

Unit 31: Impact and Sustainability in Outdoor Adventure

Unit code:	K/502/5798
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is for learners to understand the impact of outdoor activities on the natural environment.

● Unit introduction

Natural environments need to be cared for and celebrated, and those who use them should ensure that there is a sense of value, worth and spirit placed in their use. The outdoor adventure and education industries have spent many years using the countryside without thinking of the environmental costs, but this has changed in recent years and sustainability is now considered key to the industry's future.

Sustainability is often thought of as development that meets present needs without compromising future needs, and is concerned with both present and future generations. Sustainability requires consideration of the countryside as a vulnerable resource to be treated with respect and care.

Outdoor enthusiasts and those working in outdoor industries should be aware of the conflicts that can arise between different groups in the countryside. A professional approach is important to ensure all needs are considered and to ensure the continued tolerance of the industry by other countryside groups.

In this unit, learners will examine the impact of recreational activities on the environment, and will be introduced to the benefits and constraints of past and present legislation on both landowners and recreational countryside users. Learners will explore organisations associated with conservation and the difference between statutory, voluntary and private organisations.

The unit is designed to encourage learners to contribute back to the environment in a sustainable way. Learners will have the opportunity to develop ideas and to make a practical contribution to sustainability in their local area.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know about the impact of countryside use, and the benefits of a sustainable approach to use
- 2 Know about legislation relating to recreational use of, and access to, land
- 3 Know about organisations associated with conserving the environment
- 4 Be able to undertake an environmental sustainability project.

Unit content

1 Know about the impact of countryside use, and the benefits of a sustainable approach to use

Use: recreational use eg canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing, sailing, power-boating, scuba-diving, walking, mountain biking, rock climbing, caving, orienteering, parascending, paragliding, hang-gliding, microlighting, ballooning; other uses eg agriculture, military, industry, forestry; conflicting use eg fishermen and kayakers, climbers and birdwatchers, walkers and mountain bikers, surfers and windsurfers

Impacts: social; economic; cultural; physical; carrying capacity

Sustainability: definition eg development that meets present needs without compromising future needs; approaches eg visitor management techniques, self-regulation, and regulation by statutory and voluntary bodies

2 Know about legislation relating to recreational use of, and access to, land

Legislation: eg National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949), Countryside Act (1968), Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Rio Earth Summit (1992), Environment Act (1995), Criminal Justice Act (1994), the Countryside and Rights of Way Bill (March 2000); impacts of legislation

Classification orders: relating to land use and access eg Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR), DEFRA initiatives (countryside stewardship schemes), national parks

Public Rights of Way (PROW): roles (landowners, local authorities, highway authorities)

3 Know about organisations associated with conserving the environment

Organisations: statutory (government) eg local authorities, national park authorities, English Heritage, Scottish National Heritage, Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature, Countryside Agency, Forestry Commission; voluntary eg National Trust, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB), Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace; private eg water authorities, landowners (corporate and individuals); role; remit; structure

4 Be able to undertake an environmental sustainability project

Environmental sustainability project: eg tree-planting, developing an educational resource, bird identification chart, walling, footpaths (construction, repair, maintenance)

Plan: aims and objectives; SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) targets; roles; responsibilities; resources eg human, physical, fiscal; health and safety eg risk assessment; contingency plans

Undertake: complete roles and responsibilities; to meet aims and objectives; to achieve targets

Review: against aims and objectives; against targets; formative and summative; feedback eg participants, observers, peers, assessors; strengths; areas for improvement

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 assessment 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 describe the impact of countryside use	M1 explain the impact of countryside use	
P2 describe three approaches to sustainable recreational use of the countryside	M2 explain three approaches to sustainable recreational use of the countryside	D1 evaluate three approaches to sustainable recreational use of the countryside
P3 describe three pieces of legislation, three classification orders, and the Public Rights of Way system		
P4 describe three organisations associated with conserving the environment and the work they do	M3 explain the work of three organisations associated with conserving the environment	
P5 plan an environmental sustainability project [IE1, CT1, CT2, RL2]		
P6 undertake an environmental sustainability project, with tutor support [IE1, CT1, CT2]	M4 independently undertake an environmental sustainability project	
P7 review an environmental sustainability project, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. [RL1, RL3]	M5 evaluate the environmental sustainability project and make recommendations for improvement.	D2 justify suggestions made regarding the improvement of the planning and undertaking of the environmental sustainability project.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. 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

This unit is both theoretical and practical. It involves concepts that are key to the survival of the countryside and the outdoor industry. Deliverers of outdoor activities need to embrace and experience all aspects of sustainable practice.

Learners should visit the countryside to witness the effects of countryside use. The area local to the centre is most suitable for this and nearby environmental organisations could be a good point of contact.

The local park authority, the National Trust or perhaps the Field Study Council, are examples of organisations involved in environmental education. Many are willing to meet groups and talk about issues as part of their educational agenda. Many of the park authorities have developed lessons/activities to demonstrate pressures, for example, between car use and environmental protection.

Visits to quarries and military sites could also be useful to demonstrate the pressure the rural environment is under.

Learners can benefit from interviewing local people and businesses about their experiences. A study could be made of a 'honey pot' area local to the centre. Many National Parks already have literature and education packages about these aspects of the unit.

Learners can research legislation concerning use of the countryside on the internet. Useful guest speakers would be countryside wardens, access officers or planning officials. The countryside service in most local authorities is often amenable to queries on these lines. Visits to designated areas, for example Sites of Special Scientific Interest, are also useful to promote discussion regarding the value of preservation.

Guest speakers from, and visitors to, organisations concerned with environmental conservation are invaluable. The countryside service in most local authorities is often amiable to queries on these lines.

The environmentally sustainable project brings the rest of the unit together to give the learner a chance to develop an interesting and absorbing project. An excellent link between cause and effect could be made by encouraging a project that integrates delivery of another related unit from within the programme of study.

For example, units that have an events focus might involve use of Public Rights of Way for a mountain bike event, so this unit could involve group planning, participation and evaluation of PROW maintenance.

National Governing Bodies such as the Mountain Leader Training England, British Mountaineering Council or the British Caving Association could be useful contacts. This project is a great opportunity for tutors and learners to be creative. Perhaps when learners go on an expedition they could make a sustainable contribution. This unit gives learners the opportunity to plan, develop and review a self-organised project.

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 demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Tutor-led unit introduction: use of the countryside – contrasting demands
Tutor-led activity: impact of countryside use. Look at an area in terms of local people's needs, recreationalists' needs and conservationists' needs. Look at how groups inherently conflict and what 'damage' they do to the other groups needs. Explore concepts of 'What is the countryside for?' and 'Is it a natural environment?'
Consolidate learning from activity. Learners in groups research National Park Authority aims. Examples of conflict. Tutor presents slides of physical erosion, over-crowding. Learners discuss effects of tourism, foot and mouth disease, quarrying, pollution, noise, erection of mobile phone masts/wind farms. Economic conflicts – holiday homes, 'proper' shops lacking etc
Learners in groups undertake role-play on conflicts of interest
Assignment 1: Impacts of Countryside Use (P1, M1). Tutor introduces the assignment brief
Individual learning time – assignment preparation
Tutor-led discussion on effects on the environment and its users and ways of preventing/reducing impact. Visits to a countryside warden – talk through countryside management techniques
Learners in groups research carrying capacity, park'n'ride, contributing to the local economy, zoning, voluntary restrictions, NGB guidelines, consultation and compromise. Learner feedback to group, tutor consolidates.
Tutor-led discussion 'Countryside Code' (rights and responsibilities) CD ROM
'Adopt-a-cave/crag scheme': visit cave or crag meet rangers – Three Peaks Project or similar
Tutor-led discussion: MLTB Slide-show – how climbers contribute back to environment
'Adopt-a-cave/crag scheme': visit cave or crag again and complete practical work
Assignment 2: Sustainability (P2, M2, D1). Tutor introduces the assignment brief
Individual learning time on assignment
Learners in groups identify public rights of way on a range of OS maps and the symbols used for different types (eg footpaths, bridleways) etc. On a blank map of the British Isles, name and locate the National Parks of England and Wales. Discuss whether National Parks are under threat. Group discussion: reasons for preservation, and local examples
Practical activity: look at PROW network on ground. Examine irregularities, go to an area where classification orders exist – National Park containing a SSSI and other designations
Assignment 3: Legislation, Classification and PROW (P3). Tutor introduces the assignment brief
Learners research organisations associated with conserving the environment (eg governmental, private, voluntary and pressure groups). Select and research two statutory and two voluntary organisations. Investigate aims and objectives, role in managing/supporting the countryside, funding issues and membership
Visit countryside organisations eg – National Trust area (voluntary sector)
Tutor-led input on organisations, learner questions
Visit countryside organisation eg Country Park (public sector)
Assignment 4: Countryside Organisations (P4, M3). Tutor introduces the assignment brief
Learners in small groups discuss and consider options for an environmental sustainability project (local national park, countryside service, adopt-a-cave) etc

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Learner practical workshop – undertake practical work, contact local countryside service, NPA etc. Tutors observe performance

Assignment 5: Plan, Undertake and Review an Environmental Sustainability Project (P5, P6, M4, P7, M5, D2). Tutor introduces the assignment brief. Includes time allocated for feedback and review

Review of unit and assessment

Assessment

For P1, learners need to show a basic understanding of the effects of countryside use. Learners could use a grid to describe different types of use and the environmental impacts of each. Learners could gain information from guest speakers or visits and produce a presentation or report based on their findings.

For P2, learners need to describe three approaches to sustainable recreational use of the countryside. For example, park'n'ride schemes, having a take all rubbish away policy, promotion of sites with greater carrying capacities, increasing admission charging or codes of conduct.

For P3, learners need to describe countryside legislation, classification orders and the public rights of way, commenting briefly on the relevance to landowners and recreation participants. For P4, learners must describe the role of three conservation organisations.

For criteria P1, P2, P3 and P4, learners could undertake a mini-study of a specific local area, perhaps a honey-pot within a National Park or a National Park as a whole.

Criteria P5, P6 and P7 require learners to plan, undertake and review a project based on the idea of environmental sustainability. The review of the project must identify strengths and areas for improvement and is based on group performance against targets and project success. Learners are expected to demonstrate clear and sensible reasoning for the project choice. It is a really good opportunity for learners to be autonomous and independent. Project choice should not necessarily be limited by restrictive resources. Ideally, learners should think about their own impacts and try to rectify them. Learners should be encouraged to make sensible and well-thought out choices.

For M1, which builds on P1, learners need to explain the impacts of countryside use. Learners should be covering the ideas in more depth and demonstrate more understanding, and must offer an explanation of the conflicts.

For M2, learners need to explain three approaches to sustainable recreational use of the countryside. Learners should be covering the ideas in more depth, providing reasons and/or evidence to support their explanation.

For M3, learners need to explain the work of the organisations described for P4. Learners could use information derived from research or visiting speakers/tutor delivery.

For M4, learners must undertake an environmental sustainability project without tutor assistance. Tutors should complete an observation record/witness statement to confirm achievement. Grading criterion M5 requires a clear evaluation. Presentations work well in these situations. Learners should clearly state where their project was successful and less successful; honest appraisal is required. Learners do not necessarily have to achieve the objectives of the project, although success is desirable. Learners need to give recommendations for improvement.

For D1, learners need to evaluate the effectiveness of sustainable approaches. This can be related to experience; an outdoor activity day with a group could be evaluated to see how sustainable it was, and suggestions made as to how to change it for the better. Three approaches to sustainable use need to be evaluated.

For D2, which builds on P7 and M5, learners need to justify the suggestions they have made regarding possible improvements made to their project. Learners need to provide reasons or evidence to support their opinions.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and 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, M1	Impacts of Countryside Use	You are working for your local authority and have been asked to plan, undertake and review an environmental sustainability project.	Report or presentation and witness statement
P2, M2, D1	Sustainability		
P3	Legislation, Classification and PROW		
P4, M3	Countryside Organisations		
P5, P6, P7, M4, M5, D2	Plan, Undertake and Review an Environmental Sustainability Project		Report Observation record

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

This unit forms part of the BTEC Sport sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Sport suite:

Level 2 Sport	Level 3 Sport
Injury in Sport	Impact and Sustainability in Outdoor Adventure
Sports Development	Skills for Water-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities
Fitness Testing and Training	Skills for Land-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities
Outdoor and Adventurous Activities	Leading Water-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities
Work Experience in the Sports Industry	Leading Land-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities
Leading Outdoor and Adventurous Activities	Outdoor and Adventurous Expeditions
Expedition Experience	Alternative Pursuits for Outdoor Adventure

This unit links with the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for:

- Leisure Management at Level 3
- Outdoor Education, Development Training and Recreation at Level 3.

Essential resources

Learners will need access to research facilities and particular resources required by their choice of environmental sustainability project.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

This unit focuses on the practical aspects of environmental impacts and the benefits of adopting a sustainable approach. Centres are encouraged to develop links with local Countryside Services. This could be via talks, or visits to Countryside Services bases and locations, especially with regards to undertaking an environmental project.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Cooper G – *Outdoors with Young People: A Leader's Guide to Outdoor Activities, the Environment and Sustainability* (Russell House Publishing, 1998) ISBN 9781898924241

Dearling A and Armstrong H – *Youth Action and the Environment* (Russell House, 1997) ISBN 9781898924074

Langmuir E – *Mountaincraft and Leadership – revised 3rd Edition* (MLTB, 2004) ISBN 9781850602958

Martin B, Cashel C, Wagstaff M and Breunig M – *Outdoor Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Human Kinetics, 2006) ISBN 9780736057318

Websites

British Caving Association	www.britishcaving.org.uk
The British Mountaineering Council	www.thebmc.co.uk
Countryside Agency	www.countryside.gov.uk
Countryside Council for Wales	www.ccw.gov.uk
Forestry Commission	www.forestry.gov.uk
John Muir Trust	www.johnmuiraward.org
Mountain Leader Training England	www.mtle.org
National Trust	www.nationaltrust.org.uk
The Ramblers Association	www.ramblers.org.uk
Royal Society for Protection of Birds	www.rspb.org.uk

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	planning an environmental sustainability project undertaking an environmental sustainability project, with tutor support
Creative thinkers	planning an environmental sustainability project undertaking an environmental sustainability project, with tutor support
Reflective learners	planning an environmental sustainability project reviewing an environmental sustainability project, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Although PLTS 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 ...
Independent enquirers	visiting organisations to find out about their role in conserving the environment
Team workers	working with others to undertake an environmental sustainability project.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	preparing reports or presentations
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 	preparing a presentation
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	preparing a presentation
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	preparing reports or presentations
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	giving presentations
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	giving presentations
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	preparing reports and giving presentations.