approved by: Derek Napier

Signature: D Napier

Date: 9th April, 2026

Urgency of Action = (20>Very High) (16-20 High) (9-15 Moderate) (4-8 Low) (1-3 Very Low)

Severity = 1. Damage 2. Minor Injury 3. +3 Days/Hospitalised 4. Major Injury/Permanent Disability 5. Fatality

Probability = 1. Very Unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Fairly Likely 4. Likely 5. Very Likel

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