

SKAD32 (SQA Unit Code - FA4A 04)

Contribute to participants' exploration and understanding of the natural environment



Overview

This unit is about enabling people to develop a better awareness and understanding of a natural environment – for example, by taking participants on limited journeys, usually on foot, through a known and relatively non-hazardous area. The purpose of the exploration could be to help:

1. adults explore and understand a natural environment
2. children and young people explore and understand a natural environment
3. people with particular needs explore and understand a natural environment

The unit is divided into three parts. The first part describes the three things you have to do. These are:

1. Prepare for environmental exploration
2. Prepare participants for environmental exploration and understanding
3. Facilitate environmental awareness and understanding

The second part describes the knowledge and understanding you must have. The third part gives some examples and explanations of some words we use in the unit.

This unit is for staff who are responsible for outdoor education. It is likely to involve some activities that are 'off-site' and may provide an element of risk that must be carefully controlled by competent leaders. You must be appropriately trained and experienced in the activities you are leading and in environmental exploration.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Prepare for environmental exploration

- P1 identify the aims and learning objectives of the environmental exploration
- P2 make sure the experience meets the participants' needs, making best use of the available options
- P3 make sure there are safety parameters which will ensure the participants' safety and enable the agreed aims to be achieved
- P4 check and agree all aspects of the environmental exploration with a responsible person

You must be able to:

Prepare participants for environmental exploration and understanding

- P5 clarify the focus and aims of the environmental exploration with the participants
- P6 promote the value of environmental awareness and understanding to the participants
- P7 encourage the participants to take ownership of the environmental exploration for themselves
- P8 explain the safety parameters
- P9 emphasise the importance of observing the environment during the exploration and of sharing these observations with others
- P10 encourage the participants to ask questions of you and others in the group
- P11 respond to questions informatively and accurately
- P12 encourage participants to enquire further if you do not have information readily available

You must be able to:

Facilitate environmental awareness and understanding

- P13 promote the participants' environmental awareness and understanding as planned
- P14 make sure that all activity is in line with the agreed safety parameters
- P15 encourage the participants to ask questions of you and each other
- P16 deal with questions positively, responding informatively and accurately
- P17 encourage participants to enquire further if you do not have information readily available
- P18 intervene when this will support the learning objectives for the exploration
- P19 make use of the prevailing conditions, unplanned events, the site and the participants' abilities to enhance awareness and understanding

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Prepare for environmental exploration

- K1 the value of environmental awareness and understanding to participants and the types of experiences and activities which encourage this
- K2 the importance of being aware of the aims and learning objectives of the exploration and how to identify these
- K3 the available options in the local area for environmental exploration
- K4 the importance of identifying the participants' needs and how to do so
- K5 how to choose an experience relevant to the participants needs and learning
- K6 the importance of health and safety considerations when leading environmental explorations and safety guidelines for the types of environments in which you are working, for example farm land, rocky/uneven terrain, shore line etc.
- K7 safety guidelines relevant to any modes of transport which are being used, for example canoes, minibuses etc.
- K8 the importance of checking the details of the environmental exploration with a responsible colleague - senior colleague and/or the client responsible for the group

You need to know and understand:

Prepare participants for environmental exploration

- K9 the importance of clarifying the focus and aims of the exploration with the participants and how to do so
- K10 the importance of encouraging the participants to take ownership of the exploration for themselves and how to do so
- K11 the importance of making clear the safety parameters for the exploration, what the key points are and how to emphasise these
- K12 the importance of participants observing for themselves and sharing these observations with others in the group
- K13 how to encourage participants to observe and what they should be looking for and understanding of the natural environment
- K14 the importance of encouraging participants to ask questions of you and of each other
- K15 how to deal with questions informatively and positively
- K16 other sources of information which the participants or you could use, for example local libraries, field centres, environmental organisations, the internet

You need to know and understand:

Facilitate environmental awareness and understanding

- K17 key features of the local environment, including flora and fauna, general geology, geomorphology, climate, soil types and land use
- K18 the location of local sites of interest and why they are interesting

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- K19 local sites which are vulnerable, why they are vulnerable and how to protect them
- K20 how to monitor and control the exploration so that it is within agreed safety parameters and is in line with the planned aims and objectives
- K21 the importance of only intervening when this will support the agreed learning
- K22 how to make effective use of the prevailing conditions, unplanned events, the site being explored and the participants' abilities
- K23 the types of unplanned events and prevailing conditions which may occur

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Additional Information

Scope/range related to performance criteria

Participant

1. adults
2. children and young people
3. people with particular needs

Safety parameters

1. physical boundaries
2. criteria for abandoning the environmental exploration
3. the participants' safety ground rules
4. relevant guidelines for activities of this nature

Glossary

Aims

The aims which will come from the overall aims of the programme which has been devised for participants

Environmental awareness

The participants being aware of the value of the natural environment being explored and its key features

Environmental exploration

In the context of this unit, undertaking a limited journey, usually on foot in a known and relatively non-hazardous area to observe and better understand aspects of the natural environment

Environmental understanding

The participants developing a better understanding of how the environment and its ecosystems work

Learning objectives

What the participants should have learnt during and after the exploration

People with particular needs

People for whom the activity will be more than normally challenging, for example people with medical conditions, people who are unusually shy or nervous, people with low self-esteem; this unit does not cover disabled participants

Relevant guidelines

For example, organisational guidelines, legislation including local by laws, national guidelines, including those of National Governing Bodies, where

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these apply

Responsible person

The person in the organisation who is responsible for the overall programme in which the participants are taking part; also the client for whom the programme is being organised

Self awareness

The participant's awareness of themselves and their impact on others

Links to other NOS

This unit links closely with SKAD21, SKAD22 and SKAD23.

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