

Unit 16: Understanding Principles of Forest Recreation

Unit code:	F/600/9827
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The learner will develop an appreciation of the benefits to society of forest recreation provision and be able to evaluate the factors that influence this provision. The potential problems and constraints associated with multiple use management will be examined, as well as development considerations. The learner will also be able to plan and promote recreational activities and provision.

● Unit introduction

Countryside recreation is becoming an increasingly important consideration in forestry and woodland management both in the private and public sectors.

The public forest estate is managed by the Forestry Commission which in England alone amounts to over 250,000 hectares. As well as harvesting over 1.4 million cubic metres of timber and employing over 1000 people, the Forestry Commission is the single largest outdoor recreation provider in England. One of their aims is to 'work to promote health and wellbeing by encouraging people to use forests for all types of outdoor recreation and physical activity ... Opportunities will be identified to develop more accessible ways of getting to our woodlands ... improving the opportunities and facilities for all users, encouraging them to pursue more active and challenging sports, such as off-road cycling' (Forestry Commission Corporate Plan 2009-2012 available at www.forestry.gov.uk).

8.7 million visits are estimated to have happened to forests in Scotland alone every year (this does not include visits to forests in England or Wales). These visitors spent an average of £17 each, giving an estimated contribution to the economies of the visited areas of around £148 million. (All Forests Visitor Monitoring published by Forestry Commission Scotland in February 2008 available at www.forestry.gov.uk)

Forest and woodland managers therefore need to understand how recreation aims can be integrated with other woodland management objectives and acquire the skills to manage recreation activities.

This unit will develop in the learner an appreciation of the forest as a recreational resource and aims to deliver the basic skills in identification and evaluation of recreational opportunities within the forest. Learners will develop an understanding of planning and management activities for public access and enjoyment, together with methods of promotion and development of visitor attractions.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand forest recreation activities
- 2 Understand forest recreation planning, development and promotion
- 3 Be able to plan forest recreational activities.

Unit content

1 Understand forest recreation activities

Impact on society of forest recreation: positive impacts e.g. economic benefits, social benefits, health benefits, benefits to sites

Recreational activities: possible recreation activities eg walking, birdwatching, cycling, horseriding, shooting, orienteering, conservation work, play, motorsport, water activities, paintballing, outward bound/teambuilding activities, organised events such as concerts, guided walks and educational activities; positive and negative impacts of recreational activities

Factors influencing forest recreation: consideration of factors leading to increased forest recreation e.g. demographic factors (increases in leisure time, number of early retired, increases in life expectancy, flexibility in working time, larger urban populations); economic factors (need for rural areas to attract income, increases in personal disposable income); increased availability and diversity of activities/services/goods for recreation e.g. development of the 'mountain bike'; transport factors eg signage of tourist attractions/facilities from road network brown signs; technological changes eg increased access to information eg via internet; increasing provision of forest recreation facilities by site owners eg Forestry Commission; historical uses of forests for recreation eg as hunting venues for royalty

Problems and constraints: problems of recreation provision e.g. costs to site owner of providing and maintaining facilities, negative effects on the site e.g. increased traffic, increased use of sites to detriment of flora and fauna or ground condition, visual impact of recreational facilities, noise, pollution; potential solutions to these problems; constraints to providing recreation e.g. other needs of site such as timber production and nature conservation needs, lack of funding, lack of staffing, lack of site features, lack of visitor interest

2 Understand forest recreation planning, development and promotion

Design considerations: existing/potential uses of forest area; current/potential visitor numbers; internal and external landscape features; consideration of needs and wants of visitors eg car parks, picnic places, toilets, walks, disabled access; facilities design in keeping with forest landscape, internal and external landscape features and nature conservation interest

Physical and financial considerations: how physical features of site affect potential recreational activities eg soils, slopes, topography, waterbodies, existing road access, proximity to centres of population, access to surrounding rights of way, existing conservation interest; financial considerations eg costs of providing facilities, potential of income generation from activities

Legislation affecting forest recreation: consideration of relevant legislation e.g. National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1947, Countryside Act 1968, Occupiers Liability Act 1984, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, 'duty of care' and occupiers liability

Promotion of recreation: methods of promotion eg leaflet, interpretation board, guided walk, event, self-guided trail, map, website, video, podcast, audio trail, TV or radio advertising

3 Be able to plan forest recreational activities

Select appropriate activities: consideration of site factors which influence activities eg attractiveness, geographical location, size, accessibility, topography, climate, existing species of flora and fauna, ease of access, needs/wants of target market

Prepare a plan: content of plan to deliver activities: aims/objectives of activity; financial resourcing eg cost of providing activity, charging for activity; resources and facilities required to deliver activity eg physical resources, staff, time; timing/ scheduling of activity; target market/audience; need for publicity/marketing

Produce promotional material: select appropriate method of promotion

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain the impact on society of forest recreation provision [IE]	M1 explain in detail the factors that influence the use of a named forest for recreation	D1 evaluate methods of solving problems caused by forest recreation
P2 evaluate forest recreation activities [IE]		
P3 discuss factors that influence the use of forests for recreation [IE]		
P4 discuss potential problems and constraints to forest recreation provision [IE]		
P5 describe appropriate design considerations to promote the use of forests for recreation [CT]	M2 explain in detail the design considerations for development of a specified recreation activity in a named forest	
P6 discuss the physical and financial considerations when planning forest recreation [CT, IE]		
P7 summarise current legislation relevant to forest recreation [IE]		
P8 evaluate methods of promoting forest recreation [IE]		

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<p>P9 select appropriate forest recreational activities for a given situation [CT]</p>	<p>M3 justify completed promotional material for a selected forest recreational provision.</p>	<p>D2 evaluate promotional material produced, recommending improvements.</p>
<p>P10 prepare a plan to deliver forest recreational provision [IE]</p>		
<p>P11 produce promotional material for forest recreational provision. [CT]</p>		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable in the pass criteria, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
------------	--	---	--

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Delivery of this unit will involve practical assessments, written assessment, visits to suitable collections and sites and will have links to industrial experience placements. Tutors delivering this unit have opportunities to use as wide a range of techniques as possible. Lectures, discussions, seminar presentations, site visits, internet and/or library based research and the use of personal and/or industrial experience would all be suitable. Delivery should stimulate, motivate, educate and enthuse learners.

Industrial experience placements should be monitored regularly in order to ensure the quality of the learning experience. It would be beneficial if learners and supervisors were made aware of the requirements of this unit prior to any work-related activities so that naturally occurring evidence can be collected at the time. For example, learners may have the opportunity to be involved in forest recreational activities, and they should be encouraged to ask for observation records and/or witness statements to be provided as evidence of this. Guidance on the use of observation records and witness statements is provided on the Edexcel website.

Whichever delivery methods are used, it is essential that tutors stress the importance of safe working practice and health and safety, sound environment management and the need to manage the resource using legal methods.

Health and safety issues relating to recreational activities and the duty of care as applied to visitors should be stressed and regularly reinforced, and risk assessments must be undertaken prior to practical activities.

Tutors should consider integrating the delivery, private study and assessment for this unit with other relevant units and assessment instruments learners are taking as part of their programme of study.

Learners should be given sufficient time and guidance to develop skills. Initiating and maintaining effective communication with learners will be vital to ensure that they understand the specifications as intended. Continuous monitoring and assessment of progress should be documented and discussed with all learners. Any concerns or problems need to be highlighted and action plans agreed to improve performance.

Learning outcome 1 covers the development of awareness of forest recreational activities. This is likely to be delivered by visits, case studies using video, internet and promotional material of forest recreation sites as well as formal lectures and independent learner research. Learners should ideally have access to a range of woodland or forest areas where recreation activities exist as well as areas with those with potential to develop recreational activities.

Learning outcome 2 covers forest recreation development, planning and promotion. This is likely to be delivered by formal lectures, discussion, site visits, supervised fieldwork and independent learner research.

Learning outcome 3 covers the planning of forest recreational activities. This is likely to be delivered by formal lectures, in class presentations and discussion, site visits, supervised fieldwork and independent learner research.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan gives **an indication of the volume of learning it would take the average learner** to achieve the learning outcomes. It is **indicative and is one way of achieving the credit value**.

Learning time should address all learning (including assessment) relevant to the learning outcomes, regardless of where, when and how the learning has taken place.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction and overview of unit.
Assignment 1: Seeing the Wood for the Trees (P1, P2, P3, P4, M1, D1)
Introduction of brief.
Impacts on society of forest recreation.
Recreational activities – types of activities, case studies and examples.
Recreational activities – site visits.
Factors influencing forest recreation.
Problems and constraints.
Problems and constraints – site visits.
Assignment 1 individual support.
Personal study.
Assignment 2: Wood You Believe It? (P5, P6, P7, M2)
Introduction of brief.
Design considerations.
Physical and financial considerations.
Legislation affecting forest recreation.
Promotion of recreation.
Assignment 2 individual support.
Personal study.
Assignment 3: If You Go Down to the Woods Today (P8, P9, P10, P11, M3, D2)
Introduction of brief.
Assignment 3 individual support.
Selection of appropriate activities.
Plan forest recreation activities.
Produce promotional material for activity.
Assignment 3 individual support.
Personal study.
Unit reflection.

Assessment

For P1, learners must explain the impact on society of forest recreation provision, primarily focusing on the positive benefits that recreation brings. Learners must show their awareness that recreation can benefit the individual (through the benefits brought by exercise and relaxation), the economy (both locally and nationally), the community (through economic benefits and support to facilities such as shops, pubs, transport services) and the site (through increased income to support it).

In P2 learners will be able to evaluate forest recreation activities. As well as showing awareness of different forest recreation activities, learners will evaluate them by comparing different activities and their suitability to different forest environments and for different user groups. Learners will also be able to evaluate the positive and negative aspects of different recreation types, for example cycling is a form of healthy, aerobic exercise, but can cause soil erosion in poorly-suited environments and may be incompatible with walkers and young children or horseriders.

For P3, learners must discuss factors that influence the use of forests for recreation. They need to demonstrate awareness of the social and historical factors which mean that recreation has increased over the past 50-100 years, and also the factors which have led to increased forest recreation. Some of the increase will be 'demand led' i.e. consumers wanting to take part in more forest recreation. Some of the increase will be 'supply led' ie bodies like the Forestry Commission developing sites to enhance their recreational appeal.

P4 requires learners to discuss potential problems and constraints to forest recreation provision. Whilst recreation can bring many benefits, it is important that learners show understanding of the problems that recreation can bring. They also need to demonstrate awareness that not all sites have the ability to be developed for all (or any) types of recreation activity and the potential constraints that may affect the sites.

For P5, learners must describe appropriate design considerations to promote the use of forests for recreation. They need to show awareness of the range of considerations that must be taken when designing a forest for recreational activities.

Equally for P6 they must be able to discuss the physical and financial considerations when planning forest recreation and how these might impact on the eventual design/delivery.

P7 will require learners to be able to summarise current legislation relevant to forest recreation. It is not intended that learners are able to explain legislation in detail, but should be able to demonstrate awareness of the 'headline' effects and intentions of relevant legislation on forest recreation.

For P8 learners must evaluate methods of promoting forest recreation methods. They must be able to look at a range of actual promotion methods and explain their relative advantages and disadvantages. Tutors may wish to provide a range of different methods for example a leaflet, a website and one other from a range of different sites and get learners to compare them. This could be done in the form of a group discussion

P9 requires learners to select appropriate forest recreational activities for a given situation. Tutors will select an appropriate forest environment and learners will select an appropriate activity that could be developed on that site, taking into account the factors listed in the content.

For P10 learners will prepare a plan to deliver forest recreational provision. This will be the activity suggested for P9. Learners will show they are able to consider the range of factors that need to be taken into account when planning an activity.

In P11, learners will produce promotional material for forest recreational provision. This will be for the activity suggested for P9. The material could be of any appropriate type – it could be a video advert, a radio advert, a leaflet, a poster, a newspaper advert, a website design or any other suitable material. Learners should be encouraged to be as creative as possible.

In M1 learners need to explain in detail the factors that influence the use of a named forest for recreation. This should be based on a forest which the learners have visited or for which comprehensive information can be provided by the tutor. They need to be able to provide reasoned explanations of why they think the factors they have chosen have influenced that particular forest. For example, a forest in close proximity to large population centres is likely to have had increased levels of recreation compared to a remote rural one.

For M2 learners must explain in detail the design considerations for development of a specified recreation activity in a named forest. This should be based on a forest which the learners have visited or for which comprehensive information can be provided. They must be able to identify and explain the design considerations which have affected an actual activity or the considerations which could affect a proposed activity. Achievement of this criteria could be based on extended work presented for P5 ie detailed work presented for P5 could also achieve M2.

M3 requires learners to justify completed promotional material for a selected forest recreational provision. This will be based on the evidence presented for P11. Learners will need to present evidence to justify why they have chosen the selected promotional method.

For D1 learners must evaluate methods of solving problems caused by forest recreation. This will need to be based on a real site or for which sufficient source material can be provided by the tutor. They will need to be able to describe the solution and evaluate whether it is working, and its advantages and disadvantages.

In D2 learners must evaluate promotional material produced, recommending improvements. A self-critical examination is required – this could either be of their own work or a peer assessment/review of other learners work. Learners also need to identify how the material could be made better – this could be though basic improvements to spelling, grammar etc or to the format in which the material is presented.

Programme of suggested assignments

The following table shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3, P4, M1, D1	Seeing the Wood for the Trees	<p>You are acting as a consultant for a landowner with a large forested estate. She is seeking additional income and is looking for ideas to assist with this. Your brief is to show how this is possible. You will outline the positive benefits of forest recreation, you will evaluate different forest recreation activities, the factors that have influenced the use of forests for recreation, and the problems and constraints in developing forest recreation.</p> <p>To help in your explanation to your client, the work will be based on a real site for which you are able to explain the factors which have influenced its use for recreation and the solutions used to solve the problems caused by recreation.</p>	<p>Written report. Video recording. Audio recording. Group discussion. Case study. Site visit.</p>
P5, P6, P7, M2	Wood you Believe It?	<p>You have been employed to stay on as the consultant for the next stage – to design the forest recreation plan. You will come up with a plan that shows your awareness of the design considerations which affect the development of forest recreation and what physical, financial and legislative considerations come into play. You will use an actual example to show how design considerations can affect the forest recreation activities that are or may be carried out on the site.</p>	<p>Written report. Video recording. Audio recording. Group discussion. Case study. Site visit.</p>

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P8, P9, P10, P11, M3, D2	If You Go Down to the Woods Today	You, the consultant have now been directed to take things to the next level and come up with a 'sales pitch' for an activity that could happen on the site. You will start by looking at what goes on at other sites by evaluating their methods of promoting forest recreation activities. It will then be your opportunity to show if you can do better: you will choose an activity which could be appropriate for the selected site, come up with a plan to deliver this activity and design promotional material for this activity. You will need to say why you have chosen the promotional method and to review your own or others work to suggest improvements.	Written report. Video recording. Audio recording. Group discussion. Case study. Site visit.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Land-based sector suite. This unit has particular links with:

Level 2	Level 3
Introduction to Countryside Access and Recreation	Element EC21.1 Plan environmental projects Element EC21.2 Deliver environmental projects
	Understanding Countryside Tourism and Recreation

Essential resources

Learners will need access to a range of forest types involved in forest recreation. Visits to information and forest centres and other recreational facilities in forests are important in this unit. Also meetings with personnel involved in the delivery, design or supervision of recreational activities should be arranged.

Planning policy and management planning documents should be examined, and maps should be available for analysis. Data and information relating to visitor profiles and numbers would also prove useful material for study.

Information on the current legislation relating to access and health and safety regulations should be available.

Appropriate textbooks, IT and internet support should be available where necessary.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

This unit focuses on aspects of forest recreation. It will provide learners with the background skills and knowledge in understanding how and why forest recreation is carried out. Centres are encouraged to develop effective links with local forest recreation sites, especially through the use of site visits and as the venue for work experience placements. Tutors are recommended to become familiar with the Forestry commission website which provides excellent source material for the delivery of this module.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbook

Broadhurst R – *Managing Environments for Leisure and Recreation* (Taylor and Francis, 2001)
ISBN 0415200989

Journal

BBC Countryfile Magazine

Countryside Recreation published every four months by Countryside Recreation Network

Websites

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t0bv	Link to BBC Countryfile programme information
www.bta.org.uk	British Tourist Association
www.countryside recreation.org.uk	Countryside Recreation Network
www.forestry.gov.uk	Forestry Commission website
www.naturenet.net	Naturenet
www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html	UK National Statistics hub

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

The following table identifies the PLTS opportunities that have been included within the assessment criteria of this unit:

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	explaining the impact of forest recreation evaluating forest recreation activities discussing factors that influence use of forests for recreation discussing potential problems and constraints to forest recreation discussing physical and financial considerations for forest recreation summarising legislation relevant to forest recreation evaluating methods of promoting forest recreation preparing a plan to deliver forest recreation
Creative thinkers	describing design considerations to promote the use of forests for recreation discussing physical and financial considerations for forest recreation selecting appropriate forest recreational activities for a given situation producing promotional material for forest recreational provision.

Although PLTS opportunities are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Reflective learners	taking part in peer review and self reflection eg of promotional material produced
Team workers	taking part in group discussions
Self-managers	organising own time and carrying out self-guided research
Effective participators	presenting a 'sales pitch' for the proposed site activity.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	saving work produced on PC
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	developing and presenting work on a PC presenting information required for the assignments
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	gathering and developing required information
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	presenting information so that it meets the needs of the audience
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	taking part in group discussions
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading texts such as websites, leaflets etc to be able to compare them
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing documents to present information.